



# Mount Calvary Connected

July 29, 2021

*Mount Calvary Connected is a weekly newsletter that will be sent out each Wednesday while the church is pressing "pause" on in-person gatherings. Our goal is to keep you connected to your faith and your church with messages from our pastors, health information, and ways to share Christ's love during our current national crisis.*

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### LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

Mt. Calvary hosts live broadcasts of the liturgy at 8:45 AM Sunday mornings. The broadcast can be heard by tuning your radio to 88.3 FM if you are near the church. We can also stream the service live over the internet.

By clicking the following link, you can gain access to the live stream audio. <https://streams.radiomast.io/96172026-6cba-407b-9090-e150b471ae0e>

Weekly worship bulletins can be found at: [www.rebrand.ly/MtCalvaryWorship](http://www.rebrand.ly/MtCalvaryWorship)

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### Weekly Wednesday, Drive in Services

Wednesday evening drive-in services are at 6:30 pm. Download a bulletin from: <https://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/>, bring your own bread for communion, and tune your radio to 88.3FM and you are set! See you there!

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### Worship Help Needed

There are sign-up sheets, in the Narthex, for Greeters/Ushers, and Communion Assistants, for the months of July and August. Please sign up for the dates that would suit you best. We appreciate you volunteering. If you have questions about these roles, please contact Christine Koshute at 814-421-4921 or Chris Oleksa at 814-244-9851.

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### Mount Calvary's Summer VBS is "God's Secret Agents of Change!"



Join us on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> for a special program for kids entering Pre-K through 5th grade. The program will run each night from 4-5pm with a picnic meal served at 5pm and an invitation to join us for evening worship afterwards. For more information, contact Pastor Jono at [RevJonoAdams@gmail.com](mailto:RevJonoAdams@gmail.com) or 412-817-6704.

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### Backyard Cookie Collection, Thursday, August 5, 2021.

Cookies can be placed in the bin outside the church, or the labeled one inside. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Kozak at 244-6880. Thank you for your continued support!

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### Farewell Liturgy for Bishop Rhyne

We will have a service of Farewell and Godspeed at

**Evangelical Lutheran in Duncansville starting at 2 PM on August 28th.**

Clergy are invited to vest and process. August 28 is the Commemoration of St. Augustine of Hippo so the color of the day is white. The people of Duncansville have graciously offered to host a reception after the service.

**Installation of Allegheny Synod Bishop Paula Schmitt**  
Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will join us to install our new Bishop on  
**Sunday, September 19 at 3 PM.**

The service is being held at First Lutheran Church in Altoona. The color for the day is red. We will be livestreaming the service and there will be a reception following hosted by our partners at Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries.

**Birthdays and Anniversaries for the Week: August 1 - August 7, 2021.**

- Aug 1** – Michael Berkey, Blake Brehm, Craig Kuyat, Benjamin Leverknight, Paul Swartz, Thomas Venet
- Aug 2** – Gretel Kaltenbaugh, Carol Lampel, Kate Rychak
- Aug 3** – Logan Foust, Clifton Koontz
- Aug 4** – Nichole Brehm, Cynthia Solarczyk
- Aug 5** – Audrey Berkey, Wendy Floyd, Rachel Kishlock
- Aug 6** - Kayla Alexander, Kristie Magliocca, Jared McQuaide
- Aug 7** - Douglas Knepper

**About Our Members:**

Patricia Custer passed away on July 24, 2021  
Eva Eschrich passed away on July 16, 2021

**Remember those that prayer has been requested:**

Jose & Family, Harold, Rick, Midge, Shirley, Jennifer, John, Debbie Finnegan, Jill McEntee, David, Karen, Lauren, Billy, Barb, Sliko Family, McQuaide Family, Dorothy, Bob, Corey, Michelle, Linda & Dick, Dolly & Chis Palm, Claudia Plows, Linda McMullen, Stacy, Eschrich Family, Gay & Don, Custer Family, Michelle's Grandma, Friedline Family, Pastors Carol & Scott Custead, Statler Family, Fred, Bob, and Alex.

**JULY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Presently in the black, Mount Calvary came through the first six months of the year well. Giving is thus far almost exactly where our mission and ministry plan for 2021 expected it to be, with increased giving to the current fund largely offsetting decreased giving to the building fund. Until Christ comes again, it shall be important for each of us to continue to do our part when possible; maintaining our prior year's giving and increasing our giving when it's doable. Unfortunately, people continue to move, die, and grow ill and every enterprise, including the Church, continues to feel the lingering effects of the pandemic. This makes consistent giving, and increased giving, when possible, of ongoing importance both this year and next year and every year after.

On the expense side, increased property expenditures have been offset by decreased expenditures in other areas. Six months into the year, it may be that we underestimated our electricity, gas, and ground maintenance expenses. Together, just these three expense lines account for two-thirds of our property-related expenses, with the yearly expense in these areas presently on pace for somewhere between \$35,000-\$40,000. Even when summer schedules or continuing reservations related to the pandemic keep us away from the church, the basic costs of operation continue to accumulate, and they are significant.

## CONDENSED WORSHIP FOR THE WEEKEND OF SUNDAY, JULY 25, 2021.

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Gracious God, you have placed within the hearts of all your children a longing for your word and a hunger for your truth. Grant that we may know your Son to be the true bread of heaven and share this bread with all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **A: Amen.**

### FIRST READING: 2 SAMUEL 11:1-15

*King David takes Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, then eventually has her husband murdered. The king, who should be at the battle but stays home, is contrasted in this story with the loyal and upright soldier Uriah.*

<sup>1</sup>In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. <sup>3</sup>David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite." <sup>4</sup>So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. <sup>5</sup>The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

<sup>6</sup>So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup>When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. <sup>8</sup>Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. <sup>9</sup>But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. <sup>10</sup>When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?" <sup>11</sup>Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing." <sup>12</sup>Then David said to Uriah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day, <sup>13</sup>David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

<sup>14</sup>In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. <sup>15</sup>In the letter he wrote, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die."

### PSALM 14

P: Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God." They are corrupt, every deed is vile; there is no one who does any good.

**A: The LORD looks down from heaven upon us all, to see if there is anyone who is wise, who seeks after God.**

P: They have all proved faithless; all alike have turned bad; there is none who does good; no, not one.

**A: Have they no knowledge, all those evildoers who eat up my people like bread and do not call upon the LORD?**

P: See how they tremble with fear, because God is in the company of the righteous.

**A: Your aim is to confound the plans of the afflicted, but the LORD is their refuge.**

P: Oh, that Israel's deliverance would come out of Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of the people, Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad.

**SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 3:14-21**

*We have been rooted and grounded in the love of Christ, which surpasses all human knowledge. Because Christ dwells in our hearts, our lives are continuously strengthened and empowered by the ongoing presence of the Spirit.*

<sup>14</sup>For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup>from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. <sup>16</sup>I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, <sup>17</sup>and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. <sup>18</sup>I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup>and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

<sup>20</sup>Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, <sup>21</sup>to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

**GOSPEL: JOHN 6:1-21**

*In John's gospel, the miracles of Jesus are called "signs," because they reveal the true character of God. As such, they remain within the mystery of God and cannot be brought under human control.*

<sup>1</sup>Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. <sup>2</sup>A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. <sup>3</sup>Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. <sup>4</sup>Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. <sup>5</sup>When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" <sup>6</sup>He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. <sup>7</sup>Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." <sup>8</sup>One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, <sup>9</sup>"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" <sup>10</sup>Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. <sup>11</sup>Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup>When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." <sup>13</sup>So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. <sup>14</sup>When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

<sup>15</sup>When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

<sup>16</sup>When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, <sup>17</sup>got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. <sup>18</sup>The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. <sup>19</sup>When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. <sup>20</sup>But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." <sup>21</sup>Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

## SERMON BY PASTOR SCOTT

In life, there are opportunities “to be” and opportunities “to become.” I’m not here to offer anything like a comprehensive statement on these modes of existence, but I do think some generalizations can be advanced on the basis of today’s readings from Scripture. “To be” is an act of surrender and embrace. This is who God made me to be and I’m going to run with it. This is my place in God’s plan right now and I’m all in. I’m ready just to be. In spiritual circles, at least, “to become” is something entirely different. When we’re set on becoming rather than being, we can stray from God’s plan and travel off in our own direction; with self-created desires and hungers and aspirations driving the bus until we become, become those desires and those hungers and those aspirations. One might say in very general and provisional terms that “being” is the realm of saints and “becoming” is the realm of sinners. Saints trust in God’s wisdom and support; looking and listening for their Lord and following after him once he’s been heard and/or seen. Sinners defer not to their Lord, but to the personal and the popular; in the end becoming the image of the personal or the popular rather than the image of God.

This tension between “being” and “becoming” animates much of the recorded history of Jesus Christ. When Jesus receives the Holy Spirit, on the day of his baptism say Matthew, Mark, and Luke, on no particular day in John, Jesus receives all that he needs to be the person he’s been sent into the world to be. Once he’s been equipped in this way, the question becomes: Will Jesus play ball or not? Will he in his prayers and in his words and in his deeds, say to his Father in heaven, “Your will, not mine?” Or will Jesus say to his Father in heaven, “My will, not yours.” Here lies the difference between being and becoming for Christians like you and me. Here often lies the difference between living as a saint and living as a sinner.

As might be expected, we can pick up on Jesus’ personal version of the struggle between being and becoming in today’s reading from John. In this reading, Jesus is in the middle of the action. He’s out and about with the people; in a position to tend to their needs and to supply that which a sinful and self-serving world hasn’t supplied. This is right where Jesus is supposed to be if he’s to be the person he’s been sent into the world to be. When Jesus follows the Spirit’s lead, when Jesus trusts in the wisdom and support of God, he is who God has called and equipped him to be—the Bread of the World, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the True Vine, the Way, the Life, and the Truth. Being this person, being this person rather than becoming someone else, is mighty special. With plenty of leftovers remaining, Jesus is able to satisfy the deepest hungers of a throng of humanity with just five loaves and two fish. It’s something Jesus continues to do today with the simple bread and wine of holy communion.

But you know, holy communion wouldn’t be what it is today and has long been if Jesus had given in to the temptation to become, to become someone else. After all, once he had been the Bread of World for those gathered, today’s reading from John tells us those who had been fed wanted to make Jesus their king. Thank goodness Jesus resisted this temptation to become someone else. Thank goodness Jesus waited for God to make him King of kings and Lord of lords on the day of his resurrection from the dead. It’s why Jesus still is today who he came to be initially—the Bread of the World, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the True Vine, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It’s what happens when we live out the surrender and the embrace of being rather than the revolt and the rebellion of becoming. We end up with way more than we do when we give in to the popular and the personal; when we give in to the temptation to become someone other than the person God has called and equipped us to be.

Now if Jesus is the positive example of this truth, then King David is its negative manifestation in our reading from 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel. As compared to Uriah the Hittite, David knows too much about becoming and too little about being. At the time of the episode recorded by our first reading, Uriah is to be a soldier in David’s army under the command of Joab. David can’t get him to become someone else no matter how hard he tries. The time may come for Uriah to go back to being a husband, but right now he is to be a soldier in David’s army under the command of Joab. If only David had been this resolute, this faithful, this comfortable with his God-

given station in life, but he wasn't. Rather than being the king of Israel as God had anointed him to be, rather than being the shepherd of the sheep, David seeks to become intimate with someone else's wife and ends up becoming a murderer in the attempt to cover his tracks. This is how it goes when we seek to become someone other than the person God has called and equipped us to be. It doesn't work. We end up worse than we were before. When we find the courage to be, in the process breaking free from the often sinful impulse to become, our reading from Ephesians is right. Trusting in the wisdom and support of God, we accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine.

I think of our mutual call to build up the Body of Christ. God calls and equips all of us to encourage and to equip one another; to comfort and to console one another; to invite and welcome others into this fellowship or another one like it. This requires a lot of things to come together at the right time and in the right fashion. Building up the Body of Christ is about being on time and about being your God-given self. Building up the Body of Christ is all about marrying perfect timing with real and genuine authenticity. You don't want to say or to do too little. You don't want to say or to do too much. You don't want to say or to do it too late or too early. And whatever you do or say, you want to be totally real about it; using no script other than the one God has been writing for you throughout your life and during each of its moment. See how important and powerful it is to be your God-given self rather than to try to become somebody else. The New Testament tells us that God really couldn't get through to us until God came to be, came to be one of us. Successful communication on the part of God is going to be no different today. To be heard, to be felt, to get across, at just the right time, we'll need to be the person God has been calling and equipping us to be since the day of our baptism through the ongoing efforts of the Holy Spirit. And how do we arrive at this state of being; at this incredibly powerful mix of perfect timing and authenticity?

As it often does, our hymnal gives us the answer. Let me illustrate by way of reference to my mother Janice. On the day my father died, my mom was still teaching, while my dad had retired from teaching the year before. When my dad was found dead in his truck on the way to a medical appointment, with the truck in gear and my dad's foot somehow holding down the brake, with all of this happening in the driveway of what was to be my parents' retirement home, the authorities contacted the office at Friendship Learning Center; the elementary school in North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin where my mom taught and where I completed kindergarten and later the fourth grade as well. As the principal called her out of her classroom for the twenty-minute drive home, my mother knew what awaited wasn't likely to be good. In the midst of what was likely to be bad, who should she be? What should she do or say? What would the future hold for her? My mom didn't know how to answer any of these questions, so she sang a hymn she had known since childhood; a hymn that showed up in our denomination's "With One Voice" hymnal and then later in its "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" hymnal. Wanting to remain faithful, wanting to be her God-given self at a new and challenging moment, my mom sang, "Precious Lord, take my hand." Once again, she proved to be a pretty smart lady. For here's the thing. If we sing and pray, "Precious Lord, take my hand" as if it were the song of our life, more often than not, at just the right time, we'll end up being the person God has been calling and equipping us to be since the day of baptism through the Holy Spirit. Amen!

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

P: We pray for the Church. Bless every faithful ministry of every congregation near and far. Empower churches throughout the world and encourage missionaries who accompany global neighbors. Kindle in us a spirit of collaboration, that all people may know your loving works. Hear us, O God. **A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and come to the aid of those enduring sweltering heat. Nurture wheat and barley crops grown for the nourishment of your people and conserve aquatic habitats and fish populations. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We pray for those who govern. Cast out arrogance, selfishness, and corruption and instruct those who lead to practice compassion and humility. Inspire them with a vision of the common good and a commitment to ensure that all who hunger are fed. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We pray for those bowed down by heavy burdens: those who are unemployed or underemployed, those unable to find affordable housing, and those without health insurance. Console those who grieve and hear the cries of those who call to you for healing (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We pray for this assembly. Deepen our resolve to use what we have to serve those in need. When we worry that we do not have enough resources for ministry, assure us of your abundance. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We give thanks for those who have died. As you sustained them through all their days, so dwell in our hearts, that we may have the power to comprehend, with (*the apostle James, name/s, and*) all the saints, the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Hear us, O God.

**A: Your mercy is great.**

P: We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A: Amen.**