



Mount Calvary Connected

February 17, 2022

Mount Calvary Connected is a weekly newsletter sent out at the end of each week. Our goal is to keep you connected to your church and your faith with messages from our pastors, information about upcoming activities at Mt. Calvary and more!

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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 also stream these services live over the internet. Simply visit www.mt-calvarylutheran.org and click "Live Radio Broadcast" from the home page on Sunday mornings.

Weekly worship bulletins can be found at: www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/

A Message from Pastor Scott

"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good," (1. Cor. 12:7)

The above quotation is a favorite of mine. I also know it is a favorite of Pastor Jonathan's. This likely has something to do with our Lutheran, or more generally, Protestant identity. Lutherans, and Protestants generally, believe the Church is a community of equals. Ordination may set pastors apart for a specific role or office, but everyone else has their own role or office which is just as needed and just as important. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good and that means all of us. As Luther himself was fond of pointing out on the basis of Scripture, each of us without exception is a member of "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation," (1 Peter 2:9). At all times there's something for each of us to do; explaining why at this year's annual meeting you elected lay leaders to serve on your congregational council and why at its meeting on Tuesday your congregational council elected officers for 2022.

With the office presently appointed rather than elected, no election for treasurer was held. Bev Coughenour will continue her exemplary work for at least another year. In no time at all, I'm proud and happy to say that Bev has worked wonders with our books and our financial practices and systems. Now retired after years and years of professional bookkeeping, she's a pro and it shows. But Bev also has a real heart for ministry. Each week she comes to our congregation not just to do the books and pay the bills, but also to tutor someone for whom English is a second language. Here is someone who knows quite keenly that our time, talent, and treasure are not beans to be counted, but gifts to be used in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With respect to the office of president, Sean Horn was reelected for his third, one year term. Due to constitutional term limits, Sean will need to go off council next year. As a business executive, Sean is measured, fair, and judicious. He hears people and is quick to affirm legitimate concerns. Sean is also steady in the pocket. He isn't easily thrown off course or off point. As he affirms legitimate concerns, Sean also has little time for that which is unfounded or out of bounds. He has been instrumental in working towards a congregational atmosphere that is respectful and hospitable. But Sean is also a family man, with his wife Emily and their three children obviously coming first. Sean's love for family shows up in his commitments. One of my first memories of Sean is how he did his part to ensure that financial constraints and concerns would stop no teen from going to a national youth gathering once held in Houston, Texas.

Serving as Sean's replacement when he's unable to fulfill his duties as president, Mark Rychak was reelected as your vice-president. Having been actively involved with the congregation since the mid-80's, Mark brings the long view to our proceedings. He has a deep and genuine love for Mount Calvary and his goal is always for it to prosper. Along with Sean, Mark too has been generous, as he's also helped to create a healthy interpersonal environment at Mount Calvary. But in my estimation, Mark's biggest asset is his ability to think big for each of you, the congregation as a whole, and for Christ. In the years I have known him, the big project and the big idea have been Mark's calling card, with many of those big projects and big ideas having reached the finish line.

The final office which needed to be filled on Tuesday night was the office of secretary. Your new secretary is Joan Hunter. Joan is a good and willing writer. This will serve her well in her new role and has already proved to be helpful both for me and the council as a whole. Joan also brings forty years of human resources experience to her office. She has a very clear sense for what is and is not constructive. This too has already proved to be helpful and useful and I am confident it will be again. But like your other officers for 2022, it's ultimately about mission and ministry for Joan. She loves and treasures Christian community; understanding that to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. Joan also loves to praise our Lord musically; often using her cello in worship and having been a participant in our recently resurrected bell choir.

I hope the above helps to give you a sense of who your officers are. With the Lord providing, you are well-served!

Pastor Scott

Adult Sunday School

Adult Sunday School is ongoing! We were happy to see some new faces and hope that even more join us! We meet in the conference room/library each Sunday after worship.

Bible Basics Course

Pastor Scott will be leading a Bible basics course for six weeks, starting on Wednesday, March 9th. Each week we'll gather at 6:30 p.m. and discuss how the most recent readings in worship can be connected to the larger themes of the Bible. Should there be an interest, we may continue this practice after Lent concludes.

Upcoming Meetings

Social Ministry Committee: Thursday, February 17th at 6:30 p.m.

WELCA: Monday, February 21st at 6:00 p.m.

Property Committee: Tuesday, March 8th at 6:00 p.m.

Stewardship and Administration Committee: Thursday, March 10th at 6:30 p.m.

2022 Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for 2022 are now available in the narthex. Thank you in advance for your contribution!

Help Wanted

The Property Committee is looking to recruit a number of small job volunteers. Tasks might include replacing light bulbs, changing hardware on a commode, getting a lawnmower or snowblower ready for use, etc. The Committee believes we have a lot of talent in the congregation and wants to make greater use of it. Every small job handled by a member equals one less call that needs to be made to a vendor who may have a minimum visit charge or an hourly rate of \$50 or more.

Interested parties should contact Mark Rychak or one of the pastors. A message could also be left with the church office at 814-266-4859. Thank you!

Scheduled Worship Help

Saturday, February 19:

Greeters/Ushers: Pat Bittner & Linda Barnhart

Communion Assistants: Pam Bittner

Sunday, February 20:

Greeters/Ushers: Jim & Cathy Prisk

Communion Assistants: Volunteers needed!

Saturday, February 26:

Greeters/Ushers: Noelle Berkey & Todd Moss

Communion Assistants: Volunteers needed!

Sunday, February 27:

Greeters/Ushers: Ruth & Jerry Pozun

Communion Assistants: Ray Leverknight

There are sign up sheets in the Narthex for Greeters/Ushers and Communion Assistants. 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.



Youth News

Snow Camp 2022: Snow camp is BACK at Sequanota! Plans are in the works for the annual "snow camp" to return to Camp Sequanota on February 25th & 26th. This is an overnight event for youth in 6th through 12th grade. Registration opens January 15th, and we'd love to have a group. Contact Pastor Jonathan for details!

Childcare is now available during Sunday morning worship: Hannah Salamon is a Richland Learning Center staff member who will be joining us each Sunday along with Pastor Jonathan and other volunteers to provide childcare for infants through age 5. For the time being, drop-off for this service will take place in Sander Hall. Speak with Pastor Jonathan for more information.

Pastor Jonathan LOVES to get out and see our Mount Calvary youth in action doing the things they enjoy! Be sure to share your schedules for sports, concerts, recitals, etc. You never know where he might show up!

Pastor Jonathan's office hours at Mount Calvary are Mondays & Wednesdays, 10am-3pm. He is available outside of those hours via email (RevJonoAdams@gmail.com), cellphone (412-817-6704), or Facebook.

Giving Tree

A total of \$601 was collected from the Giving Tree for September-November and was donated to Nardecchia Spay and Neuter. Donations will now be given to The Helping Hands Mission in Portage through February. Thank you for your continued support!

Backyard Ministries Snack Collection

The Social Ministry Team wanted to share the following Facebook post from Backyard Ministries. It shows how much of an impact our snack collection has on the children of Johnstown.

"Why do we go? Yesterday we gave out cookies to kids getting off a bus in a Johnstown neighborhood. The kids were laughing, smiling, and repeatedly saying thank you. Just 48 hours earlier, the same bus was delayed at school for hours by a hostage situation in the neighborhood. Why do we go? Because the kids have nowhere else to go. Because Jesus goes!"

Again, thank you for your continued support!

-  Looking for a fun way to be involved during church services?
-  Looking for a way to meet other church members with similar interests?
-  Looking for a way to be creative and use your long forgotten, hidden away secret talents??
-  When you're sitting in the pew each week, do you wish you could do more than listen to the contemporary music, traditional hymns, or both?
-  Look and wish no more! Don't just sit there! Come join the Music Ministry as we revitalize and reorganize our singers, musicians, bell ringers, and more...
-  Don't think you're not good enough. Even if you're learning an instrument in school, or you haven't dusted off that flute, clarinet, violin, trumpet or guitar in quite awhile...join us.
-  We'd love to know if you like to sing, or play an instrument with others. Even If you can count a beat and read one or two notes at a time, you can join us in the bell choir!
-  Please reach out and let us know you'd like to join us. Text or call Joan Hunter at 814-955-2737 or joan20457@gmail.com, or Dan Gresh. Stop and talk to either of us after services by the organ/piano. We would love to talk to you about your musical interests.

ELCA Good Gifts

ELCA Good Gifts is a great opportunity to provide critical support to the ministries and programs of the ELCA in nearly 80 countries around the world.

How it works:

- Choose a gift (food, medical care costs, school supplies, etc.)
- Receive a card to share the news of your gift
- Make a difference in someone's life!

Visit goodgifts.elca.org for more information on how to donate!

Birthdays and Anniversaries for the Week: February 20 – February 26, 2022

Feb. 20 - Amanda Barkley, Corey Nider, Joshua Nider, & Cristen Russell

Feb. 21 - Austin McQuaide & Peter Zimmerman

Feb. 22 - Deborah Finnegan, Eric Headlund, Scott Reininger, & Nate Sann

Feb. 23 - Regan Daly, Ellen Martin, Shane McCarty, Penny Miller, & Jessica Partsch

Feb. 24 - William Eschrich, June Gresh, Jude Leonardis, Paul Pollino, & Meghan Swartz

Feb. 25 - Sandrina Gusmenotti & Jordan Lonsinger

Feb. 26 - Josh Covert, Donald Goughnour, Patricia McGraw, & Nancy Robison

Remember those that prayer has been requested for:

Jennifer & Ryan, Linda & Dick, Dolly & Chiz Palm Family, Claudia Plows, Maddie Pierce, Gladys Haupt, Bill & Linda, Jose & Family, Dave, Tom, Lt. Hunter Bergman, and Lt. Dylan Merchant, Harold, Rick, Midge, Shirley, Debbie, David, Lauren, Billy, Barb, Sara Solarczyk, Jackie Janak, Jack, Corinne, Joan, Dan, Natalie Zerby, Pastor Scott Custead, Luella Koontz, Al Lindner and Family, Bob, Dawn, Stacy & Josh,

Florence Barker, Bob Trotter, Jean Pellon, Bill Layton, Deb Zilch, Bennett, Cassy Sojak, Paul Miller, Keith Mayket, Ruth, Pete, the Teplitza Family, Ethel Warshel, Melanie, Ken, John Nerone, Dane Wisner, Jeff, Don, Dorothy, Irene, Karen, Erin, Susan Dyers, Bob McMullen, Dwayne Dietrich, Wyatt George, Larry Hockensmith, Jean Pellon, Mike, Corey, John Rychak, Pastor Jonathan & Family, Roxanee Horner, Lynn Palm and son, Alex, and Alex's wife, Becky Lilja, Kathy P., Al Johnson, Chris, Donna & Danny, Cheryl, Jennifer & Family, Jaime, Dorothy, Matt & Ashley, Landon, the Family of Attorney Gary Costlow, Max Lawn, Linda Haberkorn, Lorraine, and Joe.

Condensed Worship for Sunday, February 13, 2022

Prayer of the Day

Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Thus says the Lord: Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the Lord. They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes. They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse—who can understand it? I the Lord test the mind and search the heart to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

P: The word of the Lord,

A: Thanks be to God!

Psalm 1

P: Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

A: Their delight is in the law of the Lord, and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.

P: They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.

A: It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.

P: Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

A: For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

P: The word of the Lord,

A: Thanks be to God!

Gospel: Luke 6:17-26

[Jesus] came down with [the twelve] and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them. Then he looked up at his disciples and said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. “Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. “Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. “Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. “Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon by Pastor Jonathan Adams

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from Christ Jesus our Lord with whom our hearts are joined. Amen.

Remember who you are...

And WHOSE you are.

I couldn't tell you exactly where or when I first heard that saying, but I do remember the impact it had on me. The stark reminder that I am my own, individual, unique person, that I don't have to try to be like anybody else, that I can be myself.

But also, in that second part, the stark reminder that I am a child of God. That I can be who I am, *because of* whose I am. That I have been created and claimed by a God who will love me unconditionally every day of my life and beyond.

I could probably just stop right there and say amen. Certainly, there is a sermon to be heard in simply reminding ourselves that God loves us and claims us as God's own.

But I don't think that just saying it emphasizes how important that message really, truly is.

Nearly every day of our lives, practically from the moment we wake up, until that last second before our eyes shut, we are exposed to messages telling us who and how we should be. Some of it comes in the form of advertising, but a lot of it comes from the people we interact with all the time: our family, our friends, our coworker or classmates, the people we encounter on the street, or in the store, or any place else.

Some of these messages that we're being exposed to are good, they're pushing us in the right direction to grow and evolve, or telling us that we have what we need, helping us to see our blessings.

But a lot of these messages are not so good: they push us to believe that we're NOT good enough, that we don't have enough, that we'll never have enough.

When I think about all the times when that phrase, "Remember who you are and whose you are," resonated the most with me, it was during times when I let those negative messages control the narrative. When I let them get to me. When I trusted the opinions of people whose opinion shouldn't have mattered one bit.

The prophet Jeremiah probably wasn't talking about advertising, or bullies, or ex-girlfriends, but I think his message in today's reading is one that speaks to that sort of predicament, he tells us: cursed are those who trust in mortals, blessed are those who trust in the Lord.

Maybe the question we should be asking ourselves is, if you have to choose between trusting the opinion of a person who says you're not worth anything, and the opinion of a God who says you are worth sending his only son to die on a cross for you... Whose opinion should carry more weight?

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord.

That message becomes all the more powerful when you put it side-by-side with our Gospel reading from the beatitudes. Jesus tells those disciples practically from day one that the people who God chooses to bless, the people who God chooses to fight for, are the ones that society would typically say aren't worth anything: the poor, the hungry, the despised.

Those people who *need* the reminder that God loves them, because otherwise they might be convinced that no one does.

Recently, I read a story online, one of those chicken soup for the soul sort of things. It was the story of a young boy who was the child of a single mother, who didn't know who his father was. He was so used to the cruel taunting all across town when other kids and even adults would ask him, "Who's your daddy?"

It was on the day that a new preacher came to his church and asked that same question, innocently, that his life turned around.

The preacher asked the young boy who his father was, and immediately saw the looks on the faces of the other parishioners in the crowd and knew he had stepped on a landmine, but he recovered. The preacher told the young boy "Oh wait, I see the family resemblance now. You are a child of God."

And as the story goes, that was the beginning of that young boy's life turning around, of him having new confidence and self-esteem, new aspirations. And that young boy who was so used to being harassed because he didn't know who his daddy was, went on to become the governor of his state.

How many other stories are there like that? How many other stories like that are waiting to happen? People who need to be reminded not just who they are, but *whose* they are.

With Valentine's Day coming up on Monday, this weekend has the potential to trigger mixed feelings. For some it is a joyful celebration of love, but not so much for others.

But as Christians, our hearts are linked with our Lord. Any love we experience or share on earth is simply a reflection of the love that God first shared with us. Regardless of *who* we are, we know *whose* we are. We are children of God, loved by our heavenly Father, linked through baptism with our Lord, and united with all of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

P: Blessed are those whose trust is in you. Strengthen the faith of those who profess your name and bring reassurance to those who doubt or fear. Through your church speak continued blessing into the world. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

P: Those who trust in you are like trees planted by streams of water. Bless fruit trees with an abundant harvest. Protect rainforests from destruction. Restore land that has eroded after deforestation.

Resurrect woodlands after forest fires. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

P: Search the hearts of those who govern, that they lead with humility. Inspire leaders to collaborate on policies that protect people and the planet. Sustain truth-tellers and social movements that challenge society to become more honest and just. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

P: Send your blessings of mercy upon those who long for consolation. Tend to those struggling with poverty, unemployment, or uncertainty. Provide for all who are hungry. Console those who face persecution. Grant peace to all who suffer (especially). God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

P: Renew this congregation in our shared mission. As we plan and dream for the future you are preparing, inspire us by the examples of Martin Luther and all the reformers. Bless new projects and new ministry partnerships. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

P: Christ is raised from the dead, and so we cling to the hope of the resurrection. We praise you for the lives of the saints who lived and died in the hope of eternal life with you (especially). God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

P: Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

A: Amen.

Blessing

Live your lives in Christ, rooted and built up in him and abound in thanksgiving; and the blessing of the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**