



Mount Calvary Connected

May 11, 2023

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/

Readings & Sermon from the Past Sunday

Listen to the readings and the sermon from this past Sunday on our website: <https://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/sermons/>

Upcoming Events & Activities

Flea Market/WELCA Bake Sale - Sat., May 13th 8 am - Noon

Camp Sequanota: Mother's Day Banquet - Sun., May 14th at 11:30 am or 1:30 pm

WELCA - Mon., May 15th at 6:00 pm

Church Council Meeting - Tues., May 16th at 6:30 pm

Three Rivers Ringers - Sat., May 20th at 7:30 pm

Pastor Jonathan's Last Day - Wed., May 31st

Pond Raking Party - Tues., June 6th at 5:30 pm

We are expecting our largest flea market ever
& we need your help!

We are desperately in need of extra helpers for the Flea Market & WELCA Bake Sale.

We need volunteers this Friday, May 12 at 6 o'clock. We will especially need individuals that can carry boxes and set up tables.

Also, we need extra help Saturday morning. We will start at 7 am. If you can make it Saturday, please enter by the daycare doors. All other doors will still be locked. Thank you ahead of time!

Flea Market Donations - Last Call!

Those persons donating baked goods for the Flea Market are to drop off items Friday night or early Saturday Morning with our volunteers.

Please join us to discover new-to-you treasures and take home a few snacks on Saturday!

WELCA Bake Sale

The church is filled with many extremely talented bakers. Please share your talents by baking your favorite goodies and dropping them off the evening before the Flea Market. It's not too late!

Flea Market customer favorites include gobs, nut rolls, biscotti, anything chocolate and peanut butter, mini-breads (zucchini, blueberry), and muffins if you're searching for ideas.

Camp Sequanota: Mother's Day Banquet

On Sunday, May 14th, celebrate the mothers in your life with a lovely meal at 11:30 am or 1:30 pm at Camp Sequanota.

Your table will be dismissed to the buffet line once your entire group is present. If you would like to sit with a group, please contact the camp office to make a reservation for your group. There is no cost but a free will offering will be received. RSVP: (814) 629-6627

Three Rivers Ringers Concert

Are you seeking a fun evening out? Join us for an entertaining evening with the Three Rivers Ringers!

Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 7:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
309 Lincoln St, Johnstown, PA 15901

Additional information and tickets are available at johnstownmusic.org.

SAVE THE DATE

The property committee will be hosting a pond raking party on Tuesday, June 6, at 5:30 PM. Rain date will be the following Tuesday, June 13 at 5:30. We have successfully killed the weeds that have been haunting us for years. Our next step is to rake down the hillside, reseed with bent grass, and then gently rake the new seed. We are looking for some younger people that can rake and stand on the hillside, since most of the people on property are already over the hill! Thank you!

More information is available here: [June 22 - 25 \(sequanota.com\)](http://sequanota.com)!

Readers/Communion Assistants:

May 13 - Claudia Plows & Cindy Solarczyk
May 14 - Joan Hunter & Noelle Berkey

May 20 – Volunteers Needed
May 21 - Marybeth Heinze & Carter Bower

May 27 - Claudia Plows & Additional Volunteer Needed

May 28 - Ray Leverknight & Laura Bower

Ushers:

Saturdays - Volunteers Needed

Sundays - Mary Ann Mapes & Bill Esrich

Community Updates

Baptisms

Sunday, May 7, 2023 we welcomed Grayson Robert Zada, son of Robert and Jessica Zada into the congregation through the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

New Members

Welcome new members! On Sunday, May 7th, we welcomed Tom & Diane Leap into the Mount Calvary family as new members!

On Sunday, May 7th, we welcomed Matt, Melissa, & Maxson Fisher into the Mount Calvary family as new members!

Community Updates

Wilma Hiltz took a fall. She has relocated to Arbutus Park Retirement Community. Please help us bombard her with cards to brighten her day. The address is:

Arbutus Park Retirement Community

Wilma Hiltz, Room 307

207 Ottawa Street

Johnstown, Pa. 15904

May 13 – May 19, 2023 Birthdays & Anniversaries

Anniversaries

May 18 – Richard & Lois Gallus

Birthdays

May 13 – Rebecca Howsare

May 14 – Robyn Berkebile & Sue Sterner

May 15 – Jim Miller

May 16 – Christopher Morningstar & Diane Venet

May 17 – Bruce Hershline

Remember those that prayer has been requested for:

Kim; Devin; Laura & Family; Jo Ann; John Alt; Jan Mertz; Denny; Jill Lisson; Jaci Hauger; Sharon; Barbara; Dennis; Mary M.; Joel Penrod; Tim Miller; Cathy T.; Paul Brodt; Kim Stayrook; Alan; Pastor David Louder; Frank Robison; Sandy; Louise; Brooke & Bill; Chuck; Dawn; Cherie; Sandy; Lorrie & Bill; Jamie Bloom; Nancy Moore Family; Wilma Hiltz; Johnny Nerone; Cheryl & Roger; James; Denny & Ellen; Bill; Sue; Stan McQuaide; El Warshel; Kathy Price; Beth Oldham; Stacy & Josh; Bill; Janet; Landon; Harold; Gonzales Family; Mary; Elaine, Patty and Betty Shaffer; Theresa Lydic and Family; Jim Haberkorn; June Gresh Family; Patty Creany; Rick Wagner; the family of Helen Finnegan; Brianna; Jackie; Mike; Lois; Wilma Hiltz; David Mathis & Austin & Family; Bell family.

Saturday, May 6, 2023 & Sunday, May 7, 2023

Do not let your hearts be troubled

Prayer of the Day

P: Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

First Reading: Acts 7:55-60

Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

The word of the Lord,

A: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

L: In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

A: Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.

L: Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

A: Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, for you are my tower of strength.

L: Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

A: My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

L: Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation- if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones,

let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. The word of the Lord, **A: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel: John 14:1-14

P: The holy gospel according to John. **A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

The gospel of the Lord, **A: Praise to you, O Christ!**

Sermon

John 14:1-14 - Easter 5A

May 6, 2023

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from Jesus Christ our Lord who goes to prepare a room for us. Amen.

I've never been particularly good at goodbyes.

Even at times when goodbye should theoretically be easy, like the social time after a meeting or event, or visiting with friends, or family, I'm never quite sure when to finally finish up, say my goodbyes, and make my exit.

And struggling with easy goodbyes means that it's that much harder when a difficult goodbye comes along.

But to be perfectly honest, I don't think any human being who has an understanding of what it means to love and to lose, ever really has an easy time saying goodbye.

Not even Jesus.

Our Gospel lesson today is from a section of the Gospel of John known as the farewell discourse. Jesus thought that this disciples deserved more than a one-word goodbye, more than a quick hug and exit, and so, as John tells us, on the evening of the last supper, after they had finished the meal, he began to say his goodbyes in the most tender and compassionate way possible.

And knowing what Jesus knew about this particular goodbye, he tried to stress that it was not as final as some of the other goodbyes they had experienced in their lives.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

This is where Jesus begins it all. He knows the anxiety that can be caused by the act of saying goodbye. And he wants to start it out with a sense of calm.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”

Jesus is not questioning their faith in God, but using it as a support for the things he is going to say as he continues speaking. It's almost as if he's telling them, “I know you are faithful people who believe in the power of God, and I'm pretty sure you believe that I am the son of God, so please, please believe everything that I am about to tell you...”

And then he describes the Kingdom of Heaven, “In my Father's house there are many rooms.”

These words of scripture are probably familiar to anyone who has had to say the ultimate goodbye to a loved one. This section of the Gospel of John is on the short list of scripture references that many pastors will give to family when planning a funeral service, and on the occasion that the family says, “You pick what you feel is most appropriate, Pastor...” this reading is an obvious choice.

Jesus' words remind us that eternal life is a very special place. A place where each of us is not only welcome, but where our individual welcomes are specifically planned for. A place where each of us has a room prepared for us that has exactly what we need and want. A place where our hurts and sorrows and pain are no more.

A place where we are able to say hello once again to those we've had to say goodbye to in the past.

And the thing is, when Jesus was saying all of this, he probably wasn't anticipating that his words would be immortalized in scripture, handed down from generation to generation, and used as words of comfort and consolation when the church memorializes the life of a saint who has gone onto eternal life.

When Jesus was saying all of this, they are first and foremost words of comfort and hope. Words of grief and valedictions. Words meant to remind and affirm. Words meant to help the disciples know that even know things would change, and that they would have to say goodbye, that those goodbyes would remind

them of the great things that had happened in their lives with Jesus, and would help them to carry on their ministry in his name.

Jesus says goodbye as carefully as he can. But he still struggles, because he knows that there will still be things left unsaid and questions left unanswered. But he leaves his disciples with a goodbye of hope.

And in doing so, he gives us words of hope for every goodbye that we must say in our lives.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many rooms. I go to prepare a room for you, and when it is time, I will come to take you to that room.”

Thanks be to God.

Amen.

Prayers Of Intercession

L: United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

L: God of life, strengthen your church to proclaim your gospel even in times of trouble. As we remember Stephen, we give thanks for diaconal ministry. Bless all deacons and strengthen them for their bridge-building ministry between church and world. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: Creating God, you show your steadfast love through mighty waters, towering mountains, verdant fields, and arid deserts. Protect the earth’s diverse habitats from the forces of pollution, erosion, extinction, and global warming. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: Mighty God, your Spirit guides us into all truth. Give wisdom to world and local leaders and organizations as they begin, build, or renew relationships. Strengthen leaders and aid organizations in areas needing to be rebuilt following conflict, unrest, or natural disaster. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: Loving God, you make your home among us. Abide with refugees, those experiencing homelessness, those fleeing war and poverty, and all who question if there is a home in your heart. We pray for all who are sick. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: Assuring God, you accompany your people amid uncertainty and change. Uphold people in this community who have recently moved, changed jobs or schools, retired, or are going through transitions of any kind. Lead us in your ways. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: Renewing God, you gather the saints at your heavenly banquet. We give you thanks for the care shown us by those who have gone before us. Grant confidence and comfort for all awaiting the place you have prepared. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: Rejoicing in the victory of Christ’s resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

A: Amen.

Blessing

P: The God of all, who raised † Jesus from the dead, bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation.

A: Amen.