



Mount Calvary Connected

May 25, 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!

Pastor Jonathan Adams

Cell-Phone: 412-817-6704

Email: revjonoadams@gmail.com

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/>

A Final Message from Pastor Jono

Traveling with my parents growing up, our car radio was typically tuned to one of two radio stations...

In my dad's car, it was WDVE, Pittsburgh's classic rock station.

In my mom's car, it was WQED, one of Pittsburgh's National Public Radio affiliates.

And if we were all traveling together, regardless of whose car it was, or who was driving, it was my mom's choice of NPR that won out. I can remember many Sunday evening rides home from dinner at my grandpa's house, listening to Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion," with music I didn't necessarily like, various skits and sketches that I didn't always entirely understand, and always, "...the news from Lake Waubegon, where all the women are strong, all the men are good looking, and all the children are above average."

I don't have any wisdom to share with you in this my final message to your congregation, but just like I hold onto fond memories of the car radio all those years ago, I will hold onto fond memories of our time together.

As of May 31, I will complete my time as your pastor, but we will still be neighbors. If you see me in the grocery store or at a community event, you are welcome to choose to ignore me, but you're just as welcome to say hello. While I will no longer be able to participate in pastoral acts within these congregations, please know that I pray for you, and give thanks for our time together.

And in the immortal words that Garrison Keillor ended every episode of "A Prairie Home Companion" with:

Be well, do good work, and keep it touch...

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jonathan C. Adams

A Message from the Church Council President

My mom always told us never say "good bye." We were to say, "see you later," instead. Her reasoning was that we would see everyone again in heaven. So this will never be good-bye to Pastor Jonathan. The guidance, leadership and wisdom he's shown over the past 6 months will live within Mt. Calvary's walls for a very long time. Although Pastor Jonathan was not "called" to be here, Church Council made the unanimous decision to hang his picture in our hallway along with all called pastors who are forever part of our history and family. He is more humble than we ever thought, however, because he keeps putting off getting the picture taken. His wife promises he will indeed sit for the portrait, because she has made several "not so good" pictures available for our use if he doesn't comply!

So come next week, here we will be. Alone. Together. Be assured, although it is a time of transition for Mt. Calvary, it is gearing up to be an exciting time to be a member here. Visiting pastors and lay ministers are being lined up, movement on selecting an interim pastor is in gear, and our Call Committee is quietly going about the business of choosing our next called pastor.

In the meantime, you will probably notice some changes, and some non-traditional ways we'll fill the void of not having our own pastor. Normal routines and lines of communication may change, speeding up....or even slowing down. Please be patient. Will everything be perfect? Probably not. Will we make mistakes? Um, yes. Will we forget some things occasionally? Definitely. Some old ways of doing things are going to stop. And some new things are going to pop up. But you know what? The building will NOT collapse. The sky will not fall..Like I told my son as he was growing up, "unless there's blood or fire, everything is ok."

Some people may think about all of this and get really stressed. Believe me, I have my moments. BUT...I choose to look at this transition as very exciting. It will be a fun summer to attend Mt. Calvary. At the very least, morbid curiosity should make you want to show up! You just never know whose face you might see at the altar leading the service...or parts of it. There may be more music....sometimes less. And....especially for the summer, services may be a bit more relaxed.....AND, to the delight of some....some services may be SHORTER!! You won't know if you don't show up.

So...please. Bear with us. Continue to attend, and definitely get involved. I will need call on a lot of you to help in many ways. We all have different skills, talents and gifts given to us by God. I hope you will share them with me, or whoever is charged with asking you. Although I will always try to keep everyone updated

with what's going on, the best way to know is to show up and get involved. It is certain to be a very interesting couple of months!

And yes, we will miss Pastor Jonathan, and the two little cuties who are attached to his hip, a lot. We hope we see his blue truck pull in occasionally, and two little girls come in to say hi! Dad is invited, too. See you later, Pastor Jonathan! We are sad, but so happy for you as you begin your new calling.

Joan Hunter, Council President

Upcoming Events & Meetings

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

Thurs., June 1-- Evangelism Committee -- 6:30 pm

Sun., June 4th -- Coffee Social -- 8:00 am

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

Thurs., June 15th -- Social Ministry -- 6:30 pm

Mon., June 19th -- WELCA -- 6:00 pm

Tues., June 20th -- Church Council Meeting -- 6:30 pm

Thurs., June 22nd - Sun., June 25th -- Well Festival at Camp Sequanota

Sun., June 25th -- Blessing of the Bikes -- 10:30 am

Sat., July 8th -- Faith Night at the Point

Shoe Collection Update

Our shoe collection was a success!

We currently have a total of 83 bags, which is 2,075 pairs of shoes! Funds2Org, the company who will be picking them up, are not making a northeast run for a few more weeks so it may be another month until we know a total amount that receive for the shoes. Thank you to everyone who donated and helped to pack and sort the shoes. It would not have been possible without you!

June Giving Tree/Collection

During the month of June, we will be collecting items to be donated to local nursing homes to be used as prizes/entertainment for their residents.

The following is a list of what they would enjoy: puzzles, large print puzzle books, simple read books, tissues, card games, candy (hard or easy to chew), slippers with grips on bottom, assorted greeting cards, costume jewelry, hand/body lotion, small packs of snacks, popcorn, pudding, lipstick, aftershave, deodorant, current magazines for women (Home Journal and Good Housekeeping), current magazines for men (Popular Mechanics, hunting, fishing, sports), shampoo/body wash, bars of soap, and small fabric bags that can be attached to wheelchairs and walkers. We appreciate your generosity!

Backyard Ministries Summer Club

Mt. Calvary will be assisting Backyard Ministries again this summer in Coopersdale. The clubs will run from 2-3 pm every Thursday throughout the summer and will begin sometime in June.

Volunteers will play and interact with kids from Pre-K to elementary age and read a discuss a short Bible story. If this is something you are interested in trying, even for a week, or would like more information, please contact Mike Kozak at 244-6880. Thank you!

Pond Raking Party

The property committee will be hosting a pond raking party on Tuesday, June 6th at 5:30 pm. The rain date will be the following Tuesday, June 13th at 5:30 pm.

We successfully killed the weeds that have been haunting us for years. Our next step is to rake the hillside, reseed, and then gently rake the new seed. We are looking for volunteers that can rake and stand on the hillside. Thank you!

If you have any questions or wish to volunteer, please contact Mark Rychak at 814-525-1865 or Debbie Rychak at 814-421-8992.

The Well Festival at Camp Sequanota

We strive to live authentically as God's people. Over the generations, people have found that it is easier to live and strive when we do it together. This is what the Well Festival is all about - living, learning, and loving together.

A key component of the event is to simply provide open space for participants to engage one another. The idea is for spiritual explorers to gather to find community and support as we engage in a wide range of conversations.

Please consider joining us to grow together in Christ. For more information, visit us online: Well (sequanota.com).

Readers/Communion Assistants:

May 27 - Claudia Plows & Cindy Buday

May 28 - Ray Leverknight & Laura Bower

Ushers:

May 27 - Janis Daily & Pat Bittner

May 28 - Mary Ann Mapes & Bill Esrich

If you would like to volunteer, please sign up online or contact Terri Crisi in the church office.

Confirmations

Congratulations to Carter Bower and Caleb Hockensmith who are now FULL members of the church having participated in two years of confirmation classes and participating in their Affirmation of Baptism on May 21!

Community Updates

Reminder: Lacey Fetcko, Social Media and Communications Coordinator at Mt. Calvary, will be serving as the volunteer coordinator for worship roles (ushers/readers/communion assistants) moving forward.

She can be contacted at lacey@mt-calvarylutheran.org with any questions or changes to your volunteer sign ups. You can also contact Terrie Crisi in the church office via telephone at (814) 266-4859 or in person to sign-up or make changes to your existing commitments.

Radio Broadcast Update: Mt. Calvary's radio and internet broadcasts began out of necessity during the pandemic. It was a means for people to "attend church" without physically being able to do so. For over 3 years, our pastors were willing to share printed copies of their sermons and allowed their sermons and services to be recorded for Facebook and elsewhere on the internet. The need for this has been over for quite some time.

With the departure of Pastor Jonathan, not all visiting pastors or lay ministers will allow themselves to be recorded, and many may not be able to provide us with a printed copy of their sermons. Written permission and release forms may have to be secured from all those who conduct our services, which will take a commitment from volunteers to secure these documents.

For now, therefore, broadcasts of Sunday morning services and publication of the weekly sermons will cease after the Memorial Day weekend. The need for these activities will be revisited after a new pastor is called and in place.

Joining Mt. Calvary: Many people have expressed interest in membership and officially joining Mt. Calvary. Pastor Jonathan is asking anyone interested in full membership to contact him this week so he can meet with you before he leaves at the end of the month. After that, council president Joan Hunter will be happy to talk with you about joining or transferring your membership from another church. Call the office and leave a message if no one answers. Join us! You are welcome here!

Fill the Boot Campaign in honor of Pastor Jonathan: Thank you to everyone who helped us surprise Pastor Jonathan this past weekend, and to those of you who so generously contributed donations to the Boswell Fire Department in his honor. We will be keeping the firemen boots through next weekend. If you forgot to drop something in, you still have a chance Memorial Day weekend. Make checks payable to "Boswell Fire Department." We know he, and his fire department, are soooo appreciative.

Shut-Ins & Homebound Visits: We are still updating our shut-in and homebound visiting list and making assignments for church volunteers to make visits. If you have a family member or loved one who is unable to come to church, contact the church office so we are aware of the need. Please do not assume we are aware of someone desiring visits. Be sure your loved one is receptive to home visits and knows to expect calls to arrange visits. A few of our shut-ins turned down visits when we called.

May 27 – June 2, 2023

Anniversaries

May 27 - Keith & Wendy Mayket

May 29 - Herb & Carla J. Enos

June 1 - Robert & Suzette Colvin; Leslie & Joyce Morgenstern

Birthdays

May 27 - Carrie Eash & David Karnes

May 28 - Matthew Goehres

May 30 - Taylor Brendlinger & Emily Sterner

May 31 - Lois Sholtis

June 1 – Maxine Hale

June 2– Bob Kamler

Remember those that prayer has been requested for:

Kim; Devin; Laura & Family; Jo Ann; John Alt; Jan Mertz; Denny; Jill Lisson; Jaci; 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; Beth Oldham; Stacy & Josh; Bill; Janet; Landon; Harold; Gonzales Family; Mary; Elaine, Patty and Betty Shaffer; Jim Haberkorn; June Gresh Family; Patty Creany; Rick Wagner; Brianna; Jackie; Mike; Lois; Wilma Hiltz; David Mathis & Austin & Family; Bell family; Esther Zane.

Condensed Worship

Saturday, May 20, 2023 & Sunday, May 21, 2023

May They Be One, As We Are One

Prayer of the Day

P: O God of glory, your Son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other in suffering and in joy, that all the world may be drawn into your bountiful presence, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

First Reading: Acts 1:6-14

When [the apostles] had come together, they asked [Jesus], “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

The word of the Lord, **A: Thanks be to God.**

Psalmody: Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

L: Let God arise, and let God's enemies be scattered; let those who hate God flee.

A: As smoke is driven away, so you should drive them away; as the wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

L: But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; let them also be merry and joyful.

A: Sing to God, sing praises to God's name; exalt the one who rides the clouds; I AM is that name, rejoice before God!

L: In your holy habitation, O God, you are a father to orphans, defender of widows;

A: you give the solitary a home and bring forth prisoners into freedom; but the rebels shall live in desert places.

L: O God, when you went forth before your people, when you marched through the wilderness,

A: the earth quaked, and the skies poured down rain, at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

L: You sent a bountiful rain, O God; you restored your inheritance when it languished.

A: Your people found their home in it; in your goodness, O God, you have made provision for the poor.

L: Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord.

A: You ride in the heavens, O God, in the ancient heavens; you send forth your voice, your mighty voice.

L: Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel; whose strength is in the skies.

A: How wonderful you are in your holy places, O God of Israel, giving strength and power to your people! Blessed be God!

Second Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert.

Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen. The word of the Lord, **A: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel: John 17:1-11

P: The holy gospel according to John.

A: Glory to you, O Lord.

After Jesus had spoken these words [to his disciples], he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and

they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.” The gospel of the Lord,

A: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Easter 7A

May 21, 2023

John 17:1-11

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from Christ Jesus who prays for unity. Amen.

“Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

For our final week in the Easter season before Pentecost, we find our Gospel reading yet again in the farewell discourse, the words that Jesus shares with his disciples, sitting around the table after the last supper. The words that he intends to his way of saying goodbye to his closest friends.

And as he leads them in prayer, he asks God for one thing in particular....

Unity.

“Dear God, help my friends to find unity in their faith, so that they can share the same bond that you and I do.”

It makes you wonder whether Jesus knew all that laid ahead of the disciples, all the things that they might find to argue about in the days to come. All of the divisions that would form even in the earliest days of the church.

It makes you wonder whether Jesus knew that with each generation, the Christian church would become more and more splintered, as various groups broke off from one another over all sorts of disagreements big and small.

It makes you wonder what would prompt Jesus to pray specifically for unity in his final hours with his disciples.

I think Jesus probably knew that there were a lot of people in the world who will pick a fight at any opportunity they can. I think he knew how hard it is for us as human beings to get along, how often we end up drawing lines in the sand and separate the “us” from the “them.”

Admittedly, disagreement makes me anxious.

I think part of that comes from the fact that I'm always trying to see the big picture. And when it comes to arguments or disagreements, I try to understand both sides of what's happening. And even when I'm in the midst of my own argument, I find myself looking at the other side of things.

When there's disagreement around me, I often feel like I'm being pulled in two directions at once, because as I try to understand both side's arguments, I begin to relate to them, and it becomes harder to pick one or the other.

I wonder if that's what Jesus felt like when he decided that he would pray that God would protect his disciples and help them to act as one, to have unity.

Jesus knew that they'd be faced with times where it felt like they were being pulled in two different directions, pulled between their faith and all the other powers of the world.

And he wanted them to be strong. Strong for the sake of the Gospel.

Next Sunday, we will celebrate Pentecost and we will hear stories of the Holy Spirit descending upon those earliest disciples, empowering them to do the work of the Gospel in the world. We'll hear how people from all different countries were able to hear the Good News in their own language. Unity, in the midst of chaos.

I wonder if Jesus knew that things might get worse before they got better. That there would have to be more division before there could ever truly be unity.

And so, in these chaotic days, we follow Jesus' example and pray for unity throughout the church and throughout the world, and we put our trust in the promise that God will make all things new in the last day.

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 harmony, as you drew your Son to your side, you draw us to you and unite us with the planet and one another. Weave your church together in a web of mutual love for the sake of the world. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: As your Spirit hovered over the waters of creation, so your Spirit hovers over all that you have made. Bless the water that sustains the planet and grant wisdom to use it wisely. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: You empower your people with the fire of your Spirit. Challenge activists and organizers, teachers and politicians, and all in leadership to speak a message of peace and justice. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: You care for all your children. Show your steadfast love to those suffering isolation, especially exiles, refugees, or prisoners. Break the chains of all held fast by systemic oppression of any kind. Comfort all who are afraid or suffering from illness. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: We give thanks that humankind serves as your body in the world, stewarding your abundant gifts. Guide this congregation's leaders as they seek your will. We pray for our staff and council. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: You raise your saints to new life in Christ. We give you thanks for (Helena) all your saints who have given us glimpses of your redeeming love. 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.