

A word from Pastor Steve

When so much of what we typically do is not possible just now, it gets me thinking about what it means to be the church. When a child is baptized, a youth confirmed or an adult joins the church, we say

"With God's help, we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others."

We say these words to those who are joining the congregation, but we are also saying these things to ourselves about who we are and what we are about as the body of Christ.

One way I have often thought about the church is that we are community of people who are brought together by a common story about how God, in love, reaches out to us and calls us to live lives of hope. Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life in abundance" (John 10:10) and he said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." (John 14:6) When we look to Jesus and chose to follow him, we discover a direction and guidance and grace that shapes who we are and how we live.

So, even if we aren't doing the things we commonly associate with church, like coming together for worship, Bible study, fellowship and service—we are still shaped and formed by the good news that God offers us in Jesus Christ. We recognize the stain of human sin and the brokenness of the world, but we live with confidence that nothing can ever separate us from the love of God. God has plans for us and we can live by hope.

Pastor Steve Larsen

May Sermon Series

The New Normal: What is our life to be now?

After that first Easter morning, the disciples really weren't sure what was to come next. They had gotten use to following Jesus as he taught and healed people and traveled from place to place, but now he was no longer with them in that way. What would it mean to follow Jesus now? We will be looking at several of the accounts of what the disciples saw and did after the resurrection of Jesus.

May 3	On the Road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-34
May 10	What to Do with Sheep and Those Who Lost Their Way John 21:15-19
May 17	Instructions for the New Community Matthew 28:16-20
May 24	Looking Up and Looking Around Luke 24:44-53
May 31	Pentecost Sunday A Community Excited and Engaged Acts 2:1-21



Lunchtime Prayer Group

Tuesdays at Noon on Zoom.

https://zoom.us/j/94534936489 or call 301-715-8592

Ways to Be the Church in This Time

We are working on providing a variety of ways to communicate with you during this time when we cannot gather at the church building. We recognize that some can use technology and others cannot. We will be providing things to you by mail, telephone, email and social media. Here are some of what we are providing:

Daily devotions

If you are interested in getting a printed copy of The Upper Room devotional booklets, please let us know. We will be happy to send you a copy. We have both larger print and regular editions available. You can send a request with your name and address to office@calvaryumc.org or call the church office and leave a message 301-662-1464. Let us know if you need the large print.

Those who would like to get The Upper Room sent to you electronically can visit upperroom.org/devotionals. For a different perspective, you might also consider getting the daily devotional from Richard Rohr, a Jesuit priest and popular author, at the Center for Acton and Contemplation at www.cac.org/category/daily-meditations/

Weekly Bible Study

Pastor Steve will be providing a short Bible study/devotional online. The study will look at various times that God's people were facing doubt and fear and how hope was offered to them. This study will be available on YouTube and Facebook. We will also be setting up "watch parties" to view the presentation with others and then have discussion using Zoom. If you would like to receive a copy of the presentation sent to you, let us know and we can send it to you.

Prayer group sessions

Pastor Shannon will be leading sessions for people to offer joys and concerns and be together in prayer on Tuesday at noon and Thursdays evenings at 7 pm. We are sending out an email reminder about these times for prayer and how to participate. If you have a need for prayer, please let the office or one of the pas-

Sunday Worship

Offered every Sunday morning on Facebook at 9 am and on YouTube at 10:00. You can find links to new services and previous services on the church website. We will be sending out a bulletin and reminder each Saturday by email. We will also be happy to share bulletins and a written version of the sermon by mail upon request.

From Pastor Shannon

It seems to me that I write most of my newsletter articles about needing to slow down, probably because I need to slow down. Or needed to. Though this pandemic has brought a frantic kind of busyness to many essential employees and maybe a frenetic energy to even those whose work is more limited, it has forced some slowness on us just because we can't go out as much as we used to! But as important as using spiritual disciplines to connect with God in the present moment are, I want to write my newsletter article not to teach but to give permission. It is ok to not use this time to deepen your spirituality. It is ok if you are just trying to make it through.

While I am all about trying to make meaning with God in difficult times, I also think we need permission to just be. There's no right way to respond to thus crisis. Fight, flight, and free responses are all unconscious ways we respond to trauma. We can't control it. It is ok if you can't focus or it takes you twice as long to get things done. It is ok if you are anxious and irritable and overwhelmed. It is ok if you are happy and content too! This is why we need to reach out to one another and share love! This is a time to just be: being honest with God about our fears, being gentle with ourselves, and being loving as best we can.

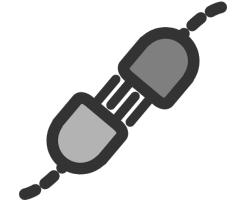
But even while we "just be," my prayer is that we still make time for just one spiritual discipline: hope. We usually see hope more as a feeling or worldview than as an action or discipline. Rebecca Solnit writes in her book *Hope in the Dark*: "Hope is an embrace of the unknown and the unknowable, an alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists. Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists take the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. It's the belief that what we do matters even though how and when it may matter, who and what it may impact, are not things we can know beforehand. We may not, in fact, know them afterward either, but they matter all the same..." Hope, real hope, is about action. It isn't about a dream, or even about a call. It isn't about staying positive. It is about simply taking a step forward, even if it is a little step. It is about doing the best we can, knowing that some days the best we can do it's great, but trying anyway. Hope and pray with me, friends, that we use this time to build a different world, one in which we take care of each other, but one in which we can be gentle with ourselves. Hope that no matter how difficult it gets, we can lean into God and keep moving.

Take heart with these words from Paul in the letter to the Romans: "And hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).



Also many of you have asked how Zekie is doing, so here is a picture of him from Easter. We miss you all!

Looking for Ways to Connect with your Calvary family? We can help!



Join our new **Facebook group** where you can share prayer concerns and connect with church members and friends.

Just search for Calvary UMC Frederick Group

Our Women's Ministry Gratitude Group is another place you can join us. We share daily gratitude and joys, daily prayer requests, and share inspirational messages. All are welcome. Just search The Gratitude Cafe

Missing your Sunday School? Many of our Adult Sunday School groups have found ways to continue to meet online through Zoom and other platforms. Our youth group is also doing twice weekly Zoom meetups. If you have not connected with your group or would like to find a group to join, email Christy Mossburg at Christy@calvaryumc.org to get connected.

Looking for Ways to Connect with your Calvary family?

The Asbury Class is meeting through Zoom Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. Here are the details, shared by class leader Pat Herber: We leave the first 15 min (9:45-10) for folks to join to join and chat (and overcome any technical difficulties). Then we have a check in where we invite everyone to share a bit and then Dave leads a scripture based discussion. We encourage folks to have their bibles available. We invite and welcome anyone to join us.

Join Zoom Meeting at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82440352670

Youth Group is meeting, please contact Rev. Shannon if you are interested in an invitation. Contact Rev. Shannon at revshannon@calvaryumc.org

Looking for activities to keep the kids or grandkids busy? We've got you covered. If you don't already subscribe to our Kid's Weekly E-News, check out our blog posts under the Family and Children's Ministry Blog on our website. You can access this by clicking on the "News" tab at the top of our website, then clicking on Family and Children's Ministry Blog in the drop down menu. Watch for regular posts on this page. You can also join one of our groups mentioned above to have quick access to our materials.

We are providing communion funds to the Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs as they work with homeless and the most vulnerable in our community.

Thank-you, thank-you so very much to the elastic donors. Each surgical gown requires 16 inches of elastic. We are given a kit of 5 gowns, that means 80 inches of elastic. If you have elastic to donate, we promise to return any we don't use if you put your name on it. Gratefully appreciated, from Gown sewers.

Hello from the Calvary Weekday School!

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family safe and healthy at home. Our staff and families were heartbroken to not be in our school but I couldn't be more proud of how my staff has continued to reach out to families and to provide our students with continuous learning through new and innovative ways. Some teachers are holding online Zoom classes, creating videos while others are providing activities, websites or games for families to do at home. Our goal was to provide families with manageable tasks, quality time with their children while also understanding the real struggles our families are going through during these difficult times. We all miss seeing our little friends and each other but realize this is the new "normal" for now. There are many uncertainties but what is certain is that our staff and families continue to work together. Our motto this year was "to just keep swimming" and we will continue to do so even over these big waves.

Sending you prayers, well wishes and sunshine-

Patty Lockard, Director

Church Scholarship Applications

Each year the church provides scholarships to students in the congregation pursuing higher education. in 2020/2021. See the church website for more information and to obtain an application.

Ways we are in ministry

- We are pleased to see that the church has reached so many people through social media, including many who would not be present with us. We are seeing that the Sunday worship services are regularly getting over 700 views each week. This means that there are many people who are turning to these services and finding them to be a helpful and meaningful part of their week and returning again. This is far more than the number of people that would typically be present in the building on Sunday morning. This would include friends and former members that have moved out of the area as well as people in our social circles that may never have visited the church.
- We opened the church building as a pop-up emergency blood donation site for the Red Cross on Maundy Thursday, April 9. The drive followed strict procedures and precautions set in place to ensure the safety of donors and Red Cross staff. This meant that only 25-30 spots were available on that drive compared to a typical drive that might have 80 spots. We will be providing an additional blood drive on May 13 and May 20. (continue on page 8)

- We have at least two members of the church sewing surgical gowns for the hospital. They have also sewed many masks. They are in desperate need of 1/2 and or 3/8 inch elastic. If you have any such elastic to donate, please drop it off at the church at the back door of the Baker Center/Church office or call me and I can arrange for it to be picked up. (301-848-8216 or RevSteve@calvaryumc.org)
- Back on March 21, the church provided take-out meals to homeless persons through the Community Action Agency soup kitchen.
- Pastor Shannon is holding an online youth group with games and discussion times every week. The youth did a fantastic job with the service on Sunday, April 19.
- Many in the church have been making telephone calls to connect with others and check in during this time. That is a great way to offer care and fellowship to one another.

Messages from Calvary Folk

Here are some of the notes that we have been receiving from members and friends.

Hi Rev. Steve

Thanks for your efforts to keep the church on an even keel. It can't be easy in these perilous times.

-Libby Hale

The Palm Sunday "Time with the Children" was a "Top Ten" moment. Thanks

Andy and Cheryl Radcliff

We are missing our church, hoping all there are staying well.

Thank you for the Palm Sunday program and the message from Pastor Steve and Shannon. Blessings to all

-Margaret Burkett

We want you to know that we have been following your streaming of Sunday Services form our "social distancing" out here in Arizona. Because of the situation we do not know when we will be able to return to Frederick. Until that time we hope you will be continuing this ministry. For those member who are elderly, it was be a great service to continue.

-Sandra and Bill Fout

God bless all of you! Stay well.

-Kaye Chesmore

Sunday Mornings on Zoom



update on church finances

Calvary United Methodist Church and the Calvary Weekday School applied for a grant with both the federal CARES ACT Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and the State of Maryland COVID-19 Emergency Grant program. Yesterday we received the funds for the PPP program. This will cover the payroll costs for the church and weekday school employees for two months.

We are so very grateful for the generous response that so many members of the church have made in this time to financial support the church and its work. We will continue to do all that we can to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our community and our world. Although we have not met in the building since March 9, and we missed Easter Sunday, we have still seen many continue to strongly support the church with their offerings and gifts. Many have even gone farther by giving an extra gift or paying the contribution early to help the church through this challenging time.

We have gone over the budget to reduce and eliminate expenses. We recognize that many in the congregation are experiencing financial hardship due to pandemic and stay at home orders. Many have been fortunate enough not to see their household incomes drop. Some of us are actually receiving an unexpected increase in income on account of the stimulus checks that have been sent out by the IRS. If you are in a position where you can give to support the church and its ministry, we encourage you to do so.

What is Zoom and how do I use it?

Are you wondering what Zoom is? It's an online meeting platform you can call into using your phone or an audio only option, but it is primarily a group video chat. Check out the Zoom instructions below!



If you haven't used Zoom before:

On a computer: when you click the meeting link it may prompt you to add the Zoom extension to your browser - this is totally safe to do. It may also just automatically ask for your camera and mic access - this is also safe! Once you grant access you will be connected to the meeting.

On a smart phone or tablet: when you click the meeting link it'll prompt you to download the Zoom app if you don't already have it. When it's installed, go back to the link and click Join Meeting, and it will automatically connect you.

By phone: dial the meeting telephone number provided. When it asks, enter the meeting code you've been provided for that particular meeting. We'll be able to hear you but not see you (like a conference call). It can be a house phone or flip phone, doesn't need to be a smart phone!

Once you have the Zoom app on your tablet, phone or computer, then next time you want to join a meeting on Zoom, you can open the app, click on "join a meeting" and enter the meeting code, and you are ready to Zoom.

* Tips for Using Zoom *

I recommend using headphones during the meeting - otherwise your computer hears your computer playing the sound of the meeting and then sends it out as what it thinks you are saying, creating an echo and sometimes a screech!

I also recommend learning about the Mute button. Zoom tries to pick up all sound going on around you - the dog's collar jingling, grandkids asking for a pencil sharpener, even the dishwasher starting a new cycle. If there are many people on at once this can get overwhelming. So if you're not talking, hit the Mute button (usually in the lower left hand corner of your screen) and it won't pick up on all that background noise. You can unmute yourself any time (and if Zoom thinks you're trying to talk, it'll remind you to unmute yourself first!).

The default screen layout on Zoom is called Speaker - it shows the person who's talking. It can be more fun to switch to Gallery mode (a set of 3x3 squares usually in the top right hand corner of the screen) - this shows everyone at once.

Stewardship

We are truly in uncharted waters as a church with closed doors but open hearts and hands. Who would have ever thought that Calvary's doors would be closed to its members for worship and study? But, we would respond and practice our faith in a virtual state of worship and contact with one another.

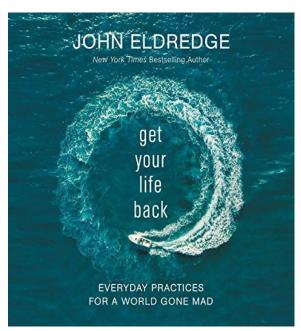
These are times that test the strength and depth of our faith in God's promises - "I will be your God and you will be my people". A time of testing of our commitment to support the missions and ministries of Calvary that God has called us to join him as his work in making disciples.

It took a few weeks for us to adjust to the virtual church as Pastor Steve and Pastor Shannon developed, produced and conducted each Sunday morning worship and weekly Bible study. We have tracked over 400 views on Sundays and topping 600 in recent Sundays.

Contributions were slim during the first weeks of the social distancing due to the Covid – 19 pandemic. Our faithful and committed members found other ways to support our ministries. Checks by mail have come in greater number. A few have started to use automatic transfer of their gifts and there are more utilizing the website. We have pivoted to continued ways that are new and allow the practice of personal stewardship and faith commitment.

God promised to be our God – he has not disappointed. God promised that we will be his people – he has let us know this during this time of self-imposed quarantine. God has been with us. Staying home has not meant we stay away from God. We just have not met him in church on Sunday morning. Open your Bible or pray a devotional and be with him.

Stay well and we will soon be in his presence together. How sweet that first Communion Table will be.



Join us for our first all-online book study, led by Christy Mossburg, Director of Christian Education at Calvary! Join us on Zoom and Facebook (optional)

starting Wednesday, April 29, at 7pm.

To join, email <u>Christy Mossburg</u>. Materials You Will Need: Get Your Life Back, by John Eldredge book and study guide. Both available on Amazon.

In Get Your Life Back, New York Times bestselling author John Eldredge provides a practical, simple, and refreshing guide to taking your life back. By practicing a few simple practices—or what John calls "graces"—you can begin to recover your soul, disentangle from the tragedies of this broken world, and discover the restorative power of beauty. Ask yourself: Are you happy most of the time? Do you feel deeply loved? Are you excited about your future? How often do you feel lighthearted? After reading this book you will learn you don't need to abandon your life to get it back. Begin restoring your life here and now. Your soul will thank you for it.

Do you enjoy drama and theater? Our Sunday School team could use you! We

get a short video script each week that we are taping and sharing on YouTube for our Sunday School kids. If you'd like to help out and lead a lesson on video one week, contact Christy Mossburg via email at Christy@calvaryumc.org. The scripts are short and simple and fun - and developed by our VBS publisher!



When in Our Music God Is Glorified In tribute to my predecessor

I remember, as if it were yesterday, seeing a big beautiful picture in the paper of Calvary's beloved organist seated at the organ console with the wonderful, fully lit Sanctuary in the background. She was preparing to retire, and the article praised her 46 years of dedicated service.



I remember bringing my mom to Calvary several years earlier so we could visit the church and hand my resume to the Pastor who was searching for a Music Director at the time. I did not get called in for an interview then, and went on to work at churches in Damascus, Aspin Hill, and Colesville. It was while I was at Colesville in 1998 that I saw that great picture of Doris Felton and the announcement of her retirement.

From that moment on God took the wheel. I decided to apply for the Organist position at Calvary – got it – and also became Director of Music before I even started later that summer. I attended the retirement service for Doris. It was a beautiful tribute, and there was no mistaking the loving contribution Doris made to the church through her many years of service. More than just a job, it was her church home, her church family, and her spiritual center. I had big shoes to fill indeed.

I have been blessed with teachers and mentors that taught me more than music, and Doris was no exception! Anyone that knew her would tell you of her welcoming warmth and her appreciation of good church music. She knew how music, beyond the notes and technique, reached into the souls of the listener. I think it was that understanding that bonded us at the onset. She helped me any way she could, supported me, and continued her musical contribution to Calvary by singing in the choir! Doris always encouraged me to take my own skills and sensibilities and seek the ways I could contribute to the musical and spiritual presence of Calvary in the community. She had done it for 46 years and I so wanted to rise to the level of her example and dedication.

I want to thank her for always being there for me and for all who knew and loved her. She will certainly be missed by many, but her reassuring voice will still be heard as part of Calvary's ongoing legacy. For her musical gift to Calvary, full of admiration and free of pride, truly glorified God - Alleluia!

Faithfully, Joche

The Give a Hug Project

Would you like to help somebody feeling isolated and lonely have a more bearable day?

Easy. Fun. And a huggable help!

We have many lonely members of our congregation who could use a little love from us right now. Did you know that holding a stuffed animal is extremely therapeutic? 'Warms the body *and* the soul. Let's show our church family we love them and give them something tangible to hold on to in this time of uncertainty, fear and loneliness.



We've made this super simple - just 4 Steps

- 1. **Let us know that you want to send a hug** & we'll provide you with the name and address of one of our church members to send the gift to.
- 2. **Order a stuffed animal** that is at least 12" tall from one of the following retailers:

Dancing Bear Toys and Gifts. Support local retailers! Go to: https://dbeartoys.com/ product-category/plush for their plush collection.

Amazon. Be sure to double check the shipping availability and size before you order. Go to: https://www.amazon.com/s?k=stuffed+animals&ref=nb_sb_noss_1 to view all of their stuffed animals.

Have the stuffed animal shipped directly to the gift recipient.

3. **BE SURE** to have the retailer include a card that says they are receiving a huggable, gift of love from their Calvary Family. This can include your name or you can just say it's from their Calvary Family and remain anonymous.

Let us know that you ordered the gift and it's on its way. That's it!

You've just made someone's day more bearable!

And after all, Scripture commends us to "bear" one another's burdens.

Thank you for helping us do so in an unusually literal way in this time of uncertainty.

**If you have trouble finding a stuffed animal at either of the suggested sites, contact Christy Mossburg for assistance at Christy@calvaryumc.org. We're happy to do the legwork and help you place the orders!

May Birthdays

1, Christopher Graham, Lucy Hardy, 2, Lindsey Shankle, Laura Cosby, Jillian Carlisle, James Bear, **3**, Zach Mossburg, **4**, Kyle Garcia, Amy Vinar, Judith Allen, Sarah Hubbard, Alexander Sparks. Helen Alsmeyer. 5. Kate Frushour, Mary Matsler, 6. Don Cline, Caroline Strakonsky. Mide Adeoye, Joshua Patterson, Suzanne Rosen, Diane Stull, Mary Beth Pearce, 7, Stephanie Slovikosky, Pamela Beachley, Charlie Jones, Cara Dragan, Jill Sugden, Belinda Teague-Levy, Shauna Main, Kaitlyn Quigley, 8, Nealy Monti, 9, Eric Andrerson, Camden Warehime, Bryce Warehime, Tracey Carter, Kyle Shipley, 10, Alice Linton, McGarity Harper, Ryan Masser, 11, Steven Zalatoris, Kelly Kim, 12, Susan MacMullen, Rebecca Crum, Susie McMullen, Ronald Dudley, 13, Laura Francisco, Melissa Rowley, 14, Amy Lyon, Matthew Kraham, Andrea Willets, 15, William Pure, Code Stottlemyer, Allison Hamilton, Matthew Giller, 16, Robert Byers, Ryan Ruffner, Rachel Carter, 18, Brad Condon, Alison Massey-Sunderman, 19, Sydney Crum, Ethan Condon, 20, Sheila Howard, David Cline, Sam Shoemaker, Cathee Calvert, Evelyn Payne, 21, Hilary Martz, Robert Pickard 22, Mike Isaacs. Traci Davies, 23, Melissa Ritterbusch, Meredith Miller, Annabelle Cromwell, 24, Glenda Hardy, Natalie Cook, 25, Deacon Buchanan, 26, Gary Brown, 28, Jessica Little, Linda Mullineaux, Dennis Ahr. 30, Allison MacDonald, 31, Stephen Harris, Jane Sowers, Doris Keeney, Emma Kinsey

May Anniversaries

Fred and Lynn Schumacher	May 1
Scott and Leisa Moyer	May 3
Greg and Carol Shipley	May 5
Tom and Billie Stokes	May 5
David and Janet Fish	May 12
Steve and Coreen Jarvis	May 20
Douglas and Kim Selby	May 22
Brad and Jennie Davy	May 26
Robert and Joyce Summers	May 28
Pat and Maria O'Toole	May 30
Robert and Elizabeth Knapp	May 31

Prayer Concerns

Recent Losses: Doris Felton

Members of Calvary: Nancy Slovikosky, Dottie Mitchel, Carol Dimock, Susan Howe, Linda Sheridan, Eleanor Pickard, JoAn Ehlers, Nancy Dobbs, Janet Dobbs, Charles Orrison, Todd Main, Jill Benton, Leslie Bell, Betty Fawley, Ann Crum, Joan Cooley, Buck Isaacs, Nancy Crum, Fannie Johnson, Bob Strine, Michael Boyer

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Calvary United Methodist Church seeks and invites all to become disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our community and our world.

Calvary at the Soup Kitchen Saturday, May 16

Contact Bob Jacobs to sign up: bobjacobs@calvaryumc.org

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