

# the Messenger

February 2021

Worship this month

We continue with the worship series we began on January 10 called "Follow Me".



## Follow Me

WORSHIP SERIES

We are considering Jesus' invitation to follow him, particularly as found in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus calls us to leave behind much of what we have known and accepted in order to join him in a journey that continues through every stage of our lives. The invitation is offered to us not only at the start of the life of faith. It is an offer that is extended to us again and again. The inspiration and materials for this series come from [www.umcdiscipleship.org](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org). You can find the previous sermon on the series at [www.calvaryumc.org](http://www.calvaryumc.org).

Feb. 7 Sermon Title: She Began to Serve

I Corinthians 9:16-29

Mark 1:29-39

Feb. 14 Transfiguration Sunday. Valentine's Day, President's Day Weekend

Sermon Title: But Only Jesus

Mark 9:2-9



REND YOUR HEARTS: CLAIMING THE PROMISE

## *Lent Worship Series*

The season of Lent begins this year on February 17. Lent is a period of preparation, of fasting and self-denial, of repentance and confession, of putting our spiritual house in order. We go through all of this so that we can be ready for Easter. Lent is about embracing the Resurrected One with a whole and longing heart. It involves putting some things away so that we can fully claim all that God offers. Our worship series is called “Rend Your Hearts: Claiming the Promise”

Feb 17                      Ash Wednesday (virtual service only)

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Sermon Title: Yet Even Now

Feb. 21                      First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17

Sermon Title: This Is the Sign

Feb 28                      Lent 2.

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Sermon Title: Walk Before Me

We will continue to hold worship services both in the sanctuary as well as virtually for the foreseeable future.

-Pastor Steve Larsen

Last year, I just came back from maternity leave for the beginning of Lent. Speaking of being in a kind of spiritual wilderness seemed incongruous when I was enjoying our much-wanted child (mostly, of course: the middle-of-the-night feedings were not as fun). But quickly the season changed--- for all of us. This year, we are all still plunged in a strange wilderness season. Help is on the way--- indeed many in our congregation and community have already received the vaccine. The journey remains a long one, just the same. So we face Lent of 2021 glimpsing the promise of resurrection in a way we may not have before, which also means perhaps we can face this remaining wilderness with renewed strength.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus begins his public ministry with these words: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). Whenever Jesus talks about the kingdom of God coming near, we nod like we understand, but we don't. At least I don't. How can the kingdom of God have come near then when in the last 2,000 years since--- heck in just this last year alone--- it seems farther away than ever?! These days are wilderness days, filled with chaos, uncertainty, violence, and the glimmers of hope we do have certainly seem a far cry from the full-fledged kingdom of God! But that's just it. The kingdom of God has come near, Jesus told us. It touches this wilderness road, so that we can see it in glimpses all the time. If we are looking. And if we take the time to not just believe the good news, but to embody that good news ourselves. That's why we should take up renewed strength in this time. For our belief and our living of the good news of the nearness of God. May it be so for me and for you.

-Pastor Shannon



Star of the  
Season!!





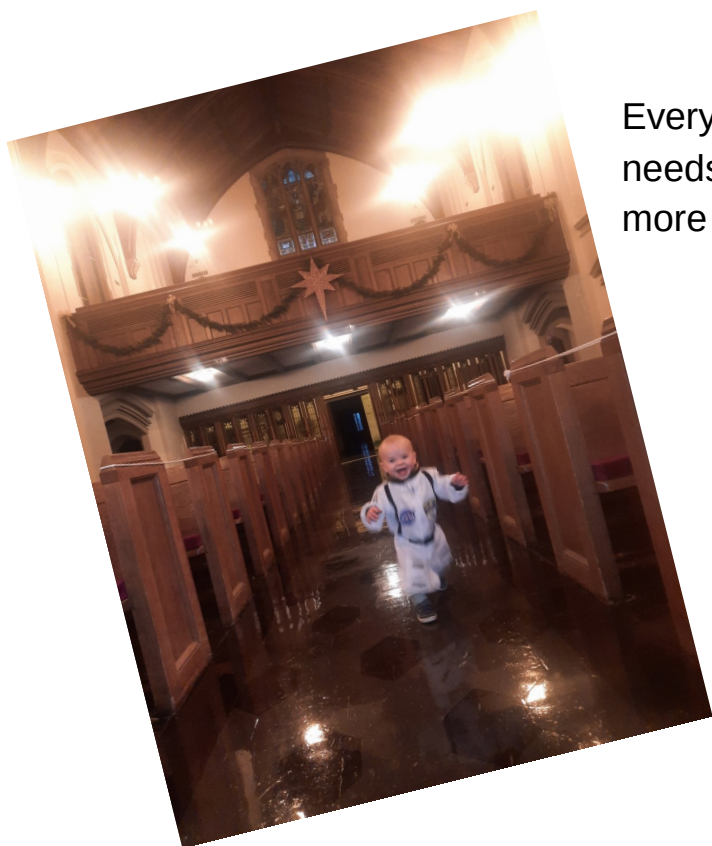
## Lenten Study

Plans are still in process for a Lenten Study that will provide opportunities for conversation, prayer and learning together on Wednesday evenings, February 24 through March 24. We are looking at ways to provide the study that will use different platforms. We will provide a video that can be viewed on both YouTube and Facebook. For those wish to have conversation with others as part of the study, we will set up a Zoom meeting that will allow us to complete the study together in real time.

The theme, format and times have not yet been set. Watch email and the church website for details as they become available. We will also be sending materials to each household that will allow people to be part of the study even if they are not able to use the technology and social media.

**Wesleyan Circle** will meet on Tuesday, February 16 at 1:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

“Hope to see everyone there”



Everyone  
needs a little  
more of Zeke!!



## **Financial Update**

Calvary Church has closed the financial books for the year 2020. You will be pleased to know that we paid all of our expenses and ended the year with a positive balance in the checking account.

We started 2020 with a budget of \$694,783 for the year. We expected to fall short on our payment of conference benevolences/apportionments. When the coronavirus pandemic struck and the church pivoted to virtual worship services and a closed building, we were afraid that our income would drop far below our expenses. That turned out not to be the case as many in the church made extra contribution and continued to support the church and even made additional contributions to meet the need.

We were greatly saddened when the decision was made to close the Calvary Week-day School for the 2020/2021 school year. This meant that we would not be serving families and providing income to the teachers and aids and the church. We did receive income through the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) last April that allowed the church to meet payroll for the Calvary Weekday School staff through May and Calvary Church staff for the three months of the year. The expectation is that this PPP money will be converted to a grant that will not need to be repaid by the church.

The PPP grant combined with a waiver from the United Methodist Church for three months of health plan and pension premiums for the two appointed pastors, provided the church with to a positive cash position throughout the year. The church was able to pay all its apportionments to the Baltimore Washington Conference and still have a balance of \$71,450 at the end of 2020.

The budget for 2021 will essentially freeze all of expenses at 2020 levels. There will be some slight increases that will bring the total budget for the church to \$697,500. The Finance Committee and Church Council will be closely monitoring the finances as the year progresses.

## Make someone smile!

Each year the Sunday School classes of all ages, the youth group, and members of our congregation collect items and make up goodie bags for members of the church who need a little extra love for Valentine's Day. This year, of course, we cannot do things the way we usually do them. So instead of everyone buying objects to be distributed through multiple bags, we are asking people to adopt someone to offer them a Love Bag.

If only one person or family is making a love bag for one other person, what does that look like?

We want it to be flexible. Normally our love bag has crossword puzzle books, lotion, chapsticks, notepad and pens, sometimes a small stuffed animal and various snacks (though not too sweet since some folks can't have a lot of sugar). Maybe you want to continue that.

Or maybe you want to offer a gift of a prayer cross or a gift box you find at a local store. It does not need to be an expensive item. Something small done with love. It is a connection point, an opportunity for a little luxury for those who need a little extra love right now. Loving our neighbor is an important part of living out our faith, and it is also a way we can be the hands and feet of Christ for another.

If you, your family, or your class or group would like to adopt a Love Bag recipient, contact Christy Mossburg at [Christy@Calvaryumc.org](mailto:Christy@Calvaryumc.org) to be matched up with one of our congregation members. We can promise you will get as much joy out of giving this small gift of connection as your newly adopted recipient does. We have over 100 people on our list to provide bags for. Let's make them smile!





Greetings from Calvary Weekday School!

January was a very busy month for the Calvary Weekday School. We have been bursting with interest in our school and we are currently nearing 50 students for the 2021-2022 school year. Olivia has been offering virtual or individual tours following all the current safety guidelines. We are very excited about how registration has been going so far. Please continue to spread the word. Interested families can email Olivia at [calvaryweekdayschool@calvaryweekdayschool.com](mailto:calvaryweekdayschool@calvaryweekdayschool.com) for more information.

We were very fortunate to receive a very generous donation from some very special Christmas Angels. Our staff was overwhelmed by their generosity and will be working through our "Christmas Wish List" that we provided for "Santa." "Santa" and his helpers also replaced our Emergency Preparedness backpacks and filled them with everything we need. Due to the school's closure this year, we were not eligible for grants we have received in the past. These funds will enable us to purchase many wonderful things for our school and help us meet some of the current safety guidelines. In addition, we received another very generous donation for the Earl Beck Scholarship. This scholarship supported two families during the 2019-2020 school year who were facing some very challenging times. Although this year has been difficult, we can't express how thankful we are for such thoughtful donations.

Our goal for the end of the month is to paint the three year old classrooms on the third floor. We are looking for volunteers to assist with this project. Anyone interested in helping us paint, please email me at [director@calvaryweekdayschool.com](mailto:director@calvaryweekdayschool.com) with contact information and times when you would be available to help. We appreciate any time you can give to our school.

Wishing everyone continued good health-

Patty Lockard, Director

## Stewardship

I keep finding nuggets of insight as I read the Bible. Reading with a purpose is a rewarding venture. There is always something new, not thought of before. Once the purpose was to identify as many promises made by God to his people. His people include you and me. There are a lot of them and as I wrote them down in a note book, I made my own comment about what that promise meant to me.

Another time, I looked for the mention of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God or of Christ (directly mentioned or not) and any other divine intervention (as in the Book of Esther). Here too, are many nuggets. But, I always look for insight about stewardship and discipleship. When encountered, inspiration and knowledge in the light of God's word is gained on the conduct of my daily life. Sometimes these nuggets are not obvious at first.

For instance in Luke 8: 1-3; Luke writes about Jesus' ministry with his Disciples, the twelve plus others, spreading the Word of God to the rest of the world. Note that there are more followers than the selected original twelve. They were not only called by Jesus, the people we called by God to partner with Jesus. Spreading and supporting the spread of the Word is a calling we accept as we identify ourselves as followers of Christ and children of God.

Those who were not of the original twelve were like you and me. We hear the word and we are called to action. We follow and we speak, we spread and offer our talent (s) to his mission.

How we put our discipleship into action – glorifies God and is our bearing good fruit. We can do acts within the church by participating in various ministries as worship, committees and other roles that support the foundation of the church. A good voice is always needed in the choir (when we return to a more normal worship life). There will always be the poor among us.

In the first three verses of Luke 8, Luke tells us that Jesus was traveling "...about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God." Luke tells us that the, "Twelve were with him and also some women...". Luke names three women and "many other women" were following along with the general group. The disciples were not mere followers who were hanging around to hear more of the Good News from Jesus.

Luke tells us in verse 3: "These women were helping to support them out of their own means." These followers are the same kind of disciples as we are today. Not only are we looking for more words of the Good News from the Bible we read in our home, or the word from the pulpit on Sunday, these disciples in Luke were supporting the work of Christ, as we do, through financial support to the ministry of Jesus spreading the word.



## The road to the Cross ...

As we prepare for the Lenten journey of our walk with Jesus to the Cross, let us do so with intent to bring a greater sense of mercy and justice into our world. Calvary has a history of such action as a church, but that does not preclude individual actions that each of us might take as we are able.

One such action has been our church support for The Religious Coalition's Family Emergency Shelter program in Frederick, volunteering with other churches our facilities for two-week periods twice a year as families transition from a homeless state to more permanent residential facilities. Due to pandemic virus restrictions, we were unable to do this during the past year; but the program continues quite successfully with use of such camping or retreat facilities as most recently West Mar in Thurmont. That program also is preparing for the renovation of a new permanent facility facilitated by our local Delaplaine Foundation in addition to government support. We can go to the Coalition's website to inquire on ways in which as individuals we may contribute to its programs.

Other local agencies always in need of support are the Frederick Community Action Center, where the Jacobs family has led us in services of mercy for many years, and the Frederick Rescue Mission from which a variety of Christian mercy programs are carried out. Of course, with the exception of this past year, our congregation has annually sponsored volunteers in mission work for youth and adults outside the area, relying as it does so on our financial and other contributions. The Shepherds and Herbers of our Missions Ministry Team can provide the latest information for plans in adult mission, and Pastor Shannon can advise about youth mission planning for the future.

Calvary also maintains a relationship with Deacon Julie Wilson who currently directs The Open Arms Community Center, a United Methodist Church mission, in Winston-Salem, N.C. The efforts there are directly supported by personal as well as institutional contributions. For more information about that program, and how you might contribute, go to its website or contact Deacon Julie directly.

With these ministries as examples, let us walk in peace this Lent with a charitable heart, giving more of ourselves as we are able in following the steps of Jesus!

Paul D. Nelson, Chair, Church & Society Ministry Team

- 1,** Zachary Patterson, **2,** Daniel Long, B. O'Hara, Michael Pfister, Carmen Vega
- 3,** John Harper, David Herber, Betsy MacMullen, Tristen Palmer
- 4,** Richard Alsmeyer, Maurlea Long, Christopher Moyer, Thea Ruff, Thomas Winkler
- 5,** Katie Kahan, Steve Mood, Amelia Whitmarsh
- 6,** Emily Capano, John Slovikosky, Tommy Stokes
- 7,** Katherine Crum, Heidi Sweet
- 8,** Pauline Baker, William Schmersahl
- 9,** Gary Coffman, Kimberly Remsberg
- 10,** Aaron Harrington, Ralph Lopez, Paul Quigley, Alison Radcliffe, Sandy Sengstack, Katie Stone,
- 11,** Amelia Irving
- 12,** Wanda Bulkowski-Larsen, Abigail Proudfoot, Linda Sheridan
- 13,** Grace Carter, William Davy
- 14,** Ashlynd Adam, Nancy Crum, Susan Miller
- 15,** Gerald Palmer, Isabelle Wilde, Ramona Yanike
- 16,** Jeff Stone
- 17,** Payton Forsythe, Thomas Ruffner, Shannon Whitmarsh
- 18,** Terry Fisher
- 19,** Cal Calcagni, Patricia Grimes, Janie Hahn, Josie Manger, Bradley Proudfoot
- 20,** Susan Burall, Jennie Davy, Edwin Kinsey, Lois Pacheco, Andrew Wilde
- 21,** Pat Herber, Katelyn Irving, Patricia Kellam
- 22,** Joshua Herber, Alyxandra Hoover
- 23,** Roy Schwarzenberg, Adam Stone, Kathryn Woodall
- 24,** Luke Witmer
- 25,** Jean Flory
- 26,** Addison Benton, Anna Belle Childers (97), Janet Cline, Peter Duthoy, Penny Reading
- 27,** Chase Leber
- 28,** Armani Gough, Vic Rohrback, Lydia Souders, Wanda Weddle



Ronald & Nancy McLaughlin	Feb. 5
Brad & Beth Condon	Feb. 14
Mike & Nancy Leftwich	Feb. 14
David & Juanita Pard	Feb. 14
Jack & Grace Heller	Feb. 16
Jeff & Michelle Matsler	Feb. 17
Keven & Kelli Fox	Feb. 24



### Calvary Christmas Card Challenge

Thanks to the many people that jumped on the opportunity to bring joy to others, we can confirm that our Calvary members received at least 1,022 cards as part of this joy-filled project. Thank you for being so willing to jump in and spread love and warmth to others.



The American Red Cross is hosting a Winter Blood Drive at Calvary UMC on Wednesday, February 3rd from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the church's Fellowship Hall. For what amounts to 1-2 hours of your time, donors can help save up to 3 people with one donation! The COVID pandemic continues to amplify the need for adequate blood supplies, so why not give a winter gift that can save up to 3 lives? Only a few spaces remain at our drive, and to sign up, call or text Eric Anderson before the event at 240.506.5759, or connect via email at [eric.anderson3@redcross.org](mailto:eric.anderson3@redcross.org).

Due to the pandemic, we are taking additional precautions to help ensure donor, staff and volunteer safety. Donors should wear masks to the event, and we will work wherever possible to maintain safe social distancing, as well as follow specific cleaning protocols.

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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.*

**Table of Contents.....**

Message from Pastor Steve.....	1
Lent Worship Series.....	2
Pastor Shannon.....	3
Lenten Study/Wesleyan Circle.....	4
Financial Update.....	5
Love Bags.....	6
Weekday School.....	7
Stewardship.....	8
Church in Society.....	9
February Birthdays.....	10
February Anniversaries .....	11

