



# Calvary Weekly Connection

January 31<sup>st</sup> – February 6th, 2021

**Sunday, Jan. 31st, 2021**

## Serving in Worship

Lay Leader: Carol Adams

Reader: Paige DeLoretta

Leading Music: Chuck &

Linda Ebersole and John Bassetti

Special Music: Deb Bierly & Megan Richerts

## **ZOOM WORSHIP by Phone**

1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 647 829 181#;

**Password: 082013**

## **ZOOM WORSHIP by PC**

<https://zoom.us/j/647829181?pwd=dHlMM09HSmFQcUZ3bEorMUNwRUNkZz09>

Meeting ID: 647 829 181

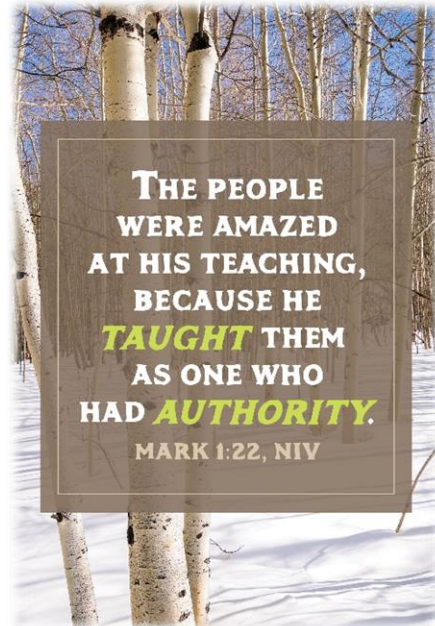
**Password: 082013**

## **Become Fishers of People**

Message by Pastor Tamie, 1/24/21

[Scripture: Mark 1:14-20]

The buzzer rang on the church door one afternoon. As I opened the door, I was greeted by a man who immediately launched into a story before I could invite him inside the building. He explained that he had lost his job, fallen into some hard times, and his water had been shut off. So as I invited him in, assuming that he was in need of money to pay his bill, he stopped me. He asked for water. I assured him that we could offer him water while we talked. He stopped me again. He went around the corner of the building and returned wheeling buckets. I am certain my mouth dropped open; I was so surprised. He didn't want money; he needed water. He was all so unexpected. We went to the maintenance closet where he could fill up the large buckets with water. Meanwhile he shared his story, where he had been and where he was going. We hoped together for a better tomorrow. As he rolled his buckets of water down the street, I had to remind myself of the beauty and courage of people, of how I need to see and welcome each person as Christ himself.



For just this hour, follow me.

Listen to my word; follow me.

Think about your life as my disciple every day; follow me.

Pray; follow me.

Sing; follow me.

Come, let us worship God!

It's a normal part of church life, strangers knocking on the door in need of assistance with housing or food or clothing. The very nature of Church calls us to be a safe place of compassion and kindness. What I've discovered is this: the most important thing anyone needs, struggling or not, is a friend, someone to navigate life with. Whether you are sharing some buckets of water or greeting a person in the grocery store, the real moment is when you pause, see the person, and offer your presence of love. In these moments of authentic relationship, everyone is transformed. I've since come to expect the "all so unexpected" in my encounters with people.

In our reading this morning, we encounter an "all so unexpected" man named Jesus. Jesus arrives out of the throes of the wilderness crying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). The previous text, in a mere five lines, describes the baptism of Jesus, the powerful force of the Spirit, and his life altering, forty-day encounter with God in the wilderness. What we know from the teaching that follows is Jesus experienced profound Universal Love. This Universal Love becomes the lens through which Jesus views the world; with God as his center point, Jesus lives and teaches with a new clarity, profound compassion, and authority. As a result, he chooses to inaugurate a new family that lives to express such inward love outwardly toward all people. For Jesus, in this new social order he refers to as the Kingdom of God, loving God is equivalent to loving humans. And so we discover the gentle, compassionate spirit of a man who travels the land of Israel, healing, teaching, and loving all of humanity in a profound way. Through this way of love, the Kingdom of God becomes fully present. In just a few lines, the Gospel of Mark defines the bedrock on which Jesus constructs the Kingdom of God. This message about the Kingdom of God is linked to the call, "Follow me!"

~Message cont'd on pg. 3

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE Through Week 4**

Current Year thru	01/24/21
Received YTD	\$11,055
Annual Budget	\$270,000
%Rec'd to Date	4.1%

Last Year thru	01/26/20
Received YTD	\$24,373
Annual Budget	\$285,910
%Rec'd to Date	8.5%



## Birthday Wishes

- 31 – Linda Chandler  
5 Kenny Dr.  
Mohnton, PA 19540
- 01 – Joan Fisher  
320 Gelsinger Rd.  
Sinking Spring, PA 19608
- 01 – Jeff Stone  
1 N. Sandy Lane  
Sinking Spring, PA 19608
- 04 – Jule Bonacci  
48 Tee Cir.  
Reading, PA 19607
- 06 – Mae Clark  
1602 Brooke Blvd.  
Kenhorst, PA 19607

### CORRECTION:

**Calvary UMC is NO LONGER a member of the Parish Resource Center. When noted, please sign up for any webinar as a non-member. If needed, any fees will be reimbursed by the church.**

### A PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST

(based on Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1: 14-20, Micah 6: 1-8)

*And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people."*

~Mark 1:17

Lord Jesus,  
The one and only Christ,  
You called many people  
From many walks of life -  
To leave their own ways and follow you;  
To be your disciples;  
And to prize people as something to  
seek, find and restore.

### FEBRUARY MIFFLIN COMMUNITY FOOD MINISTRY NEEDS:

Blueberry Muffin Mix      Canned Gravy  
Boxed/Bagged Stuffing      Canned Yams



### A MESSAGE FROM OUR TRUSTEES

Calvary's William and Beulah Eshelman Memorial Loan Scholarship Fund is administrated by the Berks County Community Foundation in Reading.

Applications are live on-line at this time. Eligible students can learn more and apply at [www.bccf.org](http://www.bccf.org) from January 1<sup>st</sup> though March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Loans are available to active members of Calvary UMC, Mohnton, in pursing some form of post-secondary education. Calvary membership must have been for at least one year to qualify. Members must be attending a 2 or 4-year college or vocational school either full or PT or pursing some type of post-secondary education through a certification program. There is a \$5,000 lifetime maximum that will be awarded to any one individual.

Individuals may apply more than one time.

For more information about this educational loan scholarship, please contact Leta Doganes at the Berks County Community Foundation at 610-685-2232.



### PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:

*Husband of Joan Crossan* – Joan is a member of Zion ECC and friend of Bob Wagner; husband is COVID+

*Danny Hutzell* – Husband of Gloria and father of Tamara DeLoretta; was hospitalized to evaluate neurological concerns; all test negative so far; may have rehab.

*Andy & Lorelei Jensen* – Son & daughter of Janet Reppert; COVID+; Andy has a fever & chest congestion; trying to find an outpatient facility to get a chest x-ray; Lorelei & her partner, Maureen Leahy recovering at home

*Fam. of Linda Spees* – Lost battle w/ Covid and pneumonia

Lord Jesus,  
The one true leader of every church,  
We choose to stand as one church – your church –  
And to lift our focus from our differences and divides.  
We will leave our own ways and follow you together;  
Support each other as we seek to be your disciples;  
And work together to focus on fishing once more.

For we must act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly together  
Before you – and each other.

For the sake of our worship of you,  
Our love for each other,  
And the future and freedom of all those still living in poverty.

Lord Jesus,  
We ask for your Spirit's help with this  
For we are quick to focus on ourselves, our labels and our differences  
Rather than the same nets in our hands, and the same leader before us.  
Christ have mercy - in your precious name which unites us all. Amen.

[from the Monthly Prayers page of the Christian Aid website Reposted: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/01/prayer-of-commitment-mark-1-14-20.html>]

A typical translation of today's scripture reads, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." That's how I had always learned it, "fish for people," as if it was something to do. The better translation, though, interprets this call of fishing for people as a new identity. It literally says in Greek, "Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers for people." This call is not an addendum to a job description; it's not one more thing to do. Leslie Hoppe eloquently explains, "Jesus' mission was to call people to repentance, that is, a total reorientation of their lives so that they will be in a position to accept God's sovereign rule authentically" (Feasting on the Word: Year B, Volume 1, 287). Followers of Christ embody a new identity. They become fishers for people.

Fishers for people drop their nets. This is a shedding of identity, especially in a culture where identity is assumed according to the trade of your family. As a follower of Jesus, there is nothing more important in life than people and impacting the lives of people. Jesus makes it clear from the very beginning, that this work is a people business. Followers of Jesus are called to get caught up with people, loving them just as they are and becoming a companion that leads to healing and justice. Notice that the fishermen leave their nets behind; they aren't hauling in a catch. Jesus begins and ends with twelve disciples. As fishers for people, our role is not to fill pews or engage in church growth initiatives. The intent is not to collect people but to unconditionally share love, joy, peace, and hope in the broken world through acts of compassion and mercy.

At the age of six, Emory professor, Dr. Gregory Ellison II, asked his aunt how he might change the world. She responded, saying, "Baby, I don't know how you can change the world, but you can change the three feet around you." His aunt's words of wisdom transformed into a spiritual way of living he calls the three-feet practice. Dr. Ellison explains that in this daily spiritual practice, he is intentional about seeing the people around him and hearing their stories. This faith practice reflects his commitment to welcoming the stranger and taking time to connect with others. He recognizes that there are people who live feeling like they are hidden in plain view. By intentionally focusing on the people who enter his three-foot space and engaging with them, Dr. Ellison asserts that his living, loving presence by just listening saves lives. People feel heard, valued, and affirmed. At the same time, it lessens the fear of strangers that is so much a part of our culture. Dr. Ellison embodies the very basic principle of becoming fishers for people. (Gregory C. Ellison 11 - The Three Feet Practice, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu\\_M08LoX-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu_M08LoX-Y), 22 Sept 2020)

In the video, Reverend Dotson was explicit, "Discipleship begins with relationship. We cannot disciple people who we are not in relationship with." The radical, universal love which Jesus shares is rooted in a compassion and mercy only possible when you see every person with dignity and open your heart to authentic relationships with them. I believe that there are no accidents. I believe that the people who enter your personal circle are there for a reason. Everywhere we go, with everyone we meet, we are called to become fishers for people...to love people radically.



Fishers for people walk away from their boats and the fish in the sea and even their families. Priorities change. You are no longer called to a private salvation but to a public vocation. Jesus did not gather these fishers for people to study together and care for their families and friends. Jesus' call moves you out of the center of your circle and into a mobile community where God's grace grounds you to be a source of love in a widening circle that reaches to the ends of the earth.

Hunter Doherty "Patch" Adams is a doctor by trade, but if you ask him, he'll tell you above all else he considers himself an activist for peace, justice and care for all people. You may know a little about his life from the movie Patch Adams with Robin Williams playing the doctor who wore a red clown nose. After being hospitalized because he didn't want to live in a world with so much violence and injustice, Patch decided instead to engage the world as a happy soul. He began clowning in public. Then Patch studied medicine to become a doctor. Along the way, he challenged the sterile, institutional practices of medicine. He focused on fostering relationships with all people, with connections that brought joy and laughter. Patch envisioned and created the Gesundheit Institute, a communal eco-village hospital that provided free medical care. His unorthodox approaches of healing almost stopped him from finishing medical school. Patch recognized that healing required more than medicine; healing was relational. Today, while he continues to pursue this dream of a crazy free hospital, he travels the world on clown trips, reaching all corners of the world - in war zones, refugee camps, natural disaster sites. He asserts, "My life has been a dance with humanity. Friends are my passion" (<https://www.patchadams.org/patch-adams/>). Patch Adams embodies the radical life of a fisher for people.

The gentleman who had wheeled his water down the street returned when he received notification of a job interview. He was so excited to share the opportunity. If he could get to the interview, he could secure himself a full-time position. He lacked the resources to pay for the public transportation. So he returned to a place where he had experienced hospitality, where he had been seen and invited in, where someone listened to his story. Someone had encouraged him in his struggles and allowed him to drink from the well. I was blessed to share in this difficult part of his life journey and celebrate his moment of success. If I had simply paid for a water bill, the outcome would have been different. Our lives would not have intersected so beautifully.

Do you "see the people" around you and offer something more than a transaction? Do you intentionally seek to engage in relational interactions with all people: friends, neighbors, and strangers; those who are like you and those who are different; those nearby and those who live in places to which you must choose to go? Jesus proclaims, "Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers for people." Become is a really important word. Following Jesus is not a one-time choice; it is a lifelong journey. We must nurture this longstanding commitment in Christ. Let us join together - whether committing for the first time or renewing your commitment - to become fishers for people, followers of Jesus the Christ:



# 2021 TOOLS FOR MINISTRY

March 13, 2021

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM via Zoom

*"To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."*

Ephesians 4:12



## Tools for Ministry Schedule

08:40 AM Opening Devotions w/Bishop Peggy Johnson & Text to Give Offering opportunity with proceeds going to Antiracism POWER Organization, Philadelphia

09:00 – 10:30AM Session A Workshops

10:30AM Break

10:45 AM Session B Workshops

Register online at

<https://na.eventcloud.com/2021-tools> Cost: \$5

If desired, the cost of attending will be covered by Calvary.

You may choose a Morning Session seminar AND an Afternoon Seminar.

A total of 35 workshops to choose from!

## MORE TOOLS FOR MINISTRY WORKSHOP OFFERINGS

To view the full brochure with all workshops, go to:

<https://www.epaumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021-Tools-for-Ministry-Brochure.pdf>

**#6 Building Community Partnerships:** Sharing ways to more effectively address economic poverty and hunger through education and building strategic community partnerships that can lead to relationships and fruitful collaboration. Presenter: Paul A. Thibodeaux is a pastor on staff at Impact Church in East Point, Georgia, one of the fastest-growing churches in the UMC.

**#11 Prison Ministry and Restorative Justice: Hearing the Stories:** An overview of prison ministry and restorative justice, this workshop will feature voices of individuals with telling their personal stories to help attendees see the real, diverse, far-reaching impact of our criminal justice system and what is needed to move forward. There are many ways to help, and everyone can do something. Co-Presenters: John Krimmel, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Criminology at The College of New Jersey and a Licensed Local Pastor serving at Neshaminy and Penns Park UMCs; and Marilyn Schneider, a Deacon serving at Grove UMC and Coordinator of Prison Ministry and Restorative Justice for the EPA Conference.

### **#13 - Seven Things John Wesley Expected Us to Do for Kids:**

Are you wondering what you can do to better connect with the children and families in your congregation and community? Let's chat together about this, and explore ways to build and maintain relationships. This isn't just for children's ministries! (Workshop includes a book from Cokesbury we could use to supplement and energize congregations.) Presenter: Elizabeth Christie works in children's and family ministries in various capacities and is passionate about finding ways to make them accessible for all of God's children.



# Looking Ahead: Dismantling Racism

Whether you already have or plan to participate in Calvary's on-going *Conversations on Race* Zoom discussions facilitated by Pastor Tamie (see the Jan. Small Group Newsletter for details), or you are simply interested in participating in this workshop, please feel free to register online (see Event link below). And don't be intimidated by the cost; Calvary will pay for it...just call the church office. However, you **MUST** be committed to attending all 3 days of the workshop.

## April 16 - April 18 Dismantling Racism, Level 1

| \$100 per person

***This event will be conducted online via Zoom video-conferencing.***

### **DISMANTLING RACISM WORKSHOPS GENERAL INFORMATION:**

This is a 3 day workshop and participation all 3 days is expected. Participants will learn concrete strategies for:

- Developing skills for addressing and changing attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate bias, discrimination, and other obstacles to equity
- Recognizing institutional racism and other forms of systemic oppression and discrimination that affect members of historically excluded groups
- Changing dysfunctional intraracial and interracial behavior that undermine effective partnerships
- Learning to acknowledge and interrupt the subtle (and often unintentional) dynamics that play out between "modern" forms of oppression and "internalized oppression".

This workshop will be led by a cross-racial, cross gender team of two facilitators from Visions, Inc. For more information on Visions, Inc. visit their website: [visions-inc.org](http://visions-inc.org)

2 Continuing Education Units are awarded upon completion of the training and this satisfies the requirement for Healing the Wounds of Racism.



**The Level II 3-Day Workshop is scheduled to begin February 27<sup>th</sup>. More information TBA.**



The four District Superintendents of the Eastern PA Conference have each offered a sermon on a timely topic. On Human Relations Sunday we heard a message from the East District D.S. Our new South District D.S, Rev. Evelyn Kent-Clark's sermon message, "Called for Such a Time as This" is drawn from Esther 14:4 and Mark 1:14-20. It may be viewed on the Conference YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHSQhHd5NqA&feature=youtu.be>



Pastor Tamie's Sunday sermons are available to listen to on Calvary's website ([www.calvaryumcmohnton.org](http://www.calvaryumcmohnton.org)). From the homepage, click on the "Worship Tab", then scroll down & click on "Sermons". They are stored in chronological order. Her sermons are also printed in the weekly *Calvary Connection* (see pg. 1 of this edition).