

April 25th – May 2nd, 2021



Calvary Weekly Connection

4th Sunday of Easter

Serving in Worship

Lay Leader – Kay Wadsworth

Reader: Lily DeLoretta

Music: Matt & Rebecca Doran,
Doug & Michele Pearson, Deb
Bierly, Megan Richerts & Jim
Adams

ZOOM WORSHIP by Phone

1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 647 829 181#;

Password: 082013

**SUNDAY WORSHIP BY PC
CLICK HERE**

On the Inside

4/18/21 Message by Pastor Tamie
[Scripture: Acts 3:12-19, NRSV]

*So, this is what it takes to get you
to temple!*

It had been a long time since I had been to a professional hockey game. One of my high school friends had been a passionate Hershey Bears fan who never missed a game. So as I sat in the crowd of local hockey fans cheering on the Reading Royals memories of hockey culture returned: the jerseys, chants, dances, entertainment and games between periods.



M All - Church Congregational Meeting

a/k/a Charge Conference

They even had an offering - people brought stuffed animals and threw them onto the ice to be collected by the Zamboni and players. These toys were to be donated and bring joy to children. As the game played out on the arena floor, I was more mesmerized by the crowd than I was by the game. People found community here; they had identity and belonging. I knew from past experience, many of them would make every game. It got me thinking about church - about getting people just as excited and engaged in the life-giving message of Jesus Christ.

What is it that gets you to church? For me, it was having children and adamantly longing for them to belong to a community that will nurture their spiritual being. It was something I had never had, and yet, I had never chosen to go for myself. In speaking to a Native American, she explained that, as a child, church for her community lasted all weekend. Because of oppressive laws that did not allow Native Americans to gather, church became the location for everything - for worship, prayer, fellowship, and to make decisions and conduct business for the good of the community. There are also the major life passages, think times of celebration and grief that draw crowds: baptisms, weddings, and funerals. For some, these are the only times they will cross the threshold of a faith community. Other people seek refuge and assistance, especially as soup kitchens, child care centers, homeless shelters, and programs like scouting, Alcoholics Anonymous, or grief counseling are hosted by faith communities. Tragic events, such as the attack on 9/11 or the terror at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, draw people to their places of faith or grant greater permission for people to talk about their faith.

If you missed the first offering, please plan to attend a “pre-Charge Conference” Zoom Informational Q&A Session on April 28th @ 7PM (using the regular Sunday morning Zoom worship link). A presentation will be made by the Vitality & Sustainability Team, with discussion following regarding the four (4) motions that will be brought up for a vote by the full congregation. Then also plan to attend the Charge Conference on Sunday, May 2nd at 7PM to cast your votes.



~Message cont'd on page 3



27 – Shirley Ayrton
Health Center, Rm. 114
PO Box 125
Cornwall, PA 17016

28 – Sara Kochan
18 Northridge Drive W
Mohnton, PA 19540

29 – Connor Dautrich
326 Carriage Dr.
Wernersville, PA 19565

30 – Logan Vernon
1036 W. Schuylkill Rd.
Pottstown, PA 19465

MAY

01 – Dan Bentz
14 Foxtail Pl.
Wernersville, PA 19565

01 – Dennis Bowers
92 Comanche Dr.
Auburn, PA 17922

01 – Angela Juckem
1 Reading Dr., Apt. 151
Wernersville, PA 19565

02 – Karisa Stump
585 Wolfe Lane
Mohnton, PA 19540

02 – Mark Gerard
2269 Welsh Rd.
Mohnton, PA 19540



Calvary Church intends to host its first in-person service on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9th at 10:30. How amazing that will be! All COVID-19 health & safety regulations will be followed, with social distancing, masks required, and no congregational singing. The Zoom service will still be offered at 9 AM. In-person or online, we are one in love and in mission.



It is with sadness, but with great understanding, that we accept & support Bob Wagner's desire to retire from his position as Calvary's Pastoral Assistant as of Sunday, May 9th. Of course, Bob will remain a faithful member of our Calvary community, as well as continue to co-facilitate the Thursday AM Bible Study. We are so very grateful for his faithful service and will honor him during the May 2nd 9AM Zoom service.

SHHHHH...IT'S A SECRET & time is of the essence, but we would like to offer everyone the opportunity to send a **Love Offering** (by 4/28, if possible) to demonstrate your thanks for the many & varied ways Bob has ministered to our congregation. We will present this gift to Bob, along with any cards and notes of appreciation received at the church (which may also be mailed directly to his home at 142 Hemlock Rd., Reading, PA 19607). Please make your check payable to: **Calvary UMC**, with "Love Offering" in the memo section, and mail it to the church: Attn: J. Dearstyne, 1 W. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, PA 19540.

Let us hold Bob, Darla, and our church in prayer during this time of transition.

Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now!

Calvary Church is seeking a small group of volunteers willing to join a Livestream team. This includes the in-house work of running the sound board and cameras, as well as creating PowerPoint presentations at home. Both youth and adults are encouraged to participate. No experience is required - just a willing heart to learn and explore and share Christ through media and an online platform. Technical training will be provided for certain tasks. This is where the inside and outside merge! Contact Pastor Tamie immediately - so we can get started in May! (pastortamie@gmail.com or 610-780-1486)

In his reflection on today's reading in *Feasting on the Word*, theologian, Thomas Long, recounts the events surrounding the 1958 hate-crime dynamiting of the Temple, the oldest synagogue in Atlanta. Melissa Fay Greene describes the events in her book *The Temple Bombing*. Following the bombing, Rabbi Jacob Rothschild spoke at the first Sabbath service. Inside the Temple, nailed boards covered the shattered windows and the doors still hung off their hinges. The Temple was filled with people. The rabbi paused to survey the crowd. With a "penetrating gaze, he quipped, 'So, *this* is what it takes to get you to temple!'" (406).

Peter asks the same question as he addresses the crowd that has followed John and him from the gate outside of the temple to their current location inside at Solomon's Portico. It's like Easter morning all over; there's standing room only. Peter turns to this unexpected crowd and quips, "What are you staring at? Why are you so surprised? Why do you suddenly care?" Though it's Peter that speaks to the crowd, it's really the leaping man praising God that everyone is watching and following.

Let's put Peter's sermon in context by understanding what happened just moments before. This starts as a normal day for a crippled beggar. He is carried to the entrance of the temple at the Beautiful Gate so that he might beg for alms. It's a hot street corner actually with lots of foot traffic at the temple. Like any other street vendor, this man is known by sight, for he sits here every day to beg. As Peter and John enter the temple for the hour of prayer, as is their habit, Peter takes notice of this man at the gate - sitting outside, always. He studies him intently and asks the man to look at them. Of course, the crippled man turns his attention to them, expecting the same response - an extended hand with a little gold or silver. Instead, Peter reaches out and touches him. In the name of Jesus Christ, Peter calls him to stand and walk. The crippled man feels so strong that he does more than that. He jumps up; he enters the temple alongside Peter and John, leaping and praising God. People gaze in amazement and wonder. As word spreads quickly, people crowd around them to see for themselves, to determine if there is any truth to the buzzing news on the street. The crippled beggar walks! People come running inside the temple. So *this* is what it takes to get people to temple!

On the Inside

It seems that getting people inside faith communities isn't a new problem. It seems also that those on the inside need a reminder of the true focus. While the healing act, the leaping singing man, drew the crowd, it is Peter's sermon that transforms the hearts. Inside the temple, Peter preaches to his fellow Jews in love and truth, because he recognizes that the crowd misunderstands. First of all, he questions why this

faithful community, which knows and celebrates the life-giving wonders of God, is surprised. The miracle of God is apparent every day. He points to the death and resurrection of Christ, a recent, open wound in the community of Jerusalem. Despite what happened that Friday during Passover, God restored life. With such a resurrection, Peter asks them how they can now stand amazed at the bodily healing of a man through the name of Jesus Christ. Secondly, he emphasizes that the source of healing is through the powerful name of Jesus Christ. Neither he nor John healed. God heals. Peter points to God through the resurrection of Christ and emphasizes the power of Christ's name. Peter sets the story straight.

The show on the outside of the temple is amazing. For Peter, when you witness the mighty life-giving work of God, it's not enough to just stand amazed. Peter calls for a faithful response. He seeks repentance from this community - all of them - for the judgment, violence, and death of Jesus. He demands they all recognize their responsibility in the cruel, heinous death of an innocent man. It's a crowd of people, some of whom were there to yell, "Crucify him!" and many of whom probably never encountered Jesus. It doesn't matter. Peter is illustrating their connection; through Christ, in God, all of creation is woven together. As Paul teaches, "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). This is healing work in a hurting, grieving community. This is true inside work. It's great that they showed up, but entering the temple is not enough.

That is true for us. Coming to church is more than showing up. Coming to church is more than a great show. The inside work, the work inside of our hearts, is really what matters. Together, we study, reflect, pray, repent, and act on behalf of God's beloved community. We challenge ourselves to a higher way of compassion, forgiveness, love, and peace. We ask:

- How are we a part of the 147 mass shootings that have happened this year alone?
- How are we a part of the healing work at the Good Shepherd mission in India?
- How are we a part of the higher rates of pollution in neighborhoods already battling poverty?
- How are we a part of the addiction crisis in our community?
- How are we a part of providing quality childcare and education for our community?

This is true inside work. You can go to a great ice hockey game. There are many venues to hear inspiring, beautiful music. There are a lot of great books you can read to learn and

grow. It's only in a faith community where you can experience the awesome power of God, whose love transforms you so deeply on the inside, whose love works its way into the very fibers of all creation - pulling you along like a thin thread in such a way that you know you are a vital part of the resurrection. This is what makes Christians leap and sing.

While the crippled man is healed on the outside (outside the temple and outside his body), the inward change is what really captivates the crowd. He is leaping and praising God. His glee, his joy, his message of hope is the real magnet. Life in the wake of resurrection, witness of healing in the name of Jesus Christ, calls for a response of equal magnitude. This is worship! This is worship inside the church and it is the true worship we are to live on the outside.

For the next five weeks, we are going to reflect on a series of events from the Acts of the Apostles. The book of Acts tells us the story of the early church - how the faith of a small community one day locked in an upper room is transformed into an international, multiethnic movement. All that transpired on the inside of the people, on their hearts, is interwoven with all that is on the outside in such a way that new life springs forth. My hope is that this story of the early church informs the transitional work of Calvary Church as we begin to worship in-person. For over a year we have been apart in body. Even as we initially reconnect, only a portion of us will be able to worship in-person. Yes, coming into sanctuary, being inside will be a joy. There might even be some leaping and rejoicing. Where we are - worshipping in-person, via Zoom, or online - doesn't matter as much as how we are worshipping. What we have to hold - what's most important - is the continuation of the inward work, the transformation of our hearts, and the practice of resurrection. Amen.



As we approach summer, and our ever closer date for re-opening our doors to in-person worship, we are also looking ahead to the possibility of holding some type of ecumenical Vacation Bible School.

Anyone interested in re-imagining and re-invigorating this vital children's community outreach by becoming part of the planning team, please contact Janet or Pastor Tamie at 610-777-8441.

Teen Suicide ~ A Silent Crisis

by Gloria Hutzell, CRNP

In my nursing career, I most recently had cared for the pediatric population for many years. I have many concerns for the increase in the rate of depression and suicide in our children and youth.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on all of us, especially children and teens. There's been a tremendous increase in mental health issues, depression, and increases in suicidal ideation. Teens have been missing friends, feeling disconnected and isolated. Other stressors teens struggle with amid COVID-19 are: school, grades, family, friends and their identity. Bullying is a serious problem with teens. Bullying is widely performed on electronic social media in the form of e-mails, texts, chat rooms and instant messaging.

Teen depression is a life threatening concern. Many think sadness and depression in teens is just a hormone imbalance, moodiness, or rebellion. Teen suicide is the second leading cause of death in 15 to 24 year olds. Adolescent females feeling sad or hopeless, consider attempting suicide and DO make an attempt at twice the rate of males. Hispanic teens attempt suicide at a rate higher than Black and White teens. Many teens are not properly diagnosed.

Clinical depression is defined as feeling down or sad for two straight weeks. Depression is a serious disorder caused by physiologic imbalances, imbalance of neurotransmitters in the brain, and requires specific treatment. Each person experiences depression in their own way. Other causes may be hereditary or major life stressors. Depression is not a character flaw.

Be aware of signs of depression in teens. These include, but are not limited to; witnessing angeriness, crankiness, moodiness, statements of sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, thoughts of dying, weight gain or loss, signs of cutting and or burning on wrists or thighs, changes in eating and sleeping, drug and/or alcohol use, and neglecting personal appearance. Prescription opioid misuse in teens also leads to an increase in suicidal behavior. Parents, school personnel, family, friends, Christian organizations and medical care givers need to seek professional help early for teens when they witness signs and symptoms of depression. Screening tools, like the PHQ -9 questionnaire can be given to teens at well visits to screen for depression.

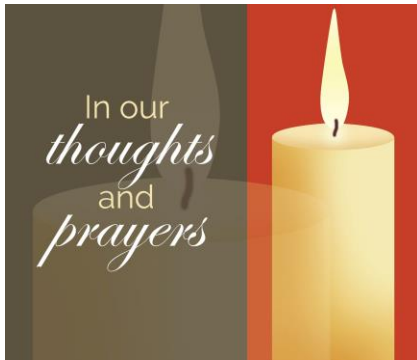
How can we help? We need to help teens recognize they are not alone - people want to help. Getting early intervention, like CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) and psychotherapy is absolutely essential. These types of therapies help replace

~cont'd on page 5

negative thinking patterns with effective coping strategies, problem solving, motivation to change behavior, build self-esteem, and teach stress management techniques.

Support from family, friends, schools and faith communities is very helpful. Some primary prevention approaches include, awareness programs in communities, schools and churches to help prevent adverse childhood experiences, child maltreatment, and exposure to violence. Mental health services that are readily available in schools is a front line necessity.

Sources: Frier, Victoria MSN, RN - BC: "Healthy Driven Minds, Healthy Driven Moms", Sept. 18, 2020 Kronig, M., Kronig, K.; Journal of Christian Nursing (April/ June 2016, 33:2, p78-86. 'Teen depression and suicide, a silent crisis'



Fam. of Peter Jackson - Teenage grandson of Rev. Rod Shearer who, after experiencing heart complications, sadly passed away on 4/18

Karen Moore – Sister of Ken Dearstyne Jr & daughter of Ken, Sr., was treated for Stage IV ovarian cancer and recently found to be "cancer-free", but a routine test showed her cancer antigens have increased; PET scan scheduled for 4/27

Bob & Wanda Steffey – Both tested COVID positive; Bob will come home from Rdg. Hosp. today, 4/21; both are getting better

April 21, 2021

Weary Years, Silent Tears

By Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

When the guilty verdict at the Derek Chauvin trial was announced, I immediately contacted one of our pastors, the Rev. Dr. Ron Bell, Jr. He is an Elder in the Peninsula-Delaware Conference who serves the Camphor UMC in St. Paul, Minnesota. Since last year, he has been hard at work ministering to a congregation and community that has been traumatized by the murder of George Floyd.

I asked him, what are you feeling right now? He said, "I have been holding this cry in since May of last year. Today, in this moment, these tears represent a deep sense of relief. I feel seen, I feel valued. I feel like finally, my black life matters to others."

Family of God, this has been a very difficult journey for our country in the past year but there have been "weary years and silent tears" for centuries. Many people have not received justice in the past; and racial inequity and violence against people of color has been a painful reality. May we shed some silent tears along with our many brothers and sisters who have been traumatized by racism, unjust systems and brutality.

As a church, may we pray for our country, that it continues the redemptive journey of racial reckoning. Please hold the family of George Floyd in your prayers for the loss of their loved one.

Pray for peace and justice for all people. Provide patient, supportive, loving community for those who have been wounded and traumatized by hate. This is not fully a moment of jubilation for all, but more a sigh of relief and deep exhaustion.

Take responsibility to do the things that you can personally do that will help make positive changes in our world. Restorative Justice is a practice, a way of living, and not a verdict in one particular trial. The church can teach this and model this.

The Psalmist reminds us that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." (Psalm 30:5) May we live and work to see the dawning of joy and of equity for everyone born.