



THIS MONTH

April/May 2009



The Calvary United Methodist Church Newsletter

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minister's musings



It's really spring. I love watching the new growth of flowers and grass pushing through the brown dead stuff on top of it. It's such a great symbol of

life. After what seemed like forever, life has returned. Winter has been long and cold, but the promise of a beautiful warm spring is there for all to see. It doesn't help that the world seems a bit depressed this year. The whole world is experiencing a struggling economy. Families are still separated by the reality of war. We've lost loved ones, parents, friends and spouses. We are ready, no, we NEED the hope of spring and life!

I dare say that we really NEED Easter! You know that Christmas Song, that says, "we need a little Christmas, right this very minute, we need a little Christmas now?" Well, I think it is more fitting for Easter. Just think about it. "We need a lot of Easter, right this very minute, we need a lot of Easter now."

Easter is the promise that there is a future, that life continues and that this dreary winter of the season and of the soul is not here to stay. Jesus is our spring. Jesus is our promise of life and new birth. Jesus is our promise of resurrection in which put our hope. The difficult distractions of the world are nothing compared to a loving Savior who came with a message of victory, promise and love. When we put our full trust and confidence in our Risen Savior, we will be able to handle whatever comes our way. We are disciples of a Savior who died on a cross for our sakes and then conquered the grave so that we could experience that same victory. Easter is the celebration of our resurrection hope. Don't miss the experience of Easter in all your preparation for Easter. Don't get too distracted by the preparing for vacation, the family dinner, the company coming to visit. Pay attention to the hope and promise of Christ that is your invitation to experience to love and grace of God.

Beth

An Invitation

You are invited to become a member of Calvary Church. If you are not already a member and would like to make the commitment of membership, please talk to Pastor Beth.

On May 31, 2009, Justin Reed will be baptized, confirmed and join Calvary Church. If you would like to join him in any part of that process, we would love to have the opportunity to celebrate with you.

180--turn around church conference report

On Thursday, March 26, 11 members of our congregation and I attended a conference at the Redeemer United Methodist Church in Dewitt, MI, to learn about leading a church through change that can bring about new growth in new members and in those who have attended here for years. It was called the 180 Turn Around Conference, because to do a 180 turn means that you turn and go in a completely new direction. (Not to confuse it with turning around and going backwards, that's not the idea!) We learned a lot and I think I speak for everyone that went when I say we were challenged and inspired to really think about ministry at Calvary and what changes we can make to go in a new direction.

85% of churches are stagnant or in decline either physically in numbers or spiritually. A stagnant church would be a church that has lost its sense of mission and exists, primarily, to provide fellowship for its members - and expects its leaders to focus solely on ministering to the member's personal spiritual needs. A church that floats along and doesn't pay attention to places where changes need to be made begins to decline. If businesses worked the way churches do, letting things ride as long as possible without making changes in a changing world, they would not stay in business very long.

"A Turn Around Church" is one that realizes that change need to be made and makes an intentional intervention into the life of the congregation. There is a shift in the way ministry is done because there has been a shift in the ways of the world that we need to reach. The pastor of Redeemer, Rod Kalajainen, said that churches go through this time of change to have "greater effectiveness in a changing culture." Think of turn around as a transition or possibly even a resurrection in our lives.

I believe that we have already started the process of change. Our current conversations around the 5 Practices of Fruitful Congregations, are a first step in the right direction. The material presented at the conference was in agreement with what we have talked about in the Sunday morning group about the book. We have discussed hospitality and we learned a lot about hospitality both in the sessions and just by being in a church that is really good at it, (see my article on hospitality in this newsletter.) Our current conversations have been about worship, and many of us attended a workshop on worship. We brought back that information to add to the discussion.



Let mutual love continue.

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:1-2

I am committed to leading us through some changes. I believe that God has plans for this congregation's future. We were warned that this kind of change can take 5 to 10 years to occur. It will take patience, determination and persistence.

Changes can be life-giving, exciting, and invigorating; however, they can also be frightening, challenging and difficult. Please know that I am always open to your opinions, your concerns and your affirmations. If ever you want to talk about what is going on around Calvary, please call me and let's sit down and talk. Please don't just give up and walk away, you and your gifts for ministry are needed at Calvary. Many things tell me we are ready for change, but sometimes it might not be easy.



I would like you all to start by praying regularly for your church and its leaders. We all need to be open to God's leading in this process and I know that prayer will help keep us focused and headed in the right direction. You can pray for the church in general, and you can pray for specific aspects of the church's ministry and specific leaders. If you would like a list of your church leaders please let me know.

The day was wonderful. People attended workshops on Leading Worship, Stewardship, Transforming Student Ministry, Small Groups, and Outreach. The general sessions included topics like "What is a Turn Around Church?", "Assessing Readiness for Change," "Getting Started," "Becoming a Prevailing Church," and "Comprehensive Restructuring." We came home with a wealth of knowledge that we are ready to use. Thank you to all who attended.

hospitality

"Welcome one another just as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:35

"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." Matthew 18:25

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." Hebrews 13:2

"Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31

As I see it, radical hospitality is not optional. It seems there are clear instruction for the Christian to live in a way that is welcoming to everyone else. It is extremely important at church. When people pull together enough

courage to walk through the doors of a church on Sunday morning, what they experience may change their lives,

The experience starts in the parking lot. Is there convenient parking for guests? Are other people warm and friendly as they walk into the church? It's their first impression. Dale and I once drove into a parking lot to visit a church, we never got out of the car. It didn't feel friendly and it looked scary to us, and we are church people. Hospitality begins when they pull into our parking lot.

As they enter our church building, they should experience the welcome of very friendly people. If there's time they could be asked if they would like a cup of coffee before church starts and someone should take them downstairs and visit with them while they have their coffee. As they head for the sanctuary, an usher should greet them, make them a name tag, and lead them to sit with someone who will act as their host, who will of course be very friendly and helpful.

Following worship, the host will introduce them to some other people and to the pastor, make sure they get their visitor gift bag, and invite them to come to fellowship time with them. They will enjoy some refreshments together and get to know each other and learn what our church has to offer them. The guests will be invited to Sunday School and walked to the class and introduced to the leader. If they choose to go home at this point, the host will use all kinds of pleasantries, "it was wonderful to meet you, I'll look forward to seeing you next week," etc. The host could send a follow up card on Monday, and the pastor will write a note.

It seems logical, you might be wondering why the step by step instructions. We need to be intentional about our welcome. It doesn't just happen. We all have things on our minds and we are distracted, we assume those people are with someone else, there's lots of reasons why it doesn't happen but let's make sure it does.

hospitality ministry team

While we are on the subject of hospitality... we are forming a Hospitality Ministry Team. This groups of people will intentionally pay attention to the welcome we are providing. Welcoming includes: how are we inviting people to experience the love of Christ? How are we welcoming them once they come to church? Are



there greeters? Are there people trained to be hosts for our guests? If you are interested in using your gifts in this area, please talk to Pastor Beth.

2009 detroit annual conference

Thursday, May 14 to Sunday, May 17

Be in prayer for our clergy and lay delegates who are members of this decision making body. For more information visit www.umc-detconf.org.

good news for habitat for humanity

"Buy One, Get One Free!" is the motto for this year's Habitat for Humanity Good News House. Habitat has been able to affordably purchase homes in need of renovation so that for the price of building a new house for one family, the group of church's participating in the Good News House will be able to renovate two houses for two families!



The schedule is different this year too. Work will begin on April 21 and take place this summer on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday each week. **Calvary's work day is Saturday, May 2.** Please sign up in the narthex to join in on the fun! We also hope to sign up together for one or more weekdays too--talk to Karen Woollams about your interest in this. Everyone at Calvary can participate in Habitat: you can work, provide lunch, or pray for the house, workers and family.

Making some noise - Each Sunday in May, we will be receiving our "Klatter Kollection" to support the Good News Habitat House. Bring your "pocket" change and "make some noise" to fill our bucket for Habitat. We'll conclude the month with a special service on Sunday, May 31 when we will focus on Habitat for Humanity and collect your "major" donations to support the Good News House. Our fund raising goal this year is \$900. There will be a Barbecue following the service where we plan to invite others in the neighborhood.

If you have any questions about these events to support the Good News Habitat House, or to sign up to work on May 2, please contact Karen Woollams.

youth group scoop

A group of Calvary's "Youth", young and old, attended "Winter Jam", a Christian Rock Concert at EMU in March. We all enjoyed the music and fellowship and learned that some Christian musicians really do Rap!

As of this writing we are looking forward to our 3rd annual Lock In on April 3rd. Youth, guests and brave adult leaders will be spending the night in the church, playing games, eating, praying and bonding. Don't forget to pray for us!

Our first ever Church Rummage sale will be held on May 29th and 30th from 9-3. Please remember to bring your slightly used items for us to sell. We will use proceeds of our sale to support Ele's Place, the Methodist Children's Home and to make some updates to the Youth Room (Upper Room). Items can be dropped off in the room behind the kitchen any time. We will also be looking for a few volunteers to help on the 29th with sales as this will be a school day for the Youth. If you have availability, like to look through antiques and old treasures, please consider helping out. We are also looking for folks to donate baked goods that we will offer to our visitors with an invitation to come join us for worship. Questions can be directed to Judy Wier.

covenant mission offering

Each year at annual conference, a special offering is taken to go towards a mission or outreach project as determined by the conference Board of Global Ministries. For Christians, a covenant is seen as an instrument by which we are bound to God and to each other. We are called to maintain our covenants, as the covenant of God is maintained with us. As the Detroit Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, our covenants with the Methodist Church of Haiti and with The United Methodist Church of Liberia call us to support each other with our prayers, our presences, and our continuing financial support. The

Detroit Conference and other conferences across the nation provide a hot lunch for nearly 20,000 children attending Methodist-supported schools in Haiti. For many, this is their only food for the entire day. Lunch costs continue to rise due to the cost of rice, transportation, and charcoal for the cooking fires. An average cost is now 50 cents (U.S.) each. Children attend school 180 days. We will again support this effort by sending one-half of this year's offering through The Advance to the Haiti District of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas.

As a conference, we also have a covenant with The United Methodist Church of Liberia. One major focus of support over the years has been the Bishop Judith Craig Children's Home. This institution provides a safe and nurturing haven for children who have been orphaned by war, abandonment, death of parents due to HIV/AIDS, or extreme economic difficulties. We will continue to support our Liberian brothers and sisters by sending one-half of this year's offering through The Advance to The United Methodist Church of Liberia for this worthwhile purpose. It is desired that each congregation in the Detroit Annual Conference become more informed about the people of Haiti and Liberia: what they experienced through their history; how the church has been part of that history; where God is directing the church today; and how each of us can be supportive. We pray that as we learn more about our sisters and brothers, God's Spirit will sensitize us, guide us, and empower us to fulfill Christ's command to "feed my lambs."

Our Covenant Mission Offering will be collected at the Opening Worship Service of the 2009 Detroit Annual Conference, which is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 14. Prayerfully support the children of our covenant partners who have been greatly affected by war, conflict, and disasters and the poverty that those produce.

Let's support these efforts. After Easter there will be special envelopes available to make a donation to Covenant Mission Offering of The Detroit Annual Conference. This is an opportunity to beyond your regular pledge to Calvary.

anniversaries

april

2 Marilyn and Jim Acheson
21 Peg and Jerry Leonard

may

6 Linda and Val Losse
10 Jan and Nub Turner
28 Karen and Steve Roberts
30 Barbara and Chuck Willey



the refrigerator page

(you know, to hang on the frig door, so you don't miss anything)
Check your bulletin for details and dates and times that may change.

holy week schedule

Palm Sunday - Worship Service with palms and communion.

Maundy Thursday - Communion service in the chapel at 7:00.



Easter Sunday

- Sunrise Service - 7:30am
- Easter Breakfast - 8:30am
- Worship Celebration - 10:00am
- Easter Egg Hunt - following worship

coming up in worship

You're not going to want to miss this:

April 5 - Palm Sunday

April 12 - EASTER SUNDAY

April 26 - Synergy Sunday - if you would like to participate, watch for sign up and information at church

May 17 - Special Speaker - Rev. Titus is at Annual Conference

May 24 - Special Service to Honor our Veterans. If you know a veteran or the family of a person serving who would like to come and be honored please invite them to come and let Pastor Beth know.

May 31 - Habitat Sunday and Confirmation Sunday. Please come and support Justin Reed as he is confirmed. We also be focusing on Habitat for Humanity. Plan to stay for lunch.

June 7 - Graduate Recognition Sunday and Teacher Appreciation Sunday. We will be recognizing the accomplishments of Matthew Titus, Zach Hamilton, Betsy Hamilton and Erin Lin. (if you know of another graduate we should recognize please let us know.)

from the trustees

Spring Clean-Up Day -- May 16, 8am-noon

Come and help us get the church looking good. Bring you rakes, shovels, work gloves etc..

birthdays

april

- 2 George Thompson
- 4 Allison Wier
- 5 Richard Fischer
- 7 Derek DeVee
- Jim Acheson
- 8 Susan Johnson
- 9 Ann Isbell
- 10 Renee Griffin
- Ben Palumbo
- 13 Kathy Sanders
- 16 Nub Turner
- Steve Roberts
- 17 Jason Eyestone
- Melanie (Simpson) Malec

- 18 Jennie Viery
- 24 Dion Woolfolk
- 25 Brian Lin #1
- 27 Betty Wier
- 30 Peggy Thompson

may

- 2 Nancy Roberts
- 3 Gerald Woolfolk
- 5 Christopher Griffin
- 7 Linda Whitman
- 10 Patrick Leonard
- 14 Margaret Storey
- 15 Hope Parow
- Mary Ford
- 17 Julianne Roberts
- 19 Nick Navarre
- 21 Stephanie Thompson
- 22 Gail Davis Barnes
- 27 Bobbie Smith
- 29 Carol Miller
- 31 Jennifer Rosenbaum



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1415 Miller
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Please check and return to church office to cancel newsletter

The Calvary United Methodist Church Newsletter

Rev. Beth D. Titus, Pastor
1415 Miller, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

(734) 769-0869
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<http://a2calvary.org>

Sunday Worship 10:00
Sunday School 11:15

haiti container

Each year at Annual Conference a large sea container is loaded with necessities to head to either Haiti or Liberia. This year the container is going to Haiti. We have the opportunity to be part of this project. It's a very simple way to be part of making a big impact. Here's how it works:

First, we have the option of making Health Kits, School Kits, Layette Kits, or Sewing Kits, or all of the above. It is easier to choose one or two because they have to be packed in plastic tubs with identical kits. We also have the option of purchasing a full Medicine Box for \$465.00.

Then, the pastor or lay delegate, takes the kits to Annual Conference where they are loaded on the container. UMCOR (United Methodist Corp On Relief), takes care of it from there. SIMPLE!

I suggest that this year we focus on putting together Health Kits.

Here are the directions.... You can make whole kits, or you can bring donations for kits to church and we will put them together. Everything must be collected by Sunday, May 10.

HEALTH KIT

Value: \$12 per kit

Place these items inside a sealed one-gallon plastic bag:

- 1 hand towel (15" x 25" up to 17" x 27", no kitchen towels)
- 1 washcloth
- 1 comb (large and sturdy, not pocket-sized)
- 1 nail file or fingernail clippers (no emery boards or toenail clippers)
- 1 bath-size bar or soap (3 oz. and up)
- 1 toothbrush (single brushes only in original wrapper. No child-size brushes)
- 6 adhesive plastic strip sterile bandages.
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste

Note: UMCOR Sager Brown is now purchasing toothpaste in bulk to be added to health kits before shipping to ensure that the product does not expire before they are sent.