



THIS MONTH

March/April 2018



The Calvary United Methodist Church Newsletter

1415 Miller, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 • (734) 769-0869 • calvary1415@att.net • <http://a2calvary.org>

minister's message



Teach me your way, O Lord,
That I may walk in your truth;
Give me an undivided heart to
revere your name.

Psalm 86:11

During Lent, it is appropriate to pray the words of the psalmist and make them our own. As Christians, we acknowledge that our hearts are divided. However, when our hearts are divided, then so too are our actions, and that is not the way we should live.

A couple of questions I like I like to repeatedly ask myself during this Lenten season are as follows:

1. How *have* I been living my life?
2. How *should* I be living my life?

I invite you to simplify your life. Put away one time-consuming distraction, and add one new habit that brings you closer to God. If you cannot think of any life-giving habits, then let me provide a suggestion; join us for our monthly breakfast at Calvary. We have them scheduled on March 11 and April 8th from 9am to 9:45am. You can help with food, rides, cleaning, or if you just want to eat and be good company, come on over. Thus far, I have seen God use this ministry to be a blessing to both those that eat the food and those that serve it.

May God teach you his way. May you walk in his truth. May he give an undivided heart today, tomorrow, and always.



Andy

he is risen!

Join us for a joyous Easter service at 10 am on Sunday, April 1. An Egg Hunt follows the service for the kids plus fellowship, coffee and treats for the whole family.

The Easter Season, also known as Eastertide or the Great Fifty Days, begins on Easter Day and ends on Pentecost. Focusing on Christ's resurrection and ascension and the sending of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost), Eastertide is the most joyous and celebrative season of the Christian year. We celebrate the good news that in Christ's death and resurrection we, and all creation, are continually being made new by God's love and saving grace.

Happy Easter!



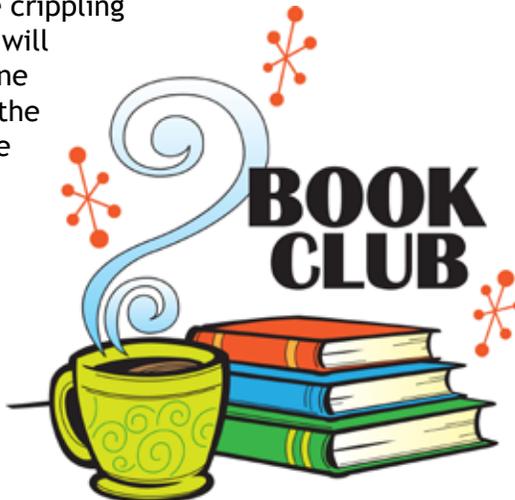
Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi is about parallel paths of sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. This extraordinary novel illuminates slavery's troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

Your Great Idea! Or, do you have another great idea for a book to share with Calvary friends? Let Judy Wier or Karen Woollams of the NOW committee know!

book group

What book would you like to read and discuss? Two books are being considered for the next Calvary Book Group selection:

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope by William Kamkwamba is about drought, hunger and hope for the future when the author built a windmill to provide his family in Malawi with electricity. It is a remarkable true story about human inventiveness and its power to overcome crippling adversity. It will inspire anyone who doubts the power of one individual's ability to change his community and better the lives of those around him.



eat spaghetti and help habitat

The next community spaghetti dinner to benefit Habitat for Humanity will be Saturday, April 7 from 5-7 pm. Calvary continues to offer free dinners for Miller Manor residents.

Is there someone you could invite who would enjoy our next spaghetti dinner in April? This is also an opportunity for Calvary members to meet new and old friends who show up! Hope to see you and your friends and family on April 7!



returnables for boy scouts

Aaron VonBargen, a scout in Troop 5, is having a bottle/can drive for his Eagle Scout Project which is building cabinets on the stage of the basement. There will be a bin in the basement of the church if you would like to donate.

Thank you.

by grace we are forgiven: justifying grace

“Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.” Many United Methodists know John Newton’s words so well that we can sing more than one verse of this great hymn from memory. We may be a little fuzzy, however, on the concept of grace.

Newton’s lyrics echo those of scripture, like Ephesians 2:8, “You are saved by God’s grace because of your faith. This salvation is God’s gift.” Both the Apostle Paul and the hymn writer teach us that our salvation is not something we earn or deserve. It comes to us because of God’s great love for us.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, preached and wrote often about the amazing grace of God that leads us into renewed relationship with God.

The gift of God

The Rev. Matt O’Reilly, pastor of St. Mark United Methodist Church, Mobile, Alabama, wants United Methodists to know that when we speak of the grace of God, we are not talking about a substance. It is instead a description of God at work in our lives.

“Grace is primarily about how God relates to us,” O’Reilly teaches, “not based on our merit, but based on God’s resolve and love for creatures made in God’s image.”

“Human effort does not play any role,” shares the Rev. Nday Bondo Mwanabute, professor of theology at Africa University, Mutare, Zimba-

bwe. “All that is required from human beings is to avail themselves to receive everything from God by faith.”

Wesley taught that our entire spiritual lives are an act of God’s grace. He names at least three periods in our spiritual development and the ways God’s grace is at work during those times—prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace. It may sound like he is talking about three different graces, but that is not the case.

“The issue is timing,” O’Reilly explains, “not so much different stuff.”

Justifying grace: God making things right

The grace with which we are most familiar is what Wesley called justifying grace.

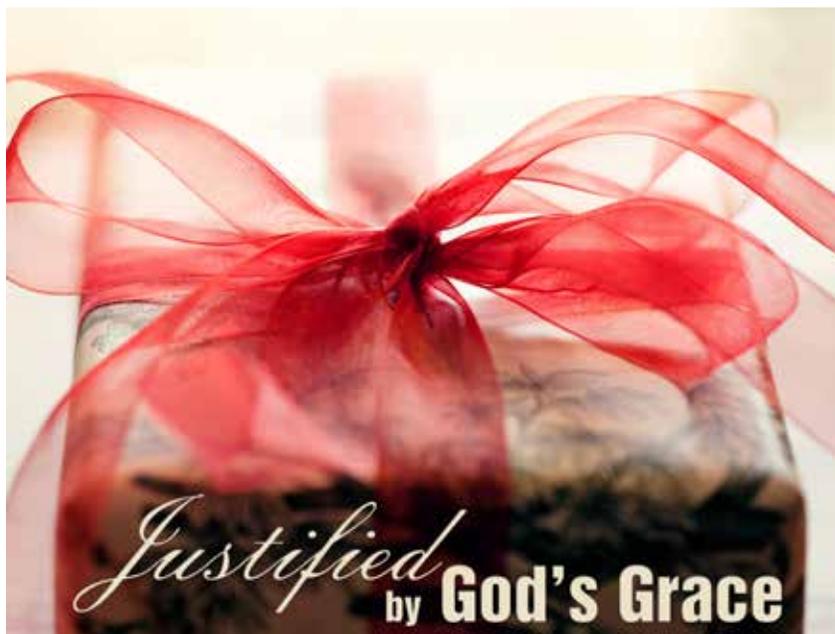
The Bible tells us, “All have sinned and fall short of God’s glory” (Romans 3:23).

Try as we might, we cannot be good enough. We need God to make things right between us, to justify us.

“Justification is another word for pardon,” John Wesley writes in a sermon called *The Scripture Way of Salvation*. “It is the forgiveness of all our sins; and, what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God.”

The Rev. Gary Henderson of United Methodist Communications uses an illustration from our word processors to help us understand what it means to be justified.

“I’m typing and the words and the lines are all over the page... and it looks like a mess,” Henderson begins. “With a keystroke or two, I



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can bring it all together and order it and align it. They call it *justifying* to the left, to the right, or to the center... Sometimes it seems as though our lives are in pieces. We need a sense of order.”

When we are justified, we are made right with God. Our sins are forgiven and God begins the process of lining our lives up to God's original design for us.

We are created in God's image, but that image is distorted by sin. By God's grace, through faith, we receive forgiveness. All of this is God's gift to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“Justifying faith implies, not only a divine evidence or conviction that ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,’” Wesley writes in another sermon, *Justification by Faith*, “but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for ‘my’ sins, that he loved ‘me,’ and gave himself for ‘me.’ And at what time soever a sinner thus believes...God justifieth

that ungodly one.”

Those familiar with Wesley's recounting of his Aldersgate experience in his journal, may hear echoes of similar themes in this description of justifying faith.

A door

In a pamphlet titled *The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained*, Wesley likens this moment in our spiritual development to a door. At the moment of justification, we cross the threshold from unbelief to belief. This, however, is not of our own doing.

As Ephesians 2:8 reminds us, salvation is a gift offered to us by our gracious (i.e. grace-filled) God. We do not earn it. Not one of us is worthy of it. We simply receive it in faith.

Getting to the door and growing on the other side of it, are also by God's grace. We will look at these dimensions of grace in the coming weeks.

Joe Iovino, *United Methodist Communications*



birthdays

march

- 1 Mark Roberts
- 3 J.R. Leonard & Chris Wallace
- 5 Keith Jameson
- 8 Amanda Lowe
- 17 Abigail DeVee & Ryleigh Lowe
- 18 Hannah Wallace
- 24 Regina Noland



april

- 2 George Thompson
- 4 Allison Wier
- 5 Richard Fischer
- 7 Derek DeVee
- 8 Susan Johnson
- 10 Renee Griffin
- 13 Kathy Sanders
- 16 Steve Roberts
- 18 Jennie Viery
- 24 Dion Woolfolk
- 29 Brad Hamilton
- 30 Peggy Thompson

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.

BIBLE STUDY – Sunday March 4, after fellowship
Discussion of Chapter 3 "*Creed - What Christians Believe and Why.*"

FREE COMMUNITY CALVARY BREAKFAST –
Sunday, March 11, 9-9:45 am
Join special invited guests and enjoy a hot breakfast before church!

DONATION COLLECTION – March 11 (and every 2nd Sunday)

BIBLE STUDY – Sunday March 11, after fellowship
Discussion of Chapter 4 "*Creed - What Christians Believe and Why.*"

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS – Sunday, March 11, 3 am

BIBLE STUDY – Sunday March 18, after fellowship
Discussion of Chapter 5 "*Creed - What Christians Believe and Why.*"

PALM CROSS MAKING PARTY – Saturday, March 24, 7 pm
Enjoy dessert with friends at Ed and Judy Wier's house while making palm crosses for the Palm Sunday service out of real palm leaves!

EASTER CELEBRATION – Sunday, April 1
Easter service followed by Easter Egg Hunt for kids!

CALVARY COOKS SPAGHETTI DINNER – Saturday, April 7, 5-7 pm
Community spaghetti dinner to benefit Habitat for Humanity.

FREE COMMUNITY CALVARY BREAKFAST – Sunday, April 8, 9-9:45 am
Join special invited guests and enjoy a hot breakfast before church!

DONATION COLLECTION – April 8 (and every 2nd Sunday)

NURTURE/OUTREACH/WORSHIP MTG – Thursday, April 26, 5:30 pm

DONATION COLLECTION – May 13 (and every 2nd Sunday)



Weekly Activities:

HOLY YOGA – Tuesdays, 5:15 pm

Enjoy a weekly yoga class with scripture and praise music to heal the body and soul! Open to all--walk ins welcome at \$15/class or 5 classes for \$65: January 9, 16, 23, 30, and February 6. Then, the classes resume in spring.

Dial Soap Collection for the Delonis Shelter donations accepted in basket in the narthex!

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Please check and return to church office to cancel newsletter

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Sunday Worship 10:00
Sunday School 11:15