

CALVARY CURRENT

Special Edition for April 16 – 30



Church News

- 1. Stay home and pray:** As we hope to reopen our communities, we keep social distancing and stay safe. While we stay at home, let us find a holy place in our home and come closer to God with our prayers.
- 2. Calvary Virtual Church, Sundays 11am**
 - Join us early after 10:30am and have fellowship with one another!
Option 1: CalvaryUMCnc.org -> Click Virtual Church Info under Worship
Option 2: Call at 980-498-3895 and press Conference ID: 479 439 471#
- 3. Prayer Updates**

Ray Smith is home but struggling with breathing problems without much energy.
Please keep lifting Ray and Marsha up in your special prayers.
Betty Matthews had hip surgery. Please pray for Betty's speedy healing.
For those who are affected by the pandemic – lost their loved ones, lost their jobs, had reduced working hours, closed their businesses, and work in tough conditions.
For medical professionals who work hard on the frontlines to fight the virus.
For our national and local leaders for wisdom, strength, and leadership.
- 4. Thank you for your generous offerings**
 - Mail your offerings to church: 512 West Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28203
 - Use "bill pays" at your online banking
 - Conference Online Giving at <https://www.wnccumc.org/online-donations-to-churches>
(Calvary UMC, Charlotte / Metro District / Pastor Jae Lee / Your Email)
- 5. Upper Room (May & June) is available**
 - You may pick it up at church.
 - Please email or call Pastor Jae if you need a copy.

“When Your Name Is Called” (John 20:11-18)

(Easter Sunday Sermon by Rev. Jae Lee)

When I was young, I was very active in my church youth group. As I served various roles in the leadership, I had to often call my friends to discuss our youth events. At that time, we didn't have cell phones yet, and I used home phone. Our home phone was in our living room, and there was a church directory next to the phone. Whenever I looked for my friends' phone numbers, I had hard time because the church directory had only the adult members' names.

In order to find my friend's number, I had to ask my dad, who was the pastor, about my friend's parents' names. At that time, my father's church had about 1,000 members including children and youth. This meant that the church consisted of about 300 households. When I asked my dad about my friend's parent's name, he promptly gave me a phone number without looking at the directory. At first, I couldn't trust my dad's memory and verified the phone number in the directory before making a phone call. More than 99% of the time, surprisingly enough, my dad was accurate. He remembered more than 300 households' phone numbers!

At a dinner table one day, I asked to my dad, “How do you remember your church members' phone numbers? Do you have a secret way to remember all those names and numbers?” My dad smiled and answered, “It's simple. Love them and you will remember their names and phone numbers.”

We have cell phones nowadays, and thank God, I don't need to remember my church members' phone numbers. In fact, I don't remember even my children's phone numbers. I barely remember mine, my wife's, and church phone number. I'm glad that I'm doing ministry in this era of technology.

On the first Easter morning we hear an interesting story in the Gospel of John. Mary Magdalene was one of Jesus' close friends. According to Luke's Gospel, she was the one who used to be seized by seven demons. When she was healed by Jesus, Mary followed him and became a faithful disciple and a good friend of Jesus. That is why she went to the tomb in the early Sunday morning. There she found the stone that had locked the tomb was rolled away and that the tomb was empty. She thought that someone stole the body of Jesus. She began to have tears in her eyes. Mary didn't know what to do and kept crying. The Bible emphasizes her words, “I don't know!” Like Mary, today we don't know what is going on with the novel coronavirus, and that's why we are scared and worried about our lives.

Then she bent over her body and looked inside the tomb. Surprisingly, she found two men there. They asked, “Woman, why are you weeping?” Mary answered, “I don't know where they have laid Jesus.” She thought that she might be in a wrong place. When she turned around, there was another man outside. The man asked her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” It was Jesus but Mary could not recognize him. Then the man called her name, “Mary!” When she heard her name, she remembered the sweet voice of Jesus who healed her,

taught the truth of God, and ever changed her with a new life's purpose! She immediately responded to him, "Rabbouni!" which means "teacher" in Hebrew.

Dear church, do you know your name? Of course, you must know your name. But do you really know the importance of your name? When someone calls your name, it means that the person who calls you has a certain relationship with you. Just imagine that Jesus the Risen Christ calls your name now! How are you going to respond? You will have a big smile and shout an "Alleluia," won't you?

Let me read a poem which describes the significance of our name! The title of poem is "The Flower," written by a Korean poet, Chun-Soo Kim.

The Flower

*Before I called her name,
she was nothing but a gesture.*

*When I called her name,
she came to me and became a flower.*

*Like I called her name,
will someone call my name
that suits my light and fragrance?
I also long to come to her and become her flower.*

*We all long to be something.
You, to me, and I, to you,
long to become a gaze that won't be forgotten.*

As the poet calls her name, she becomes a flower, a meaningful being to the poet. Naming brings our identity and relationship, and it defines who we are and whose we are. When we are called by our name, it creates a relationship with the person who calls us.

Whenever we have Holy Communion, I call your name because I would like to invite you into the relationship with God. When we receive bread and grape juice, I hope and pray that we who are called by God affirm our intimate relationship with the triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

You and I, we are called "Easter People" who put our hope and trust in the power of resurrecting Jesus Christ who died for us and rose from death, defeating the power of darkness and destruction.

On this Easter Sunday, I would like you and I to be called by God. I believe that our risen Christ is calling our names, one by one, here and now. When the risen Christ Jesus called Mary Magdalene,

she opened her spiritual eyes, recognized Jesus, and became the first witness of Jesus' resurrection.

I would like to ask you to call your name: Let's call your name now... When you hear your own voice that calls your name, what do you feel? How do you accept your name? Do you recognize your true self who is born to be, to fulfill the purpose at your birth by God? When you call your name, you may remember many things... your pain, failures and successes, tearful experiences, joys and celebrations... Our name will bring all together of who we are!

Now, let us call your loved one's name. You may call your spouse' name, your child's name, or anyone who is meaningful to your life. Call your loved one's name now... How do you feel? Do you truly sense your love toward the person you just named? Again, when we call our loved one's name, we come to think of God's blessings upon the person whom we love. God created our loved one; God molded his or her innermost being with God's loving hands. They are fearfully and wonderfully made of God's love!

Naming creates a relationship. When our name is called by God, we will reflect our relationship with God. As the risen Christ called Mary, Christ is calling you and me this morning. When your name is called, how will you respond? Are you going to say like Mary? "Teacher!" Or are you going to say, "Lord, Savior, Friend, Salvation, Strength, Help, Healer..." How are you going to respond to Jesus Christ?

Jesus says a very important thing to Mary when she recognizes him. Jesus said, "I am ascending to *my* Father, *your* Father, to *my* God and *your* God." Now Jesus invites Mary into the special relationship with God. In other words, Jesus invites all of us to call *my* God and *our* God, not Jesus' Father or Jesus' God. Yes, we have an inseparable relationship with God because we can call God, *my* Father and *my* God who not only knows our name but also our needs, our pain, and everything about us!

Dear church, when we are called by the risen Christ, we cannot keep silent. As Mary did, we need to go and speak to our friends and neighbors about our intimate relationships with God. We also need to witness our friends about our new life in Jesus by living as Easter People! As we sang the hymn, *Easter People, Raise Your Voices*, earlier in the worship, we are called to proclaim the risen Christ and live our own resurrecting life in Jesus!

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

MISSION CONTINUES: BLESSING CABINET

By Brenda Alexander, Chair of Outreach Team

Calvary has been a very active missional church. In particular, through Loaves & Fishes we have provided the needy with groceries for over 30 years. Under the pandemic, it is closed now for its volunteers' and clients' safety. Blessing Cabinet will continue serving the needy in this difficult

time. Calvary's Outreach Team will initiate buying food/goods and stocking them in the Blessing Cabinet which will be made by Wade Cobb as a donation. Once we locate the Blessing Cabinet, there will be a list of what to donate and what cannot be donated. We expect that local neighbors' needs for essential goods and food will be met, and the Blessing Cabinet will serve those who cannot have benefits from other food pantries that require background check or screening. Blessing Cabinet will be operated by Christian spirit that "our left hand will not know what our right hand is doing" (Matthew 6:3). Let us continue our missions and ministries!

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

By Deborah F. Kris

From <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

Earlier this week, I overheard my kids engaged in a round of "I heard" and "Did you know?" while they were getting ready for bed. "I heard that Margaret's dad has it," said my six-year-old. "Did you know that it's the worst sickness ever?" added my eight-year-old.

Neither statement is accurate, but they were revealing: I had thought my initial conversations with my kids about COVID-19 had been good enough. But with adults, kids at school and the news all hyper-focused on this coronavirus outbreak, my reassuring voice needed to be a little louder.

A favorite Mister Rogers' quote ran through my mind: "Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting and less scary."

So before lights out, we talked. I asked what they had heard about the coronavirus. We got it all out — their questions, their "I hears" and their fears. The rest of the conversation had three themes.

First, I shared age-appropriate facts and corrected misinformation. Because my kids are young, I kept it simple. "You know what it's like to have a cold or the flu — how sometimes you get a cough or have a fever? This is kind of like that. Most people who catch this sickness stay home, rest and get all better. And we have wonderful doctors and nurses who can help people when they need it."

Second, I reassured them that they are safe, which is the most important message my kids can hear from me. I know that they take their emotional cues from my tone. "You don't need to worry. Right now, lots of amazing grownups are working hard to keep people healthy. Luckily, we already know a lot about how to keep healthy!"

Third, I emphasized simple things our family can do to be "germ busters" — for all types of germs that are out there! As Harvard's Dr. Richard Weissbourd once shared with me, kids and adults alike are "more distressed when we feel helpless and passive, and more comfortable when we are taking action." The hygiene routines that slow the spread of the COVID-19 are the same habits that help keep us healthy all year round.

A few days after this conversation, my kids' schools closed indefinitely — and so did sports practices, playdates and a host of routine outings. Like most of the nation, my family is staying home for a while, and this brought up new questions and worries for my kids. The three themes above still apply to all our follow-up conversations, but I have added a new dimension to what our family can do to be “germ busters:” We can practice social distancing.

I explained it like this: “Germs like to travel from person to person. Have you ever noticed how kids in your class sometimes get sick at the same time? If lots of people stay home for a while, it will be hard for the Coronavirus germs to travel to new people — and that’s good news for doctors and nurses who are helping people who get sick.” A few hours later, I heard my 8-year-old re-explain it this way to her kindergarten brother: “This sickness isn’t a big deal for you or for me, but we need to be germ-busters so we can protect other people — like grandma and grandpa! This is how we help.”

Of course, that doesn’t mean social distancing is going to be easy. We are planning creative ways to stay in touch with family and friends — such as “story time” with different relatives over video chat each day. I am hoping they eventually see this as a time when our community pulled together to help others, and had some fun along the way spending extra time with their family.

Here are four ways we can help young kids build germ-busting habits.

Wash Your Hands / Catch that Cough / Rest is Best / Practice Healthy Habits

Remind kids that sleep, exercise and eating healthy foods are good, everyday ways to strengthen our bodies. We will all get sick sometimes! They have probably already had at least one cold this season. But we can be responsible germ busters when we practice handwashing, cough-catching, resting and basic healthy living.

CHURCH FINANCE REPORT

By Rachel Graves, Chair of Finance Team

Calvary has been blessed with loyal members who generously give even during these difficult and uncertain times. Thanks to this commitment, our church is able to keep going. I would encourage our congregation to continue this faithful discipline so we can maintain our budget. Although we are current on our bills, we need the contributions to continue to be able to maintain our financial stability. I would like to inform you that the Oasis School is no longer renting our facility. Therefore, the income previously generated of \$15,600 from the school is no longer contributing to our annual budget. The loss of these funds will negatively impact our church from a financial standpoint. The Lord has blessed Calvary immensely over the years even in challenging times, so let us be in thoughtful prayer that we are able to sustain our church. I pray that our Calvary members, family and friends are healthy and we are reunited soon to be able to worship together.