

# CALVARY CURRENT

Special Edition for October 2020



***“Welcome, Home!”*** Calvary’s 155<sup>th</sup> Homecoming Sunday on Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

## CHURCH NEWS

- 1. Calvary’s Worship & Ministries:** Calvary follows the guidelines set by our Bishop and the Cabinet of WNCC for “re-opening” plans of our worship and ministries. We will make a further decision in the next Church Council meeting on Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>.
- 2. Calvary Virtual Church on Sundays: Silent prayer at 10:55 am (opening from 10:30 am)**  
By computer: CalvaryUMCnc.org -> Click Virtual Church Info under Worship  
By phone: Call at 301-715-8592 and enter Meeting ID: 854 324 5409  
\*Our zoom service will be recorded and posted on the church website and youtube.
- 3. Special Prayers**  
For students, teachers, administrators, staff, and parents in this fall semester!  
For June Severs, Ty Lail, Ted and Brenda Alexander, Mary Arnold, Buck Bailes, Margaret Bumgardner, Mason Butler, Daisy Dunlap, Henry Forrest, Betty Matthews, Betty Pinion, Kathleen Shaw, Faye, Smith, Ray Smith, Ruby Vincent (Calvary); Jackie Davidson, Candy Chastain, Beth Earley, Dina Edwards, John Humphrey (Community).  
For justice and equity among God’s people in our nation.  
For those who have been affected by the coronavirus, medical providers, and our leaders.  
For those who are suffering from wildfire and hurricane.
- 4. Let’s be a generous & cheerful giver!**  
\*Mail your offerings to Calvary UMC at 512 West Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28203.  
\*Use “bill pays” at your online banking or visit “Conference Online Giving” at <https://www.wnccumc.org/online-donations-to-churches> (Calvary UMC, Charlotte / Metro District / Pastor Jae Lee / Your email address)  
\*If you want to donate special gifts for “Homecoming,” you may make a check payable to Calvary UMC and write “homecoming” on the memo.

\*Special offerings:

For R & R (Repair & Replace) Funds – Breezeway Project by Ted and Brenda Alexander, Henry and Loretta Forrest, Harding Shinn, Ray and Marsha Smith, Jae and Kim Lee, Gary and Renee Rockett, Pat Little, Terry Frye, Jimmy Jeffries, and Tom Phillips.

## **CHRIST'S CHURCH: SEEKING THE HEART OF GOD (Matthew 20:1-16)**

Preached on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> by Rev. Jae Lee

We as human beings love to be “the first.” My first appointment as an ordained minister in the UMC was at “First” UMC in Brevard. Whenever I visit different towns and cities, there are usually First UMC, First Baptist, First Presbyterian, or Central Church. However, Jesus teaches us an upside-down world when he explains God’s kingdom value. “But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first” (Matthew 19:30). Jesus tells his disciples the parable of a vineyard landowner in Matthew 20. This parable is very important because it speaks to us who our God is and what kind of church we will become.

It starts with the landowner who is the center of the story: “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner.” So, let’s focus on the actions of the landowner.

He *went out early* in the morning to hire workers at his vineyard. It was a time of sunrise at about 6am when the landowner went out first time. We see *the diligent action* of the landowner. Then he went out at 9am, 12pm, 3pm, and 5pm. He went out *five times* to hire workers at his vineyard. Whenever he hired laborers, he made a contract to pay a daily wage to them. Here, we can see a *hard-working landowner* in and out of his vineyard and hiring more laborers for his vineyard without resting. Our first impression is that the landowner’s vineyard must be very large and it needs more workers.

Now let’s pay attention to the words. When he went out and found more laborers at 5pm, he asked them, “Why are you *standing here idle* all day long?” They answered, “Because *no one has hired us.*” He said to them, “You also go into the vineyard.” The landowner hired them again *even at 5 o’clock*. It seems that he needed more laborers at the last minute.

Let’s pause here and carefully reflect the words of the landowner. “Why are you standing here idle all day long?” The landowner shows his caring heart for the laborers. Before he hired them, he did not ask their skills or work experiences but only why they were standing outside all day long. Let’s rethink their conversation as a business owner. It was already five o’clock, and there was only one more hour to work. But the landowner hired them, planning to pay the same amount as other workers. If we were an employer, would we hire more workers at 5pm?

At this moment, I wonder if the landowner really needed more workers at his vineyard. Maybe, he needed them, and that’s why he went out and hired them. However, his question, “Why are you standing here idle all day long?” sounds that he cares for them. “No one has hired us.” Why? I also wonder why the laborers were not hired by that time. We may imagine that they might be

too weak or too small, too old or too young to work in the vineyard. They might even be unable or disabled. If they were standing at the marketplace all day long and no one hired them, we can imagine that those laborers might be the frailest or worst workers. But the landowner hired them and immediately sent them into his vineyard!

Moreover, after work, he called the last ones first and paid them the usual daily wage! At this point, we finally come to know that the landowner hired them at 5pm to *share them with grace and mercy*. It was his generosity to provide the laborers with the daily wage so that they might buy food and daily needs for their families.

We do not fully understand why the landowner called the last laborers first, but it is clear that *his action was very generous and gracious for those workers*. Witnessing what was going on, the first ones who came to the vineyard from the early morning began to expect to receive more than the daily wage that was promised by the landowner. However, the manager paid the same amount and they grumbled that it was not fair because they had worked for a whole day and received the same amount.

In this parable, we find *the generous and just landowner who showed grace and mercy for the last ones*. Let's think of the last ones who were hired just before the end of the day. Who were the last ones? The last ones might be the weakest, disabled, young and old, women and children, homeless, foreign workers, illegal immigrants, strangers, or those who desperately needed daily wages for survival but were unable to find a job.

The landowner showed them mercy, grace, and justice with generosity to meet their needs. That is the heart of our God! If we understand the daily wage as God's salvation, God provides all believers with the same salvation.

As Christ's church, *we are to seek the heart of God who embraced the last ones with generous spirit* by giving them the same daily wage as the first ones who came much earlier. As we discover the heart of God in the generous and just action of the landowner for those who have less and are unable, *how can we become a generous and just church* toward the least, weak, poor, and strangers?

While the world claims fairness among diverse people nowadays, Christ's church seeks equity for all God's people beyond fairness because *God's heart always searches for the least, weak, and outcast*. When we seek the heart of God, we may become a body of Christ in which we may live the true community of love, generosity, and justice.

Before finishing my sermon, I would like to give a piece of comfort for the first ones who came to follow Christ Jesus from the early stage of your life's journey, worked very hard for God throughout your life, and received the same salvation. If the last ones contributed little to build God's kingdom, the first ones spent their whole lives to build the kingdom of God on earth in God's presence. While they poured their passion and sweats, God was there with them in their faithful presence and even worked beside them.

Therefore, let us rejoice and be glad to be part of building the kingdom of God. Rather than comparing with others and focusing on the “first” issue, let us seek the heart of God and joyfully give God our thanksgiving for God’s generous and just action for all people!

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

### **REPAIR & REPLACE (R & R) FUNDS**

Through the R & R Funds, we have repaired, upgraded, and taken care of our church buildings for many years. Calvary’s Trustees has a request for you to give a special offering and donation to have a new “breezeway!” We ask you to participate in the “go beyond” offerings for R & R Funds so that we can have a new breezeway in our church. The estimated cost is \$12,500, and we have gathered \$7,225 by the end of September from your generous giving! When you make a check to CALVARY UMC, please write “R & R Funds” on the memo. Thank you for your generous support and gifts!

Earl Beckham, Trustees Chair

### **HOMECOMING SUNDAY**



October 11<sup>th</sup> is Calvary’s 155<sup>th</sup> Homecoming Sunday. This year we will still celebrate our “HOMECOMING” virtually. Please invite your families and friends anywhere as we gather together through zoom. You can visit our website at [CalvaryUMCnc.org](http://CalvaryUMCnc.org) and click the worship to join us. Look forward to meeting you on the Homecoming Sunday!

### **LAY LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**



As we prepare the Annual Charge Conference on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Lay Leadership Team meeting on Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm through zoom. Lay Leadership Team members will be receiving a zoom invitation. If you do not have computer access, you can still attend the meeting through your phone.

Becky Pinion, Lay Leader

## BLESSING CABINET NEWS



Calvary's Outreach Team appreciates your missional support to reach out to our local community through the Blessing Cabinet. The Blessing Cabinet is available 24/7. Food from our congregation or outside our church will be welcomed, but the expiration date must be at least a year out. Monetary donations to the Blessing Cabinet can be made via payable check to Calvary UMC and on the memo line, you may write "Blessing Cabinet." Thank you for being a blessing to our needy neighbors!

Brenda Alexander, Chair of Outreach Team

## WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY



"A Journey toward a Community" - Pastor Jae is leading a Bible Study on Wednesdays 11 am-12 pm. Under the pandemic, it will be a little different from our regular Bible study: First, it is virtual, using zoom – you may click the virtual service at [CalvaryUMCnc.org](http://CalvaryUMCnc.org) as we use the same zoom address; second, it will include spiritual formation through the study so that we may become and grow as a faith community. "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go further, go with others" (African proverb). You are invited!

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN GENERAL MEETING



UMW General Meeting will be held on Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> at 2pm through zoom. We invite all women to join us to do God's wonderful ministries together!

Brenda Alexander, President of UMW

## ANNUAL CHARGE CONFERENCE / CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING



Calvary's Annual Charge Conference will be on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, Sunday, at 2pm through zoom. All church members are invited to join in the Annual Conference in which we will approve 2021 Lay Leadership, Pastor's Compensation, and Church Apportionment. We will also finalize 2021 Church Budget in the Charge Conference.

To prepare our Annual Charge Conference, we will have a Church Council meeting on Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>. Council members are requested to attend this year's last Council meeting.

Ray Smith, Church Council Chair

A SPECIAL NOTE OF  
*thanks*

We give special thanks to Patty Pressley, Marty Mulligan, Mary Arnold, and Judy Hinson (Patty's sister) for their loving service that prepared lunch boxes to celebrate Calvary's Homecoming. Calvary is a faith community where we care for one another! We also give thanks to Hanbin and Esther Koo who shared their musical gifts with us!