



Calvary Herald

JANUARY 2022 — VOLUME 53 — ISSUE 1

A Breakfast to Feed Body and Soul

Some of the most powerful tools for Christian growth are small groups in which God's Word is studied and God's people encourage one another. And thankfully, Calvary has a lot of these groups to cover a wide range of ages and interests! So on



Sunday, January 9, we'd like to invite you to connect or reconnect with a small group Bible study by joining us for a fellowship breakfast. Come to the Fellowship Hall after the Uplift service and before Sunday School (i.e. between 9:30 and 10 am), and not only will you be able to pick up a tasty meal; you'll also be able to nurture the friendships that will enrich your walk with Christ in the coming year. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us!

“Sock It to ‘Em” This Month

Have you seen the ads? “Socks are the #1 requested item in homeless shelters.” And if you think about it, it's not hard to understand why. Living on the street as they do, many homeless people rarely take their shoes off. They walk a lot, and they don't always have access to laundry facilities. And so, caring for their feet can be a difficult challenge. That's why Calvary is sponsoring a sock drive in January to minister to the homeless population of our area. Just bring your donations of new socks to church and drop them in the collection bins that will be located near the entrances. Thank you for helping us “be a blessing” to one of the vulnerable populations in our community.



Give the “Gift of Life” in the New Year

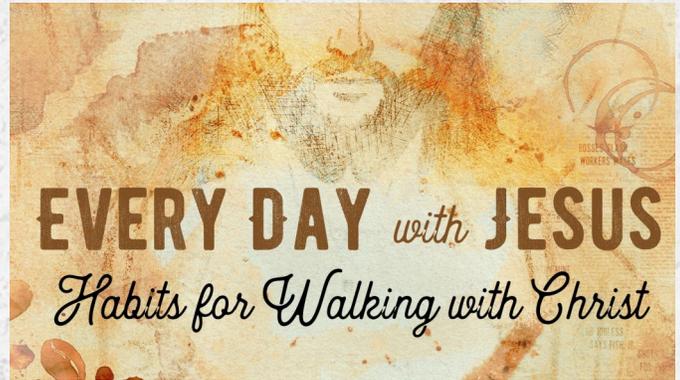
You can “give the gift of life” as you start the new year by signing up for Calvary's first blood drive of 2022! Our church will host a Red Cross Blood Drive in the Fellowship Hall from 11 am to 3:30 pm on Sunday, January 2. Donors who'd like to reserve a spot can register on line by visiting redcrossblood.org. We're also seeking volunteers who can help out by staffing the check-in table and the snack area. For more information, please contact Mary Jane Shelton or Jan Varney.



Every Day with Jesus in 2022

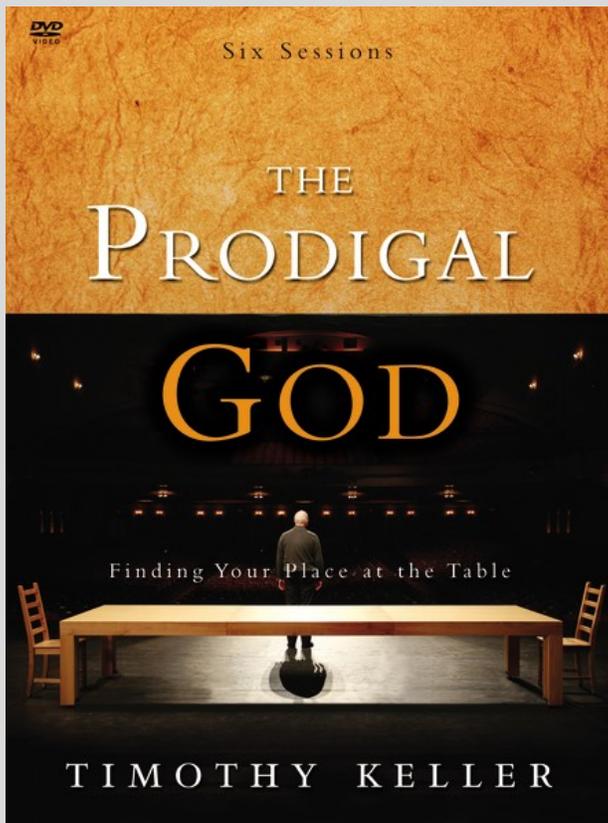
Just about every year—when I try to plan for upcoming sermons by asking people what their spiritual needs are—I get a lot of responses like these: “I want to grow spiritually,” and “I want to deepen my relationship with God.” Or “I’d like to mature as a Christian,” and “I’d like to have a stronger relationship with Christ.” And make no mistake, those are things that I need, too. And yet, it occurs to me that if we’ve been around church for a few years (which most of us have), then we’ve already learned a lot about how to accomplish these goals. The problem isn’t so much “what we know” as it is “what we do.” For some reason, we experience a “disconnect” between “being Christians” and actually “walking with Christ” in our daily decisions, emotions, and activities.

That’s why I’d like us to start the New Year with a sermon series that I’m calling, “Every Day with Jesus: Habits for Walking with Christ.” I can’t say that we’ll cover anything “new and different.” Over the course of the month, we’ll be reminded of things that all of us know are important in our relationship with Jesus—things like “Walking in His Word,” “Walking in His Presence,” “Walking with His People,” and “Walking in His Mission.” But in a way that I hope will be helpful, we’ll also consider some of the habits and practices that can help to take these priorities out of the realm of theory and into the realm of lives that are being changed. So let me encourage you to worship with us as we start the New Year. And let’s see if we can live “Every Day with Jesus” as we seek God’s kingdom and share His love with others.



Pastor Alex

New Short-Term Sunday School Class



Calvary’s next Sunday school short-term class will begin on Sunday, January 23, and is based on pastor and best-selling author Tim Keller’s book, “The Prodigal God.” Participants will dive deeply into one of Jesus’ best-loved parables to learn more about the depth of God’s love and to understand how His grace extends into unexpected places.

This is a six-week study, and there will be an “interest and introductory session” on Sunday, January 16 at 9:45 am in room 112. For those who are interested but have other commitments during Sunday school, this study will also be led on Wednesday evenings beginning January 19.

More details about this study (and accompanying videos) can be found on RightNow Media (<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/226>). Discounted study guides will be available until Jan. 16. Additional books may be ordered at regular price after that time.

To reserve your spot (and book), you can email Becky Critz at bcritz1129@gmail.com, or you can send her a text at 336-341-8249.

A Gift Delayed: “Rest, Reflect, Renew” and a Tale of Two Summers

More than two years ago, God blessed Calvary by providing a grant that would allow our pastor and congregation to share in a life-changing sabbatical experience. Our pastor, who has ministered for more than 30 years with no extended break, would get an opportunity to take some much-needed time off to recharge his spiritual batteries. Additionally, our congregation would have the privilege of learning from excellent teachers during our pastor’s absence.

Organized around the theme of “Rest, Reflect, Renew,” the sabbatical was scheduled for the summer of 2020. God had other plans, however, and the coronavirus pandemic intervened just a few months before it was to begin. At first, we anticipated rescheduling the sabbatical for the summer of 2021. But ongoing travel disruptions made that impossible; and as a result, both the sabbatical and the grant to fund it were “put on the shelf,” waiting for the day when this unique experience would be possible.

Clearly, the pandemic is still creating uncertainty, but there are now tools for handling the coronavirus that give us the confidence to move forward. Therefore, plans are being made to “Rest, Reflect, Renew” in the summer of 2022. In the months ahead, you’ll be hearing more about what’s included in the sabbatical—both for the pastor and for the church—and you’ll have opportunities to ask questions, to pray, and to participate in making this a transformative experience for everyone in our church family.

Please join us in praying that God will lead us to “Rest, Reflect, Renew” in a way that draws us closer to Him, closer to each other, and deeper into His call for our church. We encourage you to be on the lookout as additional information is provided. But even more, we encourage you to speak with Pastor Alex if you have questions, suggestions, or concerns about the sabbatical experience. God had a purpose in giving our church family this grant, and we trust that He also had a purpose in its postponement over the last two years. May we eagerly anticipate all that God wants to do in and through us as the sabbatical becomes a reality in the summer of 2022.



Mid-Week Ministries Are Back!

Calvary’s Wednesday night Ministries will begin again on January 19. However, because of changes in the needs of our church family, there will be some changes in our schedule. Most notably, we won’t be serving a Wednesday night snack supper as we start the new year. Instead, everyone participating in our Mid-Week ministries (child, youth, or adult) is encouraged to join us in the Fellowship Hall at 6 o’clock to share a brief time of prayer. After this, Christian growth opportunities for all ages will run until 7:15:

- Kids will start with a music time that runs until 6:20. From there, younger children will go to Mission Friends, while kids in grades 1 to 5 will head off to “Explorers,” a time of Bible study, games, and crafts that will be almost like a “mini-VBS.”
- Adults will have two options: a Wednesday night reprise of our Sunday morning Bible study on “The Prodigal God” led by Becky Critz, or a time of prayer and Bible study based on the model of “Lectio Divina” or “Holy Reading” and led by Pastor Alex.

Memorials

Judy Bryant Ernest by Brenda Barfield
Betty Jean Hull by Chad & Janet Hull
Mildred Jarrell by Margaret Smith
Bill & Mildred Overby by Gray & Mary Jane Shelton
Pam Saunders and Lonnie & Rachel Jackson

Dear Calvary...

Thank you so much. It is really appreciated.
Jenny Moorefield

Thank you very much for the sweet ornaments and candy! Your kindness and generosity have meant so much to us over the years. We hope you have a blessed and Merry Christmas!

Sincerely
Franklin Elementary School Kinder Team

What a joy and blessing to have been back in church these past 3 Sundays. The Christmas Musical this morning was beautiful. Marvin and I have been so blessed with your sharing, kindness, cards and prayers we’ve received this past year. Our church family is so special to us. We thank you for the filled stocking. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

Marvin and Glenda Beasley

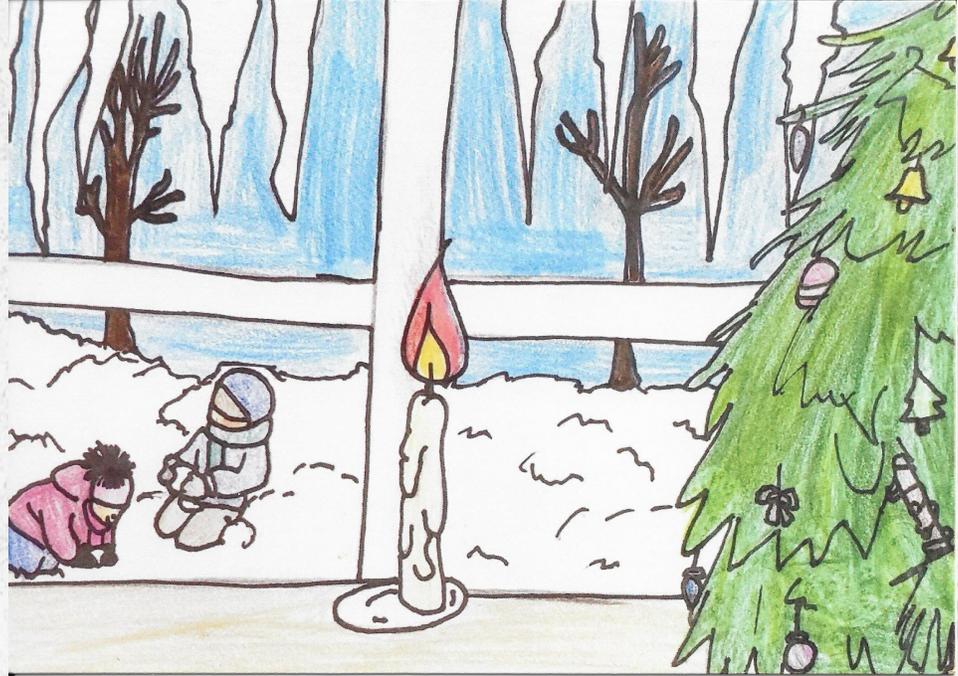
Congrats to Our Young People

In his final sermon of 2021, Pastor Alex suggested that one of the ways we can nurture our young people in faith is to affirm their gifts and to celebrate their accomplishments. So as we move into 2022, we'd like to make a habit of sharing the achievements that demonstrate God's activity in their lives. If you become aware of something special that one of our children, youth, or young adults has done, please be sure to let us know. And if you see one of these young people highlighted in the newsletter, why not consider passing along your personal word of congratulations? For this month, we'd like to highlight:



Simon Cawley:

Simon just graduated from UNC Chapel Hill this fall with "Highest Distinction in Public Policy." He plans to attend law school, beginning in the fall of 2022.



Quinn Simandle: One of Quinn's original drawings (above) was selected by Meadowview Magnet School to be used as one of their Christmas cards.

Reminders for a New Year

As we begin a New Year, we'd like to remind you of two resources here at Calvary of which you might want to take advantage. First, for those of you who don't carry cash and who don't always remember to write a check, you can use our online giving tools to give your tithes and offerings and to support the work that God is doing here at Calvary. Just visit our church website (www.calvarymountain.org), click on "Give Now" in the main menu, and you'll be taken to a page where you can make either a one-time or a recurring donation, which you can give to the general fund or to one of several designated funds. If you create an account, you can even get immediate access to a record of all your contributions for the year! And when you give online, please consider checking the box to "add 2.5% to help cover the costs of processing." That way, the entire value of your gift support ministry.



In addition, don't forget that as part of our church family, you can get a free membership to "RightNow Media." Described by some as the "Netflix of Bible studies," RightNow Media lets you and your family access thousands of videos, including a wide variety of Bible studies on numerous topics from some of today's best teachers, as well as documentaries, devotionals, and wholesome entertainment for the kids. If you haven't yet activated your RightNow membership, just contact Pastor Alex (pastoralex4@gmail.com), and he'll send you an email invitation that you can use to sign up.

We're thankful that you're a part of our church family, and we want to do all we can to support your growth in Christ. Please be sure to let us know if there are ways that we can serve you. And let's have a great year!