



Calvary *Herald*

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Rested...*Reflecting*...Renewed

Dear Calvary Family,

Over the past three months, you've given me a priceless gift. You've allowed me to step aside from the responsibilities and routines of ministry so that I could spend time with my family, seek God's presence, and recharge my spiritual batteries. *And I'm happy to report that your gift has been put to good use!* Teresa, Windham, and I shared a great vacation early this summer. I visited with my mother, my brother, and Teresa's family. And as most of you are keenly aware, I spent the last month and half cycling through the British Isles, visiting sites related to the development and spread of the Christian faith in that part of the world. But now I'm back. And while the process of reflecting on these experiences will undoubtedly go on for some time, I want you to know that I feel rested; I feel renewed; and I feel eager to take up once again the opportunities that God gives all of us to love Him, to love each other, and to share His work in the world.

Not surprisingly, there are a great many people I want to thank. I'm grateful to my sabbatical team, who played a key role in planning the pilgrimage that all of us have taken this summer. I'm grateful to Bracey, Teresa, Billie, our deacons, and so many others for leading our congregation and sustaining our ministry in my absence. I'm grateful to Roger Gilbert for providing excellent preaching and pastoral care – and to Adam Mabry, Tracy Radosevic, and Kyle Matthews for their teaching and worship leadership. And perhaps most of all, I'm grateful to all of you—for your prayers, for your commitment to our church family, and for the love that inspired you to give me this gift in the first place.

As I step back into my work as your pastor, I'll be continuing to reflect on the lessons I've learned from this sabbatical, and I'm sure that some of them will find their way into sermons and devotionals that I share with you in the months ahead. But if you'd like to know more about what I saw and did and felt, let me encourage you to stop by and chat with me. Talking with you about what *I* experienced will undoubtedly help me discern what God did in my heart and life. And hearing from you about what *you* experienced will help me discern what God is doing as we move forward.

I trust that God wouldn't have given us the gift of this sabbatical unless He wanted to prepare us for new things that He wants to do within and around us. So let's continue to seek the Father, to follow the Son, and to love each other in the power of the Spirit as we discover together how God's kingdom is coming to and through us.

Pastor Alex

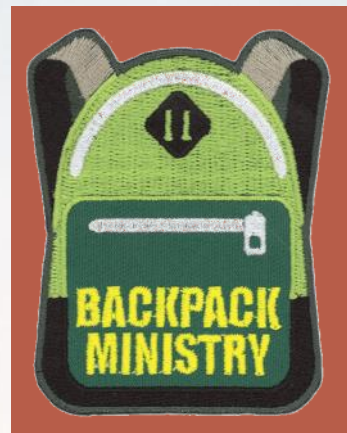


The Backpack Challenge

By the time you receive this newsletter, area schools will be back in session. And as much as we might wish it otherwise, there will be students in our schools who don't have consistent access to healthy food because their families are struggling to make ends meet. Naturally, that's a problem that's too big for our church to fix. But we have decided to be agents of God's loving care to meet that need at the school closest to us by supporting the Backpack Program at Franklin Elementary School. Beginning this month, 75 to 85 students will be sent home each weekend with a bag of food and snacks that will help keep them from going hungry.

As you can imagine, providing this ministry requires a church-wide effort! First, it takes financial resources. It costs more than \$1000 each month to provide these backpacks full of food. And that's why we're asking you to participate in this month's "Backpack Challenge," through which we hope to raise \$5000 to fund this year's ministry. To give to this project, please make sure that your check and/or envelope is marked "Backpack," or select "Franklin Backpack" as the designation for your online gift.

The Backpack Program also takes human resources. We need folks who will travel down to Winston to purchase the necessary supplies. (Please note: Those who help in this way generally need to have a truck or SUV – or have a friend with another vehicle to help transport the food.) We also need Sunday School classes and other volunteers who will help pack the food each month so that it can be delivered to the school. To participate in these ways, please contact the pastor.



Upcoming Blood Drive

Calvary's next Blood Drive will take place on Sunday, September 18, from 11 am to 3:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Your donation saves lives and offers you a practical way to bless others. To schedule an appointment, visit www.redcrossblood.org and use the sponsor code "Calvary" or contact Mary Jane Shelton. You can also contact Mary Jane if you'd like to support this effort by registering donors or staffing the snack area.

Selecting Servants of God's Church

Deacons play a key role in the work of our church. By assisting the pastor, serving our members, and guiding our ministries, they provide both practical and spiritual leadership. And this month, if you're a member of Calvary, you can nominate the individuals from whom we will select new deacons to serve a three-year term that begins in January of 2023.

According to our constitution, you can nominate men or women who are at least 21 years old, who've been members of Calvary for at least two years, and who possess the kind of character and spiritual maturity that is described in passages like Acts 6:3, Romans 16:1, and 1 Timothy 3. However, the following individuals cannot be nominated because they are currently serving and will be rotating off the board of deacons at the end of this year: Mike Francis, Ralph Hiatt, Brent Hull, Tony Martin, and Lee Mills.

Deacon nomination forms will be available in the Sunday worship bulletin and in church information centers on Sunday, September 11 and Sunday, September 18. However, you must turn in your completed forms no later than Sunday, September 18, by placing them in the offering plate or bringing them to the church office. The five most-nominated individuals who agree to serve will be placed on this year's slate of deacons. And we will vote by ballot to affirm these deacons on Sunday, October 9.



If you have any questions about our deacons or the deacon selection process, please speak with the pastor or one of our current deacons. And please pray for God's Spirit to be at work as we seek to identify those through whom God wants to lead our congregation both now and in the future.

Mid-Week Ministries

Join us on Wednesdays this Fall for a Spiritual Recharge!

Calvary's Mid-Week ministries for children, youth, and adults will resume on Wednesday, September 14. Activities begin at 6 pm with a brief time of prayer for everyone in the fellowship hall. This will be followed by Mission Friends for 4-5 year olds, Explorers for 1st-5th graders, and Bible studies for youth and adults. Adults will have two study options: "*Never Too Late*"—a study about encouraging faith in your adult children led by Becky Critz—and "*Jumping into the General Epistles*"—a study of those lesser-known letters in the New Testament led by Pastor Alex.

Nursery care is available for families that need it. And although we will not be providing a snack supper this fall, there will be some snacks available for those whose schedule makes it tough to squeeze in a meal. We encourage you to recharge your spiritual batteries by studying God's Word and strengthening your bonds with brothers and sisters in Christ.



Youth Encounter

Encounter—Calvary's Sunday night gathering for middle school and high school youth—will kickoff for the 2022-23 school year on Sunday, September 11. From 5:30 to 6:30 each Sunday evening, students will have the chance to eat, play games, study scripture, and support one another. For more information about weekly Encounter meetings or any of our other activities for youth, please contact Alex Bracey.



Make a joyful noise!

Many people in our church have untapped musical talents, and we invite you to *share* those talents by participating in the Sanctuary Choir or the Uplift Worship Band! Choir rehearsals start at 7:15 on Wednesday nights. And if you're not sure you want to "join" the Choir, you can come for the first 15 to 20 minutes to sing only in our Christmas cantata. Band rehearsals begin at 7:00 on Thursday nights. And if you like to sing—or can plan an instrument and read chord charts—we'd love for you to give it a try. Even if you don't want to "join" the Band, you could help give our other musicians an occasional (and well-deserved) break. Please talk to Teresa Martin if you'd like to know more about Calvary's music ministry!



Dear Calvary Family,

Words cannot express how thankful we are for all the cards, visits, calls, and meal during our beloved Pap's passing. We love our church family and felt your love during our very sad time. Papa was very blessed and although his swift passing was hard on us but thankfully was amazingly peaceful for him. He literally passed away in his church pew, right into the presence of the Lord. We love you and appreciate your thoughtfulness.

In Christ,

Stan, Sheila and Nick Wilson

Dear Calvary Baptist,

Even though I have a home in Mount Airy that I return to occasionally, I wanted to reach out to thank you for the devotional guide that was composed by the people of Calvary for the summer of 2022. The *Rest Reflect Renew* booklet has been such a beautiful reminder of God and a wonderful blessing. In the world in which we live, this kind of blessings can mean so much each and every day, and then we can go out and share with others. I thank Claudia Bryant for sharing it with me. I hope you will continue to do more of the same, because I would like to look forward to fall with each of your kind words.

Thanks again,

Gini Booker,

daughter of Warren and Edith Booker of Mount Airy