



Calvary Herald

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The Pastor Reflects: Finding Our Rhythm

I don't know about you, but I've been encouraged in recent weeks by the feeling that our country and our church are beginning to emerge from coronavirus pandemic. That's not to say that all the uncertainties are gone. But here at Calvary, the experience of seeing more and more members of our church family together on Sunday mornings—not to mention having guests with us in worship again—gives me hope that we'll soon be "*finding our rhythm*" and getting reconnected to each other and to the ministries that allow us to serve both God and our community.

For me, one of the "*rhythms*" that I'm most eager to "*find*" has to do with sharing visits. Right or wrong, I more-or-less stopped visiting for much of this past year—in part because many hospitals and nursing homes weren't allowing visits, and in part because I didn't want to place any of our homebound friends at risk by dropping in to see them. However, now that more and more folks have been fully vaccinated (including me), I'm eager to make up for lost time. Of course, because we have quite a few members who aren't able to get out much, it will take me a while to make my rounds. And while I don't have a list that prioritizes who I should see first, I do develop my schedule based on my *always-imperfect* perceptions about who needs a visit and who wants one. So, let me say that if you haven't seen me in a while and you'd like for me to stop by...please let me know! There's nothing wrong with making me aware of your ministry needs. And since I'm not a mind reader, you might be doing both of us a favor.

For our church family, I'm eager for us to "*find our rhythm*" when it comes to Sunday mornings. As I've already indicated, many of you have already come "back to church." And I hope that trend will continue as more and more of our members get fully vaccinated. However, you know as well as I do that our "Sunday morning rhythm" involves more than just being on the church property. It includes shaking hands, giving hugs, singing hymns, *and all of this while not wearing masks!*

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Hold the Date for VBS!
June 13-16, 2021



Volunteers are still needed,
even if you can only serve
for one night.

And don't miss this year's
Adult VBS track,
featuring a study of Nehemiah.

For more info, contact Ashley Mills
ahmills11@yahoo.com

Happy Anniversary, CBC!

On Sunday, May 2, Calvary Baptist Church will celebrate 108 years of worshiping, growing, and serving together. Of course, a lot has changed in those years. Families have welcomed new life and have mourned the passing of loved one. Ministries have come and gone. Significant challenges—like wars, business closures, and even outbreaks of disease—have been met and overcome. But some things haven't changed, like the faithfulness of God, the call of Jesus, and the power of God's Spirit, who continues to empower and direct us in our kingdom mission.

This year's festivities won't be quite the same as those we've planned for previous anniversaries. Because we haven't emerged completely from the pandemic, we won't be having a potluck. And because it's not a "milestone" anniversary, we haven't invited special guest speakers from our congregation's past. But we will give thanks for the people and events that have made us who we are, and we will pray for God's blessing as we seek to become who God wants us to be.

As is our custom, we'll be receiving an Anniversary Offering, and this year's collection will be earmarked for renovating our youth ministry area. We'd appreciate your support as we seek to enhance our facility and create an environment that nurtures our congregation's future.

Gifts and Memorials

In Memory of Mildred Jarrell
by Margaret Smith

In memory of Bill and Mildred Overby
by David Overby

In Honor of Guy and Mary Sparger
by Jim and Lilnette Phillips



Red Cross Blood Drive

May 16, 2001

11 AM—3:30 PM

To sign up, visit:

www.redcrossblood.org

Happy Anniversary, Bracey!

It's almost hard to imagine, but on May 1, Alex Bracey will have been the Minister to Youth and Children here at Calvary for NINE years! Of course, a few things have changed since he joined our staff. He married his wife Melissa (who's a gifted servant of God in her own right). And the two of them welcomed their beautiful daughter Emory (who before too long will be participating in her dad's ministries for children and youth). And along the way, Alex has become a well-known face in school lunch rooms and at sporting events as he builds relationships with Calvary's kids and with young people across our community. We are richly blessed to have a man of such character and commitment serving with us. So, if you have an opportunity, be sure to let him know that he's appreciated. And even more, be sure to pray for Alex, his family, and our young people. After all, these are challenging times for them, just as they are for the rest of us. And they'll need God's presence—along with our support—to unleash the power of His Spirit in their lives. Thank you, Alex, for your faithful ministry! And here's to many more years together.

Let No Debt Remain Outstanding

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another" (Romans 13:8). And thanks to your stewardship of God's gifts, our church family was recently able to pay off the debt that was still owed on our previous facility renovations. Retiring this debt early has saved us a significant amount of interest, and these savings have only been possible because you've been so committed to the work that God is doing among us. Of course, there are other facility improvements that we still hope to make. As you'll read elsewhere in this newsletter, we soon hope to renovate our youth ministry area. And there have been preliminary discussions about building a new picnic shelter to replace the one that was removed a couple years ago. When we're ready to start these projects, having funds on hand will reduce the amount that we need to borrow. So, any contributions that you continue to make toward debt retirement will give us a head start on these important improvements. If you have any questions about church finances or specific projects, please contact a member of the Finance Committee or the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Dear Calvary...

Thank you for the cards and prayers during the passing of my brother, Jack. You are all very special. I can feel the prayers.

In Christian love,
Linda Gordon

We enjoy watching your worship services on Facebook. And getting to see our granddaughter Megan Gentry is always a plus!

Jack and Connie Scheid

We want to thank everyone for their calls, cards, gift cards and prayers for us during our bouts with covid and me continuing with pneumonia. It hasn't been easy but the Lord, along with your thoughts and prayers, has brought us through. Thank you all and may you be blessed.

Johnny and Mary Lynn Goins

Thank you for all the thoughts and prayers. All the cards, calls and prayers were much appreciated. Thanks for the gift card, the whole family will enjoy that! Thanks again for everything.

The Gregory Family
(Rex and Stephanie)

In this season of Easter and renewal, please let me say how grateful my brother Stephen and I are for all the kindness that the Calvary family showed to us during the illnesses and passing of our parents, Mildred and Bill Overby, last summer and fall. Billie welcomed us at the church office; Alex delivered thoughtful, comforting, and inspirational words and music at the funerals; Mary Jane and Jan checked in on us at home and provided food on behalf of the congregation; others attended the services, offered support and condolences, and surrounded us in the grace of prayer—these are just a few of the faces and forms, I know, of your *unique* heartfelt and powerful ministry in the community. Obviously, the Calvary tradition of caring—which we know well from our own early life experiences there—lives on! And we appreciate it so much. Have a Blessed Easter!

David Overby

Thanks to all of you for the love and affirmation that you shared on my 10th Anniversary here at Calvary! Your cards, Facebook messages, and the church family's gift were all wonderful blessings. But the greatest blessing is that of serving such a great group of people. Please continue to pray for the ministry we share. And may the Lord give us many more years of fruitful service!

Pastor Alex

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Now, if you ask me exactly when that will be possible, my best answer is, "I don't know." All of us, I think, want it to have happened yesterday. But we also want to resume these activities in a way that safeguards our members and guests. We can ease concerns, of course, if everyone gets vaccinated. And even though some people are hesitant when it comes to these vaccines, unless your doctor has given you some medical reason to avoid them, I think the experience of our church family suggests there's not too much to worry about. So, if you haven't had your shot (or shots), I encourage you to do so.

Last but not least, I'm eager for us to "*find some new rhythms*" in our walk with Christ. If we stop and think about it, I suspect that each of us can identify ways in which this past year has revealed "weak spots" and "missing pieces" in our spiritual lives. As individuals, perhaps we've seen our need for more study and sharing with our brothers and sisters in Christ. And if you feel that way, this might be a good time to check out a Sunday morning Bible study – or for us to start some *new* small groups that meet at different times and in different places (like online). As a church, perhaps we've seen our need to be more intentional about raising up new leaders – or about finding ways to stay connected to each other, even when we can't meet physically. And I think we've definitely been reminded about the many ministry needs in our community! So the task of these coming months includes not only getting back to the "old things" we miss doing, but also discovering the "new things" that God is calling us to do.

Let me close, however, by saying that I can't think of any group of people with whom I'd want to share that journey more than I want to share it with you. Although we just marked ten years together (and please see my 'thank you' note elsewhere in this newsletter), I'm convinced that God has even better things in store in the years to come. And that's not because I trust in me (because I'm all too aware of my weaknesses). Nor is it because I trust in you (although I do think that you're awesome)! No, it's because I trust in our faithful and wonder-working God. And I know that He is able to do "immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine." So let's "find our rhythm" and discover together where He's leading us now.