

CALVARY CROSS ROADS

November 14, 2019

Worship This Sunday: **November 17, 2019**

Rev. Sarah Schlieckert, Pastor

SERVICE OF DISCERNMENT AND DIRECTION "YIELD"



Acts 2:1-12

Matthew 16:13-25

We hope you will continue in a time of intentional prayer and discernment for our congregation during the months of November and December. Please make time each day to pray for our shared ministry, as well as to listen for God's guidance.

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Mark Your Calendar

November 15 - 5-7pm Our Place Waldorf Friday Night Meal

November 16 - 10am SPRC Meeting

November 17 - 9am Sunday School, 10am Worship Service, 11am **STATE OF THE CHURCH MEETING** 5-7pm Our Place Waldorf Sunday Night Meal

November 18 - 12 noon Friendship Club Birthday Luncheon

November 19 - 6:30pm AA Meeting

November 20 - 6pm Quilters Guild, 7pm 12-Step Program

November 22 - 5-7pm Our Place Waldorf Friday Night Meal

November 24 - 9am Sunday School, 10am Worship Service, 5-7pm Our Place Waldorf Sunday Night Meal

November 25 - 10:30am Friendship Club Dominoes

CUMC message board and upcoming events

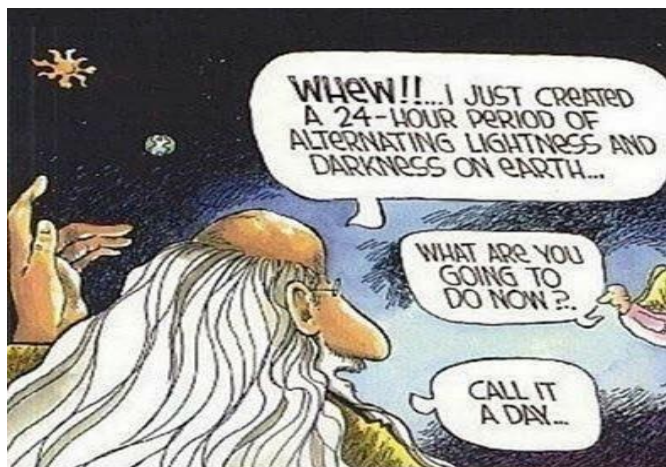
The SPRC meeting has been rescheduled. The meeting will be held Saturday, November 16th at 10:00 a.m.

State-Of-The-Church



As we look ahead at the New Year and reflect on where we are now as a congregation and where God might be calling us to go, please mark your calendar for a State of The Church meeting this **Sunday, November 17th** immediately following Worship Service. All are invited to attend.

In the meantime, I invite you into a time of deep prayer and discernment for our life together as a congregation. Please devote time each day to praying for our congregation, seeking God's guidance for our work together, and asking for God's wisdom as we discern plans for the future. We will be sharing more information about where we are as we prepare for and at the State of the Church meeting.



Next Sunday, November 24th, is our Annual Stewardship Sunday. Estimate of giving cards for 2020 will be distributed and you will be asked to fill them out with your intention for giving next year. Please pray about this as you make your financial commitment to support Calvary and its ministries.

During the worship service, you will be invited forward to place your 2020 pledge cards into

Friendship Club



Soup Luncheon

Sunday, December 1st

Immediately following Worship Service on **December 1st**, the Friendship Club Ladies will be serving a variety of delicious homemade soups, and, for dessert - cake and ice cream! Please plan to join them!

The Friendship Club needs your help. They will be decorating the church for Christmas on **Monday, December 2nd at 10:00 a.m.** The more people we have come out the more fun we have and the quicker we get the job done.

Speak to Marlene Phillips or Rebecca Morris if you have questions or if you are interested in helping.



SPECIAL MUSIC VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers for December. If you would like to share your special musical or instrumental talents with the congregation, please add your name to the signup sheet located on the choir room door across from the church office.

CUMC message board and upcoming events



Believe it or not the season of Advent is almost here. The first Sunday of Advent is **December 1st**. We need families or groups from within the church to participate in the Advent Wreath lighting each of the four weeks of Advent and for Christmas Eve.

If you are interested in helping please speak to Pastor Sarah.



BABY SHOWER FOR JESUS

On Sunday, December 15th, we will have a **Baby Shower for Jesus** following worship. This will be a very special Sunday, since this is also the day we have scheduled our **children's pageant**. What is a Baby Shower for Jesus? Well, it's a fun way to donate baby items to families in need. We will be sending items to the Catherine Foundation as well as Lifestyles, who both help families in our area. Needed items include diapers and wipes, new baby items of any kind, as well as gift cards. Let's see how many little ones we can bless this year! *(Please do not wrap your items)* The Friendship Club will be coordinating the Baby Shower party, and will provide light refreshments and maybe a couple fun games! Please plan to join us!

For the past few years we have been preparing and delivering a holiday meal for the first responders who are at work on **Christmas Eve** in Waldorf.

If you are interested in helping with this project please speak to Stacy Feldman or you can contact her via email jfeld0928@md.metrocast.net.



Christmas Eve
SERVICE

This year we will have a traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service with communion at **7:00 p.m.**

Anyone interested in providing special music for the Christmas Eve service please speak to Pastor Sarah.

DENNIS the MENACE



"IF HEAVEN IS THAT PRETTY ON THE BOTTOM, THINK HOW IT MUST LOOK ON TOP!"

Pastor Sarah's Reflection

As I have been reading through Acts this fall, I was struck by a scene from the early work of the Apostles. In Acts 5, Peter and the apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are powerfully preaching and performing incredible miracles of healing in Jesus' name. This rouses the jealousy, Acts tells us, of the religious leaders, who decide to haul Peter and the apostles in for questioning.

As you might imagine, this questioning is hardly friendly, and much like many of Jesus' own interactions with the Jewish religious leaders, reflects minds already made up—the "questioning" is really more about seeking to carry out a pre-determined penalty rather than to learn the truth.

That's why it was so striking to me to read again the words of Gamaliel, who Acts tells us was "respected by all the people." After asking for the apostles to be held outside, he speaks privately with his fellow leaders and after recounting a prior false teacher whose movement fell apart on its own, he says,

So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; because if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; 39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them—in that case you may even be found fighting against God! (Acts 5:38-39)

After being thus convinced by Gamaliel, the leaders have the apostles flogged, warned not to talk about Jesus (good luck!) and released.

History has, then, testified to the truth and power of Jesus and thus of the testimony of those apostles.

All of this is profoundly instructive for us, I think, as we reflect on the ways we can become so deeply engaged in justifying ourselves or the rightness of our interpretation of God's will. Surely we are rather called to filter our own confidence, sometimes even arrogance, in our own right-ness with the humility that God's will may not be our own.

But it doesn't stop there. Because Peter, who is the only of the apostles named in this section, later in Acts uses a similar approach to advocate for the inclusion of Gentiles in the early church.

In Acts 11, as Peter is sharing about his own experience and his guidance by God to include non-circumcised God-fearers in his ministry (and as he asks the other apostles to allow for this going forward, he says, "If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" (Acts 11:17)

The similarities, it seems to me, from Gamaliel's words are striking. Here is Peter, speaking to the other apostles, all of whom together lived through that questioning before the Jewish leaders in Acts 5, reminding them of the power of God that this Jewish leader reminded his own colleagues.

"Who was I that I could hinder God?"

Pastor Sarah's Reflection - con't.

What powerful words of humility and submission. What a profound challenge to us today when we seek to so carefully and tightly control the ways we understand God at work.

For me, these words are both words of challenge and promise. These words challenge me to withhold my own arrogance and confidence in my own determinations. But these same words also give me hope that God's will cannot be frustrated. We may not choose or be willing to be open to God's will. We may find ourselves, even in our attempts to stick to what we've always understood about God, to actually be frustrating the outpouring and work of the Holy Spirit.

Before I preach each Sunday, I offer the following prayer, "Almighty God, send your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. Speak through me, if need be in spite of me, and always beyond me, that your word might be heard by your people this day. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen."

These words, borrowed from Greg Jones, the dean of Duke Divinity School, capture what faithfulness to God is more generally. Sometimes God works through us. Sometimes, God must work in spite of us. Perhaps we might say that God worked in spite of the effort of the Jewish religious leaders in Acts 5. God certainly worked in spite of Peter at many points. But as Peter grew and matured in the faith, God was also able to work *through* Peter more effectively. Think of it—the same man who received that famous "Get three behind me Satan!" (I think this line is always best in the KJV!) is also the man who convinced (THINK of it!) the other apostles that circumcision was no longer a requirement for all for faithfulness to God.

Not because of precise arguments, but because of trust in how God had been and was continuing to be at work. Even in spite of the assumptions and understandings that the apostles had.

In the climate of our world today, an argument like Peter's (or Gamaliel's for that matter) is likely to be met by incredulity and distaste by people of faith and people of doubt alike. Indeed, sometimes it is precisely we of faith who stand most firmly against trusting God's unfolding guidance. It is so very hard to let go of a firmly held belief that has been grounded in how we have understood God's will up to that point.

But, if we are able to loosen our grip, and trust God's unfolding will, incredible things are possible.

After hearing Peter's argument—and really, it was more of a personal testimony than an argument—Acts tells us that the apostles, "were silenced." What's more, "they praised God, saying, 'Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.'" (Acts 11:18)

May we too be silenced in the face of testimony that challenges our established conclusions and understandings. May we truly reflect our confidence in the working of the Holy Spirit even today. May we never let our own ways and understandings hinder what God is doing. Rather than setting and determining God's will, may we carefully discern where God is at work and leading, and get on board.

Grace and Peace.

Pastor Sarah

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*We seek to be a faithful
congregation sharing Jesus
Christ's love by feeding our
neighbors physically,
emotionally and spiritually.*



Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

We're on the Web...
www.calvumc.org

**Submit information to be
included in the newsletter or
suggestions to:
calvumc@calvumc.org**

CUMC message board and upcoming events



Keep those fall recipes coming - with Thanksgiving just a couple weeks away, here is a recipe from Rebecca Morris - it could be used for some of that leftover turkey. One of her grandson's favorites.

TEX-MEX CHICKEN BUNDLES

Serves 4. Prep and cook time: 30 minutes

Serve with packaged Spanish rice and Mexi-corn.

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves

Mayonnaise

1 cup Cheez-it crackers, crushed

1/2 package taco seasoning mix

1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

1 4oz chopped green chilies (optional)

Salsa

Sour cream

Spray a microwaveable baking dish with non-stick spray. Crush cracker crumbs in a gallon bag and then mix in taco seasoning. Flatten chicken breast by pounding with a mallet between two sheets of plastic wrap (or use thin chicken breast). Brush each chicken breast lightly on both sides with mayo then place in bag with cracker crumbs and shake until completely coated. Place about 1 TBSP shredded cheese and 1-2 tsp green chilies in the center of each chicken breast. Roll up and place in baking dish, seam side down. Sprinkle with the rest of the cheese. Cover dish with microwaveable plastic wrap and vent. Microwave on HIGH for about 10 minutes. Internal temperature should be 170 degrees. Serve with salsa and sour cream.



PRAYERS LIST

Marion Schreiber	Martha Anderson
Gordan Christmas	Linda Muller
Bobby Vermillion	Sara Wilson
Bob Bushman	Linda Black
Flordeliza Azurin	Stacy Feldman
John Martin	

*To have names added to the prayer chain contact Pastor Sarah
(pastor@calvumc.org) or Kathie Auth (calvumc@calvumc.org)*