

Lent 2010: *Outstretched Hands*



**Come touch
his healing hands
Come touch
his wounded side
And feel the love that waits
like a bridegroom
for the bride
Come touch
his healing hands
Come touch
his wounded side
and feel the love that's giving
broken hearts new life
Outstretched arms
waiting for you
Love's embrace always**

Lenten Services

This year we will focus on the theme, "Outstretched Hands" which includes God's powerful and outstretched hands creating the world, Jesus' hands outstretched in love on the cross for us, and finally, our hands, stretched out beyond ourselves for others. The ELCA theme, "God's Work, Our Hands" helps us to support the theme too, as do two banners we have in the Fellowship Hall right now.

We are grateful to have a variety of speakers from our congregation and outside telling their stories of God's Work and Our Hands in their lives, vocations, and faith:

February 28.....Rob McNair
March 3.....Carla Gauwitz
March 10.....Tracy Bieger
March 17.....Rand Stolee
March 24.....Elena Arvig
Kjirsten Kroenke
Whitney Delaney

Lenten Series begin at 6:30 each Wednesday evening, through March 24. We will use the Holden Evening Prayer liturgy. Come early for the wonderful Lenten dinner served each Wednesday night at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall, hosted by the Youth.

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

Maundy Thursday.... April 1

Worship1:30PM + 6:30PM

Good Friday April 2

Worship 6:30PM

Easter Sunday..... April 4

Worship . 8:30AM + 10:45AM

MARRIAGE

Congratulations to Kim Hofland and Jeremy Guck who were married at Calvary on January 30.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

Begins Sunday, March 14. "Spring ahead" and turn your clock ahead an hour on March 13 before you retire.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

1st-6th grade Sunday school kids have memory work that will be recited in April. Please contact Tracy Bieger if you don't have a copy of your child's memory work.

Sunday, March 7 there will be Pray N Play instead of regular classes.

Palm Sunday, March 28, our Sunday School children will wave palms and sing at the 10:45 service.

ADULT STUDIES

Join Jeff Tweeton in the Matthias Room Sundays between services reading the stories of "Listening For God." It's not too late to join, books are at the office for \$10

Open The Book. Find Yourself." Join us in the Matthias Room as we study Jesus' parable to encourage finding ourselves. Pastor Holtan facilitates the study.

"Seekers" is like a college or seminary level class. We read good books and expect homework each week to prepare for serious discussion and meet 8:30 to 9:30 AM Tuesdays in the Matthias Room. "The Apostle's Creed for Everyman" will be the topic beginning March 16. Contact Tracy Bieger if interested in ordering this book and joining in the study.

Running The Race

"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14

Do you know what it's like to run in a race? I recently ran in one, and many of you who have will empathize with me when I describe the feeling, especially if you get caught with what is apparently known as "the wave."

You start out full of strength and energy, running fast with everyone else. It seems like it will be easy, your legs are pumping hard.

After about 10 seconds, you realize there is no way you can keep this up. Your breathing is already labored, your heart is pounding fast and hard. After another minute or maybe even two, you cannot go on. You hit the wall. You might even stop and walk a few seconds.

But...all of sudden, something (endorphins? fear of being beaten by a pregnant woman?) kicks in and gives you the perseverance you need to continue. You get your focus back, and finish the race.

I think this happens with our faith, too. At first it's easy, but it becomes boring, even unsatisfying or pointless. We hit a wall, but through grace we somehow find new inspiration that leads us into new service.

We need the goal to run, a finish line, and the vision of the end of the race.



There is a story out there somewhere of a woman who was a spectator at the New York City Marathon, and she was filled with emotion just cheering the runners on.

We imagine that Christ is at the finish line, waiting for us with open arms, but He is running the race with us, helping us up through every stumble and obstacle, cheering us on to the finish line.

God's Peace, *Tracy Bieger*

Notes from the Music Man



Community Lenten Choir 2010 Cantata

February 21, the 2010 Community Lenten Choir began working on its 28th annual cantata to be presented on Palm Sunday, March 28. This year's work, *Once Upon A Tree*, is penned by Pepper Choplin. *Once Upon A Tree* tells the story of Christ's passion through the eyes of Luke. Our next practice as you read this will be March 7 at 7 p.m. at Calvary. If you would like to join the choir, please come to the next practice!

Presentations of *Once Upon A Tree* will be 3 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in New York Mills and 7 p.m. at St. Henry's Catholic Church in Perham. Join us for reflection as you begin your Holy Week journey!

Thanks to all those who are helping with Holden Evening Prayer each week at Wednesday Lenten services. This year we will project the service...you will not need those little booklets any more!

Our Contemporary Group continues to work hard for you, leading worship each week. Calvary is so grateful for the many people involved in this ministry.

Choir Corner. Our Senior Choir will sing Joel Raney's inspiring arrangement of the beloved hymn *Holy, Holy, Holy* on March 14. March 28 which is Palm Sunday this year, the Choir will be singing Lari Goss's exciting rhythmic arrangement of Jeff Switzer's *Hosanna*. Our Youth Choir is working on *Delight Yourself In The Lord*, and our Carol Choir is working on *The King Of Me*, both to be sung in March. The times are yet to be .

Jonah and the Wailers is looking at singing *Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying* on March 7.

May peace be with you as we together travel on our Lenten journey in 2010, reaching out for those outstretched arms just waiting for us to come into them.

In His Peace and Love, *Russ Bunker*

Women's Ministry at Calvary

Greetings from Terri Olson, 2010 Women's Coordinator. You may contact me during March on my cell phone (218-334-2770) or by e-mail at olson.ter@gmail.com.

We are on our Lenten journey this month. I once read that the word Lenten originated from the word "lengthen," for the lengthening of days in this season. That symbolism has been powerful for me. Every year in late autumn as the days shorten, I long for the shortest day—December 21—only because it means daylight will then start becoming progressively longer. Those longer days mean more sun, warmth and higher spirits. So the shortest day brings hope for longer days.

During Lent we feel the pull toward the lowest point in our Savior Jesus' life—his death on the cross. But we look for this point because of the significance it has for the days to follow—the sunshine of His resurrection for our redemption. May we all live these lengthening Lenten days with heartfelt gratitude for Jesus' tremendous sacrifice for us and with a desire to bring the light of His love to others around us.

Lutheran World Relief for Haiti earthquake victims. Needed are health kits, layettes, quilts and school kits. Items may be sent to 398 Richmond Street East, South St. Paul, Minnesota 55075-5939. For more information you can visit the web site www.lwr.org or call 651-457-9009.



Calvary Men's Ministry Happenings

Canoe Trip. David Knudsen reports that he has the reservations for the trip and has a list of men with 3 on the waiting list. When he asks for deposits next month that list may change.

Canadian Fishing Trip. Rand Stolee offered to host a fishing trip again this year. The best dates were June 12-14. He can host up to 14 men. The food and gas expenses usually come to \$50 per person. Canadian fishing licenses are extra. Contact Rand to get on the list.

Rewind. Ron Anderson reports that the unit is full again. The guys are still looking for work. Some need rides periodically as well.

Fix-it Ministry. Mark Olson and Lee Mindemann that there have been some small tasks accomplished and one in the works. Rand will put the issue in the slide show to raise awareness.

Men's Breakfast meets 7 a.m. the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month. All men welcome!

Circle Studies. Wednesday, March 3, Charity Circle meets at 9:30 a.m. in the Matthias Room and Faith Circle at 1:00 p.m. in the Matthias Room following 11:30 lunch at Mulligan's. Wednesday, March 10 Peace Circle meets at 9:30 a.m. in the Matthias Room.

Java Jams is having "Chocolat for Lent" Mondays at 8:30 a.m.

Remember to save the following. We collect them in baskets under the bulletin board in the fellowship hall entrance: Campbell's Soup Labels for Education, Pop Tops for Ronald McDonald and Kemps milk "Nickels for Schools" lids.

The Calvary Cut-Up Quilters continue to meet every Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All women welcome! Bring scissors and a treat for coffee. Questions? Call Leona at 346-6633.

All-Day Women's Craft/Project Event. Coming soon! If you scrapbook, knit, crochet, or just want to organize your recipes, photos, etc. Contact Tracy Bieger if you have ideas, or are just interested in participating.



Youth and Family

Confirmation

Students are expected to attend Wednesday worship at 6:30pm in lieu of confirmation classes during Lent.

Calvary youth are also serving our Lenten suppers each week at 5:30 p.m. and will receive a reminder when it is their week to serve.

Worship Helpers

Youth are worship helpers on the first Sunday of each month. Contact Rob if you have any questions.

Thanks to our young people for their gift of service!

Butterbraids

Youth will sell Butterbraids again on Sunday, March 7 between services.

Delivery will be March 28 between services.

Youth Focus



Emily Peterson, 16-year-old daughter of Mike and Lisa Peterson of Perham, was crowned as Miss Polar Fest 2010 by Nancy Stenger, Miss Polar Fest 2009, at the annual pageant in Detroit Lakes' Historic Holmes Theatre. Emily officially began her reign Saturday, February 6, at Detroit Lakes' annual celebration of all things cold.

Adoption Meeting

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota Adoption: Join us to learn about the exciting opportunities and recent changes in adoption. Learn how LSS can partner with you to grow your family. LSS can help families adopt children locally and from countries around the world. Call Lynne Haggart at (612) 879-5230 or 1-888-205-3769 to register for the 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. meeting at the Clay County Service Center (located at 715 North 11th Street, Moorhead) on Thursday, March 11. For more information, or to register online, visit www.minnesotaadoption.org

American Cancer Society Daffodils

Pick up dates are March 13 after 11 a.m. and March 14. Questions? Call Dee at 346-5352.

Marriage Encounter

A Lutheran Encounter Weekend builds a foundation for the kind of trust and love every marriage deserves. The weekend includes two nights in a hotel and five meals from Friday at 7:00 pm to Sunday at 5:00 pm. Four presenting couples, including a Lutheran clergy couple, give presentations followed by questions couples discuss in the privacy of their room. The next Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends are March 19-21 in Brooklyn Center; April 16-18 in Duluth or April 30 – May 2 in Alexandria. Please register a month in advance. Contact Dick & Judy Dehnel at 952-432-3105, Pete & Phyllis McMahon at 763-561-1575 or visit: www.godlovesmarriage.org.

Jubilee Focus: *Her Mission Is Outside Our Walls*

"My focus here is what happens outside the walls of Calvary." Cindy Olson lives this, her stated mission. Throughout our community she is known for the program she began ten years ago and still directs today: Community Outreach. This wide-ranging program supplies those who have serious, immediate needs with everything from diapers and beds to groceries and gas cards. Her program was a forerunner of our extensive Social Ministry activities, including Stephen Ministry, TWIGS, Meal Ministry, the Fishermen (Cindy's husband Mark is very active in this), Justice Journeys, and Fair Trade Coffee, to name a few.

Cindy's important program began with her observations of the clients she served on the home visits which were part of her job as a speech therapist.

One family she had to meet in the school parking lot, as they were homeless and living out of their car. A second family had housing, but no furniture – the children, including an infant slept on the floor; there was no high chair, no table, no crib. She felt that each person should at least have a bed. She got one donated, and thus began the sophisticated, far-ranging program we know today.

How extensive is her program? She says, "It runs up and down Highway 10. We have served clients from Ponsford to Staples and from Menahga to Parkers Prairie." In every town, there is at least one congregation involved in identifying people's needs and working to fill them. Most Perham churches work on some phase of Community Outreach. There are volunteers who supply "muscle power" to repair and move items; there are social workers, early childhood specialists and public health volunteers. And it continues to grow!

Cindy – and Mark – live Christ's command, "That which you do for the least of these, you do for me."



TWIGS: *Together Winning In God's Service*

TWIGS is a caring ministry of Calvary Lutheran Church that strives to meet ongoing needs of individuals and families in our community that cannot be met through traditional resources. We were able to fulfill several needs last month with your help.

Several needs on the tree in the fellowship hall are waiting for sponsorship and can also be viewed on Calvary's website at www.calvaryperham.com. We welcome sponsorship of an entire need or any amount towards a need.

All donations flow through Calvary and are tax deductible.

Thank you for caring for others in our community.

We received a lovely card of thanks from a gift receiver: "Thank you for the beautiful winter coat you gave me. It fits perfectly ... and it comes at a time when things are hard. May God bless each and every one of you."

We also received a note from the pharmacy where we have an account set for prescription needs: "People are really grateful for this account. Most are wonderful about paying back the money used, even though they are told they don't have to. Most people we help are just "short-funded" for that given time, and then want to return the money when they have it. It's really been a blessing."

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown, it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Matthew 13:31-32

The Backpack Program. . . *Satisfy The Hunger*

In January, 55 food bags were delivered every Friday. Thanks again to all of those volunteers!

The delivery is constantly changing as children have moved out of the district, moved in, new needs have been identified and some families situations have changed so that they are no longer in need of the food. The help of Julie Vomacka, Elementary Counselor, has been phenomenal. We couldn't do this without her!

An article about our Perham/Dent program was written by Kari Yates, Elementary Principal, and published in In Good Company magazine. You can view that article at www.ingoodcompanyff.com. Following that article, the Fargo Forum, the Focus and WDAY all did pieces on the program. From that exposure, a 3rd grade teacher in Plummer, Minnesota called wanting to know how to get a Backpack Program started in her town. She was so moved and so determined that within less than a month, this teacher will have organized food bags to go home on weekends to hungry children.

Satisfy the Hunger!



Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 14

March Food Share

March is Minnesota Food Share Month and the need has never been greater!

The March campaign is second only in food and fund raising for food shelves to the holidays.

Over half the food given at food shelves in the year come from the March campaign.

There are two incentives for the local food shelf from your gifts, one from Minnesota Food Share and the other from the Feinstein Foundation. Donations automatically become larger! This is the only time of year this happens.

For more information please visit: www.minnesotafoodshare.org.

Living Well Workshop

March 23, 30 and April 6, 13, 20 and 27, 9:30 to noon at the Perham Public Library, MeritCare Health System invites you to participate in a self-management program for people with chronic or long-lasting health conditions.

This six part workshop helps people cope and manage the symptoms and frustration of living with a health condition.

Chronic conditions include heart disease, breathing problems, stroke, being overweight, diabetes, arthritis, fibromyalgia, high blood pressure, cancers, etc.

The workshop covers topics such as working with your health care provider, problem solving, fitness and exercise, relaxation, and managing negative emotions and symptoms.

Classes are free of charge but is limited to 15 participants.

Treasurer's Report

General Fund receipts for February to date through the 21st were \$23,852 or 65% of the budgeted revenues of \$36,544. There is one more Sunday remaining in the month.

Building Fund receipts for February to date through the 21st were \$3,010 or 52% of the amount needed to make the mortgage payment of \$5,832.

January special offerings for Haiti and the Synod were \$3,468 and \$2,723, respectively. Thank you for your response to these needs.

Actual results for January for the General Fund, was a favorable variance of \$1,098. Total receipts for the month were \$27,808 and expenses were \$26,710. The Building fund receipts for the month were \$3,935, which were less than the amount needed by \$1,897.

Thank you for your continued support of Calvary's general and building funds.

Simply Giving®

This is an automated giving program designed to help you conveniently and consistently contribute to a Lutheran congregation through a pre-authorized withdrawal from your bank account or credit card.

For more information, talk to Shirley at the church office and she will be happy to help you.

The Thoughts Of Our Hearts

by Rob McNair

Nathaniel Beaver shared with me this quote from C.S. Lewis in response to my last article: *"The moment you have a self at all, there is a possibility of putting yourself first—wanting to be the centre—wanting to be God, in fact. That was the sin of Satan, and that was the sin he taught the human race. Some people think the fall of man had something to do with sex, but that is a mistake. (The story in the Book of Genesis rather suggests that some corruption in our sexual nature followed the fall and was its result, not its cause.) What Satan put into the heads of our remote ancestors was the idea that they could 'be like gods'—could set up on their own as if they had created themselves—be their own masters—invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery—the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy."* I always appreciate when people respond, so thank you Nathaniel.



Every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts
was only evil continually.
Genesis 6:5

The Gnostics were an early Christian sect that separated themselves from the larger society in order to maintain their physical and spiritual purity. The Gnostics promoted the idea that the physical was bad and the spiritual was good, thus our physical bodies were inherently evil and full of sin and we had to deny the physical and strive for spiritual attainment. For this reason the Gnostics did not believe Jesus was fully human, but rather believed him to be a spiritual apparition that only appeared to have a physical body. This is the reason the Apostles Creed is so heavily focused on the physical birth and death of Jesus, to make certain it was understood that Jesus was physically human and not just a spiritual being.

We must realize that our physical bodies and sex are not inherently bad, for God designed our bodies and told us to have sex. In fact, if you look at Genesis 8, as Noah and his family are getting off the ark, God commands them to have sex three times. In Genesis 8:17, 9:1, and 9:7 we read the same thing as God again and again says, "Be fruitful and multiply." Now if God thought sex was the root of all evil after dealing with Adam and Eve, why would He tell Noah and his family to do it?

Now some people chalk this up to God simply wanting us to procreate. However, God could have populated the earth on his own, he didn't need us to do that. I think a key part to understanding God's intentions lie in this idea of being "fruitful." The obvious understanding is that being fruitful has to do with multiplying, but perhaps there is another meaning. I am reminded of John the Baptist shouting at the religious leaders, "every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10). Jesus himself withered the fig tree because it did not bear fruit (Matthew 21:18) and at the end of the Parable of the Wicked Tenants Jesus stated to the religious leaders, "Therefore I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom" (Matthew 21: 43). So in the New Testament this idea of being fruitful has nothing to do with producing offspring, but rather has to do with following God and engaging in good works to see His will be done (on earth as it is in heaven). The prophet Micah summed up being fruitful this way: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). Jesus had a similar response to the religious leaders when they asked him what was the greatest commandment and Jesus responded, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 37-40). And to his disciples Jesus simplified it even more telling them, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (John 13:34).

So if we were to take this understanding of what being fruitful means, which Jesus boiled down to loving God and loving each other, that command to "be fruitful and multiply" that God gave three times to Noah and his family could be translated as: "Love God, love each other, and have children." And what is the greatest expression of love but to deny and sacrifice oneself for the sake of another. It is what God did for us through Jesus and what we are expected to do for God and one another.

And what better way to learn this kind of self-sacrificing love than to become a parent. God shared with us the power to create life and create our own family, for God knew that having children was the best way to teach us about this agape love. Nothing so closely resembles how God loves us than the love a parent has for their child. Augustine summed up God's love well when he wrote, "God loves each one of us as if there was only one of us to love."

The Gnostics tried to separate the physical and the spiritual, but it is only through the physical that we can attain the spiritual. Nowhere does God condemn the physical act of sex. It is the "thoughts of our hearts" that cause us to sin. Our desires and passions (eros) cause us to put our own needs before God and the needs of each other. King David, who wrote "For he knows the secrets of the heart" (Psalm 44:21), knew all too well that there is no hiding our sin from God. God knows our thoughts and feelings, which can drive us to act in inappropriate, non-loving ways. But the struggle should not be to condemn or hide sex, but we must strive to lift it up and keep it sacred.

Sex is God's way of teaching us about love, in its different forms, through the creation of life. And His love, agape, is a love built on sacrifice because nothing gets us closer to God than when we sacrifice ourselves for one another.

And what greater sacrifice is there for us than to be a parent and give our time, energy, and resources to raise a child.

Reflection

What is it about marriage that is so important? Why should people wait until they are married in order to have sex? What sacrifices are involved in a marriage?

In Psalm 51:10 King David writes, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8). How do we foster being pure in heart?

What may seem like a genuine, selfless expression of love, may actually be governed by self interest and meeting one's own desires. How can you tell if someone is trying to meet your needs or theirs?

When is it appropriate to sacrifice yourself for the sake of another, and when is it detrimental? How do you distinguish between the two?

Inside the Calvary Connection

Lent 2010: Outstretched Hands	1
<i>Running The Race</i> + Music Ministry + Education	2
Women's Ministry + Men's Ministry + Youth and Family	3
Jubilee Focus + TWIGS + Adoption + Marriage Encounter	4
Backpack Program + Finance + Food Share + Living Well	5
<i>The Thoughts Of Our Hearts</i>	6
New Members	7



Volume 18, Issue 3

March 2010

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERHAM MN 56573
PERMIT NO 15

The Calvary Connection

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
EXISTS TO BE AN EXAMPLE OF
CHRIST'S LOVE THROUGH SERVICE
TO ALL PEOPLE, HELPING EVERY-
ONE TO LEARN AND EXPERIENCE
GOD'S LOVE IN THE STRUGGLE
AND TRIUMPHS OF DAILY LIFE.

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA
619 3RD AVE SW PERHAM MN 56573

PHONE 218-346-4780

FAX 218-346-4781

E-MAIL halo@eot.com

WEB www.calvaryperham.com

TO RECEIVE *THE CALVARY CONNECTION* BY E-MAIL PLEASE CONTACT US.

Address Service Requested

