

# Calvin Connection



April 2020

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## Esther 4:14 – ... for such a time as this...

When this whole thing started, I suspect we were all thinking we would be coming up with new ways to get through this time until life got back to normal. When we closed the church office, we thought it would be for a couple of weeks. It was impossible to think of our not being together as a community to celebrate Easter.

I don't know about anyone else, but without looking at a calendar I find it hard to remember when this all started. Changes have been coming so quickly, it took time before we realized we were not exempt from the reality of living with a pandemic threat.

By now we know this is not just 'get through a week or two' time. Like it or not, this appears to be our new normal for an unknown amount of time. The Presbytery office tells us to plan on being out of the church through the month of April, but that too may be overly optimistic.

We are all learning new things, new ways to connect, to do school and work as best we can. People are getting creative in how they stay connected, having drive-by visits with family and Zoom dinners or even game nights with friends using video conference calls. People stuck at home are finding all kinds of ways to share their talents: concerts with singers and instrumentalists participating from their own living rooms, exercise videos to use while stuck inside, recipe sharing or tutorials on endless projects you could tackle while at home. Others make us laugh: Debbie Stubbs shared a link of nuns (in full habit), singing a Covid-19 version of "The Gambler"!

At Calvin Church we add spiritual practices during the season of Lent. We cannot gather for Wednesday evening services, but we can take some of the time that seems to go slowly just now and spend it in prayer (for family, friends, for our health care workers, first responders...). Spend time in meditation, in reading Scripture, singing hymns. Go outside and be in God's creation in all its spring glory. Reflect on what is important and what we are missing – friends, family, freedom to move around freely... Journal or record the blessings we **do** have, and make sure we tell the people who are significant in our lives just what they mean to us.

My prayer is for all of us to feel God's comfort and grace and strength for however long this time may last. Even in a time of social distancing and isolation, we are not alone. Reach out to others. Be gentle with yourself and with one another. And remember: you are loved and held in God's grace - and you are not alone!

Keep washing your hands – stay in touch – and stay connected to God!

*Carol*

Driftwood cross from northern MN



## A LETTER FROM OUR PARISH ASSOCIATE

Dear Friends at Calvin Presbyterian Church,

“Why are you cast down, O my soul (our mind, will, and emotions), and why are you disquieted within me?

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.” Psalm 42:5

“For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth.” Psalm 71:5

“My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” Psalm 121:2

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 1:3, 4 & 27, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy...Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.”

“Social distancing” is what we need to do right now as our nation and world are afflicted with the coronavirus for which we have no medical defense yet. However, social distancing is not what a church is all about. A church has always been about “social connecting”. The church is about relationships. First, your personal relationship with God through Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, then our relationship with other Christians; being in fellowship and communion with other members in the church, the Body of Christ. Being members of the Body of Christ, we are:

- the hands of Christ – GIVING
- the feet of Christ – GOING
- the eyes of Christ – SEEING
- the ears of Christ – LISTENING
- the mouth of Christ – SPEAKING HIS WORD
- all directed by the Head of the Body, the Lord Jesus Christ.

How do we do this in this time of social distancing? The Apostle Paul gives us some clues, as he experienced social distancing all the time. He started churches all over Asia Minor and Greece and then had to leave them, always wondering how they were doing in his absence. We read in Paul’s letters of the pain and emotional distress this caused him. He had no phone, no social media, no video chat, no text messaging. He did all he could do – write a letter, pray for the people in these distant churches, and wait months for a return letter.

What did Paul say in his letters? Words like this: “Stay firm in your faith, keep close to Christ, read and obey his Word and serve Him, using the gifts and talents and opportunities you have to live for Christ and serve Him in ways you can.” In Romans 12:9-21 Paul summarizes it beautifully, including these words, “Serve the Lord, Rejoice in Hope, Be Patient in Tribulation, Be Constant in Prayer”.

We need to be faithful to our Lord and use the abilities and opportunities God gives us to be a light for Christ and be a blessing to family, friends, and neighbors who are hurting from all the disruptions this pandemic is causing us. This could include: calling someone on the phone or connecting with other forms of instant communication, writing a note or letter (like Paul had to do), and being creative to find ways to encourage and support one another.

“Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.  
Before our Father’s throne, we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.  
We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear;  
And often for each other flows, the sympathizing tear.  
When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.”  
*Blest Be the Tie That Binds Hymn #438 (Presbyterian Hymnal)*

With love and prayers,  
Rev. Dwight Chamberlain, Parish Associate

## April Worship Update

At the time of publication of this newsletter, our public health officials and the Presbytery recommend no public worship or gatherings through the month of April. Watch our church's website ([calvinchurch.net](http://calvinchurch.net)) or Facebook page for updated information as we move through the month. Sunday worship services from March 15th, 22nd and March 29th are available to watch on our website or our Facebook page. Palm Sunday online worship service will premiere at 10am on Sunday, April 5th on both platforms. If you are unable to watch online, ask a Deacon about getting an audio CD of the recorded services.

You can also watch an Easter worship service from our denomination available on the Presbyterian Church (USA) Facebook page or on its website: [pcusa.org](http://pcusa.org).

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### The Three Days: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil

[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/covid19/online\\_services\\_for\\_holy\\_week\\_and\\_easter\\_2020.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid19/online_services_for_holy_week_and_easter_2020.pdf)

Ideas from the Presbyterian Church (USA) for worship, personal devotion, or online reflection:

Maundy Thursday focuses on Jesus' service and love: how can we love and serve today?

Good Friday features Jesus' outstretched arms: how can we embrace the world today?

Easter Vigil tells the story of God's saving love: how will we remember, share the story?

#### Handwashing: A Spiritual Practice for Maundy Thursday

*Prepare a pitcher of water, a bowl, and towels*

*Prayerfully pour water over each hand (or allow a family member to do so)*

*As you do so reflect on the grace and love of Jesus Christ poured out in your life*

*Dry your hands (or those of family members) with a towel*

*Conclude with this or a similar prayer:*

O God, your love is embodied in Jesus Christ, who washed disciples' feet on the night of his betrayal. Wash us from the stain of sin, so that, in hours of danger, we may not fail, but follow your Son through every trial, and praise him always as Lord and Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (Book of Common Worship 276)

#### Prayer of Lament: A Spiritual Practice for Good Friday

*Read Psalm 22, a psalm of lament*

*Reflect on the state of the world, the church, and your own life*

*Offer these things to God in prayer, seeking God's saving power*

*Read, pray, or sing the psalm a second time*

*Conclude with prayer*

Eternal God, your Son cried out in anguish from the cross, and you delivered him. Do not hide your face from those who cry out to you. By his death and resurrection bring life where there is death: feed the hungry, strengthen the weak, and break the chains of oppression, that all people may rejoice in your saving deeds through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (Book of Common Worship 946)

#### Thanksgiving for Light: A Spiritual Practice for the Easter Vigil (Saturday evening of Holy Week)

*Light a candle and read John 1:1-5*

*Reflect on and give thanks for times where you see God's light shining in darkness*

*Conclude with this or a similar prayer:*

We praise and glorify you, Lord God, for Christ, our life, is risen and has conquered sin and death. He has broken the chains that bind us and freed us to live in his kingdom of light. May Christ enlighten the hearts of all who believe. May Christ transform this world that longs to see him, enlightening the hearts of all who believe, and restore all creation to its rightful place. Glory, praise, thanksgiving, and blessing to you, O God, victor over sin and death, now and forever. Amen. (Book of Common Worship 831)



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



Illustrated Ministry LLC



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the incredible & immense work food shelves have taken on at this time, the March Campaign has been extended through April 30, 2020.

We are still participating as a church in the Minnesota FoodShare Month. The month of March is when the food pantries we support get matching grants. How to participate?

Mail in a check, made out to the church, specifically marked – **MN FoodShare**.



**RUMMAGE SALE AND PW UPDATES**

The PW Coordinating Team meeting scheduled for Monday, April 6th is cancelled. The date for the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 9am on May 4, 2020.

The Calvin PW Rummage Sale originally scheduled for May 7th-9th, will be postponed until June 4th-6th, with set up beginning May 28th (times will remain the same). While we are optimistic that we will be able to have our Spring Rummage Sale this year, we will monitor the current situation in Minnesota, our country & the world, to make sure that it is safe for our workers and shoppers to proceed with the new dates. Updates and additional information will be included in the May newsletter. Thanks for your understanding!

Please mark your calendars for the Spring Salad Supper on Monday, May 18th at 6:30pm. At this time, we have high hopes that we can proceed with this wonderful event as planned!

## Birthdays

April 1	Alice Hurd
April 2	Ron Bowman
April 11	Vicky Williamson
April 13	Denny Anderson
April 15	Alison Bowman
April 18	Bonnie Boylan
April 22	Adeline Gagner
April 25	Lenny Berg
April 26	Susan Baker Wanda Pratt
April 27	Ann Shaughnessy



Celebrate!




ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

We all realize that the needs of this time are not decreasing, they are increasing. Our gifts to the local food pantries and One Great Hour of Sharing take on even greater significance. Please give as you are able – by a check sent to the church or by our online giving platform. We will dedicate the offerings once we are back in worship – together – in the sanctuary. If you wish to donate directly to One Great Hour of Sharing you can do so by going to: <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/make-a-gift/gift-info/oghs/>. When prompted, indicate your church and we will receive credit for the gift given.

*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?  
—Psalm 27:1*

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**

**PW** No April meeting  
**Ruth Circle and Mary & Martha Circle**  
No April meeting





Although our church building is temporarily closed, bills still need to be paid and the staff is continuing to work remotely. For the month of April, the mail is being held at the post office and picked up weekly. You can mail your pledges in to church, or you may choose to use our new online giving platform called GivePlus through Vanco. To give online, simply go to [www.calvinchurch.net](http://www.calvinchurch.net) and click on the “Make Donation or Pledge” button on the bottom right of the homepage. You can also give through text by texting “Assist” to #833-979-0687. It will send you a link to input all your info. Look for more details and information coming this month on how to give in these new ways.



**Daily Devotions**

The daily devotional “**These Days**” is now available for April-June. They can be picked up in the Gathering Hall, if you have access to church. Otherwise arrangements can be made to mail a devotional to members. If you are interested in receiving a copy, either speak with a Deacon or call the church office.



**Our palms have arrived for Palm Sunday!** We weren’t able to cancel our order, as they had already been harvested and shipped by the time we knew we couldn’t gather for Palm Sunday worship. If you would like a palm (or two) for your home, they will be outside by the front doors and available to take. Wave the branches of the palm tree!



Greetings from the Music Department!

What a strange time for all of us, and especially for those of us who are used to making music together with others! While we all try to find ways to both survive and thrive during a time of social isolation, it's important to look ahead. Lenten music is about considering the sacrifices Jesus will make, and Holy Week is about looking forward to the Resurrection, and by Easter: we have arrived! I hope you recognize these elements within our music as you worship with our online services in the coming weeks. I'm grateful to our Calvin musicians Kiley Hazelton, Miles Herr, and Jared Miller who have, and who are assisting with these services. Their skills add so much depth to both our in-person and online worship. Easter is on it's way: even if we aren't physically together making music, rest assured: when we are all together, joyful noises will be all we hear!

~Mark Bilyeu

**This prayer was shared with us in the weekly mailing from the Presbytery office:**

*We are frightened, God,  
Worried for our loved ones,  
Worried for our world.  
Helpless and confused,  
We turn to You  
Seeking comfort, faith and hope.*

*Teach us God, to turn our panic into patience,  
And our fear into acts of kindness and support.  
Our strong must watch out for our weak,  
Our young must take care of our old.  
Help each one of us to do our part to halt the spread of this virus*

*Send strength and courage to the doctors and nurses  
In the frontlines of this battle,  
Fortify them with the full force of their healing powers.  
Send wisdom and insight to the scientists  
Working day and night across the world to discover healing treatments.  
Bless their efforts, God.  
Fill our leaders with the wisdom and the courage  
To choose wisely and act quickly.  
Help us, God, to see that we are one world,  
One people  
Who will rise above this pandemic together.*

*Send us health God,  
Watch over us,  
Grace us with Your love,  
Bless us with Your healing light.  
Hear us God,  
Heal us God,  
Amen.*

*Rabbi Naomi Levy*

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**Scripture reading from Romans 8:31,35, 37-39**

If God is for us, who is against us? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Cross from Isle of Iona, Scotland*



CALVIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

177 Glendale Drive  
Long Lake, MN 55356

Phone: 952-473-5419

[calvinchurch.net](http://calvinchurch.net)

Connect with us!



**OFFICE HOURS**

Monday - Friday  
10:00am - 2:00pm

*Pastor Carol is in  
the office Tues - Fri  
(or can be reached at  
her home phone #)*



Please recycle

*We extend a most cordial invitation  
to you to participate in worship,  
study and the many other activities in  
the life of our Calvin family.*



**Church Staff**

- Pastor - Rev. Dr. Carol Reed
- Parish Associate - Rev. Dwight Chamberlain
- Pastor Emeritus - Rev. Douglas Potter
- Clerk of Session - Walter Baker
  
- Music Director - Mark Bilyeu
- Choral Accompanist - Jared Miller
- Choral Scholar - Kiley Hazelton
  
- Office Administrator - Angela Coccoluto
- Treasurer - Pat King
- Financial Secretaries - Marj Eisinger & Tammy Wenz

**Email address contacts:**

- Carol Reed                      [carol.reed@calvinchurch.net](mailto:carol.reed@calvinchurch.net)
- Angela Coccoluto            [angela@calvinchurch.net](mailto:angela@calvinchurch.net)

**Calvin Connection deadline:** Second Friday of the month  
**Sunday Bulletin announcements deadline:** Thursdays at 10am  
*Email articles and/or announcements for the Calvin Connection & Sunday bulletins to Angela (see email address above), or drop them off in the church office. Any questions, please call Angela at 952-473-5419.*