

FROM THE PASTOR



MUSTARD SEED
CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 2017

Over the course of the past week I have found myself, along with so many others, struggling with the events that unfolded in Charlottesville, VA on Saturday August 12th and what seems like every day since. News media, social media, politicians, Fortune 500 CEO's, and all sorts of organizations have weighed in on the matter of hate, bigotry, injustice, and prejudice. Televisions, Facebook, and internet home pages have been flooded with comments about the KKK, neo-Nazi's, and white supremacists. Arguments about what constitutes "Freedom of Speech" and what exactly the constitutional amendment actually protects spurs widespread debate, much of which is highly charged and volatile. As a pastor, I have struggled how best to respond, taking into consideration all that I have heard and seen both on the news as well as the internet. What I continue coming back to is that one thing which has brought all this about...sin.

I know that saying "sin" being the cause of such ugly and disgusting actions and words in Charlottesville sounds like a copout. At a glance, it doesn't have the ring of justice the masses of people want to hear. It's just too easy, especially when 3 people died and many others were injured as a result. Surely there are other reasons behind hatred, racism, and prejudice. And honestly, there are other reasons, but they all come back to their origin...sin. What the world witnessed was the ugly, heinous, disgusting nature of sin. It is as horrific and terrible as God says it is.

If what happened in Charlottesville wasn't enough, sin reared its nasty head again and again. Slinging hurtful words, pointing fingers of blame, and perpetrating horrific acts have continued. To add insult to injury, terrorists attacked people in Barcelona, Spain claiming multiple victims and injuring others. Sadly, this is the world in which we live...a world that, for lack of any other better explanation, is shattered by sin.

For those of us who believe in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior, the challenge of living in a world broken by sin while at the same time speaking the truth of God's Word can be daunting. Christ has given us His Word in order that we as His Church would call sin what it is... sin, plead that the world would recognize her sinfulness and repent, and with the Gospel usher in light to those who are lost in darkness daring them to hope. Yes, there are those who will call us "fools" and "weaklings" choosing empty and temporal means to pacify their worries and struggles. People will laugh at us for what they believe to be the ridiculous notion that there is a God who is just but also gracious and merciful...Who will one day return just as He has promised to destroy the broken and remake it into the glorious...Who will

separate the believers from the unbelievers...Who will cast the multitudes of unbelievers into the abyss where they will remain while the faithful will be welcomed into the heavenly and live forever. Yes, we are those foolish ones...but I'd prefer to be a fool to the world but rendered wise by the divine!

Which leads me to ask you about our mission as Christ's Church on earth and how we carry on that mission as Calvary Lutheran Church? What is Calvary Lutheran Church? Or, more importantly, "WHO" is Calvary Lutheran Church? What is our purpose? Why are we here? Sure, it's great to say that we are the "OLDEST" Lutheran Church in Arizona (and by that, we mean the church building itself...not the people in the building), but why should people in Yuma really care about that? Why should people come here to Calvary and want to be a part of Calvary's worship and life? What sets us apart from other Christian congregations in our community? Why do you care about this church?

That's a lot of questions, but it doesn't even come close to being the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. I can't impress upon you enough how important it is that you take time to think about your church and why she is so important...why others need to know about her...why she should remain here for future generations long after we are all gone. On **Saturday afternoon, September 9th from 3:00-5:00PM** a congregational meeting is scheduled to be held in the Parish Hall to consider a series of 6 questions...questions that stimulate ideas and suggestions about how Calvary Lutheran Church's vision serves to fulfill her Christ given mission. **YOUR** presence and insight...**YOUR** ideas and suggestions... **YOUR** passion and hope...is what is needed as together we venture into the future as Christ's Church to bring the message of the Gospel to a world that is in great need of it. The six questions that we will reflect upon are:

- Why did I decide to join or become a regular attender of Calvary Lutheran Church?
- What is special about this congregation?
- Are newcomers welcome here? How do they know?
- What one way could we begin to share our love with friends/community outside of church?
- If you could change one thing in the church, what would it be?
- What role will you play to get the congregation to where you see it being in five years?

We will break off into small groups so that all people can offer their ideas as well as their hopes for Calvary's future. Then we will return as one large group to reflect on our small group meetings as a whole. **We will conclude our meeting with a potluck dinner**

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and fellowship together rejoicing over just how truly blessed we are in Christ. The Church Council is only asking you for 2 hours of your time on a Saturday to discuss the future of our beloved congregation. Will you please make every effort to attend...even if you can only attend for part of it? Your input...your voice...is very much wanted and needed. **YOU...ALL OF YOU...are so very important to this congregation...YOU ARE CALVARY!**

See you September 9th!
Pastor Kessler



Christian Education

Calvary's Sunday School program will resume on September 10th, the first Sunday after Labor Day. That was the agreement reached by a group of 8 parents/grandparents at a meeting on March 26th. There are about 20 children at Calvary who will benefit, ranging from toddlers through high school. A slumber party is planned at the church on Saturday, September 9th as a festive kick-off to the new school year. Volunteers have stepped forward to teach the toddlers, 8 – 13-year-olds, and high schoolers. Those in attendance agreed that parental commitment to having their children attend on a regular basis is key to re-building a successful program. That way teachers can prepare for class with confidence that students will be attending. Ideas presented include longer-term class projects and a Christmas Bible Study. Still to be determined is how often Sunday School will meet...weekly, twice a month or monthly. More information will be presented as September nears. The meeting was attended by: Pastor Kessler, Jenifer Kessler, Mel Parker, Carol Parker, Melissa Fairchild, Donna Fairchild, Paula Backs, Katie Strom.

Altar Guild

We have recently changed florists. The new price for flowers is now \$38.00. When paying please make note on your envelope that it is for flowers.

Happy Birthday!

Rodney Fischer	09/01
Whitney Stuebs	09/02
Kyle Williams	09/03
Ragna Bezo	09/05
April Ehrlich	09/05
Tamara Hansen	09/05
Brayleigh Stuebs	09/05
Ella Stewart	09/09
Nolan Ford	09/11
Janet Ehrlich	09/13
Dylan MacFarlane	09/16
Donna Fairchild	09/18
Teri Jo Ford	09/18
Phyllis Strickhouser	09/19
Reagan Strom	09/20
Taylee Stuebs	09/20
Joanne Williams	09/25

BAPTISM

Rodney Fischer	09/01
Ira Thiessen	09/01
Tamara Hansen	09/05
Melissa Fairchild	09/08
Michael Fairchild	09/08
Emma Stewart	09/10
Chaylen Hilstad	09/16
Maren Green	09/26
Brayleigh Stuebs	09/27
Nolan Ford	09/28
Sophia Kessler	09/28
April Ehrlich	09/29

Happy Anniversary

Mike & Janet Ehrlich

09/14



Recycle aluminum cans

Please continue to bring your cans in.

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
 COUNCIL MEETING
 JUNE 13, 2017

Calvary Lutheran Church
 Council Reports

PRESENT: Debbie Lamaestra, Janet Ehrlich, Pastor Kessler, Pat Lamaestra, Lisa Elam, Johnnie Altstatt, Brian Atchley

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with an opening prayer by Pastor Kessler.

MINUTES- The April minutes were reviewed. Janet motioned to accept the minutes, Debbie 2nd. Motion passed. The May minutes were not available.

TREASURER- The Thrivent CD has matured. Johnnie is transferring it to Schwab because it pays a little bit more. The report shows \$242 in the AWC ministry acct. That acct should be 0. That money should be listed under the burglary acct. Johnnie will adjust that. Pastor motioned to accept the report, Debbie 2nd. Motion passed.

PRESIDENT- Pat had a meeting with Pastor about the congressional direction meeting questions. They were sent to Bruce to review.

VICE PRESIDENT- none

SECRETARY- none

TREASURER- none

PASTOR- (attached) Pastor says Church attendance numbers are down and slowly declining in the past few years.

ELDERS- none

MISSION- They will be having a food drive during the month of July for the Yuma food bank. They are still deciding on a theme. The food bank has given us a list of the most needed items. Debbie will be making a flyer. We have been receiving a bill from the newspaper for an ad that Elaine Green is paying. Janet said that bill cannot come to the office. It needs to go directly to the person paying it.

TRUSTEES- We have been having sprinkler heads stolen. They have been replaced. A new janitor has been hired. It is Alvin. Crossroads mission has been hired for lawn care. It will be listed under grounds maintenance. Also juvenile probation will be coming once a month for weed control.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS- We have set a date of Sept. 9th at 3:00 p.m. for the congressional direction meeting. A potluck at 5 will follow.

NEW BUSINESS- none

GOOD OF THE ORDER- Pat read 2 stories about good things in the world.

Johnnie motioned to adjourn the meeting, Debbie 2nd. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Board Meetings & Council

Tuesday, September 12, 2017 @ 6PM

If you have a complaint or concern please attend the board meetings so the boards can address the issue.

2017 Contributions	
08/02/2017	\$1,709.00
08/06/2017	\$1,986.00
08/13/2017	\$1,955.00
08/20/2017	\$1,508.00
08/27/2017	\$1,817.00
Avg \$2,243.75	



Contribution amount needed, per week is \$3,441.37 to meet current budget.

Year to date	\$95,741.69
Misc Income	1,561.27
Fund raiser (chicken)	2,162.00
Avg. \$ per week (35weeks)	\$ 2,841.86
Short \$ per week	\$ 599.51

2017 Contributions & Expenses AUGUST (UN-RECONCILED)	
GENERAL FUND	
Contributions	\$ 8,975.00
Misc Income	\$
Expenses	\$15,188.17
Excess/Loss	<\$ 6,213.17>

YEAR TO DATE	
Contributions	\$95,741.69
Misc Income	\$ 3,783.98
Expenses	\$76,092.47
Excess/Loss	<\$ 7,337.79>

Parking Lot Fund	
Fund Total as of August	\$14,842.00
Contributions	\$
Aluminum Cans	\$
Fund Total	\$14,842.00

HELP WANTED!

COUNTERS NEEDED

For more information to sign up to be a counter please see the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

September 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro
3 09:00 AM-Communion Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes	4	5	6 11:00 AM-Bible Study	7 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC Campus Ministry	8	9 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro 03:00 PM-Congregational Meeting
10 09:00 AM-Communion Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes	11	12 06:00 PM-Board Meetings 07:15 PM-Council Meeting	13 11:00 AM-Bible Study	14 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC Campus Ministry	15	16 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro
17 09:00 AM-Matins Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes	18	19	20 11:00 AM-Bible Study	21 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC Campus Ministry	22 09:00am LWMML Quilting 04:00 PM-Elders Meeting	23 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro
24 09:00 AM-Communion Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes	25	26	27 11:00 AM-Bible Study	28 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC Campus Ministry	29	30 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro