

Calvary Courier

February 2020

A Publication of Calvary Lutheran Church, Moline, Illinois

From the Pastor

I would like to reflect for a moment on two parables from Matthew's gospel.

The first parable is brief but powerful.

³¹[Jesus] put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it 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)

In this parable Jesus is addressing a crowd of curiosity seekers, those who are intrigued by all the wonderful things he is doing. In the midst of this crowd is a small group of apostles, the twelve, who will have the responsibility of carrying on the mission of Jesus. To them Jesus is offering a word of hope and encouragement. Like the mustard seed, as a group they may feel like they are small and insignificant. They may not believe they have much to offer in the way of growing the kingdom of God. But like that mustard seed, in the hands of God, they in fact can help the kingdom grow into a tree. From little, seemingly insignificant resources, God can make great things happen.

The second parable, Matthew 25: 14-30, is commonly referred to as the Parable of the Talents. In this story a man is going away and entrusts his property in various proportions to three of his servants. The first two servants invest what had been entrusted to them and have some profit to report to the master when he returns. The third servant buries the money entrusted to him so as not to lose it. He wants to be sure to protect what he has been given. Upon the master's return this third servant is chastised for not using what he had been given.

I always wished Jesus had included in this parable a fourth servant who took what he had been given, invested it, but lost it. In this version of the parable the fourth servant, like the first two, is praised for his actions because I think Jesus point here is that God intends for his children to use what they have been given even though there is a risk that it may not return a profit.

I think it is easy for us, as a congregation, to feel like that third servant who has been given a mustard seed to use to grow the kingdom of God in our midst. It doesn't feel like much and we certainly don't want to lose it. But if we plant that seed, if we use what God has given us, then God can make great things happen. However, if we hide it, if we hold it back, then nothing will come of it. I don't think God calls on us to be profitable, but rather to be faithful. I think God calls on us to use the gifts we have been given, even at the risk of losing them, for the sake of growing the kingdom.

As an institution Calvary may not be the biggest or most affluent congregation in the Quad Cities. We may not have large resources to share. But we are gifted. God has blessed with our time, our talents and our voices. And God calls us, no matter how insignificant we may feel, to use what we have and trust that God will make it grow into a the greatest of shrubs.

As we begin another year, I thank God for the "talents" with which we have been blessed and pray that we continue to invest in the work of the Lord.

I thank God for choir voices, accompanists, worship assistants, lectors, altar committee members, ushers, greeters and everyone else who helps us provide meaningful worship every week.

I thank God for congregational council members and committee members who help plan and implement various ministries in the congregation.

I thank God for the volunteers who help feed the hungry at Café on Vine and Mt. Zion in East Moline, work with Habitat for Humanity, visit the sick and shut-ins, host funeral meals for those who are grieving, sew quilts or knit hats and mittens and scarves.

I thank God for the people who worship with us, for those who pray for us, and for those who share their time with us in any way.

And I thank God for those who share their money with us through their offerings.

No matter how small your contribution of time or resources may be, in the hands of God it grows. We may not be able to see the growth, or the growth may not come where we expect it, but the kingdom does grow.

In the end it doesn't matter what we have left. Rather, what God expects of us is to use whatever we have been given for the sake of the kingdom.

In Christ,
Pastor Knowles

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Birthday to:

- 2 – Rick Ohrn
- 6 – Connie Jensen
- 7 – Renee Ketelsen
- 8 – Megan Necessary
- 9 – Beth Fuller
- 10 – Kendall Knowles
- 15 – Elaine Foster
- 17 – Dorothy Harmening
- 20 – Linda Johansen
- 21 – Lisa Dicks, Logan Gross, Sue Knipe



WELCA - All Calvary women are invited.



Deborah Circle – Feb. 4 at 9:00 am in the Upper Room. Hostesses will be Sharon Hough and Marilyn Gross.



HAPPY HOOKERS - will meet on February 26 at 9:30 am in Erlander Hall. Activities include quilting, crocheting, knitting and handicrafts. (bring a treat to share at “coffee time.”)


COLLECTING WINTER COATS

We are collecting winter coats to give to the homeless during the month of February. Please bring to the church and give to Ruth Laabs-Wilcox.



COAT COLLECTION

Don't Forget! The **ANNUAL MEETING** is Sunday, January 26th after worship in Erlander Hall.



ALTAR GUILD MEETING

The **Altar Guild meeting** will be held on Friday, January 31 at 1:30 p.m. in the Upper Room.



LUNCH BUNCH “Valentine Party”

Tuesday, February 18th at 11:00 am in the Upper Room. Come and bring your friends – always a sociable time and good food, too.

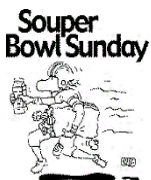
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

for **MARCH** is no later than **February 13** for distribution on February 20. Please have your articles to me on time. You may email or put your articles in my box.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY is February 2

The soup pots will be ringing, so be sure to have your change and checks ready. All money collected will go Churches United for food pantries and meal sites.





During the month of January we received the following word of thanks....

✧ Dear Friends, I want to Thank all of you for your gifts and visits making my Christmas so special.

----Sincerely, Gisele Richardson

✧ We both enjoyed the carolers on the porch. I wasn't able to see them but really enjoyed the songs. Gene saw them though. Also thank you so much for the lap robe and slippers from the Happy Hookers. Thank you so much and God Bless you all.

---- Gene & Betsy Untiedt

✧ Dear Happy Hookers, I saw the lovely gift from you. Mom really likes the crochet lap blanket. Thank you so much.

----Love Jane, Daughter of Marynell,
sister to Karla



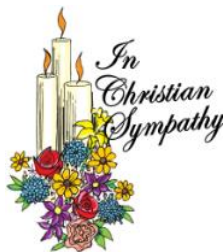
**KIDS AGAINST HUNGER
PACKING EVENT
MARCH 15TH.**

On March 15, we will once again be packing meals for Kids Against Hunger

We will have a light lunch after worship and then start packing the meals. We are asking you to give up something for Lent that you would spend money on and give that money to Kids Against Hunger. St. James is invited to help. Our goal is 4,000 meals (\$1,000.00).

A form will be included in the February and March newsletter. Beginning in February, forms will be inserted in the weekly bulletins. You may also designate an amount on your weekly envelope.

If you have any questions ask Pam Gross or Ruth Labbs-Wilcox.



We offer our sympathies and prayers to the family and friends of JoAnn Sullivan. JoAnn passed away on January 5th. **We also offer our sympathies and prayers** to the family and friends of Ardeth Lindell. Ardeth passed away on January 12th. May you find refuge and comfort in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Feb. 26 – ASH WEDNESDAY Service
12:00 and 6:30 pm at **Calvary**
Choir practice will be after service.



**HELP WILL BE NEEDED
FOR LENTEN LUNCHES.....**

We have one circle (Deborah) meeting now and in order to continue serving lunch during Lent (starting March 4 thru April 1) we are asking people to take a Wednesday and plan a menu. (It does not have to be fancy.) It could be pizza or sandwiches, dessert and something to drink. If you can volunteer or need more information, please see Charlene Lundstrom or Marilyn Gross.

Knit-A-Bit WILL NOT meet during LENT

Beginning with February 26 – Ash Wednesday through Easter, Knit-A-Bit **WILL NOT** be meeting. Knit-A-Bit will resume on April 15th. Any items you have completed during our break, please bring on April 15th. It will be fun to see how much everyone has completed.



Kids Against Hunger



Each day, thousands of children around the world go hungry. What if it took just one quarter — 25 cents — to provide a lifesaving meal to a starving youngster? Kids Against Hunger can use your small change to make a BIG change for struggling children in foreign lands—and here at home. We are asking you to give up something for Lent that you would spend money on and give that money to Kids Against Hunger. St. James is invited to help. Please fill out the pledge card below and join us on Sunday, March 15th, as we package nutrient-rich meals for distribution both locally and abroad. We will gather for a light lunch, then put on our caps and get to work. If we get a good crew, we should be done by 2:00 p.m. Our goal is 4,000 meals (\$1,000).

What will your quarters buy?



\$10.00 = 40 meals
 \$25.00 = 100 meals
 \$40.00 = 160 meals

Blessed that I will not go hungry today when so many others will, I pledge:

- To donate _____ to provide meals for those in need.
- To be God's hands by helping to assemble meals on Oct. 21.

Name _____



Recipe Corner

At Lunch Bunch on January 21, various attendees asked for the soup recipe that was served.

Chef John's Ham and Potato Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ pounds of potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 medium carrot, diced
- 1 rib of celery, diced
- 8 ounces smoked ham, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced, diced or equivalent using dried garlic
- 3 tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup flour
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup heavy cream
- Salt & pepper to taste (depends on the salt content of the ham)

Directions:

- 1 Melt butter in a stockpot over medium heat until golden brown. Stir in carrot, celery, onion, ham and garlic; cook and stir for 5-6 minutes, until vegetables soften and the onions are translucent.
- 2 Stir in flour, cook for about 3 minutes. Stir in chicken broth, 1 cup at a time. Add water and stir to combine. Turn the heat to high and bring to a simmer. Simmer on medium-low for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 3 Taste the soup for salt and add more if necessary. Stir in potatoes; cook for 15 minutes or more, until potatoes are tender. Skim fat if desired.
- 4 With a potato masher, mash the soup a few times, leaving plenty of whole chunks of potato, season with salt & pepper (to taste), and add cream. Stir to combine and heat through.

Note: You can add more potatoes, ham, celery, carrots. (Charlene used 1 stick of butter with flour according). Enjoy!