

LENTEN WORSHIP

THE WILDERNESS
OF DEMENTIA

SMALL GROUPS

lost

LENT 2017



CQ

FROM PASTOR HANS

Dear Calvary Friends in Faith,

I almost lost my son at Fleet Farm.

Yup. Don't judge. I was looking for a new flannel shirt at Fleet Farm. My son, Lars (three years old at the time), was by my side. All of a sudden, *he was gone*. Of course, at first I thought he was hiding in the middle of the clothes racks like kids do. So, I used my cute Dad voice, "Lars, where are you? Come out, come out wherever you are!" No response. A bead of sweat rolls down my back and I started to think: I've lost a lot of things, but never a child. This is not going to go over well with my wife. I raised my voice, "Lars, come out...NOW!" Soon I'm frantically running from clothes rack to clothes rack, then through the aisles, hollering, "LAAAARS!!!" After the longest three minutes of my life, I peered down an aisle and there he was, standing with a friendly young couple. The lost was found.

Our year-long theme is "Church in the Wild." Together we're wondering: What does it mean to be people of faith out in the wild of daily life where we often feel lost? Parenting doesn't come with a manual. Kids get cut from teams and adults are let go from jobs. We know broken marriages, stressful finances, depression and the loss of loved ones. We know what it means to be lost.

During the weeks leading up to Easter we're going to explore Bible stories about people and things that were lost. And, as we do, we'll remember that when we are lost, there is one who knows where we are and is unafraid to walk with us in the wild. And, come Easter, we'll celebrate because we have a God with whom we are never lost!

Inside these pages you'll read about some of the ways God is using our church family to walk with those of us who feel lost now and then — from young families to elders, busy newlyweds to the aged who are unable to leave their homes. **God is scooping up all of us who sometimes feel lost in the loving arms of this family of faith we call "Calvary."**

Come, worship with your church family this Lent and Easter, and know you are always found!

Sometimes lost like you,



Pastor Hans

SPRING 2017

Calvary Lutheran Church
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In the wilderness of everyday life we know what it feels like to be “Lost.” Lost in our busyness. Lost in our worry and our drive to acquire more and more. Lost in our agendas, appearances, and doubt. During Lent we’ll enter this wilderness together and remember that when we are lost God doesn’t sit waiting for us to find our way back. Rather, God is always frantically searching you out. Nothing will separate us from this God. With God, know this: You are never truly lost.



PALM & PASSION WEEKEND

APRIL 8TH & 9TH

6pm, Saturday Worship
8:30am, 10:45am, Sunday Worship

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 13TH

12:00pm, Maundy Thursday Worship
6:00pm, The Last Supper Drama & First Communion

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 14TH

12:00pm, Good Friday All-ELCA Worship
6:00pm, Passion Drama (at Calvary)

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 16TH

8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am, Easter Worship
w/Holy Communion at all services

the Wild HOPE of Christmas with CALVARY

In today's world, it is easy to become trapped by our consumer culture. We think, "I'll find happiness only after I buy one more thing..." particularly during the season of Christmas. But this year, Calvary people refused to be defined by culture. THANK YOU for putting others first, for bringing cheer, for reaching out—for making a difference!



The Giving Tree

Calvary contributed more than 300 Christmas gifts to families in need through our partnership with United Way of Douglas and Pope Counties.



Christmas Caroling

Confirmision students and their families spread out all over Alexandria to connect with people in local care facilities to bring a little cheer. How fun, especially to connect with our Calvary friends!



LWR Sunday School Offering

Sunday School kids collected \$451.57 worth of change to give to our Bihar, India partnership with Lutheran World Relief through their Christmas program, "Christmas in Cowboy Town."



Student Clothes Closet

"The Upper Room" clothes closet reopened and is being run through the collaborative work of Becky Hedstrom, Kalli Kracker, Georgia and Sara Reemts, Aubry and Sara Kusters, and many Alexandria High School staff. Clothes are available for middle and high school students in need.



Cheer Baskets

In December, people of Calvary delivered 96 Cheer Baskets of goodies to those who may appreciate a day brightener.

"On behalf of my Dad and Mom, Franklin W. and Mary A. Swenson, we would like to extend a sincere 'thank you' to the Calvary Outreach Team that delivered goody-boxes to my parents for the Christmas Holiday! Your thoughtfulness and kindness is truly appreciated! I am so proud to be a member of Calvary!" – Diane Lynn Swenson Pantze

What Calvary Folks Are Saying About *Small Groups*



Norma Knapp & Mary Ida Oorlog

These friends reflect with gratitude on the small group that brought them together.

Mary Ida Oorlog met Norma Knapp several years ago when she moved back to her hometown of Alexandria with her husband Russ. When the Oorlogs joined Calvary, Mary Ida decided to join a small group — the Naomi Circle — as a way to connect with and meet other women at Calvary. Little did she know that the friendship she and Norma developed would lead her on a 1,000 mile car trip in the fall of 2016. On October 29, Norma was traveling with another friend from Colorado to Minnesota, when she was in a terrible car accident that landed her in the hospital in Kearney, Nebraska for 22 days. Norma's children spent as much time as they could with her, but it was challenging for them to take additional days away from work and family to help her get home. When Mary Ida called to check on Norma in the hospital, she boldly offered to drive to Kearney and pick her up. Now, as Norma continues to recover at home, these friends reflect with gratitude on the small group that brought them together.

"Friendship and fun fellowship with the Lunch Ladies goes beyond the monthly book studies. We had fun gatherings with our spouses and ended our first year with lunch at LA FERME. Lively discussions, honest opinions and loving encouragement lace our meetings!"

- JUDY DIETZLER

"I look forward to it every Wednesday morning. We have a good lesson and discussion and great fellowship. I really appreciate when we close and join hands to recite the Lord's Prayer."

- ARLAN JOHNSON

"I enjoy it because of the fellowship and comradery with other men. I really appreciate the support, and enjoy hearing other's thoughts and opinions on the Scripture passages we study."

- JIM ANDERSON

"The name of our small group is Friends in Faith. It is all about sharing our lives and stories with each other. A few days ago I attended a ceremony and shared my experience with the group. Come to find out, several others have had similar experiences in their past. By talking about it we all got to know each other better and became closer. For me this is the true value in belonging to our small group. I am so blessed to have these amazing women in my life."

- ANN SCOTT

"I participate in the intellectual and personally enriching Tuesday evening weekly book study at Calvary! We have chosen books on the history of Jesus and related topics that provide food for thought and discussion. The small group size has allowed me to get to know the other women, and it has become a close, supportive group spanning a range of ages."

- JACKIE FEIL

Church Council President: Sarah Suchy

WHY DID YOU ACCEPT THE INVITATION TO SERVE ON CALVARY'S COUNCIL?

My motivation to serve on Calvary's council was my own children. I want them to grow up engaged in a life of faith, and for this reason, I am excited particularly to help the church build programming for Calvary's youngest members.



Sarah & Kevin Suchy with their children, Kennedy and Grady

glass of wine, and sneaking in the back pew a minute before church starts. My husband and I often joke that this “wild” world is what we have, and we need to embrace the ways our faith can be part of it.

HOW DOES FAITH IMPACT YOUR LEADERSHIP OUT IN THE WILD, MONDAY-SATURDAY?

As an elementary principal, I work with over 500 students and families, and over 100 staff members, and it's amazing to see God at work every day. Earlier this fall, a community member proudly gave me a check from his church for whatever our kids needed. Last week we discovered a student who wasn't getting enough food at home, so we provided her with Backpack Attack food on weekends. I also see many adults providing love and structure for kids who don't ask for it in the best ways, and I see children being friends and forgiving others who don't fit in a pretty box. With this said, I'm reminded often how God gives me strength to lead in my career and to support my own family.

SARAH SUCHY, Calvary Council President

Calvary's Building Exploratory Team

At January's annual meeting the Congregation approved the Building Exploratory Team recommended by the Church Council. The team's assignment is to study the future building and space needed for our ministry at Calvary. The group will prepare a report and offer recommendations for the Congregation to consider at the 2018 annual meeting. The team will study our current facility and visit with church members and staff to better understand where we are and where we are going. They will look at how other churches are creatively using their space and consider options for adding space to our building.

TEAM MEMBERS: Craig Andrews, Clint Bachmann, Alicia Bertram, Pastor Hans Dahl Todd Emmons, Mary Griffin, Rich Rentz, Miriam Svobodny, and Dave Ahlquist.

If you would like to share an idea, please contact one of the team members, put your idea in an envelope and drop it in the church office or email us: building@calvaryalex.org.

DAVE AHLQUIST

Snapshots of Calvary

The photo gallery in the hallway at Calvary emerged out of the Calvary Renew projects in 2013. The goal was to create an environment welcoming to all. From that came the idea of a changing photo gallery to reflect the life of our congregation—the church is the people! Calvary is growing and changing with the people of the church. The photos give a “snapshot” of that growth and life and provide a visual that tell stories of Calvary's ministries. They show love, joy, fellowship, and service to God, each other, and the world.

My hope is that the photos connect the Calvary family. It is a joint effort of several members who share their photographic eye and of course, all the beautiful people of this congregation!

MARY GRIFFIN



Mary Griffin gives her time each month to print and hang photos. She is pictured here with Gary Kluver and a photo of his mother Edna, one of Calvary's saints who passed away in December.

Little Calvary at Grand Arbor

In the fall of 2016, Marlene and Tom Thompson sold their home and moved into the beautiful new addition at Grand Arbor. And as anyone who has moved before can attest, transitions like this often bring uncertainties. *How will I fit into my new community? Will I know any of my neighbors?*

But Marlene and Tom didn't waste time in finding ways to connect with others. As Caring Connectors from our Calvary in the Neighborhood ministry, they took the initiative to organize monthly gatherings with other Calvary members who live at Grand Arbor. The



group calls itself “Little Calvary,” and they are a part of Neighborhood 16 (N16) which includes the Lake Burgen and Grand Arbor area.



Grand Arbor residents hold the “Little Calvary” neighborhood gathering on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 2:00 PM.

If you're looking for ways to get to know your Calvary neighbors, reach out to your Caring Connector and check out the map in the church gathering area. You might be surprised to discover that the person you sit next to at worship is also your neighbor!

Pre-Marriage Retreat

On January 7, 2017, Callen and I attended the Marriage Retreat. Before attending we did not know what to expect. First, we thought we already knew everything about each other. Second, we knew we had a few things to talk over and figure out before getting married but did not think those issues would come up during the retreat. They did.

The marriage retreat was so much more than I expected. We had active conversations amongst our peers and ourselves that pertained to some of the issues that we had. We have been together for four years, after this marriage retreat we felt more connected and understood a deeper part of each other that would have never emerged if not for the retreat. Before the retreat we were asked to take a strengths finder test that showed what strengths you have and what strengths your partner has. They showed us our results at the retreat and how we can use the results in our marriage. That was very helpful for the both of us, and again, gave us a deeper connection. I would recommend to any couple that is getting married to give the retreat a try. You will come out with a better understanding of your partner and how you can both strengthen your relationship so it may last a lifetime.

ANDREW OLSON



Faith In The Home

One night, as I was tucking in our three-year-old daughter she said, “Daddy I want to hold Milo and pray. Please help if I miss anything!” With a smile on my face I waited to hear her “prayer.”

She proceeded to recite the Lord’s Prayer (by herself) without mistake. I was blown away at my little girl. However, I cannot take credit for this heartfelt moment completely. It was Peyton that asked us about learning the Lord’s Prayer. She asked to hear it at bedtime and started repeating and practicing every night with my wife.

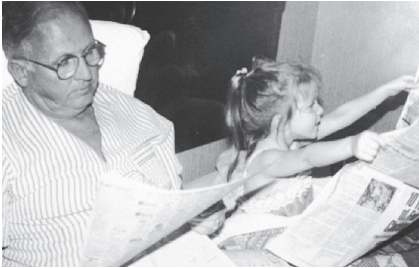


She wanted to learn the Lord’s Prayer because she heard it at Faith Launchers with Pastor Ben. She wanted to say it loud and proud in the prayer circle every Wednesday night, which she now does. Our family has benefited greatly since joining Faith Launchers and other youth activities at Calvary. Our three year old knowing the Lord’s Prayer by heart is just one way.

CORY AND JENNIFER HODGSON

The Wilderness of Dementia

Like many families, the Dittberners have a tradition of celebrating Christmas together. And with 20 members of the family, they've opted to keep gift-giving simple: each person is assigned another family member's name and given a \$25 spending limit.



Emma Sieling is 3rd born among all of the Dittberner grandchildren, and this year she was matched up with her grandfather, Dave. She bought him the flannel shirt she knew he needed, but she wanted to do something more personal as well. Emma knew her grandfather struggled to keep his hands still as a result of his progressing Alzheimer's. "His hands are always moving—constantly folding napkins or tying things," said Carol, the matriarch of the family.



So Emma researched online and discovered something called a Fidget Quilt. She found old shirts and pants at thrift stores, using the buttons, zippers, and buckles to create panels on the front of the quilt, also printing family

photos on the fabric. Carol beams thinking about Emma's gift. "It was a great surprise to everyone—the highlight of our Christmas celebration!"

Carol admits there are challenges watching a spouse struggle with this terrible disease. She is grateful for all the help from her children and grandchildren, as well as the local support group she faithfully attends. "We have to talk about Alzheimer's," she says. "It's important for others to know they aren't alone." Always positive, Carol reflects, "Dave and I are so blessed to be together for all these years." This summer, the family will celebrate again as Emma becomes the first Dittberner grandchild to be married. In fact, it's no coincidence for this tightly-knit family that Emma will marry Colin Erickson the same week in June that Dave and Carol were married nearly 60 years ago.



The Alexandria Alzheimer's Support group meets the 4th Thursday of each month, 1:30-3:00pm at the Public Works building. Contact: Mary Krueger (320-762-3047)

New Parent Friendly Visitor Ministry

My passion for helping families comes from my day to day work as a nurse in a program called Supporting Hands Nurse-Family Partnership. I work with first-time moms by supporting them on their motherhood journey from pregnancy to toddlerhood. I enjoy building positive relationships with the families and empowering women to create the life they want for their child and themselves.



Here at Calvary, I recently joined other members with a similar passion, as part of the **New Parent Friendly Visitor Ministry**. Part of our mission is to support new parents in our church soon after the birth or adoption of a child by bringing a basket of newborn essentials and sharing “congrats” on behalf of our church family.

In December, I used a Thrivent Actions Team to purchase supplies for this ministry, inviting Sunday

Lacey, pictured with Alicia Bertram, another partner in this ministry

School students to bring new or gently used books and to assemble the kits. The kids also wrote creative words of advice to the new parents. It was fun to involve several generations! Being a new parent is rewarding and challenging, all at the same time. I hope this ministry will continue to grow, letting these families know the church is here to support them in their parenting journey.

LACEY SEVERSON

Service Blitz Care Packages

Thank you to everyone who donated and/or helped pack and send care packages to the college students! I am a junior at Minnesota State University Moorhead. A package from my Calvary family arrived just before my finals started and brightened my spirits and kept me fed during those stressful few weeks.

Thank you to the students who worked on my pillow. It will be used in my living room with the blanket that was made and sent to college students in last years' package. To all the confirmation students who helped with this project, I pray that you continue to grow in your faith and that you understand how giving of your time and talents can brighten the days of people you may not even know. Thank you!



SAM FREDERICK

Faith For Life Artist: Paul Oman

Worship with Cavalry on Ash Wednesday, March 1 at 6pm, and experience Paul's amazing gifts as he helps bring the message of scripture to life in this artistic ministry. Paul Oman draws artistic inspiration from his experiences and travels, recreating these experiences through watercolor. As an emerging master of watercolor, Paul is sought after for both his work and his teaching.



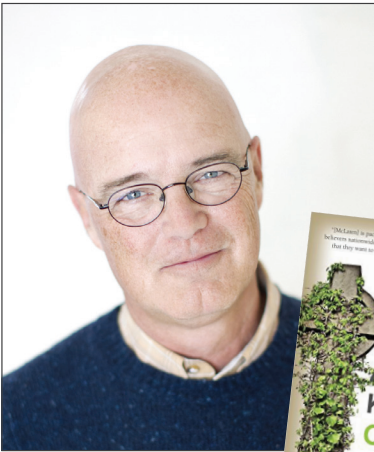
Artist, Paul Oman



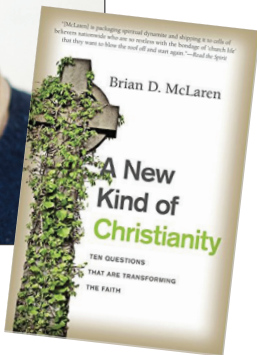
(Photo: paulomanfineart.com and pzphotography)

Faith For Life Speaker: Brian McLaren

On April 5 at 6pm, Brian McLaren will wrap up this year's Faith for Life Speaker Series. He will help us think about what it means to love your neighbor, regardless of their race, creed or religion, in what he calls a more humble, inclusivist approach to live like Jesus. Brian is a popular conference speaker and a frequent guest lecturer for denominational and ecumenical leadership gatherings—across the US and Canada, Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. His public speaking covers a broad range of topics including postmodern thought and culture, Biblical studies, evangelism, leadership, global mission, spiritual formation, worship, inter-religious dialogue, and social justice.



Speaker, Brian McLaren
(Photo: Courtney Perry)



A frequent guest on television, radio, and news media programs, his work has also been covered in Time (where he was listed as one of American's 25 most influential evangelicals), Christianity Today, Christian Century, the Washington Post, Huffington Post, CNN.com, among others.

In *"A New Kind of Christianity"* (HarperOne, 2010), Brian articulated ten questions that are central to the emergence of a postmodern, post-colonial Christian faith. Brian's *"Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road? (Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World)"* explores the intersection of religious identity, inter-religious hostility, and human solidarity.

His 2016 release, *"The Great Spiritual Migration,"* has been hailed as his most important work to date. While with us, Brian will focus specifically on a conversation we started last year about interfaith dialog and commitment to loving our neighbor—especially those of a different faith.

Easter

CHRIST IS RISEN

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 16TH

8am, 9:30am, 11am | Easter Worship

w/Holy Communion at all services

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Saturday: 6pm Praise Worship

Sunday: 8:30am Traditional Worship

10:45am Celebrate Worship

Wednesday: 6pm Worship on Wednesday

[JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT CALVARY!](#)



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