

Reflections from Calvary

February 2019

A Publication of Calvary Lutheran Church, Moline, Illinois

Pastor's Report of 2019 Annual Meeting:

On the First Sunday of Advent this past December, in the gospel reading from Luke (21:25-28) Jesus spoke of signs in the sun and moon and stars, of roaring seas and the heavens shaking. He talked about fear and foreboding for what is coming to the world. Jesus was giving a vision of the end of time, of what is often referred to as the apocalypse. Then Jesus concludes his vision by saying, "Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

At the beginning of my sermon that morning I read a poem, "By Kindly Powers Surrounded." It is a poem of tremendous hope, written by Dietrich Bonhoeffer from a Nazi prison in December 1944...just months prior to his execution. In the midst of all the evil that surrounded him in prison during one of the darkest periods of world history, Bonhoeffer found cause for hope and optimism. The source of that hope was faith that God was with him and that God would fulfill God's promise to always be with him and love him.

It is the same message expressed by Jesus as he spoke of the end times. Despite the tumult of a world in chaos...despite the fear and anxiety caused by the trials and tribulations of life...Jesus says "stand up and raise your heads," because God is with you and God's kingdom will come as God has promised.

As we conclude 2018 it might seem like our congregation is experiencing some tumult of our own. Though I am not one to get bogged down in "numbers," we do have some negative numbers in our reports this year.

First, our average worship attendance showed a significant decline in 2018. Though I am certain this is not the sole explanation, part of the reason for the decline is due to the number of our regular attenders who passed away in the last year or so. I don't know

that in any year of my ministry I have had so many relatively active members die in such a short period of time.

The second number which may seem to be a cause for concern is the decrease in our current & benevolence offerings. That number had been steady or growing for several years. And I am certain that a major reason for the decline in this number is the same as the reason for the decline in worship attendance. Those active members who passed away were also regular contributors to the mission of the congregation. Their offerings are missed. (It is also important to note here that because of our shared ministry with St. James, our 2018 income exceeded our expenses.)

Yet in the midst of this seemingly foreboding news, I want to echo the confidence of Jesus from Luke 21. Stand up and raise your heads. A decline in worship attendance and offerings does not mean that God has abandoned us. With the faith and optimism expressed by Bonhoeffer from his prison cell, I believe that God is still with us and that God will keep God's promise to always be with us.

And so we raise up our heads in hope, our hearts in joy, and hands in service to God. Despite the "numbers" in 2018, we continued to do the work that God has called us to. We...

- Offered our prayers and praise to God in weekly worship.
- Provided opportunities for members to grow in faith and understanding of the Word of God through Bible study.
- Comforted the grieving members among us.
- Fed the hungry at the East Moline Meal Site, local food pantries, Café on Vine and through the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

- Comforted some in distress with our support of Winnie’s Place Domestic Violence Shelter for Women.
- Helped provide shelter for the poor with our support of Habitat for Humanity.
- Provided relief for victims of hurricanes, floods and fires through the ELCA Disaster Response.
- Offered warmth and love with lap robes and quilts for people in nursing homes and with mittens and hats for children or the homeless.
- Visited the sick and the shut-ins.
- Provided underwear to children in Romania.
- Offered fellowship for those who may be lonely.
- and more.

So, while “the numbers” may not be what we may hope for, we continue to be a vital congregation serving God in word and deed.

And as we complete our 100th year of ministry in this place, we can absolutely stand up and raise our heads, knowing that God will continue to be with us in all we do for all the years to come.

In Christ,
Pastor Knowles

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Birthday to:

- 1 – Judy Carbiener
- 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



TRIVIA NIGHT ON FEBRUARY 1

As part of the celebration of our 100th anniversary, Calvary Lutheran Church will host a trivia night on Friday, February 1. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. and the game begins at 7 p.m., downstairs in Erlander Hall.

To reserve a table, call or text Paul Levesque at (309) 236-1726 or send an e-mail to levesque5562@att.net

The event will be led by Mister Trivia, the Quad Cities’ leading and best trivia host. Cost will be \$100 per table, for tables of up to 10 people; the price includes doublers and mulligans.

Money raised at the trivia night will go toward the love gift that Calvary will give to mark its 100th anniversary. The love gift will go toward the establishment of a mission church in Genoa, Illinois.

Along with trivia, the event will feature a silent auction and more. Snacks and soft drinks will be on sale; you may bring your own as well, but no alcoholic beverages please.



The **ANNUAL MEETING** is Sunday, January 27th after worship in Erlander Hall. All voting members are encouraged to attend.

DONATIONS through our Website

Donations through our Website You are now able to make donations to Calvary through our website. Just click on the Donate tab. If you need help, or more information, please contact the church office.

100th Anniversary Information:

For **February 2019** – we will be collecting **100 boxes** of Cake/Brownie Mix

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

for **MARCH** is no later than **February 12** for distribution on February 21. Please have your articles to me on time. You may email or put your articles in my box.





We offer our sympathies and prayers to Candice Tennison on the death of her son, Shawn in Colorado in December. We also extend our sympathies Kurt & Lisa Dicks on the death of Kurt's father, Doren on January 6. May each of you find refuge and comfort in our Lord, Jesus Christ.



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

✧ To Our Calvary Friends – I enjoyed your Christmas Caroling and the very special gifts from my Happy Hookers Ladies group. Thank you very much.

--- Happy New Year, Gisele Richardson

✧ Thanks to the Christmas carolers who came to Colona House and also brought the tasty Christmas goodies. It' so nice to be remembered.

---- Kathryn Beardsley

✧ Thank you so much for making the trip out to Geneseo to sing Christmas carols and brought treats and gifts. I want to wish everyone a Blessed New Year.

----Sincerely, Stan Heed

❖ Thank you so much for the generous donation of beautiful blankets.

---- Merry Christmas, Genesis Visiting Nurses

❖ Dear Calvary Lutheran Church, Pam Gross brought us 18 bags of food. Thank you so much for thinking of Winnie's Place. We are so grateful to all of you.

---- Sincerely, Winnie's Place

❖ Dear friends, The CUMC Food Pantry appreciates your generous donation. Thank you! Contributions, like yours, help the pantry meet the needs of food insecure families in our area.

----Sincerely, Sue Swartz

❖ Calvary Lutheran, Thank you so much for thinking of YouthHope Food Pantry for monthly donations. The mashed potatoes on our shelf are 1/2 gone -

----Youth Hope Food Pantry

❖ Thank you! Because of you, needy families are receiving Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets again this year. We had hundreds of requests for both the Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets over the last two months. With your support, we have been able to help with many of these requests.

---- Merry Christmas! Mark Drake,
Executive Director Of Youth Hope

WELCA - All Calvary women are invited.



✧ **Deborah Circle** – Feb. 5 at 9:00 am in the Upper Room. Hostesses will be Sharon Hough and Marilyn Gross.

✧ **WELCA Board** – will meet on **Thursday, Feb. 7 at 6:30 pm** to discuss 2019 programming. We are hosting the WELCA West Conference Assembly in April. This meeting is open to all women of Calvary

✧ **HAPPY HOOKERS** - will meet on February 27 at 9:30 am in Erlander Hall. Activities include quilting, crocheting, knitting and handicrafts. (bring a treat to share at “coffee time.”)

**LUNCH BUNCH
“Valentine Party”**

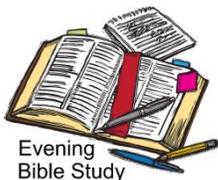
Tuesday, February 19th at 11:00 am in the Upper Room. *Come and bring your friends – always a*

sociable time and good food, too. Our entertainment will be the Quarter Moon Tinsnips Blue Grass Band” with leader Don Haugen. They play gospel and bluegrass music...it will be a “foot-tapping” afternoon!



CAFÉ - February 23 at 9:30 a.m.
Moline Public Library Café,
3210 41st Street, Moline, IL
Sponsored by St. James WELCA

Please join us for a cup of coffee, tea, and maybe a pastry, as we gather for Bible Study and discussion on a Podcast from the ELCA website. All women of St. James Lutheran and Calvary Lutheran Churches are invited.



ST. JAMES Evening Bible Study

Beginning February 5 at 6:30 pm an Evening Bible study will be held at St. James, Rock Island, We will be studying the book of Luke.



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

We have one circle (Deborah) meeting now and in order to continue serving lunch during

Lent (starting in March) 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.

FAITHFUL FLEXORS Exercise Group



Faithful Flexors

Our exercise class, "Faithful Flexors" meet regularly on Mondays and Thursdays at 9:00 – 9:30 am. Just these few minutes can make a difference in your health and well-being. Come Join us!!! (you can invite friends and neighbors, too – open to all!!!)



RELAY FOR LIFE "Calvary Crusaders"

The "2019 Relay for Life of the Quad Cities" will be held at Bettendorf High School on Saturday, September 21, 2019.

The Calvary Crusaders have organized and plan to hold 4th Sunday Coffee Hours during this year as in the past. A grant from Thrivent Financial to help cover expenses has been approved. Other Crusaders relay activities will be held to a minimum to give opportunity for events celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Calvary.

The Laureate Beta Psi sorority members of the relay team are planning a quilt auction and will also work with the team's sponsor, Culver's, Silvis to raise money during the year.

THRIVENT "ACTION TEAMS" #1 Live Generously")

This program is available to Thrivent members that desire to benefit the community by their involvement in volunteering and service to others. Two grants of \$250 are available each year for qualifying Thrivent members. If interested, check with your Thrivent representative or log-in to your Thrivent web-site.

How many of you have noticed a Name Change to the Calvary Courier? At various times throughout the coming months, please take note the Name of the Newsletter. I will write a short history on the newsletter and how it has evolved over the years.

"Reflections from Calvary"

Rev. Maynard Force, Pastor of Calvary saw a need to try and bring the unchurched into Calvary from the surrounding area. Sunday school children attended, but their parents did not.

Out of this need a bulletin was produced according to the 1938 Annual Report – "Prior to Thanksgiving 300 issues were mailed and 1200 handbills were distributed from house to house. At Christmas, mailing of 300 and 1000 handbills were distributed to homes around the church. Then before Lent, another 300 were mailed, but due to a City Ordinance change prohibited us from passing out handbills to homes around the church."

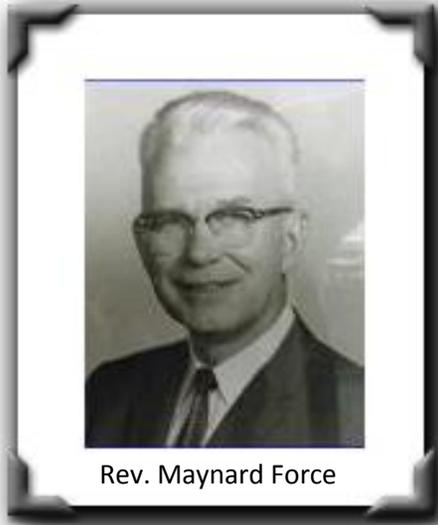
Annual Report - October 1939 thru October 1940 – "Reflections of Calvary" was sent out once to surrounding homes and given to Sunday school children to take home. This "Reflection" was seen as ..."worthwhile for us [Calvary] to enlarge that bulletin into a monthly booklet to be sent out in our vicinity" – This was a quote from Pastor Emory Erlander.

Calvary's Second Decade (1930-1939)

The first decade of Calvary Lutheran Church was marked by tremendous growth and the establishment of a permanent home for the congregation—the "basement church." But the excitement the members must have felt in anchoring a new church in a fast-growing section of Moline was soon overshadowed by the Great Depression gripping the nation at the time. The financial crisis hit Calvary hard: At one point, more than three-fourths of its members were receiving charitable assistance. So great were the challenges the fledgling faith community faced, some even wondered whether it would survive.

Shepherding the debt-ridden congregation through much of this troubled time was the Rev. Maynard Force, who joined Calvary in September of 1931 after the April departure of the Rev. Adolph Dickhart.

The new pastor seemed aptly named, as he was, indeed, a



Rev. Maynard Force

formidable force for spreading the gospel in the community.

In his report summing up his first year at Calvary, Rev. Force noted that while “many institutions, corporations, banks, governments

and organizations of all kinds are crumbling and falling,” Christ’s Word is unfailing.

During the Depression, the congregation cut expenses as much as possible. The Illinois Conference (the Synod) had been assisting the church by providing financial help of up to \$1,900 a year, but those dollars were shrinking. To help the church, the organist, two assistants and the choir director all chose to serve without pay, according to a 1933 report. The church members took on the janitorial duties for the building, and some men from Calvary cut ice for Moline Consumers Company to work off the church’s \$20 coal debt with the company. Another individual donated two tons of coal. Volunteers also cut wood near the town of Hampton for fuel to heat the building—enough to last three years! And church organizations began to meet in homes to keep heating costs down.

year, including one outing where they “motored to Maquoketa Caves” on Decoration Day (Memorial Day). The Ladies Aid reportedly purchased items for the church through fundraisers that included making and selling potato sausage, and hawking Whites Wonder cleaner. The Brotherhood, a men’s group organized in 1931 at Calvary, had as its motto, “Hold Fast.” During the winter of 1931-32, the men of this group went door-to-door distributing nearly 900 copies of the Gospel of St. John, and also placed religious tracts at area depots. The Girls’ Missionary Society (or “Circle” in some references) focused on spiritual edification and the support of missions. And the Junior Mission Band (which had *nothing* to do with making music) was a children’s group operating under the auspices of the Augustana Lutheran Church, with an emphasis on spreading the Gospel.

The Sunday School—where everything began for Calvary—had an enrollment nearing 300



Cradle Roll party - 31 mothers and children attended early 1930s

in the early 1930’s, with record attendance of 262 children in 1932 (an increase of about 100 over the previous year). A Christmas program drew upwards of 500 people, reports show. The church held successful Vacation Bible School programs each summer—with 1937 being an exception. That was the year a smallpox scare occurred in the area. Just a week before Calvary’s VBS was set to begin, the city physician declared that only those children who had been vaccinated against the disease could take part, drastically reducing attendance that year.

Calvary’s parishioners had ample opportunity for worship and faith building during this decade, although Communion was only offered about six times a year (church deacons stored the “Communion Box” at their homes until a cabinet was finally built for it). In proportion to its membership, Calvary had the highest attendance of any Moline church at the time, Rev. Force believed. There were Prayer Meetings held each Wednesday evening, drawing an average of 70 attendees; cottage prayer meetings on Friday evenings; and, of course, regular worship services. Sunday morning services



Confirmation Class – of 1936

Annual reports from this time show that Calvary had many active groups in the 1930s. The Luther League, made up of youth from the church, held a variety of service projects and events each

drew an average of 150—including a number of students from the local Augustana Seminary—while attendance on Sunday evening was around 85. Weeklong “Evangelistic Meetings” (i.e., religious revivals) also were held. Yes, the work of God continued at Calvary, despite the congregation’s financial woes.

In 1934, the Calvary Lutheran Hospital Circle was formed for the purpose of holding sewing days at the hospital and helping the church meet its \$600 “hospital pledge”—an assessment made of area congregations to keep the Lutheran-affiliated



Lutheran Hospital

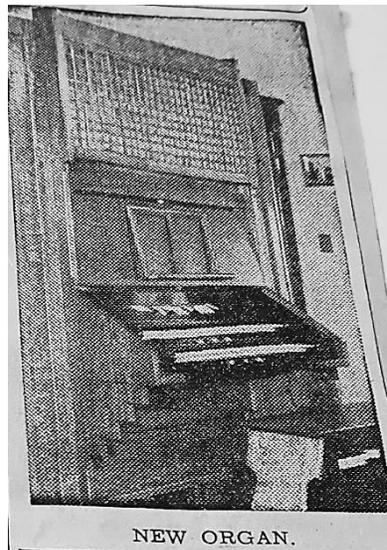
medical facility in Moline afloat during the Depression. For one creative fundraiser, aprons were sent to friends

and members, who were asked to sew into the apron pocket coins amounting to one cent per inch of their waist measure, and then return it. Presumably they took donors at their word.

Also in 1934, the church returned to its roots by purchasing a portable classroom from the Moline School Board for \$50 to help accommodate the Sunday School students. The structure was dismantled on the Logan School property and rebuilt on the church grounds by the men of Calvary. Chairs for the four new classrooms were provided in part by “Esterdahl’s Undertaking establishment,” it was reported. The congregation also installed canvas curtains in the “social hall” to create six separate classrooms. That same year, Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Nelson donated an altar painting, “Christ in Gethsemane,” greatly enhancing Calvary’s worship space.



By the mid-1930s, the financial picture was starting



NEW ORGAN.

to brighten in the Tri-Cities. Calvary was able to purchase—for \$700 in cash—a pipe organ built by Rock Island resident Edward Lundeen, and dedicated on April 25, 1937.

Space constraints meant that the organ chamber had to be installed in the kitchen! During this time, Calvary also was slowly reducing its debt for the basement building. In 1937, a \$4,000 “note” held by a local bank was taken over by the Illinois Conference, which greatly pleased Rev. Force. He stated: “We are indeed fortunate to get away from the bank and their threats, and to have our entire debt in the hands of ... an organization which has a soul.” (That debt would be paid in full as part of the church’s 20th anniversary celebration in 1939.)

During his tenure at Calvary, the Rev. Force was known to use his annual reports to discuss the social ills of the day. For example, he wrote that the “saloon, or modern tavern, has had its effect upon the church work,” and even *women* were frequenting these places, he lamented. Also in his sights were movies, which were luring his parishioners with offers of big prizes on “Bank Night” at the cinemas, and the “modern dance, which has cursed so many lives ...,” he wrote. Bingo and baseball (particularly Sunday night ball games) were later added to Force’s list of sinful pleasures drawing Calvary members away from church activities.

Despite these temptations, Calvary saw its highest worship attendance to date with a 1937 Easter service that drew 355 people. Unfortunately, attendance quickly went back to “normal” the following week, which Rev. Force found disheartening. “How much good one or two services a year can do for these people God alone knows,” he stated.

Rev. Force remained at Calvary through March of 1940. In marking the church’s 20th year in 1939, the pastor made this prediction for the congregation’s future: “If Calvary remains a humble, prayerful church, the years to come will be marked with a great harvest of souls.”

Now, eighty years later, that harvest continues.