

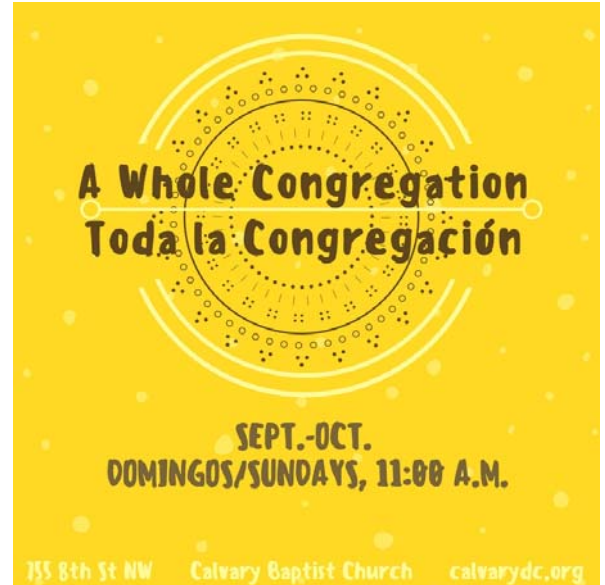
Fall 2017

THE CALLER

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Fall Sermon Series

A Whole Congregation: As we re-enter the lectionary and re-enter the sanctuary together this September, we find ourselves walking with the people of Israel as they flee Egypt, wander in the desert, and make sense of how to be a new people in a new land. And while these enslaved people are under the shadow of Egypt's empire, God asks Moses to gather "the whole congregation." Before they are "the people Israel," before they have made it out of bondage or out of the wilderness or out of anything at all for that matter, God already calls them a "whole" congregation. And as we follow them on their journey together, we learn some things about what it means to become a whole congregation together, too. Throughout these two months, and more directly during the month of October as in years past, together we will press into the importance of stewardship, giving, and acts of commitment to the life of the church. If "stewardship" feels like a real churchy word, think of it this way. Stewardship is, very simply (but not so simply) the task of taking care of, properly tending for, and addressing honestly the needs of an institution or community. *Good* stewardship always involves the act of becoming, much like becoming a whole congregation. It takes honest conversation about our past and any trauma or pain we've endured from it, it takes intentional care and formation of leaders, it takes giving and serving in ways that are not rooted in fear or anxiety. It takes a group of people who have chosen whole-hearted living to make a whole-hearted congregation. So, during the months of September and October, we will focus in on our community, on stewardship, and on what it means to be a "whole" congregation, together.



Summer Sunday School Series

TextTalks, Voiceboxer, and a Journey with New Technology

This summer we spent time hooked up to sound devices, projectors, and hopefully, each other's heart. For eight weeks this summer during the Sunday school hour, we let a TED Talk and a Scripture passage serve as our curriculum. Sometimes, those talks were in Spanish with English subtitles and sometimes, they were in English with Spanish subtitles. To further enhance bilingual inclusion as we shared in conversation together, we utilized some exciting technology through an application called, Voice Boxer. We are hopeful this new technology might serve us well in the future as we continue to seek creative ways to communicate across languages. Here's a list of the talks we explored together:

- Brené Brown- *The power of vulnerability (El poder de la vulnerabilidad)*
- Bryan Stevenson- *We need to talk about an injustice (Tenemos que hablar de una injusticia)*
- Angela Dass- *The beauty of human skin in every color (La belleza del color de la piel)*
- Chimamanda Adichi- *The danger of a single story (El peligro de la historia unica)*
- Matías Najún- *Vivir hasta morir*

Music and the Arts

To the Beloved Community of Calvary Baptist Church

Dear Friends:

Today I stand at the intersection of courage and vulnerability (another great quote from Pastor Maria...) to share with you some news that is both difficult and exciting. The winds of change are stirring in my life, and I feel the undeniable call to move on, to leave the DC area, and to change my life in some significant ways. Of course, this decision means change for Calvary too.

In recent days I've been holding important conversations with Pastor Maria and Pastor Sally, with the Staff and the Board, and now it is time to share with all of you my call to leave my position as Director of Music at Calvary. My final Sunday in worship will be September 17.

Let me emphasize that there is no conflict or hidden agenda here. With all transparency, I can claim this call as my own, these decisions as my own. Like you, I feel that Calvary is extremely lucky and blessed to have Pastors Maria and Sally, and Elijah and Erica, in leadership. I have treasured this opportunity to work with all of them, and with Paul and Sabra. The Staff Team here at Calvary is extremely talented, each one completely devoted to the work, and our collaboration has been one of the great gifts of my working life. I'm deeply grateful to our Music Staff and Volunteers—your devotion to Choir and to music in worship is exceptional, and I'm proud and thankful for all we accomplish together each week. Indeed, I'm thankful to everyone in the Calvary Congregation, for the support you have shown, for your willingness to experiment and to try new things, to become the amazing singing congregation and musical church that you are. So I want to take this opportunity to thank *each of you*, most sincerely.

Leaving Calvary is very difficult, and saying goodbye to all of you in the coming weeks even moreso. Like me, you know that Calvary is a special place, that this community is a unique microcosm of the Kingdom, or Kingdom of God. Living and working here at Calvary has been far more life-affirming, impacting and formative than I could have imagined when I began my job 12 years ago. I am so proud of this place and all of you, and I'm so thankful for these 12 years with you. This is an important change of season in my life and in the life of the church, and I hope you'll join me in looking forward to all that lies ahead.

So in the coming days and weeks I ask you to join me in becoming excited about the future of music and arts at Calvary. I encourage all of you to enter into conversation together, to dream big about what might come next for Calvary, and to be bold in your hopes for the next chapter. There are gifted musicians and church leaders in our world today, and any one of them will be lucky and blessed to be welcomed into this community. I'll be praying for you and I'll be looking forward to hearing all about it!

I want to do all I can to help create a smooth transition, to leave well and to say goodbye well. So let me begin that process now by saying to each one of you—thank you so very much for all the great gifts you have shared with me. I love you with all my heart, and truly I will miss you. I pray that you will continue to experience many surprising, extravagant gifts of Spirit. I'm thankful to have been one link in the chain of people and events that combine to create the ongoing story of Calvary Baptist Church. And next June I'll be celebrating 156 years right along with you!

In exchange, I ask for your prayers as I take time for rest and sabbatical, and as I explore new opportunities in the weeks and months ahead. I'm counting on your prayerful support, and I want to leave Calvary knowing that I'm surrounded by all of you as my own Cloud of Witnesses.

Thank you for all that you are to me and for all that your ministry means in our world.

With deep love and affection, I bid you peace—

Cheryl Branham



Welcome Back, Pastor Elijah!

Calvary Baptist Church is excited to welcome Elijah R. Zehyoue back as full-time Pastoral Resident at Calvary for another year, extending and building on his ministry which began here in 2014. Pastor Zehyoue was ordained at Calvary during his earlier stint as Pastoral Resident and he subsequently took a position as Director of Programs and Communications at the New Baptist Covenant.

Throughout the changes, Elijah continued to be active at Calvary--preaching and organizing programs on racial justice and human rights, and leading Theology on Draft. His stewardship of Theology on Draft reinvigorated the weekly evening discussion program and has attracted a growing number of young adults to Calvary.

Over the next twelve months, Elijah will support the work of Pastors Sally and Maria and share responsibilities for preaching in rotation, spiritual formation, and pastoral care. His particular focus will be on youth and young adult activities, developing deeper community engagement and social justice advocacy around racial justice and immigration, and developing liturgical experiences drawn from the richness of the black church tradition.

[Having fled from Liberia with his family as a young child to emigrate to the US, Elijah describes himself as living in the world as West African, Black and American, and this experience helps him understand the many wounds people carry. His vision is to work through the church to heal those wounds and build bridges in our shared work for justice.



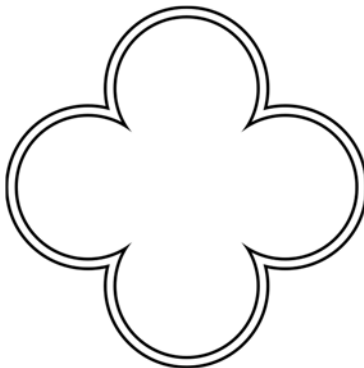
Business Meeting Dates

As set by the Church Board, the next Quarterly Business Meeting will be held
Sunday, October 22

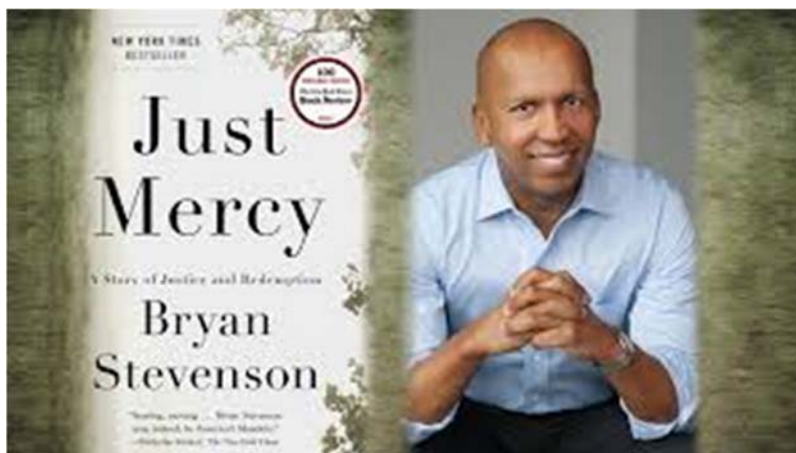
and the Annual Business Meeting
Sunday, January 28, 2018

Be sure to mark your calendar to attend the Sunday, October 22, 2017, Quarterly Business Meeting as we will receive and act on the recommendations of the Nominations Committee for 2018 church leadership as well as adopting an operating budget for 2018 which will include a motion to draw additional funds from the Endowment (see the summary of the July Quarterly Business Meeting on page 6).

If you are Interested in serving on a committee or the Church Board please see Amaka Anku or Tim Shaw.



Theology on Draft



Theology on Draft is currently studying and discussing Bryan Stevenson's award winning book *Just Mercy*. This book provides a closer look into how racialized and inhumane our criminal justice system is. It pays special attention to stories of men, women, and children who are on death row. As a church small group, we are studying this book because of its theological profundity and its moral courage. This book will challenge us as church to think deeply about the decisions we have made as a society and hopefully call us further out into the public square to proclaim our witness. Join us Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. in Butler Hall for Theology on Draft.

Missions Committee

The Missions Committee continues to engage with other local congregations to support immigrants in our community as part of Sanctuary DMV, and with our long-time partner WIN (Washington Interfaith Network). If you are interested in becoming more involved advocating with the immigrant community, please contact Josh Russell (scjoshrussell@gmail.com).

Thanks to the many Calvary members who participated in WIN's latest city-wide action with Mayor Bowser on July 26. If you are interested in participating in WIN's education and advocacy work, there are many opportunities!

Each Tuesday in August, a group will meet at Union Station from 6:30-8:00 p.m. to learn more about improving WMATA. Contact Rev. Alison Dunn-Almagauer if you are interested: alison@windc-iaf.org. The next city-wide WIN meeting will be September 12, 7:00 p.m., at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, (206 New York Ave. NW Washington, DC 20001).

WIN will also have a three-day training on education and advocacy this fall November 16-18. Location is yet to be determined.

We continue to volunteer to bring and serve food at Calvary Women's Services. Thanks to everyone for their generous contributions! We are committed to the following meals the rest of the year, so please contact Josh Russell (scjoshrussell@gmail.com) if you are interested in contributing your time or preparing a meal.

- Sunday, September 10 - dinner
- Saturday, October 21 - breakfast
- Sunday, November 12 - dinner
- Saturday, December 16 - breakfast



Calvary Photos



Senior Co-Pastors Sally and Maria in the Sanctuary.



Paul Rice celebrated 50 years as a member of Calvary on April 23, 2017.



David Pereira-Decorado at Blessing of the Graduates, May 21, 2017.



Bandages hand-rolled by Calvary! WMS collected bedsheets to make bandages to be sent abroad, August 20, 2017.



Laura Beth Blythe-Goodman Bridal Shower June 17, 2017.



Pastor Sally and baby Rory Dalton at his dedication, June 18, 2017.



Summary of the July Quarterly Business Meeting

July 23, 2017

The meeting opened with prayer followed by a review and approval of the minutes from the May 7, 2017 Quarterly Business Meeting. Treasurer Becky Vaughn reviewed the financial reports that were included in the handout, noting that overall revenues are lower than budgeted and less than the same time and that expenses while less than budgeted are higher than last year at the same time. The handout contained a detailed listing of designated funds and an analysis of the Endowment and performance.

In addition to the committee reports contained in the handout the Diaconate asked members to be sure to add the September 23 all-church retreat to be held at Camp Fraser to their calendars. Missions highlighted the "You Can Get Involved with Immigration Reform" portion of their report, identifying three specific ways to get involved, Accompaniment, Advocacy and Organizing – and that there was and would be a sign-up sheet available as well as online at our web site. Nominations reported that they are working on putting together a slate of candidates for 2018 which will be presented and voted on at the October Business Meeting.

As required by Standing Resolution 56, Paragraph 3c the Board announced that it intends to recommend an increase in the transfer of additional funds from the Endowment Fund at the next Quarterly Business Meeting scheduled for October 22, 2017, as necessary for the growth and life of Calvary, and to support the 2018 budget. Tim Shaw thanked the Women's Missionary Society for providing lunch to raise funds for Shalom Scholarship Fund.

Copies of the agenda and printed reports distributed at the meeting as well as a draft of the meeting minutes are available from the church office.

The next Quarterly Business Meeting will be October 22, 2017.

Beyond Neighborliness

*It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood,
A beautiful day for a neighbor,
Would you be mine?
Could you be mine?*

*It's a neighborly day in this beautywood,
A neighborly day for a beauty,
Would you be mine?
Could you be mine?*

*I have always wanted to have a neighbor just like you,
I've always wanted to live in a neighborhood with you.*

*So let's make the most of this beautiful day,
Since we're together, we might as well say,
Would you be mine?
Could you be mine?
Won't you be my neighbor?*



This enchanting song with flowing rhythms and inviting lyrics came across television screens for over 30 years at the beginning of each episode of *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, much to the delight of children and adults alike.

In his day-to-day interactions in the fictional neighborhood, with the aid of puppets, props, and people in his community such as Chef Brockett, Mr. McFeely the postal worker, and diverse children, Mr. Rogers mirrored the essence of neighborliness. He respected everyone he encountered, expressed his genuine care in tangible ways and made space for diversity.



I long for a leader in 2017 who respects everyone they encounter, expresses genuine care and makes space for diversity.

It has been several weeks since the American President declared intentions for the United States to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, a major global effort to address climate change. Nothing feels more antithetical to Fred Rogers' life work and idealized neighborhood than the current state of affairs of misguided isolationist executive branch decisions and the escalation of hate crimes.

Nothing feels more antithetical to the Gospel of Jesus Christ than the Church's half-hearted engagement in resisting institutional and daily violence. Now is the time for something more than neighborliness that will share a cup of sugar and compliment Christmas lights, but refuses to respond to harassment as an active bystander. Now is the time for a more radical and expansive neighborliness.

The Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan challenges us to consider the question, who is my neighbor? Anyone who has passed kindergarten Sunday School knows the answer to this question: everyone is my neighbor.

But really. Who is my neighbor?

Immigrant families who live in fear of deportation.

Women who dare to assert leadership.

Eric Garner, Alton Sterling, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray and other unarmed Black men killed by police.

Your favorite aunt or uncle.

LGBTQ people who have Bible verses thrown at them.

Muslim women who may or may not wear a hijab.

White men who struggle to find new definitions of success when capital gain is challenged.

Senior adults who feel forgotten and disrespected.

Oak trees, polar ice caps and bees.

St. Francis of Assisi felt so connected to all of Creation that he named nature with familial titles in his famous poetic prayer, *Canticle of the Sun: Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Wind, Sister Water, Brother Fire, and Sister Mother Earth.*

It is not enough to feel a personal connection or even to make environmentally responsible decisions a la Doris Janzen Longacre (author of the famous *More-with-Less* cookbook) on an individual, family or even congregational level. These micro-level environmentally responsible decisions paired with macro-level advocacy on local, national, and global levels will be what makes a difference and potentially saves the planet from more serious suffering. The answer to our current and impending catastrophic climate change is neither uniformity nor attempting to control Creation. Rather, the answer is living as a good neighbor: with respect, care and room for diversity in both human and non-human parts of Creation.

Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood episodes conclude with this song:

It's such a good feeling

To know you're alive.

It's such a happy feeling;

You're growing inside.

And when you wake up ready to say:

I think I'll make a snappy new day.

I am thankful for Mr. Rogers' teachings and life example of neighborliness. But I am even more thankful for Jesus' teachings and life examples of loving justice. I look forward to seeing the church continue to blossom like a reinvigorated lotus as we move beyond neighborliness to loving justice.

Now is the time.

Pastor Erica Lea

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Coming Up at Calvary

Calvary presents

3+1 STRING QUARTET IN CONCERT

featuring music of:
Haydn, Marcelllo, Monti, Saint-Saens & more

Sun, Sept 17, 1:30 p.m.
donations collected to support
Calvary's Shalom Scholarship fund

Emily Liu, violin
Lindsey Lim, violin
Rachel Alcazar, viola
Joey Hsieh, cello
Students of Dr. Maria Montano

Dr. Cheryl Branham, piano

755 8th St NW calvarydc.org 202.347.8355

FINDING BEAUTY: CHURCH-WIDE RETREAT

Join us Saturday, September 23, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. as we gather at Camp Fraser for a church-wide retreat. We will focus on finding God's Beauty - in the Earth, in the Word, at the Table and in the Body.

Activities will include worship, Bible Study, hiking & plenty of time for fellowship and fun for grownups and kids alike. Refreshments and a light lunch will be provided. To wrap up the day, there will be a cookout & hymn singing. Feel free to let us know if you have any special requests. (*THERE WILL BE S'MORES TOO!*)

You can sign up by: 1) replying to the Evite you should have received through Calvary's *Latest Happenings* Email; 2) the signup sheet at the Welcome Table during coffee hour; 3) or emailing Ashley Becker at Ashley.coates.becker@gmail.com.

RETIRO CONGREGACIONAL
SÁBADO, 9/23, 9AM-5PM

DESCUBRIENDO LA BELLEZA

CAMP FRASER
101 SPRINGVALE RD, GREAT FALLS, VA

CONTACTE A ASHLEY BECKER CON SUS PREGUNTAS O PARA RESERVAR:
ASHLEY.COATES.BECKER@GMAIL.COM

CALVARYDC.ORG 202.347.8355

CHURCH-WIDE RETREAT
SATURDAY, 9/23, 9AM-5PM

FINDING BEAUTY

CREATING BEAUTIFUL THINGS TOGETHER

CAMP FRASER
101 SPRINGVALE RD, GREAT FALLS, VA

CONTACT ASHLEY BECKER WITH QUESTIONS OR TO RSVP:
ASHLEY.COATES.BECKER@GMAIL.COM

CALVARYDC.ORG 202.347.8355

Rev. Sally Sarratt and Rev. Maria Swearingen, Senior Co-Pastors
Rev. Erica Lea, Pastor in Residence; Rev. Elijah Zehyoue, Pastor in Residence
Cheryl Branham, Director of Music; Harold L. Ritchie, Editor Emeritus; Paul Rosstead, Church Administrator;
Sabra Barrett, Administrative and Communications Assistant

Calvary Baptist Church
755 8th St NW Washington, DC 20001
202-347-8355 Fax: 202-347-6360 www.calvarydc.org