



The Rending...the Ripping...The Ringing in of the New

The season of Advent, the new liturgical year, began with the text from the prophet Isaiah calling for God to rend or tear open the heavens and come down.

The first Sunday after the Epiphany, in this new calendar year, centers us squarely in Mark's gospel text in which the heavens are ripped open and the voice of God bellows over Jesus (or at least Jesus hears it).

There is something powerful...wonderful...and downright scary about these texts and the prayers of the people for God to rend, rip, and ring in the new.

I've been thinking a lot about this with regard to Calvary in the coming year. There will be rending and ripping...there will be newness. It will be an incredible gift...and at times it will feel overwhelming and scary.

Renewed structuring of community life

First off, coming out of the visioning process, it became clear that most people in our congregation are very committed, but also extremely overcommitted. We have many families with young and growing children; we have many Gen Xers and Millennials who struggle with sitting in committee meetings after long days at work; and we have several Boomers and Greats who have been sitting in meetings all of their lives and simply want to do and give back. It is also clear that we have many gifted leaders in our congregation who struggle to take on leadership (or end up declining stepping in) due to time constraints. The Visioning Team has been striving to come up with a way to connect, serve... and minimize meetings.

This coming year the **Church Council** will be going to quarterly meetings with an annual retreat in February and a half-day retreat in August. This means six meetings a year versus twelve. The church council will be meeting on the second Mondays of the month in March, June, September, December.

Additionally, committees will be moving to quar-

terly meetings. **Community Life Committees** (MICAHA, Education, Social Justice, and the Crossroads Board) will meet on the same night—the second Mondays of April, July, October, and January. **Community Operations and Planning Committees** (Mission Support, Property, and Worship) will meet on the second Mondays of February, May, August, and November.

Our plan is to continue to have community meals on the second Monday of each month. It is our hope that many people will come. We will plan to have a meal, a short devotion/prayer/learning experience, and then those who are on committees will meet—others may connect, attend a meeting they want to learn more about, or simply make their way home.

Due to the changes in time commitment with council we will have an **Executive Committee** that will meet monthly on the third Monday of the month. They will assist in overseeing on-going operations, personnel.

An Old Idea Made New

In the book of Acts there were deacons who were called to care for people (the hungry, the children, the community members). As the congregation finds itself rooted in nurturing relationships with God and with one another, there is a clear sense that we need to have a structure that supports and nurtures community life.

This spring we will be lifting up a Board of Deacons. The deacons will provide avenues of connection in our congregation—assist with community events, connect with people who are sick or homebound, serve as an additional point of contact (beyond the pastor).

These congregational leaders will work to provide additional support and care.

There is an awareness that our congregation has grown from 165 members to 225 members over the last six years...and it looks that by this time next year we could have over 250 members. This

(Continued on page 6)

JANUARY WORSHIP & MINISTRY LEADERS				
Ministry	January 4	January 11	January 18	January 25
Deacon	Katie Escalante	Emilie Bouvier	Josh Kestner	Jennifer McCarthy
Acolytes	Jeri Schultz Benjamin Huff	Josh Moberg Christian Moberg	Pat Olson Chris Robson	Kendra McCarthy Danielle Hill
Lector	Felecia Boone	Alli Zeigler	Carol Rue	Jeri Schultz
Sacristan	Melissa Brooks	Melissa Brooks	Stacia Wick	Stacia Wick
Sound Board	Dick Peik	Eliot Aust	George Robson	Gary Nelson
Coffee Hour Hosts	Stacia Wick Eric Ebbesen	Daniel & Laura Huff Joani & Josh Moberg	Brian Aust dorothy lesher Steve & Jennifer McCarthy	Anne Boone Ruth Pope Sandy Nekola
Food Shelf	<i>(Jan. 10)</i> Judith Glass Michael Weber	<i>(Jan. 17)</i> Gary Nelson Jeri Schultz Josh Kestner	<i>(Jan. 24)</i> Marilyn Holm Ebbesen/Wick family	<i>(Jan. 31)</i> Aust/lesher family Teri Schweizer
Counters	Mary Nelson Marilyn Holm	Pat Olson Mary Nelson	Joanne Shepherd Verna Lutes	Michael Weber Jeri Schultz

January Celebrations

Birthdays

1/1 - Rachel Bjorhus
 1/8 - Caleb Moberg
 1/9 - Elisa Holm
 1/10 - Lyle Jaeger
 1/11 - Mona Eastman
 1/12 - Shari Seifert
 1/14 - Johanna Aust
 1/17 - Jeri Schultz
 1/20 - Joani Moberg
 1/23 - Violet Nystrom
 1/26 - Melanie Jackson
 1/27 - Jackson Robson
 1/28 - Carolyn Youngbauer
 1/31 - dorothy lesher
 1/31 - Gary Nelson
 1/31 - Deb Paulsrud

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR SHARI SEIFERT SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

Shari Seifert is turning 50 in January and is throwing a birthday bash which will benefit the Calvary Food Shelf and the Calvary Race Equity Team. All are invited. The adult-only Birthday Bash will kick off at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall at Calvary. Please come and enjoy heavy appetizers, a glass of wine, beer or non-alcoholic options. Bring your dancing shoes - Bernice (the undisputed queen of Zumba) will lead us in some Zumba moves to get the dancing started. Please RSVP by sending an email to sseifert@cbburnet.com by Tuesday January 6th so that we can get numbers to the caterer.

GENEROSITY - NEEDS AND WANTS

When January 11 arrives, no matter what the outdoor temperature is, Calvary will be full of warmth. We are going to rally together to gather warm clothes and blankets to benefit the many people who come to Central Lutheran's Clothes Closet. (See details below.) Some of the people are homeless, most are struggling with life issues including being warm in Minnesota in January.

As you look through your closet and shelves, begin with gratitude. What if we each said a verbal thank you for each of the sweaters or slacks or jackets we own? What if we cut our closet contents in half? would we still be able to manage adequately? It is an easy move to go from thinking something is **wanted** to its being **needed**. Of course we need a coat, perhaps even more than one. But do we actually **need** them or just **want** them? Do we need multiple colors of a particular garment? We want to have a comfortable sweater — but how many do we **need**? As you proceed toward our collection Sunday on January 11, take a little extra time to **think carefully** about what you have and need. Have you already forgotten what it was you received for Christmas? Did you **need** it? Can you share some of all you have?

This year we've been saying that the Gratitude is the Mother of Generosity. How grateful are you for what life and God has given you?

EPIPHANY GENEROSITY PROJECT

Did you or a family member receive a holiday gift (or buy yourself one at an After Christmas sale)? Do you now have a gently used coat, hat, mittens, gloves, scarf, boots, boots, blanket that you no longer need? Would you like to donate the item to someone who needs one and can't afford to purchase it?

IF YES, Please bring your gently used item(s) to Calvary on Sunday, January 11 and we will bring them to the Clothes Closet at Central Lutheran Church. All sizes for all ages needed!

If you would like to learn more about the program, please check this website <http://www.centralmpls.org/community-ministry/the-free-store/>

OBSERVING HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH AT CALVARY

By Presidential proclamation, January has been declared National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Sunday, January 11 is Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Sex traffickers use violence, threats, lies, debt bondage, and other forms of coercion to force women, men, and children to engage in commercial sex against their will. Awareness is the first step towards prevention of this horrendous crime.

Over the last year there have been several articles about human trafficking here in the Twin Cities, and just this past weekend about human trafficking and sex trade in North Dakota. Additionally, members of our congregation such as Emilie Bouvier and Saanii Hernandez Mohr have been involved in artistic projects, awareness, and support for organizations to end human trafficking.

As we learn about this here are some ways to be involved...and a simple prayer for all of us to pray.

- Do a service project for a local agency: Collect materials and supplies for The Link <http://www.thelinkmn.org/immediate-needs> For more information contact Jen Becker at jbecker@thelinkmn.org or 612-767-4479
- Sunday, January 11, is Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Prayers of the People:

God of Liberation. You see works of human trafficking and weep. Relieve the suffering of all who have experienced or are survivors of trafficking, abuse and violence. Grant them peace of mind and a renewed faith in your protection and care. Keep all your children safe from sexual exploitation, help us bring offenders to justice, and restore us to tranquility and peace.

[Adapted from Evangelical Lutheran Worship Pastoral Care. Page 383]

- Contact Cherish All Children to learn about their Caring Neighbors Project. Engage your congregation in partnership with an agency serving sexually exploited women and children. Contact Ginny Rudloff, Minneapolis Prevention Coordinator 612-751-5214, vrudloff@cherishchildren.org

A SEASON OF GIVING!

THRIVENT GIVES!!

Thrivent Financial has been a generous community partner this year. Highlights include:

- Spring painting project for Urban Arts Library \$1200 in supplies.
- Spring matching grant of \$1200 for Urban Arts Ask/Fund a Need at Gala.
- Fall matching grant of \$1200 for Rummage Sale to support grants to Twin City Women's Choir and Beechwood, Inc.
- Fall matching grant of \$1200 for Food Shelf Fund-raiser.

In December Calvary and Crossroads each received grants from Thrivent Financial--one grant of \$1,200 bought household supplies for clients at Beechwood, Inc. and the other grant of \$1,200 bought personal supplies for the clients of the food shelf.

The food shelf supplies were put into bags at the Christmas Party on Sunday, December 14 and will be given out to clients as they come for their groceries. This was an important gift to the food shelf as they are not able to buy personal hygiene and paper products.

Bags of household supplies were put together on Friday, December 12 for the Beechwood clients who live independently, but need supervision. Their caseworker will deliver the items of laundry soap, paper products and dishwashing soap to them.

We appreciate the support of Thrivent in giving us the opportunity to help people in our community.

CHRISTMAS PARTY CARDS

Children and adults had great fun in designing Christmas cards for themselves and others at the December 14 party. We were able to send cards to all our home-bound members and 60+ cards to Our Saviour's Housing.

TWIN CITIES WOMEN'S CHOIR (TCWC)

TCWC gave each of the after school children in Urban Arts Academy a non-electronic game. They are one of our building partners and enjoy being able to support the programs of other building partners. They are also great volunteers with us for our Annual Rummage Sale.



Urban Arts Academy Executive Director Honored with Outstanding Achievement Leadership Award



Congratulations to Tamar Ghidalia, executive director of Urban Arts Academy! She was recently named the recipient of the Minnesota Youth Intervention Programs Association (YIPA) Outstanding Achievement Leadership Award. Tamar is being recognized for her many years of dedication and leadership. YIPA is a membership association offering programs and services that address the needs of youth serving organizations and youth workers in communities throughout Minnesota.

Paul Meunier, executive director of YIPA, congratulated Tamar for this recognition and described her as "inspiring" and "the epitome of a champion for youth." The mission of YIPA is to ensure that youth intervention programs are embraced and well equipped to provide high quality and cost effective youth intervention services.

Tamar is in her second year at Urban Arts Academy and we are lucky to have her on our team. On behalf of the Ur-

Mission of the Month: Sister Boiler

With temperatures below zero...or peaking in the single digits, it is a time of year to give thanks for the heat that keeps us warm on Sunday mornings and each day.

Our mission of the month ties in with our campaign this fall with Sister Boiler and the work done to ensure the effective heating of our church.

Some may question the validity of the Boiler being a mission of the month. Don't we work to send our mission dollars to individuals or organizations outside of ourselves? (i.e. food at the food shelf, scholarships for Urban Arts, camperships at Bible camp, support for Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, ELCA global mission and ELCA Hunger Appeal) The answer to your question is, by and large, yes.

For just one minute, however, we invite you to think about the people who come into Calvary on a weekly basis:

- Most every day between 70-90 children and youth spend time in the building at Calvary with Urban Arts Academy
- Each day 15-30 staff, interns, artists, volunteers come to Calvary with Urban Arts
- 12-20 full-time and part-time staff use space at Calvary with BeechWood
- 15-50 clients of BeechWood meet, greet, and spend time at Calvary each week
- Nearly 120 women sing at Calvary with the Twin Cities Women's Choir 25-30 girls meet here with the Twin Cities Girls Choir
- 5-12 Bagpiper and drummers meet here once or twice a week
- 20-50 Masons and Eastern Stars rent space for their meetings
- Often 30-50 people come each Saturday to utilize the food shelf
- We have people here from South High School (one act play event); families renting space (baking holiday cookies; family gatherings); Theater Pro Rata (play rehearsals); the Minneapolis Area Synod (Holiday party); Urban Arts (community gathering/thank you event); Urban Arts (parent/community nights); Twin Cities Women's Choir (holiday concerts)...the list goes on.

It doesn't take much to realize that on any given week we have between 450-600 people in our community using and spending significant time in the church.

In this way, our very own Sister Boiler is an incredible mission to the community.

As you think about how we use all of the gifts we have as a community (including our building), consider dropping an envelope in the plate...or making a special gift to help pay for the boiler. As of today we have \$41,000 of \$56,500 committed (either having been paid or pledged). Your gift helps to pay off the remaining portion.

Upcoming Missions of the Month:

February: Youth in Mission

March: Calvary Emergency Food Shelf

April: Urban Arts Academy

 <p><i>We are called to be a progressive Christian community of vibrant worship,</i></p>		<p>January 5, 2014</p> <p>Calvary Lutheran Church 3901 Chicago Ave • Minneapolis, MN 55407</p> <p>Mission of the Month</p> <p>\$ _____</p>
		<p>Pre-printed donor name Address City, State Zip</p>

(Continued from page 1)

means that we need to plan and create strong avenues of community support and connection. We are going to try out the model of deacons and parish/community group ministry. Please stay tuned...and prayerfully think of people in the congregation that you experience as connectors, faithful prayers, individuals who serve.

Sabbatical Time

In the midst of everything else that is going on this spring will usher in a sabbatical time. I will be gone for three and one-half months; Calvary will be shepherded by the Rev. Sherman Hicks.

Very likely for all of us this will feel like a time of ripping and rending. There will be newness and wonder...there will be uncertainty and discomfort.

Yet, what I know is that this time of being apart allows for renewal, growth, and visioning. It challenges us to look to the ways that God is opening us up to do next things together. That is a pretty incredible vision.

Also, there will be avenues for learning as we go. Pr. Sherman Hicks is excited to work on racial justice and congregational life at Calvary. Bill, Torin, and I will be sharing experiences via a blog. We are just getting the blog up and running (and have a few initial posts)—check out <http://bbtabroad.blogspot.com>.

The Promise beyond the Ripping and Rending

Wrapped in the words of Advent is the promise that God dwells with the people and will not let them go. Emerging in the season of Epiphany is the witness of one lifted up as beloved who offers challenge, comfort, consolation, and new life to the people.

It is the witness of new life that allows us to step forth boldly in faith. We imagine ourselves differently as we encounter a God who breaks through to us, nurtures us, and equips us to live in new ways.

It is in breaking open the heavens (the very world and structures around us) that God enters into our lives and being; stirs us up with the Holy Spirit; and in claiming us calls us to live in newness of life.

What a daunting challenge! What a gift!
Blessings in this Epiphany season as the light and life of Christ breaks us open and claims us in new life!

Pr. Brad

JANUARY 25 - ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting for Calvary Lutheran will be held on Sunday, January 25, 2015 following worship. This meeting will be held in conjunction with a Potluck Luncheon - so bring a dish to share for the meal!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: CONTRIBUTION COUNTER

The teams of volunteers who count the contributions each week and make the bank deposit need one more person to help with this important task. If you are interested in joining a team that works once every five weeks, contact Kurt at the church office during the week.

2015 Contribution Envelopes

Calvary Lutheran has utilized "boxed sets" of offering envelopes in the past years, where each December the church would receive a set number of boxes, assign an envelope number for each regular contributor, and ask the donors to pick up their boxed set (or mail to those who couldn't pick it up in person). For 2015 we will be utilizing a different program for distributing the envelopes, where a small packet of offering envelopes (a two-month supply) will be mailed directly from the printer to the donor's home. These envelopes will have the same envelope number, and you will use them as you have in the past.

If you are a regular contributor to Calvary you should have received your first packet of envelopes in the mail. If you have not, please call Kurt at the church office.

If you use Simply Giving (electronic) and would prefer to not have paper envelopes mailed, let Kurt know that, as well.

PASTOR BRADLEY SCHMELING TO PREACH 2015 RECONCILING IN CHRIST SERVICE



Join the ELCA Lutheran communities of the Twin Cities for the 2015 Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Service and Community Gathering on **January 24, 2015 at 4:00 PM** at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Saint Paul, to celebrate, reflect and be energized for the work of welcome, education, advocacy and outreach. Reconciling in Christ congregations witness God's love for persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities. It's a time to highlight what it means to live a theology of reconciliation.

Pastor Bradley Schmeling will preach. Pastor Schmeling is the first openly gay senior pastor in the ELCA. Schmeling says he was drawn to Gloria Dei Lutheran, a Reconciling in Christ congregation: "because of its deep commitment to God's unconditional welcome as it takes shape on Sunday morning and in the congregation's witness to the wider world. I believe the church is called to respond to the Spirit's gentle and challenging call to widen the circle and to erase barriers. God's grace and love are for everyone."

2015 Reconciling in Christ Service and Community Gathering (with a simple supper)
Saturday, January 24, 2015, 4:00 PM
Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale Street, Saint Paul, MN 55103
 (North of I-94 at Dale Street Exit in Saint Paul)

The Twin Cities Chapter of ReconcilingWorks (founded 1974) hosts a yearly celebration of the witness of the 44 Reconciling in Christ congregations in Minnesota, ELCA communities publicly welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The community gathering and meal provide opportunities to get to know each other, share ideas and upcoming events, and brainstorm about new ways to educate and advocate for LGBT equality and inclusion.

Twin Cities Chapter of ReconcilingWorks
 100 Oxford St N
 Saint Paul, MN 55104-6540

BISHOP EATON'S CHRISTMAS ADDRESS



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I recall this image from my home congregation: A banner depicting Mary and Jesus in the manger and the backlit silhouette of the cross cast over this scene. It was jarring. The cross on Christmas? I didn't like it.

Christmas can carry so much emotional freight. We must be merry and filled with good cheer. We are driven to get everything perfect by the stroke of midnight on Christmas Eve. We are filled with wistful longing. But what are we longing for?

We long for peace, love and a place to belong. We want to know that someone cares. We want the assurance that all of this means something. And, we try to bring that all about in the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The hope of Christmas was fulfilled on Good Friday. The cross is part of Christmas. "Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you" (What Child Is This?). The cross is the Christmas gift, where all of our Christmas glorias are realized in Jesus' glorification on the cross.

We don't have to get everything completely right. We can't. That's God's work and it has been done. So, good Christian friends, rejoice!

Peace,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
 Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



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Food Shelf Coordinator:
Henrietta Williams

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Nicole Falk
Melinda Horn
Laura Huff
Lyle Jaeger
Kendra McCarthy
Chris Robson
Shari Seifert
Ramona Starks
Chris Van Meter
Michael Weber