

# Calvary Church

*A Reconciling Congregation*



*“Prepare the way of the HOLY ONE,  
make God’s paths straight.”*

**- Luke 3:4b**

**December 8, 2024**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent*

# CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

## GATHERING

**Gathering Song:** "Waiting for You" (*Christopher Grundy*)

## **Welcome & Announcements**

- **Advent & Christmas at Calvary:** [allmeansall.org/advent](http://allmeansall.org/advent)
- **Previous sermons:** [allmeansall.org/sermons](http://allmeansall.org/sermons)
- **Previous bulletins:** [allmeansall.org/bulletins](http://allmeansall.org/bulletins)

## Calendar

**Today, Dec 8, 8-9 pm:** Spiritual Reflection Group (*virtual / weekly – also Wednesday, Dec 18 & Sunday, Dec 22*)

- [allmeansall.org/spiritual-reflection-group](http://allmeansall.org/spiritual-reflection-group)

**Tuesday, Dec 10, 12-1 pm:** Midweek Prayer (*virtual / weekly*)

- [allmeansall.org/midweek-prayer](http://allmeansall.org/midweek-prayer)

## **Thursday, Dec 12**

- **1 pm:** Trustees (*rescheduled*)
- **7-8:30 pm:** POWER West/Southwest Cluster (*virtual / monthly – 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays*)
  - contact Pastor Tim for details, or to get involved with Calvary's POWER Team
- **8-9ish pm:** Spirituality on Tap (*rescheduled from Dec 5 / monthly – 1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays*)
  - Carbon Copy / 701 S. 50<sup>th</sup> St
  - [allmeansall.org/spirituality-on-tap](http://allmeansall.org/spirituality-on-tap)

## **Sunday, Dec 15**

- **9:15-10:15 am:** Bible Study – Matthew & Luke (*hybrid / weekly, through Dec 22*)
  - Calvary office if joining in person
- **10:15-10:55 am:** Choir rehearsal
- **11 am-12:30 pm:** Hybrid Worship (*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent*)
  - Calvary Kids during worship (ages 7-11/12)
- **12:45-2 pm:** "2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday" Potluck – Christmas Party
  - featuring white elephant gift exchange
  - [allmeansall.org/potlucks](http://allmeansall.org/potlucks)

- **6:30 pm:** Big Push Christmas Benefit Concert for Calvary

- [allmeansall.org/concert](http://allmeansall.org/concert)

**Tuesday, Dec 17, 7 pm:** Church Council

**Saturday, Dec 21, 7-8 pm:** Blue Christmas Service (*hybrid*)

- [allmeansall.org/blue](http://allmeansall.org/blue)

**Sunday, Dec 22, 11 am-12:30 pm:** Hybrid Worship (*4th Sunday of Advent*)

**Tuesday, Dec 24, 7 pm:** Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols (*hybrid*)

- [allmeansall.org/christmas](http://allmeansall.org/christmas)

**Sunday, Dec 29, 11 am-12 pm:** Virtual Worship (*1st Sunday after Christmas*)

- there will be no in-person option

### Visiting With Us?

We're glad you're here, for whatever reason you chose to join us! We strive to make our worship space (in-person and virtual) as welcoming and accommodating of different needs as possible. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact Pastor Tim.

## **CENTERING & CONNECTING**

### **Breathing Our Way In**

**Singing Our Way In:** "Drawing Nearer" (*Christopher Grundy*)

Even in the midst of all of this,  
trouble on the news, no peace within,  
still there is a light in the distance,  
drawing nearer, drawing nearer.

So, open up our eyes to see your light.  
Open up our arms, they're clenched so tightly.  
Come in like a thief and steal our hearts  
like a baby, like a baby.

Even in the midst of all of this ...

**Call to Worship / Lighting the Advent Candle** (Jon Humphries,  
*Susan Wickham – adapted*)

One: God of hope, peace, joy and love, we wait. We pray. We remember. We ready ourselves.

**ALL (sung): O come, o come, Emmanuel ...**

One: Last Sunday we prayed hope. As we light this candle, we pray peace. Peace for all people. Peace for all places.

**ALL (sung): O come, o come, Emmanuel ...**

One: Peace for all times. Peace for all situations. Peace for all circumstances.

**ALL (sung): O come, o come, Emmanuel ...**

One: Peace in our hearts. Peace in our minds. Peace in our bodies. Peace within. Peace without.

**ALL (sung): Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.**

One: Alleluia!

**ALL: Alleluia!**

**Opening Song: "Come and Find the Quiet Center"** (TFWS  
#2128, tune: *B.F. White* / lyrics: *Shirley Erena Murray*)

Come and find the quiet center  
in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter,  
find the frame where we are freed:  
Clear the chaos and the clutter,  
clear our eyes that we can see  
all the things that really matter,  
be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us,  
cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us,  
knows our being, touches base,  
making space within our thinking,  
lifting shades to show the sun,

raising courage when we're shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel,  
open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel,  
celebrate the space we gain:  
There's a place for deepest dreaming,  
there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming  
there is always room to spare.

## **Stewardship Moment**

### **Offering Ourselves & Our Gifts / Passing the Peace**

*"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not  
regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

**- 2 Corinthians 9:7**

One: The peace of God be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

## **GROUNDING**

### **Community Prayer** *(Steve Garnaas-Holmes)*

Gracious God, through all our doubt and despair,  
prepare a way for hope. Through our selfishness and fear,  
prepare a way for love. Through our resistance and  
control, prepare a way for grace. Through our anger and  
enmity, prepare a way for peace. O, you who are  
coming, prepare your way in us. Amen.

## **Silent Prayer**

## **Special Music**

### **Scripture Lesson:** Luke 1:68-79

"Blessed be the HOLY ONE of Israel, for God has looked favorably on God's people and redeemed them. **69** God has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of God's

child David, **70** as God spoke through the mouth of God's holy prophets from of old, **71** that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. **72** Thus God has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors and has remembered God's holy covenant, **73** the oath that God swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us **74** that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve God without fear, **75** in holiness and righteousness in God's presence all our days. **76** And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the HOLY ONE to prepare God's ways, **77** to give God's people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins. **78** Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, **79** to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

**Choral Alleluia** *(UMH #186, Jerry Sinclair)*

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**Scripture Lesson:** Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, **2** during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. **3** He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, **4** as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Holy One, make God's paths straight. **5** Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways

made smooth, 6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

One: The word of God for the people of God.

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

### **Choral Alleluia**

Sing alleluia, sing alleluia, sing alleluia, alleluia. *(repeat)*

**Sermon:** "A Way in the Wilderness"

**Song:** "Prepare the Way with Quietness" *(tune: UMH #269, USA folk melody / lyrics: David Bjorlin)*

Prepare the way with quietness,  
a stillness in the storm,  
that will not speak the wounding words  
that cheapen or deform.

Prepare the way with hopeful words  
some mock but others crave,  
that makes the empire flinch in fear  
and turn the fearful brave.

Prepare the way through holding back  
while others grasp or strain  
for unjust wealth and untamed power  
that add to human pain.

Prepare the way with fervent love  
that tears down walls of hate  
and reconstructs a kinder world  
that justice can create.

Prepare the way until we reach  
the dawn of that new day  
when all our paths converge in (peace)  
and we have found our way.

### **SHARING**

**Prayers of the People / Joys & Concerns**

**Sung Response** (tune: UMH #294, Hugh Wilson / lyrics: John Pritchard)

O coming Christ, to you we pray,  
to you hearts open wide.  
Your justice bring, to wounds healing;  
in joy let all abide.

## **ENGAGING**

**Closing Song:** "This Little Light of Mine" (AAHH #549, African American spiritual)

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Everywhere I go ...

All through the night ...

## **Benediction**

**Singing Our Way Out:** "Let the Church Say Amen" (Andraé Crouch)

Let the church say, "Amen" (repeat)  
God has spoken, let the church say, "Amen"

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## **Calvary United Methodist Church**

at the intersection of 48<sup>th</sup> & Baltimore / spirituality & justice

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**Pastor Tim Emmett-Rardin:** [pastortim@allmeansall.org](mailto:pastortim@allmeansall.org)

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**Norris Person** (accompanist): [music@allmeansall.org](mailto:music@allmeansall.org)