

Calvary Church

A Reconciling Congregation



What Would Esther Do? (Arlene Goldbard)

*“Blessed are those who have not seen,
and yet believe.”*
- **John 20:29b**

April 7, 2024
2nd Sunday of Easter

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

Arab American Heritage Month / Earth Month

GATHERING

Gathering Song: "Rise Up" (*Bifrost Arts*)

Welcome & Announcements

(also available at allmeansall.org/announcements)

- **Pastor Tim on vacation:** April 10-16
 - in case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Jennine (SPRC chair): 215.990.5668
- **Story Circles**
 - allmeansall.org/story-circles
 - contact Amy to sign up: aemmettrardin@gmail.com
- **Spring Bible Study**
 - focus & timing TBD by participants
 - allmeansall.org/bible-studies
- **Spring Retreat at Pendle Hill:** June 7-8 (9)
 - allmeansall.org/spring-retreat (deadline: April 24)
- **Faith Climate Action Week:** April 19-28
 - interfaithpowerandlight.org/faithclimateactionweek
- **General Conference of the United Methodist Church:**
April 23 – May 3 (*Charlotte, NC*)
 - tinyurl.com/GenConf20
- **Previous sermons:** allmeansall.org/sermons
- **Previous bulletins:** allmeansall.org/bulletins

Calendar

Today, Apr 7, 8-9 pm: Spiritual Reflection Group

- allmeansall.org/spiritual-reflection-group

Tuesday, Apr 9, 12-1 pm: Midweek Prayer (*weekly*)

- allmeansall.org/midweek-prayer

Thursday, Apr 11

- **7-8:30 pm:** POWER West/Southwest Cluster
 - contact Pastor Tim for details and to get involved
- **7-8:30 pm:** General Conference Info Session
 - contact Pastor Tim for details

Sunday, Apr 14

- **11 am-12:30 pm:** Hybrid Worship
 - guest preacher: Lesley Curtis
- **12:45-2 pm:** 2nd Sunday Potluck
 - bring a dish and/or drinks to share if you can

Saturday, May 4, 10 am-1 pm: 11th Annual Sojourner Truth Walk (*Camp Sojourner, Girls' Leadership Camp*)

- join/sponsor Calvary's team: allmeansall.org/stw

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.

Calvary Email List

If you're not on the Calvary email list and want to be, or think you are but aren't seeing emails from us, please contact the church office or sign up online. Our **Calvary Connections e-newsletter** goes out every Thursday night.

CENTERING & CONNECTING

Breathing Our Way In

Singing Our Way In: "We Rise" (*Batya Levine*)

We rise, humbly hearted
Rise, won't be divided
Rise, with spirit to guide us
Rise!

*In hope, in prayer, we find ourselves here
In hope, in prayer, we're right here (repeat)*

We rise, all of the children
Rise, elders with wisdom
Rise, ancestors surround us
Rise! (*refrain*)

We rise, up from the wreckage
Rise, with tears and with courage
Rise, fighting for life, we
Rise! (*refrain*)

Call to Worship (*John Ballenger – adapted*)

One: May we, our God, in the wake of Easter, ride a
wave of irrepressible hope—

ALL: rising from the deep,

One: following the trajectory of love,

**ALL: through the currents and over the turbulences of our
living.**

One: As we gather again within your joy, as Easter
people, may we sense anew your presence hovering
ever with us—

ALL: ever speaking,

One: ever singing,

ALL: ever calling forth

One: new creation—

**ALL: ever calling us and all of Creation into resurrected
possibility. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Opening Song: “Christ Is Risen” (*UMH #307, tune: Polish carol /
lyrics: Brian Wren*)

Christ is risen! Shout hosanna!

Celebrate this day of days!

Christ is risen! Hush in wonder:

all creation is amazed.

In the desert all-surrounding,

see, a spreading tree has grown.

Healing leaves of grace abounding

bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits

from the caverns of despair.

Walk with gladness in the morning.

See what love can do and dare.

Drink the wine of resurrection,
not a servant, but a friend.
Jesus is our strong companion.
Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven
nevermore shall be the same.
Break the bread of new creation
where the world is still in pain.
Tell its grim, demonic chorus:
"Christ is risen! Get you gone!"
God the First and Last is with us.
Sing Hosanna everyone!

Offering Ourselves & Our Gifts / Passing the Peace

One: The peace of God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

GROUNDING

Community Prayer *(John Humphries – adapted)*

Christ who is God, God who is Christ, Spirit in all, help us to be deeply Easter people – bearers of good news for hard times. Strip off the candy coating of hollow triumphalism and empty piety, cast into the glory of resurrection the shadow of the cross, so that we might remember that ours is not a fairy-tale faith, full of magic and happily ever-afters. Ours is the very way embodied in the risen and still rising Jesus – where eternal life is the resourcing of hope and perseverance, the power of love and grace to lift us from the dying of dreams and our deepest longings, and bring resurrection to heartbreaking, crucified realities.

Help us embrace the mystery of your call, which takes us through the valley of the shadow of death to confront our fear and doubt – and so transform them into healing and wholeness, redemption and renewal. May we learn

this Easter season what it truly means to take up our cross and follow you, sharing in your life made ever new and walking in your way. Living your love and grace as we work with you to build and rebuild the Commonwealth of the common good. Amen.

Silent Prayer

Special Music

Scripture Lesson: Esther 9:18-28

But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and gladness.

19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the open towns, hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and feasting, a holiday on which they send gifts of food to one another. **20** Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, **21** enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, **22** as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday, that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor. **23** So the Jews adopted as a custom what they had begun to do, as Mordecai had written to them.

24 For Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them and had cast Pur—that is, “the lot”—to crush and to destroy them, **25** but when Esther came before the king, he gave orders in writing that the wicked plot that he had devised against the Jews should come upon his own head and that he and his sons should be

hung on the pole. **26** Therefore these days are called Purim, from the word Pur. Thus because of all that was written in this letter and of what they had faced in this matter and of what had happened to them, **27** the Jews established and accepted as a custom for themselves and their descendants and all who joined them that without fail they would continue to observe these two days every year, as it was written and at the time appointed. **28** These days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, in every family, province, and city, and these days of Purim should never fall into disuse among the Jews, nor should the commemoration of these days cease among their descendants.

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

Scripture Lesson: John 20:19-29 (*A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church, Wilda C. Gafney*)

When it was evening on that day, the first of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples (gathered) were closed for fear of the Judeans, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you all." **20** And having said this, Jesus showed them his hands and his side, and then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Messiah. **21** Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you all, just as the God of Peace has sent me, so I send you all." **22** When Jesus had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit; **23** if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve who was called Didymus (the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. **25** So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Messiah." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of

the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." **26** And within eight days his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, though the doors were shut, and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you all." **27** Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands. Bring your hand and put it in my side and do not doubt, rather believe." **28** Thomas answered him, saying, "My Savior and my God!" **29** Jesus said to him, "Was it because you have seen me that you believed? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

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

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Choral Alleluia

Sermon: "A Different Ending"

Song: "The Prophets Caught a Vision" (*tune: UMH #545, Samuel Sebastian Wesley / lyrics: David Bjorlin*)

The prophets caught a vision too thrilling to ignore
of children leading nations
no longer armed for war,
of weapons used for planting
and wolf and lamb at play,
of wild things all conspiring,
preparing God's own way.

The prophets sought a vision,
a dream of God's own reign,
where peace embraces justice
and joy eclipses pain.

And though such dreams seem useless,
their purposes grow clear:
to free minds long held captive
and loose hearts gripped by fear.

God, grow in us a vision
beyond our common dreams,
that wakes imaginations
asleep in selfish schemes.

Then rising up together, your vision as our goal,
we work toward that great promise
a shattered world made whole.

SHARING

Prayers of the People / Joys & Concerns

"Thanks be to God" or "God hears our prayer"

Sung Response *(tune: UMH #408, trad. English / lyrics: John Pritchard)*

O Open Arms, now hold our cares,
the aches we've named, the joys we've shared.
And hold us, too; into us breathe –
your grace, your life, let us receive.

Communion / The Great Thanksgiving *(Steve Garnaas-Holmes – adapted)*

One: God is with you.

ALL: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to God and to each other.

One: Let us give thanks to the Holy One, our God.

ALL: It is good and beautiful to give God our praise.

One: We delight to praise and thank you, God, and we share this meal in celebration. For you create us in love and make Covenant to be our God. You expose the crucifying nails we hold and the hammers we wield, and you call out the forces of oppression. In love you overcome the power of evil, and set us free, oppressor and oppressed alike. In Christ you receive our worst and transform it by your grace; you raise Christ from the dead, and you raise us with Christ, to new lives. So we come to this feast, singing your praise with all Creation:

ALL SING (TFWS #2257-b, tune: Mark Miller / lyrics: UM Hymnal):

Holy, holy, holy (One); God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

Blest is the one who comes in the name of (our God).

Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

One: Blessed are all who come in the power of your love, and blessed is Jesus, your Christ. He taught and healed with love; he gathered the broken and the outcast. He faced our violence with non-violence and our betrayal with forgiveness. He bore the marks of our cruelty, and died at the hands of our injustice; but you raised him from the dead. Your love in him prevailed over sin and death.

On the night before he would be betrayed, arrested, crucified ... And so we remember. As often as we break the bread and share the cup, we remember. We taste the same Spirit, we feast on the same promise and renew our commitment to follow the same path, as we proclaim mystery at the heart of our faith:

ALL SING (TFWS #2257-c, tune: Mark Miller / lyrics: UM Hymnal):

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

One: Pour out your Spirit on these gifts of bread and cup, tangible symbols for us of Jesus' body, Jesus' life, given in love, for love. Pour out your Spirit on us gathered, in person and virtually, that we may be for the world your body, O God – given in love, for love. Breathe your Spirit into us, and send us in your love. By your grace may we bear the marks of humble obedience, suffer for the sake of love and justice, and trust your power to raise us up in victory ov

ALL SING (TFWS #2257-d, tune: Mark Miller / lyrics: UM Hymnal):

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Hosanna in the highest! (3x)

Sung Response: "Eat This Bread" (UMH #628, tune: Robert Batastini & Taizé Community / lyrics: Jacques Berthier)

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry.

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst.

ENGAGING

Benediction

Singing Our Way Out: "Go Now in Peace" (UMH #665, Natalie Sleeth)

Go now in peace, go now in peace,
may the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere, you may go.

Calvary United Methodist Church

at the intersection of 48th & Baltimore / spirituality & justice

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