

# Calvary Protestant Evangelical Free Church

2801 Park Avenue, Baldwin, NY 11510

Pastor Charles Lucchesi 516-223-4070

E-mail: [calvarychurch@optonline.net](mailto:calvarychurch@optonline.net) Website: [www.cpcbaldwin.com](http://www.cpcbaldwin.com)



## CALVARY CHRONICLE

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### Ten Questions for a New Year!

This is a nice article written by Professor Don Whitney of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, *Ten Questions for a New Year*.

Enjoy Charles Lucchesi!

Even those most faithful to God occasionally need to pause and think about the direction of their lives. It's so easy to bump along from one busy week to another without ever stopping to ponder where we're going and where we should be going.

Once, when the people of God had become careless in their relationship with him, the Lord rebuked them through the prophet Haggai: "*Consider your ways!*" (Haggai 1:5). He urged them to reflect on some of the things happening to them, and to evaluate their slipshod spirituality in light of what God had told them.

#### Ten Questions

The beginning of a new year is an ideal time to stop, look up, and get our bearings. A great time for us to "Consider our ways." To that end, here are some questions to ask prayerfully in the presence of God.

#### 1. What's one thing you can do this year to increase your enjoyment of God?

Our enjoyment of God comes primarily through the means of grace he has given us. He has promised to bless us most directly and consistently through means such as his word, prayer, and the church. One specific suggestion I'd offer would be to include some meditation on Scripture along with your daily reading. It's better to read less - if necessary - and yet as the result of meditation remember something, than to read more and remember nothing.

#### 2. What's an impossible prayer you can pray?

There are more than a dozen "but God" statements in Scripture, such as in Romans 5:8, which reads, "*but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" Situations that were humanly

impossible were transformed by "but God" (Ephesians 2:1-7). What's a "but God" prayer you can pray for the coming year?

#### 3. What's the most important thing you could do to improve your family life?

If your family doesn't practice family worship, beginning there is the single best recommendation I could make. Just ten minutes a day, simply reading the Bible, praying, and singing together - an event that requires no preparation - is all it takes. My little book titled *Family Worship* can tell you more.

#### 4. In which spiritual discipline do you most want to make progress this year?

Would it be a personal spiritual discipline (that is, one you practice alone), or an interpersonal spiritual discipline (one you practice with other believers)? Once you decide, determine the next step to take and when you will take it.

#### 5. What's the single biggest time-waster in your life, and how can you redeem the time?

Social media? TV? Video games? Sports? Hobbies? It's easy for any of these (or something else) to take too much of our hearts and time. Is repentance required? Trying to stop, by itself, is probably not the answer. Actively replacing it with something better helps us in "*making the best use of the time, because the days are evil*" (Ephesians 5:16).

#### 6. What's the most helpful new way you could strengthen your church?

While we often stress the fact that individual believers are the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:15), the New Testament actually says seven times to one that the church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 5:23). We mustn't let our frequent emphasis on our personal relationship with Christ minimize the importance of our service to Jesus through his body. How can your church be stronger this year because of you? Serving? Giving? Praying?

(continued on next page)

**7. For whose salvation will you pray most fervently this year?**

Praying frequently and fervently for someone's salvation makes us more sensitive to opportunities to share the gospel with him or her. Will you commit to praying for at least one person's salvation every day this new year?

**8. What's the most important way, by God's grace, you will try to make this year different from last?**

Obviously, God's sovereignty rules over all things, and there is nothing we can do about much that he brings into our lives. On the other hand, under his sovereignty he gives us a measure of responsibility over many areas of life. In which of these would you most like to see a change from last year? You may find that your answer to this question is found in one of your answers above. To which of them do you sense the Holy Spirit calling your attention most urgently?

**9. What one thing could you do to improve your prayer life this year?**

For many, it might be as simple as designating a time exclusively for prayer instead of praying only "on the go" types of prayers. For others, it might be learning the simple, biblical practice of praying the Bible.

**10. What single thing can you plan to do this year that will matter most in ten years? In eternity?**

Short-term deadlines tend to dominate our attention. Busyness and fatigue often limit our vision to just getting through today. But don't let the tyranny of the urgent distract you from something you're neglecting that would have enormous long-term impact on your soul, your family, or your church.

#### **Consider Your New Year**

The value of many of these questions is not in their profundity, but in the simple fact that they bring an issue or commitment into focus. For example, just by making a goal to encourage one person in particular this year is more likely to help you remember to encourage that person than if you hadn't set that goal.

If you've found these questions helpful, you might want to put them someplace - on your phone, computer, calendar, or wherever you put reminders - where you can review them frequently.

I hope this article will help you to "consider your ways," to make plans and goals, and to live this new year with biblical diligence, remembering the principle that *"the plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance"* (Proverbs 21:5). But in all things, let's also remember our dependence on our King, who said, *"Apart from me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5).

## **FEBRUARY SENIORS LUNCHEON**

We invite all our Seniors to the next luncheon to be held **Tuesday, February 4th**. As always, the luncheons start promptly at 12:00 noon, so come early and grab a seat with your friends.

On the menu for February is Italian food. There will be chicken cutlets, meatballs, pasta with sauce, a salad, and a sweet dessert for dessert.

Please let us know you are coming by either signing the sign-up sheet at the church or call the church office at 516-223-4070.

Pictured below are some of our seniors enjoying their time together at the December luncheon. In photo on right are good friends Pat and Phyllis who have known each other for almost 50 years.





# Celebrating Christmas

There were many activities throughout the month of December where the church family got together to celebrate Christmas, gathered to prepare gifts for others, and even brought holiday cheer to some of our shut-ins.

## Cookie Exchange Celebration

A Cookie Exchange Celebration took place on Saturday, December 14th. Several ladies attended and enjoyed fellowship, food, and fun. Each woman brought a different type of cookie to the event. During their time together they packed containers with the assortment of cookies and shared their recipes. Each of the women got to bring home a container full of goodies to enjoy during the holiday. Joining in on the celebration were (pictured left to right): Patti, Kaia, Melissa, Lois, Sarabeth, Peggy, and Barbara.



## Gifts bags for men

Eight ladies from the Ladies Bible Study met together on Thursday evening, December 12th, to pack up the items that were donated for the men at Recovery House. Thanks to the generosity of the church family there was a mountain of wonderful clothes to distribute to the residents who are currently at the house. Twenty large gift bags were filled with clothes, socks, new wallets, toiletries, books, pad of paper, calendars, a copy of "More Than a Carpenter," and candy! The gift bags were left outside the men's bedroom doors on Christmas Eve.

Kathy Guerin, who works at Recovery House, said they were very surprised and pleased. The director was "in awe" of the



generosity!!! The ladies were delighted to be able to bring some joy to these men who are trying to get their lives in order. Pictured in left photo are Barbara, Mary Jo, Martha, Flo, Sotar, Patti, Kathy, Kaia, and Rita (standing left to right).

Thank you all for helping us so beautifully!

## Packing Gifts For Ladies

Just like the collection for the men, a collection for ladies took place as well. A few women from Calvary came to the church during the week to help organize the donated items, wrap some of the gifts, and pack large gift bags to be delivered to the ladies who are currently residing at Mercy Hall in Freeport, a home for women who also are trying to get their lives back in order.

Photo at right is Mary Jo, Keri, Nancy, Martha, and Patti (pictured left to right) while wrapping and packing gifts.



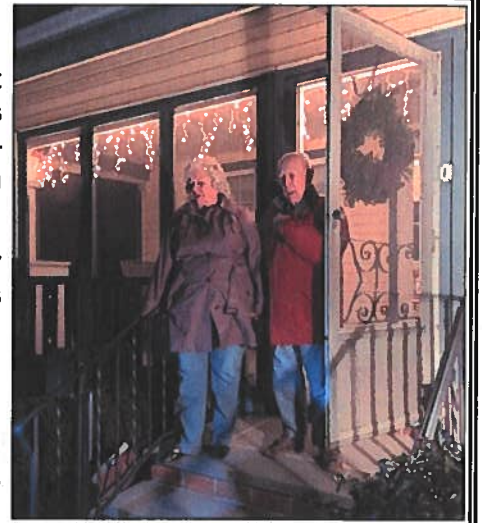


## Christmas Caroling

On Sunday, December 22nd, a group of 20+ adults and children brought some holiday cheers to some of our friends from the church family. It's always a great time for both the carolers and those that are visited - especially those who are currently having a difficult time attending church due to health limitations.

At many of the homes we are invited inside as at times it's difficult for our friends to meet us outdoors. At Helen and Barbara's home it was special as we also got to sing "Happy Birthday" to Helen as her birthday falls on Christmas Eve.

Pictured right are the Ekstroms. They put on their coats and met us at the door. For many years Pete and Mary Lou would go caroling as they were used to singing with a group (both Pete and Mary Lou are in the choir). It was special this year to go and sing for them.



The carolers also sang for Rose, Carmine and Mary Jo, Lou and Wally, Janet, and for Nancy and Bob.

By the time we finished visiting the seven homes, the night air was cooling off, the temperature was dropping, and our voices were getting raspy. Everyone went back to the church to enjoy hot chocolate, some treats, and spend time talking.

It was a great evening, a good time was had by all, and is so special to see the smiles on our visitors faces - truly bringing some holiday cheer and uplifting some special people in our church family.

## M Meeting With Paul DeMena

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Through its Missions Budget, Calvary helps to financially support numerous missionaries - some stateside, some overseas. One of our missionaries is Paul DeMena who has been serving with In His Image International in Asia for almost 20 years.

Paul was back in the U.S. and had been traveling to many of the churches that help to support his ministry. The Missions Committee and Paul were able to set up a date for him to come to Calvary to update us on his missions work. On Monday, December 9th, a dinner and meeting took place.

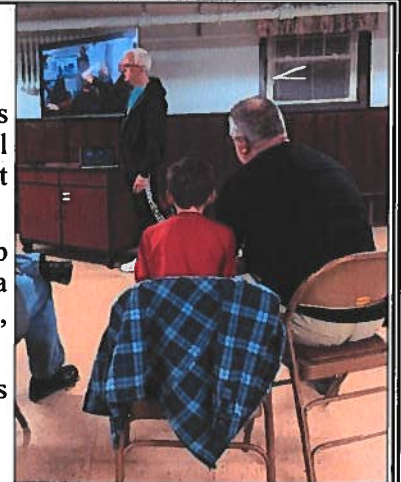
Pictured right are Tim and Reed (father and son) listening as Paul gave his presentation. Pictured lower right is the group enjoying a meal together.

Paul and Cheryl (his wife) minister to the people in China through:

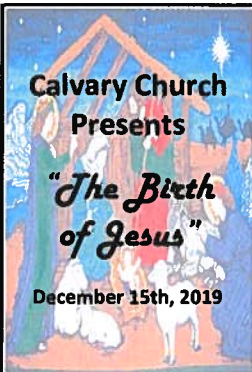
- ♦ Education - international Christian school, impacting students and their families.
- ♦ Healthcare - family medicine clinic, family medicine training, compassion medical ministry (visiting a leprosy village).
- ♦ Family - in-home senior care.
- ♦ Church - church-based training curriculum, small group training, mentoring church leaders.

It was encouraging to Paul to get together and pray for him and his ministry to the people in China.

Later that evening Paul headed to the airport to fly back to China to continue his work there and be with his family.







Calvary's drama production of "The Birth of Christ" took place on December 15th. For weeks the cast members practiced during Sunday School. Then it was show time!

There were quite a number of people involved with the play: the director was Linda Boughton, associate director was Magalie Alcindor, pianist was Melissa Watts, the sound and video system was run by Harold Verity and Connor Watts, costuming was overseen by Nedy Nathan and Laura Nicolich, and the narrator was Paul Nembhard.

There were 32 adults and children in the ensemble, plus six women in the choir of angels.



**ACT I - The Angel Gabriel speaks to Mary** (pictured right - Kirsten and Nicole)  
The angel said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. You will conceive a child and give birth to him, and his name will be Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."



**ACT II - Mary visits Elizabeth** (pictured left - Trudy and Nicole)  
Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who was with child. Elizabeth said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear." Mary said, "My soul does glorify the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Mary then sang "My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord." Nicole captured everyone's heart as she sang the solo.

**ACT III - The Angel Gabriel appears to Joseph in a dream**  
"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins."

**ACT IV - Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem**  
Now in those days there went out a decree that a census should be taken. Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem because they were of the house and lineage of David. Joseph needed to find a place to stay, but as there was no room in the inn, Joseph and Mary were offered the stable. While they were there, she gave birth to her firstborn, a son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths and placed him in a manger.

**ACT V - Angels appear to the shepherds in the field**  
Now there were shepherds living in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared unto them and said, "Glory to God in the highest - and on earth peace to men." The shepherds hurried off to Bethlehem in search of this child, and found Joseph, Mary, and the baby who was lying in a manger.

**ACT VI - Magi from the east follow the star**  
Magi from the east came to Jerusalem asking, "Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We have seen his star in the east and have come to worship him." The Magi followed the star to Bethlehem. They found Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, and bowed down to worship him. They opened their treasures and presented him gifts of gold and incense and myrrh.



To conclude the play everyone joined together in singing "Joy To the World." We thank everyone for all their hard work over the last couple of months, and greatly appreciate the enthusiastic performances. The play was really great!

(Photo left are Dennis and Zavier as King Herod's guards, and Fitz Jr. in center as lead shepherd; photo right are Kirsten, Nicole and Joel, along with many of our young shepherds and sheep.)



# Calvary Chronicle

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Baldwin, NY 11510

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## BIRTHDAYS

### JANUARY

1st Martha Mietenkorte  
3rd David Brewster  
4th Greg Dapice  
5th Magalie Alcindor  
6th Fitz Alcindor Sr.  
8th Matthew Lucchesi  
9th Lorna Bigby  
9th Steven Elcock  
14th Dorothy Brown  
16th Bob Benedetto  
18th Raynell Falden  
21st Louise Fazzino  
21st Eugene Lloyd  
22nd Wally Capasso  
22nd Erin Waldvogel  
24th Magaline Alcindor  
24th Vinnie Rotolo  
24th Tim Waldvogel  
25th Finch Waldvogel  
27th Dave Senita  
29th Roy Knoernschild  
29th Allison Linhart  
30th Ralph Rose  
31st Chris Watts

### FEBRUARY

1st Nadia Elcock  
2nd Barbara Lucchesi  
3rd Amelia Rose Mandato  
4th Peg Corcoran  
12th Ruth Mason  
16th Aaron Nehring  
17th Kirsten Watts  
19th Mary Lou Ekstrom  
26th Carol Chalavoutis  
26th Joshua Lucchesi

**Happy  
Birthday!**

## ANNIVERSARIES

### JANUARY

4th Charles & Barbara Lucchesi  
21st Joe & Louise Fazzino  
24th Matt & Karen Linhart

### FEBRUARY

3rd Pete & Mary Lou Ekstrom  
20th Brett & Melissa Rose

### It Wasn't Always a New Year on January 1

The new year has in the past begun at many different times. The ancient Egyptians began the year on September 21; the ancient Greeks, on December 21; and March 25 was the usual New Year's Day among Christians during the medieval days. The Gregorian calendar, which was introduced in 1582, put January 1 in the position of New Year's Day, and it was immediately accepted by Germany and Denmark, by Sweden about 1700, and by England in 1752.

No matter when the new year began, it was a time to forget the past year and look forward to the coming year and plan for the future.