

Calvary Protestant Evangelical Free Church

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CALVARY CHRONICLE

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“The Time Is Now”

“Now is the acceptable time.” 2 Corinthians 6:2

It should be said that although God is the Master of time, we are not. In fact, we are pretty much the slaves of time. The clock is always ticking, and there is never quite enough time left.

It seems that we are always running out of time. Time passes so quickly. Deadlines are upon us before we know it, and we feel the intense pressure and stress that these fixed moments in time cause us. If only we could in some way s-t-r-e-t-c-h time. But we cannot.

But for all of our frustrations concerning time, we must remember that time may be less real than we think. Do you suppose that God has a calendar in heaven? What kind of watch do you think God wears on His wrist? There is no time as we know it in heaven. There God lives in eternity, which is not time drawn out, but timelessness. The concept of time is a convention for the benefit of man so that our lives can experience some sense of order and successiveness.

Time certainly has a definite impact in all of our lives. And we deal differently with time in different stages of our lives. When we were young we tended to wish time away. We were always waiting for something---for some future event to happen. It might have been a birthday, or a vacation, or Christmas. Time seemed to move incredibly slow back then. And the time between the present and that longed for event was always wished away. We were always wanting to grow up more quickly.

To some degree we still do this. But this is a false dealing with time. By wishing for some future day to arrive we may miss the present entirely. But we still wish. We wish for the day that we will graduate from high school, then college. We wish for the day we will be married to the one we love. We wish for the day

we will begin that new job. We wish for the day we can buy that new home. We wish for the day when our children will be on their own. We wish for the day when we will retire. These are all good milestones, but what about today?

You see, if we are always living for some future event, we are wasting today. If we never learn to live in “now,” one day we will look back on our lives and conclude that they were wasted waiting for the next thing to happen.

We are entering into the beginning of a new year in time. The year of our Lord we have called 2018 is over. A new year designated as 2019 has begun. So what? Does it really make any difference? Every year we come to this time with the concept of time on our minds. We feel that the passing of time compels us to think about our lives and the direction they are taking. A “new” year ought to cause us to make “new” resolutions concerning our lives. This is the way we think. Should we be thinking this way?

Yesterday

In thinking about time, we **must think clearly about the past**. It should go without saying that the *past is past*. What we have done is done and there is nothing we can do about it. And people who can allow the past to be past are fortunate indeed. You see, the past can bind us, it can imprison us.

Some people live in the past. It is in this sense that the past can enslave us. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with memories. In fact, good memories are exceedingly valuable. But the memories of our failures and our fears, and the times we were hurt by others; these are the things that can drag us down. In one sense, this sense, we do need to let the past go.

(continued on next page)

In another sense, however, *the past is not dead at all*. And it should not be. The past is very much alive in us. The past has shaped us. It has made us, to a certain degree, who we are. Because of our experiences in the past, our character has been formed the way it is. So in a real sense the past is present with us every moment.

How do you view your past? Is it something that still haunts you, or is it something that helps you? Are there unresolved situations in your past that you need to deal with today? Are there people in your past you need to contact in order to make something right? Are there past sins you need to confess to God, to repent of, and to turn from? The past is past, but it is not dead. We must deal with the past effectively if we are to live in the present happily.

Tomorrow

In thinking about time the next thing we must deal with is **the future**. Our yesterdays are behind us. Our tomorrows are not yet here. Indeed, *tomorrow never comes*. When it gets here, it is today.

It should be said about the future, that *it is uncertain*. There is no guarantee that we will ever see any point in what we call the future. Our lives could end at any time. There is no guarantee that we will live to be ninety, or eighty, or seventy, or sixty, or fifty, or even forty.

I have personally known several people who died unexpectedly at a very early age. You probably have known someone yourselves. None of us have a guarantee of tomorrow.

Tomorrow is not even ours anyway. God holds our future in His hands.

This does not mean that we do not think about the future or plan for the future. We should certainly do both of those things. We should consider the possibilities for the future and we should also be prepared for what the future may behold. But we should think realistically about the future if we are to live effectively in the present.

The *future can give us hope*. We now are starting the beginning of a new year. What will this year hold for us? We certainly hope that it holds good things. One thing it does hold is the promise that it may be better than the last year. It also holds the promise that things needing change in our lives may in fact be changed. While there are no guarantees, it does hold the promise and the hope for good things in 2019.

On the other hand, *the future can give us a false hope*. It can provide a false sense of security and thereby keep us from living effectively in the present. By assuming that we do have the guarantee of tomorrow we can postpone many of the things we need to be doing today. This false hope that we will be able to accomplish something "tomorrow" provides many people with the excuse they want so they can put off the very thing they need to do today.

I have met so many people who attempt to live in the future. They are going to do great things when they get

around to it. When they have time, they are going to become more involved in things that count. When this happens, or that happens, they will then begin. They will do it later, tomorrow, next week, next month, someday. The fact is that the time never comes, the situation never is right, tomorrow never arrives.

Today

The bottom line of the whole matter is that *we only have today*. Today is all we have. This is why the Scripture says that **now is the acceptable time**. It is an affirmation that we live in the present. The past is gone. The future may never arrive. But **now** is here.

Now is the only time we can accept and it is the only time **acceptable** to God. The question we must answer is: What are we going to do with **now**?

How are you spending **now**? Are you either living in the past or the future? Are there things you have been putting off until tomorrow---things which you should be doing today? Are you sitting back thinking that there will come that perfect situation which will enable you to be involved? It will never come.

This is the message we need to hear at this time of year. We must live in the **now** in 2019, because it is the only time we have. Thank God for the past. Thank God for whatever future there is awaiting us. But live **now**.

We must live now in terms of our personal lives and also in terms of the church. You see, we cannot simply wait for the future to come upon us. If 2019 is going to be lived for Jesus, it must be lived one day at a time. Every day will be today. The only time we will have to live will be **now**.

So, there are no resolutions to make other than the decision to live **now**. And the questions which you need to answer today have to do with what God is telling you to do **now**.

What are the issues with which you need to deal with today? Are there sins you need to confess today? "*Today is the day of salvation*." God's forgiveness awaits you today if you will come to Him.

In terms of your commitment to your church, what is the Lord telling you to do today? The church is you, and is only as strong as you allow it to be by your commitment and service. Are you involved, committed, active, alive, pressing-in, dedicated, and dependable?

Are you involved in the ministry of your church by giving of your time, talents, and tithe? Without your support the church might just as well close its doors. And if you are not giving to the Lord's work, both of yourself and His tithe, then you are robbing God of what is His by right and you are robbing yourselves of the blessing God will give to you.

What is the Lord touching in your life today? What will you do about it? Whatever you do, you must do **now**. It is the only time you have.

(Excerpt from a sermon by Pastor Lucchesi)

Seniors Luncheon

The Seniors had a terrific Christmas luncheon in December. The food was delicious, the fellowship was cheerful, Christmas music was playing in the background, and it was great to see so many of the ladies festively dressed for the occasion. Pictured right are good friends enjoying each others company. Posing in top photo are Ida Scaduto and Anna Baldassano. Even at the age of 105 Ida still looks great as she celebrates life. Pictured in middle photo are Maryanne Croshere and Gladys Miller. It was a great afternoon as everyone was filled with holiday cheer.

We thank Vinnie Rotolo who once again entertained the crowd with his piano playing. He is quite an accomplished pianist and captivated the audience. Vinnie also gave a spirit-filled message on the true meaning of Christmas - the birth of Jesus Christ who was sent to save the world from sin.

What a day it was to start the holiday season.



**We invite all our Seniors to the next luncheon
scheduled for Tuesday, February 5th.**

On the menu is roast loin of pork, red cabbage, another vegetable, red potatoes, and sweet treat for dessert.

Arrangements are being made to have a guest speaker from the Town of Hempstead Senior Enrichment Department attend to speak on a topic relevant to Seniors.

Please be sure to let us know you are attending by either signing the sign-up sheet at the church, or call the church office and leave a message (516-223-4070).

Christmas Dinner & Show

There were many special events held throughout the month of December. One of the highlights was the church family dinner and special program on Sunday, December 16th. As always, the pot-luck dinner was well attended. There was different ethnic-style foods to sample. We do have many great cooks in the church family.



After dinner a special Christmas pageant was held entitled "Let's Keep God's Love in Christmas." A brief summary about the play: Mrs. Bartlett (someone with years of experience in the theater) worries that the spirit of Christmas has been lost in all the glitz, glitter, and commercialism. She believes that when Christ was born, love was born, and she's determined to put God's love back into Christmas so that children will understand the true meaning of the occasion.



Calvary's production of "Let's Keep God's Love in Christmas" was directed by Linda Boughton. There were many adults, teens, and children cast in the play. And we can't forget the numerous people who worked behind the scenes as well (those working with costuming, set design, and the sound/video system).

The following are the list of main characters and cast members: Mrs. Bartlett was played by Melissa Watts, Cindy was played by Kirsten Watts, Andy was played by Matthew Lucchesi, Jennifer was played by Sarabeth DiCostanzo, and Kathy was played by Barbara Lucchesi. The play also included a nativity scene with several characters singing as they entered. Mary and Joseph were portrayed by Justine and Derek; the shepherds were played by Anthony (L.T.), Brandon, Brant, Christian, Joshua, Justin, and Kathy; the angels were Angeline, Barbara C., Becky, and Magalie; the Wise Men were Fitz Jr., Fitz Sr., and Ronnie; and the adorable stable animals included Reed as a donkey, and Melissa, Natalie, Sarabeth (LaLa), and Sydney as sheep.

It was a wonderful night with many saying it was the best play they have seen in years. We thank all those who participated in the pageant, a special thank you to Linda Boughton who put in much thought and time as our pageant director, and the audience who encouraged and cheered everyone on.

What a blessing was received watching all the hard work come together, and for the message to not forget and "Let's Keep God's Love in Christmas."



Collection of Gifts For Men

by Kathy Guerin

On December 20, 2018, the Ladies Bible Study Group met at the church for fellowship and pizza. Our mission was to put together gift bags for the men at Recovery House, a halfway house for those who struggle with addiction. For more than 15 years the ladies have been collecting donations and distributing gift bags to Mercy Hall, the "sister" program to Recovery House. This year Patti Senita suggested that the ladies also could help with collecting donations for the men.

The "hope" was to be able to collect a few little gifts for the men, a little something under the tree, a message of God's love for them. What an incredible sight to see all the generous donations from our amazing church family. We were able to fill large bags to the brim with hats, socks, games, mugs, toiletries, ties, and scarves. The ladies even got to meet one of the residents who just so happened to be at the church that night.

The staff at Recovery House was very grateful that they would be able to present each resident with a gift. One of the social workers held back tears as she described the feeling of "joy" and "hope" that was in the air as each resident opened and showed off their presents. The men also received a copy of "Joseph was a Carpenter." Hopefully they will read it and discover the true meaning of Christmas!



Pictured left to right:
Mary Jo, Martha, Patti, Barbara, Kathy, Flo, Kaia, and Colleen

THE JOY IN CHRIST

New mercies, new blessings, new light on the way,
New courage, new hope, new strength for each day;
New juice in the chalice, new altars to raise;
New fruits for thy Master, new garments of praise;
New gifts from His treasures, smiles from His face,
New streams from the fountain of infinite grace,
New stars for thy crown, and new tokens of love,
New gleams of the glory that waits thee above;
New light of His countenance, full and unpriced - -
All this be thy joy of the New Year in Christ!

New Year Prayer

Lord, I have no idea what's going to happen in this new year, but all I pray is that you will guide me and help me! Please help me to look to you always, and through everything that I do, may I bring praise and glory to your name! I thank you Lord for another year! Amen

Just build a better you

"To build a better world," God said.

But I answered, "How? The world is such a large, vast place. And I am so small and useless. There's nothing I can do."

But God in all His wisdom said, "Just build a better you." How?

- Let go of grudges, gripes and prejudices.
- Push the "clear" button on attitude and develop one that really fits the circumstances.
- Treat each person you meet as you want to be treated.
- Make every day a happy new experience.
- Make an extra effort to be unusually nice to some one each day.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY

1st Martha Mietenkorte
4th Gregory 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 (Bigby)
22nd Erin Waldvogel
24th Magaline Alcindor
24th Vincent 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
16th Aaron Nehring
17th Kirsten Watts
19th Mary Lou Ekstrom
26th Carol Chalavoutis
26th Joshua Lucchesi

**Happy
Birthday!**

ANNIVERSARIES

JANUARY

4th Charles & Barbara Lucchesi
24th Matt & Karen Linhart

FEBRUARY

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

What God Has Given

Friendship - a shelter for the lonely heart.
Music - wings for the heavy heart.
Laughter - healing for the hurting heart.
Beauty - an answer for the searching heart.
Hope - strength for the discouraged heart.
Peace - a resting place for the weary heart.
Love - the greatest gift for every heart.