

JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERIAN NEWSLETTER



JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MARCH 2021

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LENT

Preparing for Easter
~Prayers~Fasting~Almsgiving~

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*You're
Invited!*

Fellowship Friday!

We had so much fun at the Virtual Happy Hour that we decided to have it regularly and call it Fellowship Friday!

Friday, March 5 at 5:30 pm

One hour of interesting, light-hearted conversation on Zoom. You might even learn something!

Did you know that someone in our congregation was named after a bar? You'll never know who if you don't join the conversation.

Just hit the link and join in!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89786682100>

Meeting ID: 897 8668 2100

Do this from your computer, your smart phone, or a pad – nothing to it!

But if it doesn't work:

Call Dennis Lauland at 504-388-8030, OR

From Reverend Ochart

Wilderness

Last year around this time in South Carolina, I began a Sunday School series (Inspired by Julie's Lenten study here at John Calvin) on the concept of "Wilderness." Little did either of us know how much the spiritual concept of wilderness would resonate in the spring of 2020, and continues to resonate today with the ongoing plagues of Coronavirus, Racism, and Poverty.

The concept of 'Wilderness' is a deeply important one throughout Scripture. In Scripture, the first interaction with wilderness occurs in Genesis 3 after Adam and Eve have sinned. They can no longer be trusted to remain in the Garden of Eden, God's beatific and holy creation, and must be cast out into the wilderness. It is not a fun place, and that is the point.

The spiritual concept of wilderness is central to the story of the Hebrew people after being freed from Egypt in Exodus, and their forty-year journey to the Promised Land (Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), in fact "The Wilderness" is the Hebrew title to the book that we call Numbers*. In the literal wilderness, the Hebrews learned to depend on the Living God in everything (or, at least that was the plan).

The pattern of the Deuteronomic histories is that the people of God would rebel, and God would use an opposing army to punish them (a metaphorical wilderness), so that they would again return to their faith in the Living God. This is most clear when God allowed the Babylonian Empire to take the nation of Judah into exile. The Christian Scriptures also use the concept of wilderness, Jesus himself begins his ministry by spending forty days in the literal wilderness (One of the chief inspirations for the season of Lent). Paul spent much of his career either on the run, or in prison, both metaphorical wildernesses.

The concept of wilderness is a helpful one to us all, because it is most often in these wilderness experi-

ences that we learn and grow. A modern term we sometimes use is a 'liminal space' a place in-between one thing and another. I imagine that you have learned and grown most during times of distress and 'in-between times' (e.g. college, birth of a child, retirement, changing careers, etc.).

During the Session Retreat, several elders (though certainly not all) listed Coronavirus as one of the best things that happened in 2020. A wilderness certainly, but it has given us a chance to reevaluate everything, personally, in the church, nationally, institutionally, etc.

Wilderness is also a fruitful concept for the season of Lent, a journey from Ash Wednesday, to Holy Week, to Easter. In this self imposed wilderness we spend time in self-reflection, fasting (depriving ourselves of things we do not need for a time), almsgiving (taking on something that we should be doing more of), and generally using this liminal space to prepare ourselves for Christ's work of redemption afresh.

I encourage you to continue to use this wilderness time to depend more deeply and wholly on our Loving and Living God, preparing for the resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Kingdom of God.

*Boy did somebody mess that title up, who [other than perhaps an accountant (an accountant who didn't secretly want to be a lumberjack)] would choose to read a book called 'Numbers' over one called 'the Wilderness'?

Rev. Aaron's Radar: February

The collage features several items:

- A book cover for "Mister Rogers Talks With Parents" by Fred Rogers, with a photo of Fred Rogers.
- A book cover for "Disunity in Christ" by Christena Cleveland, with the subtitle "Uncovering the Hidden Forces that Keep Us Apart" and "Read by Randy Kaye".
- A game cover for "The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild" for Nintendo Switch.
- A "WandaVision" video thumbnail showing Wanda Maximoff and Vision.
- A "Staged" video thumbnail showing a man with a beard.
- A small portrait of a man with curly hair.
- A small video thumbnail of a man speaking.

LENT

Sunday School for Adults and Youth:

Starting Sunday February 21st, Rev. Ochart will lead a Sunday School series for both youth and adults on the passion narrative from the Gospel of Luke (Chapters 19b-23). The study will start at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall (so there is enough room to socially distance), and will also be available on Zoom, either on the computer or on the phone. All are invited.

Sunday School Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83601188662>

Or call: (301)715-8592

Meeting ID: 836 0118 8662

Lenten Bible Study: Julie Hebert will offer the Lenten study, "Into the Wild: A Lenten Liturgy and Intergenerational Study on Hunger" at 5:30 pm on the Wednesdays of Lent, starting February 24th. The study will be presented virtually through Zoom, and an email will be sent out each week with the Zoom Link, handouts, list of materials, and anything else needed to participate. If you have trouble connecting, Rev. Ochart will be happy to get you connected.

Lenten Bible Study Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89373131472?pwd=RlIXUnFYVmVBZVlZHpRT0ZOMldwdz09>

Or call: (301)715-8592

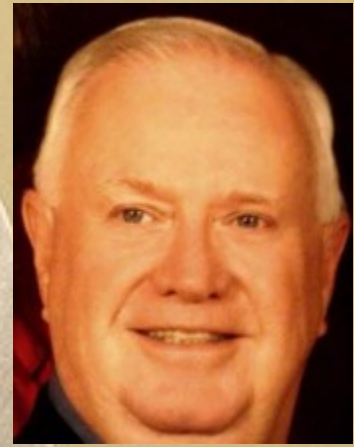
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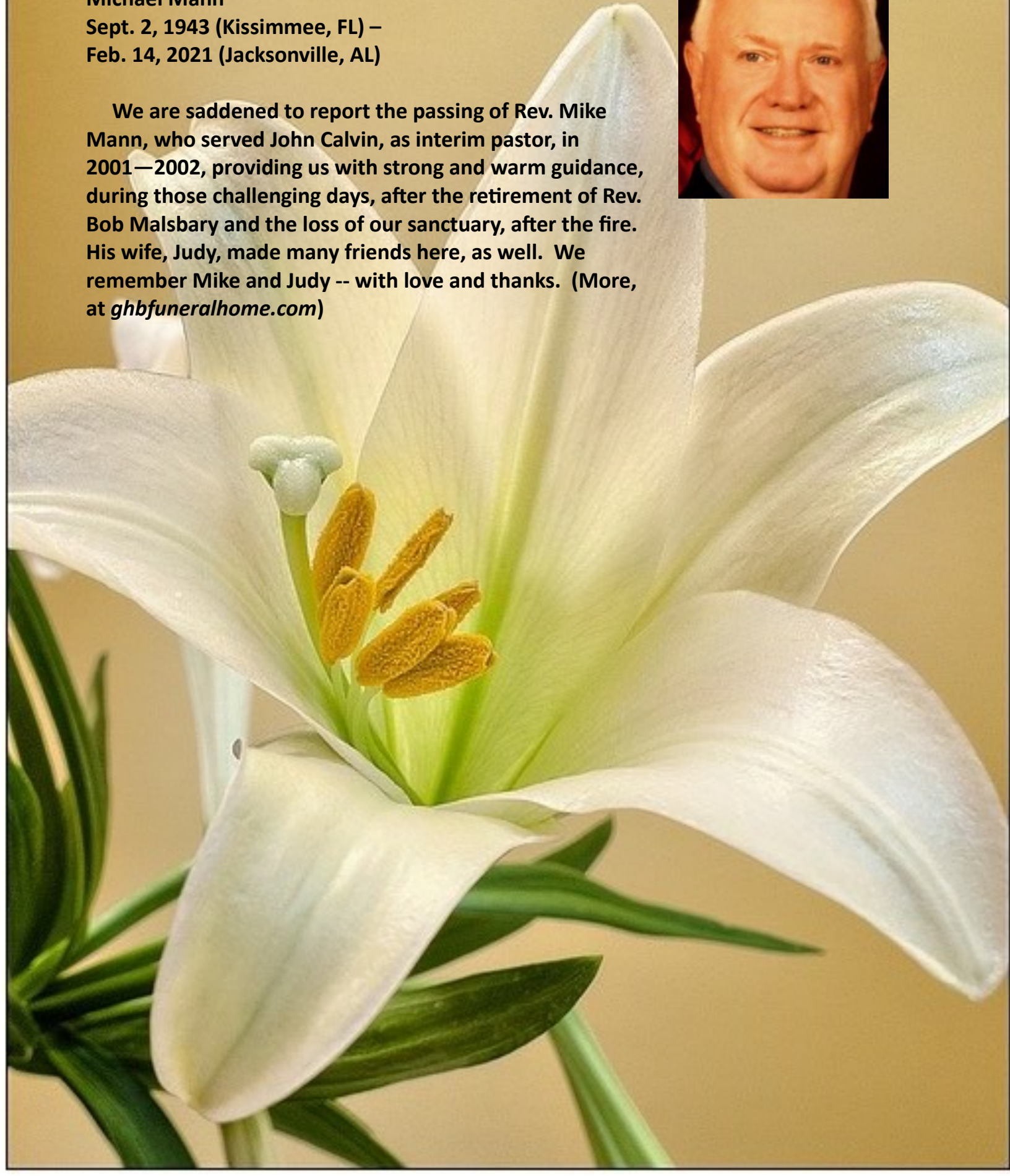
Throughout the Lenten Season, the Outreach Committee will be bringing you stories of Presbyterian missions here in the US and throughout the world, in preparation for **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering on Easter Sunday.

Michael Mann

**Sept. 2, 1943 (Kissimmee, FL) –
Feb. 14, 2021 (Jacksonville, AL)**



We are saddened to report the passing of Rev. Mike Mann, who served John Calvin, as interim pastor, in 2001—2002, providing us with strong and warm guidance, during those challenging days, after the retirement of Rev. Bob Malsbary and the loss of our sanctuary, after the fire. His wife, Judy, made many friends here, as well. We remember Mike and Judy -- with love and thanks. (More, at ghbfuneralhome.com)



Do you have any...

Cross-Stitch or Embroidery Supplies

that you would like to give away?

A new young Presbyterian Pastor, Rev. Zoe Garry, who is running a college ministry at Tulane and Loyola is looking for your unwanted cross-stitch and embroidery supplies. She has a group of young people – both men and women – who are enjoying creating together!

They are looking for anything you've got, particularly scissors, and waste canvas!

Ready to clean out one more closet?

Please bring any of these items you'd like to donate, to the church – there will be a box in the narthex.

Not getting out yet, call Sharon Fortin 984-725-0904 and she will come pick them up!

Thank you!!



EASTER LILY ORDER FORM

\$17.50 each Order by March 14, 2021

To The Glory of God

In Honor of

In Memory of

Given By

Please make checks payable to John Calvin Presbyterian Church and write Easter Lily on the memo line.

Easter Egg Hunt

John Calvin Presbyterian Church

March 27th, 9am-12pm

2 and under 9:00-9:45

3 & 4 year old's 10:00-10:45

5 and up 11:00-11:45

Crafts, Bunny, Hunt

Candy Donations accepted outside of the
playschool and church offices. Individually
wrapped candy and please no nuts.

Questions:

Julie.hebert@johncalvinchurch.org



John Calvin Presbyterian Church



“Freed by the Fire, Renewed by the Flood, and Empowered by the Spirit”