



## From the Pastor...

I love those “surprises” in the Scriptures. I love the things that we read over quickly, maybe for years, and then, when we stop to understand what is being said, we are surprised. There’s one such passage in the book of I Peter that I hope has caught your attention. It’s actually an amazing passage, one that can reshape a lot of what we think and how we understand God and God’s ways.

In I Peter 2:9, the Apostle Peter, the first bishop of the church in Rome, is writing to the gentile (non-Jewish) believers scattered through-out gentile areas like Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (not Judea or Israel). He writes: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people.” What a surprise! These gentiles who have become “obedient to Jesus Christ” (1:1) are now described with terms and words that would have only been used previously for Jews, for Israel. Gentile believers in Jesus (together with Jewish believers in Jesus) are now “a chosen race.” The idea of a “chosen race” was a clear reference to the Old Covenant that God had with the Hebrew people, the Jews, Israelites. It was language that distinguished Jews from the rest of the “non-chosen” world. And Gentile believers in Jesus are now “a royal priesthood,” again, pointing to the Levitical priests of Israel. No longer are the Priests of God from a particular Israelite lineage. And Gentile believers in Jesus are “a holy nation.” Geographical boundaries no longer identify the “tribes” or “nation” of God. What once was the claim of national Israel now is used to describe any and all who are followers of Jesus, from any nation or tribe or language or people. And Gentile believers in Jesus are now “God’s own people”, or more literally, “a people for God’s possession.” Again, language that was historically used to describe the singular “people of God” called the Jews or Israel.

In Christianity today, there is a lot of theology that surrounds the idea that the modern-day nation of Israel is still “God’s chosen people.” The problem with that theology is that it doesn’t align with the core of the New Testament and the Gospel of Jesus. Here in this surprising passage, Peter makes it clear. The church – the assembly of all those who are called to faith in Jesus – the church now inherits the language once used to refer only to Israel. In the New Covenant of God, the church becomes the new people of God.

So, if you are part of the church of Jesus Christ through your faith in Him and through the work of the Holy Spirit to bring about your re-birth into the family of God, then you are, in fact, part of this “holy nation” of God. You are part of the new humanity (Ephesians 2:15-16) in which God has broken down the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile and, as Paul says, “created one new humanity in place of the two.”

(Continued on pg2)

**Women’s Tea - Saturday, May 31, 2025**

## From the Pastor... (continued)

So... Surprise! There truly is no longer a distinction between Jew and gentile. Surprise! There are no national boundaries in God's eyes. Surprise! There are no claims to land based on ethnicity or previous precedent. Surprise! There are no special blessings reserved for a select few. Surprise! Your race doesn't matter. Your ethnicity doesn't matter. Where you live doesn't matter. What religion your parents or ancestors followed doesn't matter. All that distinguishes between people is whether you are "in Christ" or not "in Christ", whether you are a follower of Jesus, or not. The scripture is clear: those who are "in Christ" are "God's own possession," all of us! All of us, together as one, with a shared purpose, according to Peter, which is this: "that you may proclaim his mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:10)

So... Surprise! And isn't it a wonderfully glorious surprise?!

— Rendell

### Women's Tea/Brunch

"His Joy Our Strength"

Saturday, May 31, 10 am until Noon

The Learning Center at Calvary Church



Time for Tea! Join us on **Saturday, May 31**, as we gather to drink tea and share food, fellowship, and inspiration. The tea will be provided, so bring your favorite brunch food to share. One of the best parts of the tea is seeing the beauty of the decorated tables. Please let us know if you want to share your decorating talents. You can sign up on the sheet located in the sanctuary or by contacting Katha Tasios (828-279-3933). Tables will need to be decorated before *Saturday, May 31*.

For our inspiration, we are honored to have a guest speaker, Dr. Sophia Steibel. Dr. Steibel was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She retired in 2024 after serving at Gardner-Webb University for 30 years, and was named Professor Emerita in the School of Divinity. She earned her Master of Arts in religious education and her Ph.D. in education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. After receiving her master's degree, she taught at the Baptist Religious Education Institute in Rio de Janeiro. Then, she taught at the South Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary in Rio de Janeiro. After earning her Ph.D., Steibel also served three years as president of Campinas Baptist Theological College in Sao Paulo, Brazil. During this time, her husband, Eduardo, pastored the Cambui Baptist Church in that city. We look forward to her inspiring humility and her sincere love of the Lord and His people.



Come join your sisters as we have a wonderful time of fellowship, food, and worship.



## Upcoming Dates

5/01/25 — Men's Prayer Breakfast  
5/13/25 — Deacons' Meeting  
5/14/25 — Ladies' Prayer Breakfast  
5/21/25 — Leadership Team Meeting (10am)  
5/22/25 — ABCCM Missions Opportunity  
5/26/25 — Memorial Day  
5/31/25 — Women's Tea/Brunch

## Thank You!

Many thanks to Reverend Rendell and Rick Green for coming to the hospital the day of my surgery. Your support and prayers were greatly appreciated.

We love our Calvary Family!

Blessings,

Norman & Pam Rice

## Update on Project Uplift

We are just weeks away from seeing "Project Uplift" get off the ground! Soon, we will see this work beginning, which will include new front doors, new paint, repairs to the facade, new clear plexiglass covering for the stained glass windows, a new awning for the Baker Street entrance, and other needed upgrades to the front of the Sanctuary. Much of the funding is already available, but we will be needing some additional funds to complete the full project. Any designated gifts to this project, over and above your tithe, can be made to Calvary Church with "Project Uplift" in the memo.



## Thank you!

Dear Calvary Family,

Thank you so very much for ALL the cards, meals, phone calls, visits, love and prayers you have so lovingly showered us with during the past year. I miss being there with you! My cancer is MDS – Myelodysplastic Syndrome – a bone marrow cancer that destroys red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets and causes me to have NO immune system, so I have to work very hard to stay well and stay out of the hospital. Please continue to pray for us as we journey together through this stage of life - Butch is a wonderful caregiver, shopper, house cleaner, dog walker, personal Uber driver. We love you and miss ALL of you.

God bless you.

Butch & Pat

## Invitations are Yours to Give

Pick up a handful of our small "invitation cards" to invite someone to church. They are located on the Connection Table in the Sanctuary.



### CONTACT US

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### Rendell Hipps

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Kids Ministry Coordinator

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## The Ministry of Prayer

Each week, our worship service, worship leaders, pastor, and congregation are being lifted up to the Lord in prayer by those of you who have committed to pray in our Prayer Room from 10:30—11:30 during worship. Please contact Butch Stillwell to volunteer to pray during worship!



## Monthly Hands -On Missions Opportunity

On **Thursday, May 22**, Calvary will be providing dessert for about 50 residents at ABBCM's Transformation Village off Brevard Road near I-26. We will need a couple of volunteers who can serve dessert on the evening of **May 22** from **5:30-6:30pm**, as well as volunteers who can provide dessert prior to the event. Sign-up sheets will soon be provided for both. This is a great opportunity to be "hands-on" in being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community!" See Jori Gelbaugh for more details or information!



## Monthly Prayer Breakfasts

**Men's Prayer Breakfast:** Change in venue:  
Our Men's Prayer Breakfast will be **Thursday, May 1, @ 7:30am** @ Chick-fil-A Smokey Park Hwy.

**Ladies' Prayer Breakfast:** Our Ladies' Prayer Breakfast will be **Wednesday, May 14 @ 8:30am** @ Chick-fil-A Smokey Park Hwy.

## LIVE Streaming of Calvary Worship

Each Sunday, our worship service is LIVE on Facebook @ 10:30. If you cannot attend in person, join us online!

[www.Calvarync.org](http://www.Calvarync.org)



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FIND US AT  
[calvarync.org](http://calvarync.org)



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Watch our worship services on Facebook Live.  
Services are posted on our website on Sunday afternoons.  
[www.calvarync.org/messages](http://www.calvarync.org/messages)

# 2025 May

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>Deacon for May:</b> James Gay 828-215-4212  <b>Deacon Greeters for May:</b> Gary Smallan and James Gay				Men's Prayer Breakfast 7:30am <b>Chick-Fil-A</b> Smokey Park Hwy	Friday Crafters 11a-2p	
9:20 Prayer 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Worship					Friday Crafters 11a-2p	
9:20 Prayer 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Worship			6:30-8:30 Worship Team Rehearsal			
9:20 Prayer 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Worship		Deacon Meeting 4pm LC	Ladies Prayer Breakfast 8:30am <b>Chick-Fil-A</b> Smokey Park Hwy  6:30-8:30 Worship Team Rehearsal		Friday Crafters 11a-2p	
9:20 Prayer 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Worship	CrossPoints Deadline		Leadership Team 10am LC  6:30-8:30 Worship Team Rehearsal		Friday Crafters 11a-2p	
9:20 Prayer 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Worship	<b>Memorial Day</b>					<b>Women's Tea</b> The Learning Ctr 9a-12p
			6:30-8:30 Worship Team Rehearsal			



**Calvary Prayer List**

Alverta Bolick Home  
Deacons & Leadership Team  
Karen Bartlett  
Margaret Bradshaw  
Betty Carter  
Ellen Cheng  
Jennie Dalton  
Mary Ruth Duyck  
Rick Green  
Floyd & Donna Hilemon  
Neva Hancock  
Sam Hocking  
Diane Jervis  
Les Little  
Margaret Mattox  
Mark McKinney

Sarah McGinnis  
Edith Middleton  
Mustafa Family  
Debbie Nix  
Poteat Family  
Jean Rice  
Norman Rice  
Frank Richardson  
Kathy Rhodes  
Barbara Roberts  
Geana Rollins  
Smallan Family  
Pat Stillwell  
Kayla Welborn  
Jewell Wilson  
**Other Concerns**  
Canterbury Classical School

Robert Atwater  
Mike Baker  
Kim Brantley  
Margaret Brown  
Peggy Burke  
Evelyn Carter  
Breanna Chambers  
Joan Cook  
Elijah Frisby  
Nick Givens  
Cami Green  
Colson Gropp  
Kimberly Hanna  
Keith & Betty Sue Haywood  
Gayle Jenkins  
Pat Millard  
Jamie Miller

Sue Morgan  
Chris Pafford  
Lynn Queen  
William Richardson  
Bill Rice  
Sean Robinson  
Donald & Kevin Robinson  
Robert Shelton  
Bob Snedden  
Phillip Taylor  
Tammy Tweed  
Deb Welborn  
Suzanne Wilson  
Linda Worley

**Our Military**  
Graham Tasios

**Sunday Morning Prayer Team in  
the Prayer Room in the Learning  
Center (Praying During Worship)**

May 04 Margaret Morgan  
May 11 Bruce Fowler  
May 18 Butch Stillwell  
May 25 Gary Smallan



*He*

is my rock and my salvation; He is my  
fortress, I will not be shaken. Psalm 62:6

**Prayer Time on Sunday  
Morning before Worship**

Please join us for prayer  
time each Sunday morning  
in the Narthex in the rear of  
the sanctuary at 10:20.

**May Birthdays**

-----  
1 Mona Moore  
2 Kyleigh Shell  
5 Jan Hicks  
5 Frederick Snedden  
13 Eric McKinney  
15 Rick Wynne  
17 Pauline Powell  
18 Dianna Wyatt  
21 John Buckner  
23 Judith Prather  
26 Louise Corbin  
27 Karla Gay  
28 Adam Nix

*Hello  
May*

**May Anniversaries**

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10 Terry & Anita Smith  
11 Dan & Margaret Bradshaw  
16 Tom & Margaret Mattox  
27 Jason & Kelli Nix

*Happy Memorial Day!*