

Calvin Connect

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I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.

John 11:25-26 NIV

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Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ.

The mission statement of Calvin Presbyterian Church is to build a community where Jesus is worshipped, lived, and shared. My question to all of us is what kind of Jesus Christ do we worship and share?

I personally don't want to build a mega church. I don't want to attract people to good self-esteem messages. I don't want to agree with every belief to make everyone happy.

To me the message of the cross is important. The Bible says, "the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God". We, as a local body of Christ here at Calvin Presbyterian Church, worship Jesus and preach Jesus Christ crucified.

As we began the season of Lent this year, I took this picture of flowers in purple and white, (colors of Lent and Easter) with our mission statement and the image of the cross in the background.

There may be a lot of things that we don't understand, but remember, God accomplished that which was impossible when He went to the cross and died for our sins. He did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves.

Blessings,
Thomas Kim



Anatomy of a Calvin Presbyterian Church Service Part 2 – Music

By Don Blaak

In the September 2023 issue of *Calvin Connect*, I mentioned that I am occasionally asked questions regarding why we do, or do not do, certain things during our Sunday morning worship services here at Calvin Presbyterian Church. I attempted to begin to answer such questions by beginning with a brief history and description of the *four-fold pattern of worship* which we follow in each of our Sunday morning worship services. It was my original intention to then move into some explanation regarding our current gestures or practices during our worship services that are specific to our congregation here at Calvin Church. However, considering the significant role that music plays in our worship service and throughout the history of our faith, I feel that it is useful to devote some discussion to the topic of music alone before moving on to the details of our worship services.

Many of us have opinions concerning the role that music serves in worship and what kind of music is appropriate and inappropriate in a worship service. To better understand how these attitudes may have developed, let us examine a history of these attitudes beginning at the time of the Protestant Reformation (early 16th century).

At the beginning of the Reformation two schools of thought began to emerge which greatly influenced church music and can be described as the *normative principles of worship* and the *regulative principles of worship*. Both approaches were in response to the music of the Roman Catholic church which, in many instances, had become complex and ornate to the point of distraction. Both approaches also pursued the greater use of one's native language in place of or alongside liturgical Latin.

The *normative* approach was adopted by Martin Luther and is the more flexible approach to the Bible and God's intentions concerning worship. It teaches that whatever is not prohibited in Scripture is permissible in worship provided it is amenable to peace and unity in the church. This doctrine allowed its adherents greater creativity and freedom in organizing worship and composing hymns and frequently incorporated instruments such as organs into church music.

The *regulative* approach was adopted by John Calvin and is much more prescriptive concerning how God is to be worshipped. It focuses on obedience to God and prohibits any expression of worship that is not affirmatively found in scripture through express commands or implied logically through deductive reasoning. The regulative principle's effect on church music was to restrict sung texts to those texts found in the scripture alone such as the Psalms (psalmody). Songs sung in worship employed texts from Scripture verbatim or based on Psalms which were put to simple, singable melodies. These Psalms were sung in unison and harmonization of these melodies was discouraged during worship services.

The Calvinist reformers took the priesthood of all believers very seriously and encouraged believers to speak (or sing) for themselves. Therefore, choirs, choral anthems, cantatas, and the like were not employed in worship services. The congregation was to worship God directly and not vicariously through a choir or group of professional musicians.

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Many of the early reformers also prohibited the use of musical instruments in worship. Although Calvin did initially allow the use of musical instruments, he later banned them from his congregation fearing that their use was too closely associated with unorthodox practices before the Reformation. As the influence of the reformers and those adhering to the *regulative principles of worship* grew, many churches removed their pipe organs from their religious institutions.*

From the mid-16th century to the early 18th century, the common method of singing during a Presbyterian worship service was known as *lining out*. A person, known as a *precentor*, would lead the congregational singing unaccompanied by any instruments (*a cappella*) and would read or sing one line which would then be repeated by the congregation. These readings were exclusively psalms or versified paraphrases of psalms or scripture passages. This practice was not a doctrinal position but was used for practical purposes among many congregations where many people were not sufficiently literate, or churches lacked psalters to distribute to the congregation.

From approximately 1720 onwards, the practice of continuous or regular singing (using written music) became increasingly more common (however, many congregations continued to use the *lining out* method). In 1861 the Church of Scotland officially adopted the use of hymns in worship services. Hymns differed from psalmody in that the text of a hymn was often extra-biblical.

In the early 19th century, attempts were made to reintroduce musical instruments into the worship services; however, this was initially met with considerable resistance. For instance, in 1855, First Presbyterian Church in Brockville, Ontario, installed a pipe organ which incited what was known as "the great organ controversy". The Synod opposed the use of the organ during worship services, and after two years of debate, the church in Brockville complied with the directives of the Synod. Nevertheless, the debate continued and in 1860, when the Synod ordered the Session of St. Andrew's Church in Toronto to remove their organ from the sanctuary, the Session refused. After a great deal of further debate, the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church opted, in 1872, to allow individual congregations to decide for themselves whether to include the organ in their worship services. Gradually, organs were increasingly employed by Presbyterian churches throughout Canada.

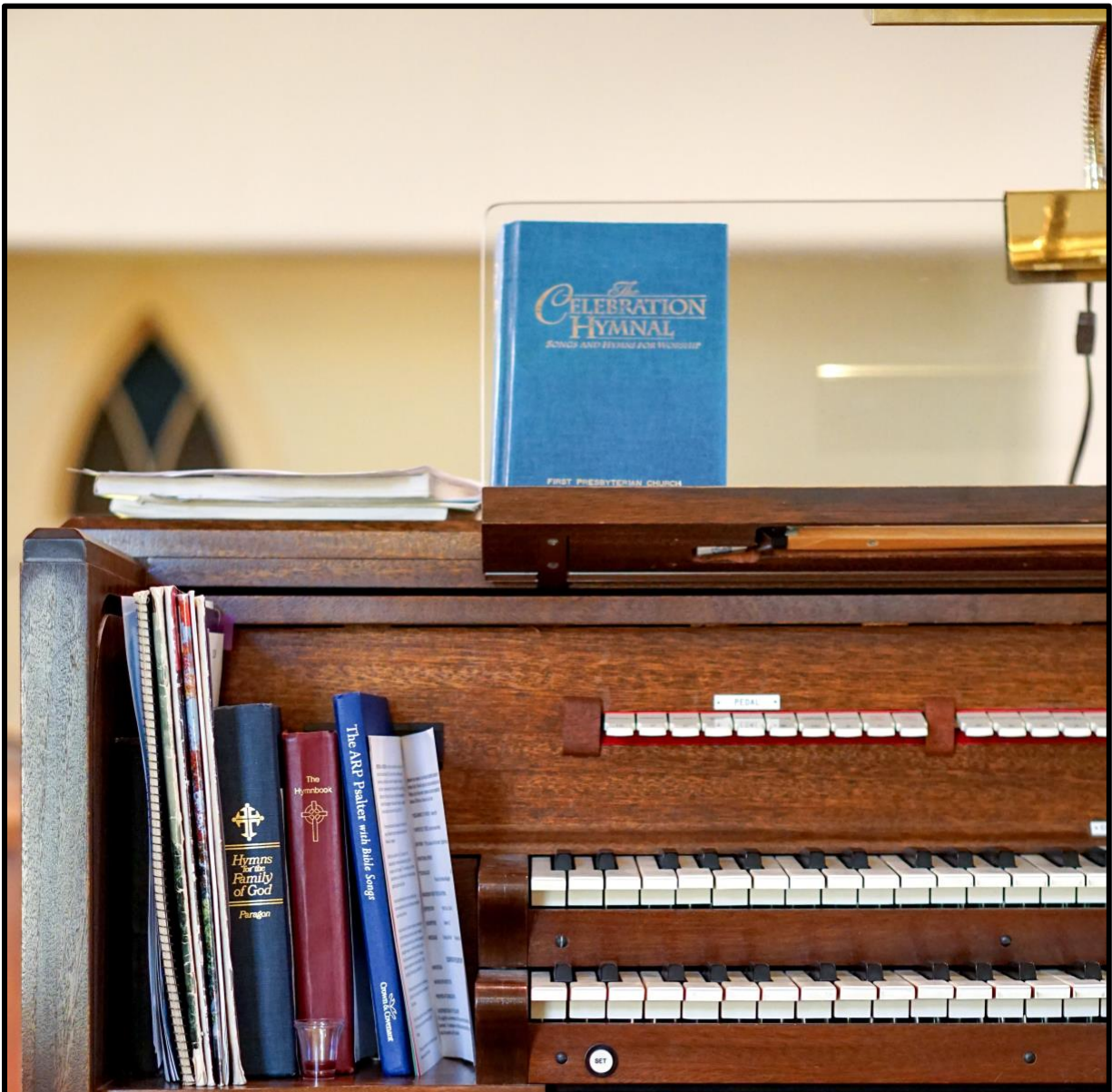
Around the same time, choirs also began to be included in Presbyterian worship services. Often the choir would perform a choral anthem related to the season or topic of the sermon. The choir also helped lead the congregational singing throughout the worship service, often singing in four-part harmony. This was a common practice at Calvin Church up until a few years ago when interest among our congregation in committing to weekly participation in a choir began to drop.

*A notable exception to the absence of organs in reformed churches was seen in many of the Dutch reformed churches. It seems that the Dutch were particularly fond of organ music and the town magistrates were loath to remove these expensive instruments from their churches after dearly paying for them through either municipal or church taxes. This often put them at odds with the state church but, eventually, a compromise was reached allowing organists to perform recitals before or after worship services. This concession eventually contributed to the organ prelude and postlude which is a feature of many Presbyterian worship services including Calvin Presbyterian Church. Furthermore, the traditional attitude towards instrumental music has also led to some confusion as to whether the Prelude and Postlude are a part of the worship service, or "bookends" to the worship service.

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Today, many Presbyterian churches, including Calvin Church, have relaxed their attitudes toward the *regulative principles of worship* concerning the role of music in a worship service. Many members of the Presbyterian church, including myself, have come from other traditions of faith. I suspect that this has influenced how we worship today and has resulted in a more *normative* approach to the principles of worship when concerning music. Nevertheless, many of the traditions or practices of the early reformers are still present in our worship services including the singing of psalms and a strong emphasis on congregational participation.

Perhaps I have raised more questions than given answers as to why we do things the way we do at Calvin Presbyterian Church. I hope that I have at least shown that the worship of our triune God is not "fixed", but in the true spirit of the reformed tradition, *ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* "the church reformed, ever reforming".



Meet Our Elders

Edward Ansah Akuffo

Prof. Edward Ansah Akuffo was baptized as an infant in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in his hometown called Akroprong Akwapim, in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Edward is the first born of three boys, and he is an Akan which is the largest ethnic group in Ghana. The Akans speak the "Twi" language which has several dialects but are mutually intelligible. Although he is called by his first name, Edward, in Canada, he is called Kwame by his family, in-laws, and friends in Ghana. The name Kwame is rooted in the Akan tradition where a child has an automatic God-given name based on the day he or she was born. Kwame is the name for all males who are born on Saturday. In that light, there can be many Kwames in one family just like the other God-given names for the days of the week for males and females! Edward will be happy to have a chat with anyone who would like to know more about the customs and naming ceremony of the Akans in Ghana.

Growing up, Edward regularly attended the Children's Service (Kids Connect) at the Christ Presbyterian Church in Akropong Akwapim. He attended the Presbyterian Training College Demonstration Primary School for his elementary education where studying the Bible, singing of Hymns, and Praying were part of the daily routine. He proceeded to Okuapeman School which is also in Akropong Awapim for his secondary education where he completed his General Certificate of Education at the Ordinary and Advanced Levels. It was at Okuapeman School that Edward had his Confirmation and was inducted to take Holy Communion in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. He became a member of the Bible Study and Prayer Group of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana at the Ebenezer congregation in a town called Kyebi, in the Eastern Region where he met his lovely wife, Alexandra. Edward and Alexandra married in the Ebenezer Presbyterian Church in Kyebi.

After completing his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at the University of Ghana, Edward moved to Canada in 2002 to pursue a Master of Arts in International Relations at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. He joined Knox Presbyterian Church in St. Catharines, Ontario and was the Youth Representative at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada which was held in Guelph Ontario in 2003. He relocated to Edmonton after he gained admission to study for his PhD in Political Science (specializing in International Relations) at the University of Alberta. He and Alexandra and their three children (Gideon, Lydia, and Angel-Gabriel) were members of the now defunct Strathcona Presbyterian Church in Edmonton. God has blessed Edward and Alexandra with two more children, Caleb, and David, since they joined Calvin Presbyterian Church in 2011 after Edward successfully completed his PhD at the University of Alberta.

Professionally, Edward is an Associate Professor of International Relations, and the Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford. He is also a Past-President of International Studies Association, Canada Branch, and the immediate Past-Director of the University of the Fraser Valley Center for Global Development. Edward is an Adjunct Professor in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of New Brunswick-Fredericton, and a member of the University of Waterloo based Defense and Security Foresight Group. He was a Visiting Scholar at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, Ghana.

Edward's research and teaching focus on international relations, and Canada's foreign and security policy in Africa, African Union-NATO interregional security cooperation, and maritime security in Africa. His work has appeared in several academic journals and edited books. He is the author of the first ever single authored book on Canada-Africa relations called, *Canadian Foreign Policy in Africa: Regional Approaches to Peace, Security, and Development* which was published by Ashgate/Routledge in 2012. Due to his expertise on Canada-Africa relations, Edward has been consulted on policy discussions by the Parliament of Canada, Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, the German Embassy in Ottawa, and other diplomatic missions, as well as public and private organizations.

He gives all the glory and thanks to God for his professional achievements and credits his successes to his lovely wife, Alexandra, and five beautiful children, Gideon, Lydia, Angel-Gabriel, Caleb, and David who stand by him and endure the many days, weeks, and sometimes months that he is away working. Indeed, he strives to balance family-work life, but he sees his most important job as being a husband and father. It is a blessing from God! Edward enjoys playing and watching football (the Americans call it soccer...hahaha!!), going for nature walks with his wife and kids, and the daily wrestling 'matches' with all of them. He is blessed to be serving in his second term in Calvin as an elder and sharing in the building of God's Kingdom here in Abbotsford. To God be all the Glory!!



In Memoriam

Since our last issue in December, we have lost three members of our congregation, Joe Ward, Doris Husdon and Eileen Christiansen.

Please remember the families of Joe, Doris, and Eileen in your prayers.



Safely Home

I am home in Heaven dear ones;
 Oh, so happy and bright!
 There is perfect joy and beauty
 In this everlasting light.
 All pain and grief is over,
 Every restless tossing passed.
 I am now at peace forever.
 Safely home in Heaven at last.
 There is work still waiting for you,
 So you must not idly stand,
 Do it now, while life remaineth-
 You shall rest in Jesus' land.
 When that work is all completed,
 He will gently call you Home.
 Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
 Oh, the joy to see you come!

FRIENDS and COFFEE SOCIAL

WEDNESDAY COFFEE SOCIAL

Another year of Coffee & Conversation in our cozy Fireside Room began on the 3rd of January 2024. We don't make resolutions anymore but lots of conversations help us to keep up with each other and what's happening in the neighbourhood. We did have to cancel one week because of some snow and very cold weather. We celebrated Robbie Burns Day with poetry and songs of tartan and heather. February was Valentines and Lent with Shrove Tuesday pancakes on Ash Wednesday. Yes, the traditional hot cross buns and spring flowers graced our table too. St. Patrick's Day and lots of blarney in March with leaping leprechauns and lucky clover to bring us almost to the end of the first quarter of 2024. Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter Day will remind us of the greatest sacrifice that binds us together at Calvin Church. We love having visitors so please join us and bring friends too on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. EVERYBODY WELCOME!

Happy Hosts... Margaret Ward & Joyce Tiessen.



TWO DIFFERENT DOCTORS' OFFICES (Boy, if this doesn't hit the nail on the head, I don't know what does!):

Two patients limp into two different medical clinics with the same complaint.

Both have trouble walking and appear to require a hip replacement.

The FIRST patient is examined within the hour, is x-rayed the same day, and has a time booked for surgery the following week.

The SECOND sees his family doctor after waiting 3 weeks for an appointment, then waits 8 weeks to see a specialist, then gets an x-ray, which isn't reviewed for another week and finally has his surgery scheduled for 6 months from then.

Why the different treatment for the two patients?

The FIRST is a Golden Retriever.

The SECOND is a Senior Citizen.

Next time take me to a vet!



Calvin Coffee House

Our last coffee house on March 8th featured Jazz, Scriptures, and God! We had over 100 people in attendance and there was a lot of praise and toe tapping! We hope to have another one soon!

Our next coffee house will be on Friday, April 12th. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and an open mic begins at 7:30. Our featured musical guest will begin at 8:30. Admission is free; however, donations are greatly appreciated. All donations go directly to our featured artist.

