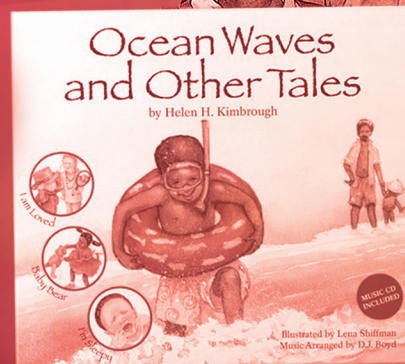
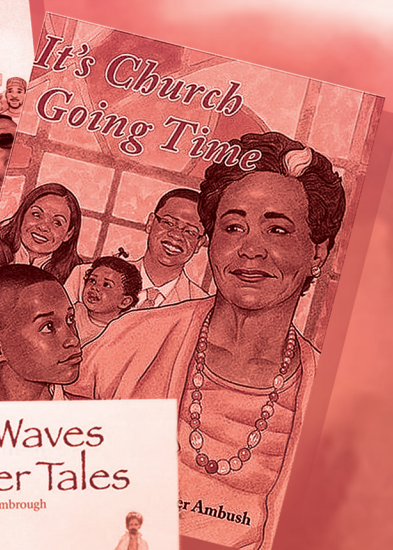
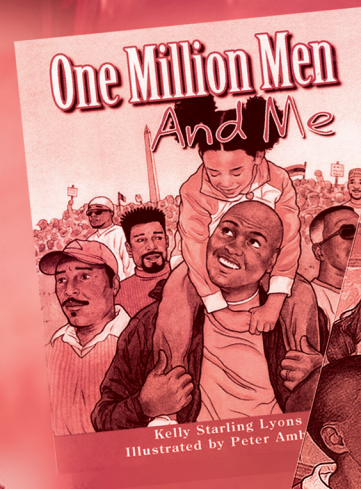


# The Calvary Connection

Fall 2008

Published by Calvary Baptist Church



*Pursuing Change  
Pursuing Dreams*

# Power Belongs to God



I recently heard a Republican political analyst refer to Democratic presidential candidate, Barack Obama as "Jesus." For several months the enemies of Obama have been calling him "Messiah." This caricature is meant to be an insult to Obama and his supporters. The Republican right has been consistently insinuating that Barack Obama has a "Messiah complex" and that his supporters exalt him as though he is some kind of deity. This view is an attempt to discredit the attention that Obama has captured and the movement of change that he has initiated. This is another example of demeaning and denigrating something that you can't destroy.

These attempts to slow down this movement of change on the part of some Republicans, as sinister as they may be, have reminded me that we have to be careful about placing too much confidence in political figures. Neither John McCain nor Barack Obama has all the solutions to life's problems! There is nothing wrong with getting behind a candidate and supporting him, or her. The church should be involved in politics. Politics affect people's lives, and we are interested in people's lives. Therefore, we should be wholeheartedly conscious of and connected to the political process. Every child of God should vote!

*"There should be some excitement about this presidential election. But, at the same time there should be excitement on another level about the One who is neither Democrat nor Republican..."*

But we must be mindful of where we place our real confidence. The temptation to place our trust in elected officials is especially appealing this year. After eight years of what we've had, everyone is talking about change. The constant threat of terrorism, the

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the economic instability in our country and abroad have created an atmosphere of fear and anxiety. Hence, talk of reform and change is very attractive. Beyond these factors, the presence of an African American and a woman in this presidential race has instilled marginalized people with a hope that is as refreshing as the morning dew. Never have so many different groups of people in this country been this engaged in a presidential election. One way or another, history will be made.

Be that as it may, we have to be careful about where our ultimate confidence is. As I reflected over this thought, I just happened to be reading Psalm 62 in my devotion. This Psalm says "He (God) only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense...(v. 2)." The psalmist continues his expression of confidence by saying "My soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him (v.5)." This psalm reminded me of where my real trust and confidence should be. Our ultimate confidence is in Jehovah. This does not mean that we isolate ourselves from the process. But it does mean that we should keep everything in proper perspective. There should be some excitement about this presidential election. But, at the same time there should be excitement on another level about the One who is neither Democrat nor Republican – the One who sits on the throne forever.

As we analyze the foreign and domestic policies of the respective candidates; as we watch the debates on television; as we wear the buttons and tee-shirts; as we pray for guidance; and as we go to the polls to cast our vote; we should be ever mindful of Psalm 62:11 which reads "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God."

*– Pastor Jerry M. Carter, Jr.*

# When God Whispers

*“May He give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed.”*

– NIV Psalm 20:4

**N**ot too long ago, I struck up a conversation at a football game with a woman I did not know. At some point in our conversation we began talking about her dream of wanting to be a cartoonist. In fact, she told me that she had written and illustrated a children’s book that is now dying on her bookshelf. I began making a few suggestions as to how she could revive her dream. I was really hurt to hear her excuses for why she couldn’t possibly become a cartoonist. Her lack of understanding of the power of God bothered me.

God plants the seeds of our dreams in our hearts. His spirit engulfs our hearts and our minds with a purpose. It is our charge to recognize it, nurture it and pursue it. It’s a beautiful thing to acknowledge God’s purpose for our lives, giving us something to strive for. The would-be cartoonist seemed to be passionate about the idea of having a dream but not necessarily accepting or owning the dream. Her words didn’t match with her actions.

What about you -- are you living your dream? Do you have a dream? I would venture to guess that most people are not living their dream. It

takes faith to pursue one’s dream, and depending on its nature, the willingness to take a risk. But all along the way, you must hold on to your faith in Jesus Christ. Remember that God loves you. He promised: “never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). You have all that you need to live that dream you have tucked away. Come on, I know you have it in you. Whether it is owning a business, completing your college education or running in a marathon, you can do it. You can become more physically fit by next summer. You can travel to another country to learn its culture. I once dreamed of driving up the mountains of Pikes Peak in Colorado, and I did it. When I saw those amazing mountains all I could do was tell God over and over again how marvelous He is. What is it that excites you? Whatever energizes or motivates you, know that you can do it. It may take just days or months or years to accomplish it. It doesn’t matter. Remember that Jesus Christ is the source of your strength. It’s absolutely true! We profess that we can “do all things through Christ who strengthens us,” (Phil 4:13). I’m not a biblical scholar, but it says ALL things. Do you believe those words for yourself? You can do it!

When God whispers a dream in your ear, you know it’s the voice of God because every ounce of your being will recognize that moment of completion of who you are and who you’re meant

to become. It’s the moment you become equipped to handle the pursuit of your dream. It’s those who have acknowledged the whispers of God who are making strides toward their dreams.

“This is the day that the Lord has made I will rejoice and be glad in it.” Have you given any thought to your dream today? What’s going to be your new thing as 2008 winds to a close? Has God whispered in your ear? I believe everyone has a dream. Still not sure what yours is? It’s never too late to find out! Try going to the Lord in prayer asking him to make your path straight; read God’s word and mediate on it day and night. Even if you’re not yearning for some alone time with God, be proactive and get some quiet time in with Him. He will speak when you’re least likely to expect it. Once while I was sitting quietly alone after writing, I heard the gentle voice that was clear yet strong enough for me to understand. I looked around and behind me. Warm streams of tears raced down to my chin when I repeated what I had heard. There are no words to describe that moment. It was God, whispering to me.

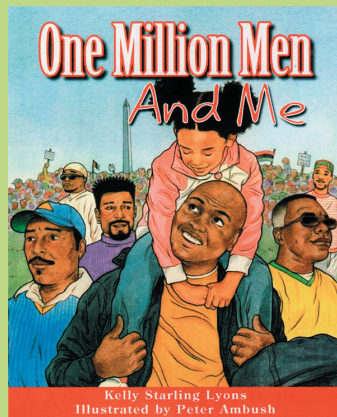
Pursuing your dream is a process and a sweet one when the Lord God is your partner. So, with unshakable faith, resilient determination and great expectation, go and live your dream. God bless you!

– Renita Bourgeois

## One Million Men And Me

Written by Kelly Starling Lyons, illustrated by **Peter Ambush**. “One Million Men And Me is a moving tribute to the Million Man March told through the shared experience of a father and daughter. Written in rhyme, the touching story is an insightful read for parents who want to teach their children about the historic march on October 16, 1995.” (Ebony Magazine, 11/07)

• AVAILABLE at [justusbooks.com](http://justusbooks.com) and major book resellers.

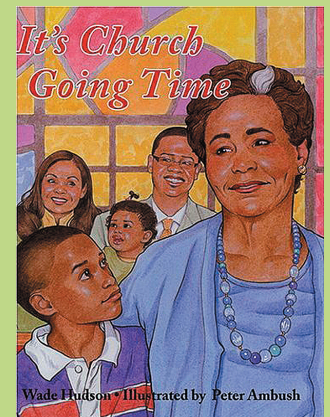


Also available

## It’s Church Going Time

Written by Wade Hudson, illustrated by **Peter Ambush**.

• AVAILABLE at [justusbooks.com](http://justusbooks.com) and major book resellers.



# DO WHAT YOU LOVE!

Did you ever think how much more Christians could do for the Kingdom of God if we were more diligent and excited about our gifts? Jesus told us to go into the entire world and preach the gospel, tell others the good news of new life, hope and joy, not only in eternity, but right in the here and now. We're all to be a part of the fabulous work and movement of God, connecting across the globe, sharing the Gospel, the good news, in multiple ways.

Interestingly, Jesus after rising from the grave, admonished us all to "preach" the gospel and yet not all of us are preachers literally. So what did He mean? To preach means to proclaim, to tell. We're to tell of our life-changing experience since placing faith in Him, how our lives have been changed for the better since experiencing His love and power. Each of our stories is different, but they're real and people need to know that Jesus is real and has done some pretty fantastic things in our lives.

*"If more people were doing what they were born to do, we'd have many more happy people."*

Many of us have testimonies of a former something and then there are those nasty sins such as jealousy and bigotry, arrogance and strife, deceit and gossip. If the truth were told, though some of us have overcome, others still may struggle with some of those things, but knowing Jesus has made a huge difference. It wouldn't have been possible had it not been for Him. Having placed our faith in Him, our relationship has been restored. We're in right standing with God once again. The broken fellowship with Christ has now been mended. In the process, God in His infinite love has rescued us from the destruction of ourselves and others, changing us for the better, placing love in our hearts for Him and others. This, I believe, is how we preach. It's through sharing our stories.

Yet I also think that we preach the gospel via the opportunities afforded to us by virtue of our talents.

Lives are enriched as we share our gifts and talents with the world. How many people have told stories of a song that gave them peace in moments of utter bereavement, or how a card received lifted their spirit on a day that began as a downer? Perhaps, you visited a prisoner or your assistance to a co-worker struggling to meet a deadline made them believe that kindness does still exist. That gift you bought for a motherless, fatherless child created a lifelong memory to be cherished forever. Others share their talents through the arts, or administration and work done behind the scenes that not many may ever come to know. When you do these things, in each of these circumstances, you're using the gift you've been given to impact the world. As we live out the gospel in our everyday lives, we are in effect, preaching the gospel.

I once heard someone say, "If more people were doing what they were born to do, we'd have many more happy people." People would be happy, joyful and excited because they would know why they were placed here on earth and fulfil it through their calling.

Sharing our faith is easier than we think and using our talent is as well if we tap into it. What better way to tell of the love of God than through what you love and were born to do. Preaching, I believe, becomes easier then. However, you can't do it if you don't know what your talent is. These are three quick and easy steps that I used when determining mine. One, a talent is what you're naturally good at. Two, you love to do it, and three, others admire and can see it in you. Some have even said that our talent can often be overlooked because it's so natural to us (so, if you're in doubt, take a closer look at yourself). You may need to perfect your talent, like an artist needs to hone his craft; but doing so will only make you better at it!

Don't be afraid to let God use you to be creative. Start flowing in your gift, sharing your faith and you'll begin to see doors open for you the likes of which you've never dreamed.

– Evonne Jefferson

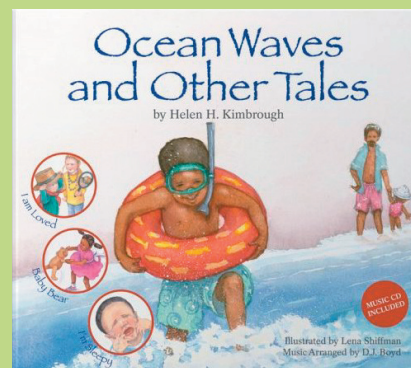
## **Ocean Waves and Other Stories** Written by Helen H. Kimbrough

Multi-Cultural children's book celebrates universal themes and connections that foster joy and acceptance delightful illustrations and an accompanying musical CD add extra appeal to make reading and learning irresistibly fun.

First-time children's book author Helen H. Kimbrough's new book Ocean Waves and Other Tales is a multi-cultural collection of four short stories, "Ocean Waves," "I Am Loved," "Baby Bear," and "I'm Sleepy."

These simply-told stories and their beautiful illustrations celebrate a child's connections to family, places, and special possessions. Individually and collectively, they reflect universal messages of love and acceptance that children and parents everywhere will respond to. • AVAILABLE at major book resellers.

For more information, please contact Helen H. Kimbrough at [info@oceanwavesandothertales.com](mailto:info@oceanwavesandothertales.com)



# CBC PRESENTS THE VISION 2010 "20 FOR 10 CHALLENGE"

Dove tailing off of the 50 Million Pound Challenge concept, we offered Calvary Baptist Church members a chance to improve their health by exercising, eating right and losing weight. Those who committed to losing 10 pounds in 10 weeks were challenged to get 20 people to sponsor them. The 20 sponsors each agreed to pay \$10 (\$1 per pound over the 10 week period). Members were invited to weigh in by sheepfold. The Wellspring/Health & Healing Ministries offered exercise classes to help achieve goals and held a session with a nutritionist to promote healthier eating habits.

Four participants – Jesse Alexander , Maurice Hedgepeth , Al Nobles and Lynne Pittman, – shared their experience with The Calvary Connection and their enthusiasm about accomplishing some personal goals and contributing to our collective work of fulfilling Vision 2010.

Lynn Pittman who lost 13 pounds noted that weight loss is a personal challenge that she feels she has finally been able to conquer. She said that she may slip every now and then, but it feels good not to be a slave to food. Deacon Jesse Alexander who lost 13 pounds said he feels better physically and mentally. Deacon Al Nobles who lost 13 pounds was motivated to improve his eating habits and better manage his diabetes. And Maurice Hedgepeth who lost 12 pounds said that he thinks there is still more work to be done for our health whether physical or financial.

CC: How did you lose the weight?

HEDGEPEETH: I lost the weight and inches by changing the foods I ate. I consumed more fruit and vegetables. I ate less junk food and desserts (desserts are my downfall). What we fail to realize is that we can still eat the foods we grew up on, but just less. We do not need to eat the entire cake just to see what it tastes like. If we eat in moderation everyday, that alone would be a big step toward a healthier lifestyle. The second part of losing weight that was key for me was exercise. I walked to and from the gym instead of driving. By the time I arrived at the gym my heart rate was up; my body was warmed up and ready to go.

NOBLES: Portion modification; watching what and how much I ate. I drank diet tea and water. No soda.

CC: What type of impact did it have?

ALEXANDER, HEDGEPEETH, NOBLES, PITTMAN : I eat much healthier

CC: What was your inspiration/drive to lose the weight?

HEDGEPEETH: My inspiration to get into a healthier lifestyle is my children. My children are 13, 10, and 8. If I can teach them now about healthy eating, living and exercise, this is something they can pass on to their children one day.

PITTMAN: I wanted to change the adjectives that people used to describe me. On more than one occasion I had overheard someone trying to describe me to someone else and the way that was most common was, "the heavy set girl with the pretty face." So I needed to change the adjectives that people used for me.

Maurice Hedgepeth added, "This was a great step, but we should have another challenge very soon especially with the holidays coming up. We literally are killing ourselves as a people when we shovel unhealthy foods into our mouths during the holidays,

and then sit around and do nothing. Moderation, Moderation, Moderation."

"We should know have individual challenges with not only weight loss, but inches lost, body fat lost. etc. We could have prizes such as personal training sessions, spa day, maybe a weekend trip away. If we truly believe that the body is the temple for the Holy Spirit, we should treat our bodyiesas temples and not shacks."

– Veronica Young

## 20 for 10 Challengers Tips for Healthy Living

- Pay more attention to portion sizes of meals as well as snacks. Read food labels more carefully and beware of additives and preservatives
- Walk around your neighborhood if you do not belong to a gym
- During lunch, after eating go outside and walk around for 30 minutes if possible
- During inclement weather exercise at home
- Exercise with a friend
- Get off the couch and do something!

## FITNESS CHALLENGE CHAMPIONS



**Deacon Alexander Lost 13lbs.**



**Maurice Hedgepeth Lost 12lbs.**



**Deacon Nobles Lost 13lbs.**



**Lynn Pittman Lost 13lbs.**

# State of CYM

Recently the Calvary Youth Ministry presented a "State of the Ministry" to update families on how young people are growing and learning and what is on the horizon for our youth. Min. Anthony Riley, Staff Minister to Youth, shared some of the highlights with the Calvary Connection.

## Dear Parent(s),

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is with great joy that I write you to address the State of the Calvary Youth Ministry.

Calvary Youth Ministries have been on the move! Lives are being transformed, ministries are blossoming and servant leaders are being equipped – all to the glory of God and for the advancement of the community. Get on board...

To date, the Youth Ministry has been to the Liberty Science Center, Dave and Buster's, Barnum & Bailey's Ringling Bros. Circus and a Nets basketball game, just to name a few venues. We look forward to hosting the biggest Hallelujah night ever! Youth and teens, save the date. Also, in December we are headed to New York City to see the Christmas Spectacular.

Motions of Praise and Sounds of Silence have teamed up to more frequently enrich the worship experience. Motions of Praise memorized bible verses on liturgical dance, and Sounds of Silence participated in the Celebration of Education and Festival of Arts. In 2008-2009, Sounds of Silence will further develop their ministry through mime. The Primary/Youth Choirs added several new selections to their repertoire, while welcoming new soloists.

Academic Enrichment enhanced its tutoring program and integrated the use of Wellspring Center's computer lab. Children's Church has seen tremendous numerical growth. Youth Christians Seeking Instruction (Bible Study) is utilizing Arts, Storytelling/Drama, Video, Games and Music. In 2008-2009, Youth CSI will feature independent classes for grades 6-8 and 9-12. The 2008 Youth Enrichment Summer (YES) Program enjoyed learning how to have joy in serving our friends, community, neighbors, family and Jesus.

Boyz II Men saw the rebirth and revitalization of the CBC Stepperz who represented Calvary well at Cathedral International, Neighborhood House, Calvary's Celebration of Education and Festival of Arts, and other events. Teens Loving Christ (teen girls) hosted a moving workshop on self-esteem. The girls bonded with women in our church family and their servant leaders. Youth Night continues to provide a safe environment for structured Christian fun.

**Purpose Statements** - As one pastor/preacher has taught, when we do not know the purpose of ministry, it is likely to be abused. Every youth ministry now has: 1) a biblical foundation; 2) a clearly defined purpose statement; 3) specific objectives that realize the purpose; and 4) 3-6 month measurable growth goals. This firm foundation determines the content and calendar for each ministry.

All youth from grades 6-12 are invited to apply to be a part of the Youth Council Student Leadership Program. Youth are called and appointed after much prayer and a discernment process that includes: completing an application, an interview and a commitment discussion with his/her parents to serve in a specific area of youth ministry. They will receive individualized leadership development training from adult leaders and staff ministers. If you are interested see me for an application.

Youth Worship is specifically purposed to train youth in grades 4 through 7 on the 'why's and 'how's of worship. By the end of a youth's season in Youth Worship, they should be active and able to fully participate in and contribute to both Youth Worship and corporate worship in the sanctuary. Teen Rows are designated in the 10:45AM worship. These rows: 1) emphasize their priority in the worshipping life of the church; 2) encourage engagement in the worship atmosphere; and 3) entice our youth to see themselves as worshippers and not spectators.

Lastly, Family Sundays are observed each first Sunday. Families with young people are encouraged to worship together. Adults without young people worshipping in the congregation are encouraged to connect with youth without worshipping parents by sitting together.

Servant Leadership Development and servant appreciation are priorities in youth ministry. We have established biannual youth ministry vision conferences and quarterly empowerment training sessions, each with the purpose to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, (Ephesians 4:12). During our 2008-2009 Youth Ministry Vision Conference, we discussed this year's focus: relationships.

Our aim, this youth ministry year, is to begin to see dynamic relationships formed and flourishing between: 1) our servants and youth; 2) amongst our youth; 3) amongst our servants; and 4) between the ministries and families.

## A CALL TO ACTION

As of late, I have been seized by the idea that many of the behaviors that youth feel free to express are those that they unconsciously picked up watching adults. Please join me in my renewed commitment to model discipleship, membership and other Christlike behaviors.

**Parents:** Periodically I would like to share helpful resources for spiritual parenting, understanding youth culture and empowering youth to be mature disciples. Please share your email address with me at [youth@calvarybc.org](mailto:youth@calvarybc.org). (Check out [www.cpyu.org](http://www.cpyu.org) – The Center for Parent/Youth Understanding)

**Young people:** Every once in a while I like to share encouraging words that empower you to be the best you that God has created you to be. Please share your mobile phone number and I will text you from 973.460.6637 or share your email address with me.

God is Doing a New Thing in Youth Ministry. I sincerely believe that God is ready to take youth ministry to higher heights and I invite you to partner with the ministry as we continue to grow to reflect the Kingdom of God.

– Minister Anthony L. Riley

# *New Beginnings*

Imagine a squirrel laying in the middle of the street, paralyzed from the neck down, only able to lift its' head up for a few seconds before its muscles give out, imagine that squirrel lifting its head up toward you, its eyes staring into yours. That squirrels' soul asking you for help.

Would you pick that squirrel up out the street and lay it on the sidewalk next to the rose growing in the concrete, or let it meet its fate in the street where memories of cars and truck tires will burn into the back of it's eyelids like childhood thoughts brought back by nostalgic items and scenes like merry-go-rounds and walks in park?

Would you walk by? Even after making eye contact, knowing that inside you want to help that squirrel just like you would want to be helped if you were in that predicament?

When I saw that squirrel I wanted to cry. I wanted to take it home and surgically repair it so that it could have the brains of Janis Joplin and Madame CJ walker and could soar like the Apollo 9. I wanted to go back in time to me sitting in my room watching the Wizard of Oz, shove my hand into the TV screen, take Dorothy's shoes away from her, put that squirrel in one of those shoes and tap them together and say, "There's no place like home, there's no place like home, there's no place like home." Then that squirrel wouldn't have to hurt anymore.

I know how it feels to hurt. I reminisce through my dreams of times when things weren't right and I would bleed, as I'd fight my father ready to beat me up over anything. His fists would hit me rhythmically, knuckles colliding with my face to the tempo of Pete Rock and C.L. Smooth's "They Reminisce Over You."

I know how it feels to be paralyzed, not being able to move because you're disconnected from your body, soul, and mind. And I wanted to help that squirrel so bad because it's muscles were separated like how I am from reality, and it couldn't move like how I can't move because we're both just souls trapped inside these holding capsules formed by flesh barbwire fences.

My body kept walking down the street but my soul just couldn't go. It went inside the squirrel's bloodstream and was able to see what the squirrel could see, genocide in the form of pollution. Through the squirrel's eyes my soul saw trees full of life being cut down by these extraterrestrials called humans, and I actually got to see what cruelty toward animals feels like when I unlocked one of the squirrel's suppressed memories. The setting was a tree and this squirrel was relaxing happily with it's family, then some humans came and shot rocks at it and its' family with slingshots and those squirrels ran, man. They almost ran into insanity as the humans gave each other high fives and laughed happily. At that moment my soul was able to understand that all of God's creatures feel pain.

My soul was able to understand how killing an ant is equal to how a Jewish prisoner was killed in a German concentration camp and how spraying a wasp nest with a water hose is equal to how Hurricane Katrina wiped out many people's homes in New Orleans, yo.

See, that squirrel was America and its paralyzed body was our economy and every time that squirrel lifted its head up that was the statue of liberty trying to break out of her concrete skin so she could confront Uncle Sam.

Every vein within its skin represented every piece of Pangaea and the blood that circulated in those veins represented every nomad looking for a place to stay.

And the tears that squirrel shed weren't tears of pain, but tears of confusion because it couldn't understand why it was unable to move.

My soul eventually left that squirrel and caught up with my body, but the next day when I walked pass that squirrel's body it was split like Pangaea when it broke into the seven continents, and I could have saved that squirrel. But then I realized its soul left that body and was headed for "New Beginnings."

– James Jadon Woodard

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# *I Must Achieve Greatness In Everything*

*I must achieve greatness in everything...to me that means in everything I put my mind to, I must achieve in it.*

To begin with, I want to get good grades this year at Frelinghuysen and be on the honor roll for all four marking periods. So I must do well in all my classes, study for all of my tests and do all of my homework that is assigned. Also, if I want to be successful in life I must READ!!! Everyone always says, "Reading is the key to having a successful life, and if you can't read you won't be successful in life." So, if I read more it will help me to have a successful life.

My parents always say that "High schools and colleges are looking at me right now." So, I can't wait until my junior and senior year in high school to start doing well. Since I want to go to a good college I must try my hardest, do the best that I can do and give 100% all the time.

Furthermore, Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me." So since God wants me to do well I must take the gifts that He gives me and use them as He wishes. Also God wants the best for me and He only wants me to do well. So when I get bad grades I am not only embarrassing my parents but God as well.

Greatness comes in many ways, but you just have to know the right ways and how to use them.

– Brandon Drayton

The Calvary Connection (C<sup>2</sup>)

is published quarterly.

Submit your ideas, photos  
and writings to

connection@calvarybc.org  
or drop them in the C<sup>2</sup> mailbox.

(Submissions may be edited before publication)

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CHURCH SCHOOL

9:30 am

CHRISTIANS SEEKING INSTRUCTION

Tuesdays at 7:00 pm

Wednesdays at Noon

## CALVARY CONNECTION (C<sup>2</sup>) TEAM

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DESIGNER: Peter Ambush

Share your skills and talents with us!

We need your help with graphic design/layout,  
writing, reporting, editing,  
and photography.

E-mail [Connection@calvarybc.org](mailto:Connection@calvarybc.org)  
for more information.

## History in the Making!



Sarah Palin



Watch  
Election Results  
As They Come In  
Tues., Nov. 4th



Joe Biden

**Immediately Following Bible Study  
In the MJFH!!!**

## NEW Extended Day Program

Academic Enrichment

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Little Lights Learning Academy

Is Offering

After School Tutoring Services

Monday – Friday from 3 – 7 p.m.

Tutors & Students Sign-up in MJFH

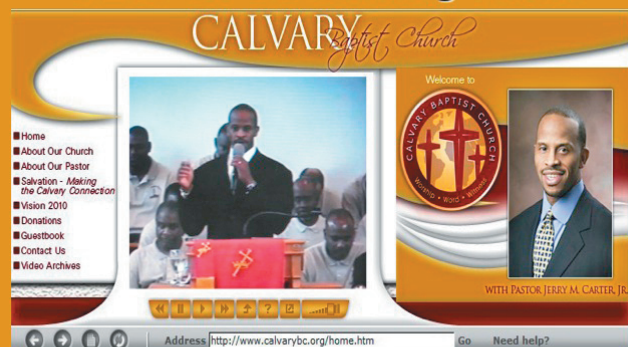
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