

CALVARY COMMENT

March 2025

Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

English District

208 Woods Drive

Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

The Rev. Luke T. Zimmerman, Pastor

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www.calvarymechanicsburg.org

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

QUIET STEWARDSHIP

We may not be the star of a basketball team, the dynamo in the office, the leader in our community, or the Energizer Bunny of our family. But does that matter in our lives of discipleship? Do we have to be shining stars or brilliant lights?

As we see at Christmas Eve, when the lights are dimmed, we can ignite our little candles and illumine the worship space. All those flames are little. None are bright like a floodlight. So it is with stewardship. God gives us different opportunities and abilities to steward what He has given us. Doing so doesn't have to be flashy.

The LORD doesn't ask us to be supernovas as disciples. He asks us to faithfully use, to the best of our ability, what He has entrusted to us. Whatever He has entrusted us is the light that He has provided for us to shine, no matter how many or few lumens that may be.

It can be easy for us to feel that efforts that we or others might consider to be small go unnoticed. But as a member of the Body of

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Lent is a time of confrontation. That might not be our initial thought when we see the term. But at the heart of Lent is the Lord Jesus' confrontation with the Evil One and his assaults upon humanity. That is brought to our remembrance, as we speak of Jesus in the Proper Prefaces during the first part of Lent—*"who overcame the assaults of the devil and gave His life as a ransom for many"*—and when we enter Passiontide and Holy Week—*"who accomplished the salvation of mankind by the tree of the cross that, where death arose, there life also might rise again and that the serpent who overcame by the tree of the garden might likewise by the tree of the cross be overcome."*

Lent begins with the account of our Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. His confrontation with Satan is part of His redemptive work for humanity. Jesus prevails over the attempts made to dissuade Him from placing full trust in the LORD and to carry out His will.

Jesus' temptation reveals the challenges brought against the LORD and His people. We can recall this when we pray in the Lord's Prayer: *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* Such petition is necessary because there are entities that wish to prevent the LORD's will from being fulfilled. In the Catechism, we note how the LORD deals with this: *"God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die."*

Attempts to prevent the LORD's will from being fulfilled can take most any sort of form. That makes it so challenging for all who strive to abide by the LORD's ways. When Jesus was tempted, Satan used whatever was at hand as pressure points. Jesus hadn't eaten in 40 days, so the Evil One plays on His hunger. Jesus had waived His divine privileges, so the Tempter plays on His poverty. Jesus heard the Father call Him *"His Beloved Son"* at His Baptism, so the Accuser suggests that the LORD is just all talk, encouraging Jesus to make Him prove that His Word is true.

What Jesus was subjected to in His temptation is what we also experience. Whatever is at hand will be used by the devil, the world, and our sinful nature to attempt to pry us from the LORD's will and ways, to sow discord and strife, to create doubt and despair. This is true in our own personal lives, in our homes and workplaces, even in our life together as a congregation or church body. Those who are opposed to the LORD's will are much more like guerrilla soldiers than legionnaires or classic infantrymen who fought in orderly ranks. We need to be aware of this.

Lent can bring back to our attention what we may have forgotten about our adversaries. Jesus has achieved redemption for us fallen humans by His victorious confrontations with the Evil One. The LORD continues to act for His people who face assaults in this life: *"He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday."* (Ps 91:4-6) The LORD brings that needed protection by carrying out His good and gracious will for us during our confrontations.

So we can pray during Lent: *"Triune God, be Thou our stay; / O let us perish never! / Cleanse us from our sins, we pray, / And grant us life forever. / Keep us from the evil one; / Uphold our faith most holy, / And let us trust Thee solely / With humble hearts and lowly. / Let us put God's armor on, / With all true Christians running / Our heav'nly race and shunning / The devil's wiles and cunning. / Amen, amen! This be done; / O Lord, have mercy on us."* [Lutheran Service Book 505]

STEWARDSHIP CORNER (Continued from Page 1)

Christ, each action that we do honors God and spreads the gospel to those around us and into the world. As Pastor recently said in his Sunday announcements: "We have an opportunity in many different ways to benefit our neighbors in our community."

That brings us back to the Stewardship Questions mentioned last month that each of us can reflect upon: (1) *How has God blessed us?* (2) *How is God calling us to respond?*

What are the gifts that He has provided for you to manage, even if they seem to be little? What are the opportunities where you can put your abilities and gifts to use, even if they seem to be insignificant? Answering these questions leads you to practice your stewardship. Responding quietly is OK. For even then, your light spreads and reflects the Gospel, just as the LORD has graciously arranged for you to do.

2025 LENT WORSHIP SCHEDULE

To mark Lent at Calvary, additional worship services will be held during the weeks of that season:

MAR 5	Ash Wednesday Divine Services	10:30am/7:00pm
MAR 12	Lent Midweek Prayer Offices	10:30am/7:00pm
MAR 19	Lent Midweek Prayer Offices	10:30am/7:00pm
MAR 26	Lent Midweek Prayer Offices	10:30am/7:00pm
APR 2	Lent Midweek Prayer Offices	10:30am/7:00pm
APR 9	Lent Midweek Prayer Offices	10:30am/7:00pm
APR 17	Holy Thursday Divine Services	12:00pm/7:00pm
APR 18	Good Friday Services	12:00pm/7:00pm
APR 19	Vigil of Easter	7:00pm

All are invited to participate in these services as they are able.

The Lent Midweek Prayer Offices will focus on the Passion Narrative recorded in the Gospel of Luke.



LWML/LADIES AID SOCIETY NEWS

SPRING RALLY – SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, May 3, 9:00am–2:00pm. All women of Calvary are encouraged to attend the Philadelphia Zone Spring Rally held here at Calvary! There will be a breakfast 'snack', Morning Prayer service, a business meeting including grant proposals, lunch, Orphan Grain Train speaker, and ingathering blessing. Look for more details and signups in March and April.

NEXT MEETING: Our next monthly meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, March 15 at 9:30am** in the Education Wing Meeting Room. Pastor will lead a study from the Winter 2024 issue of the *Lutheran Women's Quarterly* and a business meeting will follow—all wrapping up by noon. Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Dates

Sunday, April 13

Palm Sunday – Holy Week Begins

Sunday, April 20

Easter Sunday

Saturday, May 3

LWML Philadelphia Zone Spring Rally

Sunday, May 4

2nd Quarter Voters Assembly Meeting

Thursday, May 29

**Ascension Day Divine Service at
Mount Calvary – Lititz, PA**

Thursday—Saturday, June 26–28

**English District Convention
Ann Arbor, MI**

MEN'S IMPACT GROUP Calvary Men in Mission

Special Meeting: March 22, 2025 at 9:30am in the Social Hall

Men of Calvary, our congregation's mission is "to bring people into fellowship with the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – so they may share in the new life and eternal salvation that He has won for them." This mission is carried out by "worshiping and studying the Word of God; nurturing and providing support and encouragement to each other; witnessing to the saving power of the Gospel to our community, country, and world; and serving as good stewards of God's gifts by using our time, talents, and treasures to further His kingdom."

Are you connected in our mission? Where do you connect? Is it through your baptism (*Is 43:1*)? Is it through Bible study (*Jn 8:31*)? Is it through your daily living experiences (*Mt 28:19-20*)? Or do you describe your connection another way?

Getting to know each other and how we fit in is the plan for the Special Meeting on March 22: getting to know each other more and connecting more with Jesus as the center of our life.

All men are encouraged to attend. A special encouragement is for all men in leadership roles: officers, board/committee chairs, members of these groups, and any other way you may be serving, such as ushers, cantors, counters, assisting ministers, Operation Barnabas workers.

If you are a man who worships God, our heavenly Father, in Divine Service, you have that special connection in our Lord's mission at Calvary. So come, see, and get to know the men who impact our mission at Calvary.

Food and coffee will be part of the continental breakfast. To help with preparations, tell us if you are coming by texting or personal contact to Devon Barnes (717-943-4372), Trent Dietrich (717-736-3201), or Bill Schirmer (717-385-6238).



PARISH CASH FLOW REPORT
January 1–31, 2025

INCOME	
General Offering	\$ 27,399.06
Mission Offering	2,643.75
Building Fund	2,848.75
Plate Offering	229.00
Memorials	0.00
My Neighbor Fund	0.00
1-1-1 Project	23.53
Initial Offering	240.00
Church Seasonal Service Offerings	245.00
Building Use	0.00
Refunds	0.00
Other Income	120.00
Thrivent Choice Dollars	85.00
Lutheran Witness Subscriptions	145.60
Sunday School	0.00
Youth Group	50.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 34,029.69
EXPENDITURES	
Pastoral Expenses	\$ 8,975.87
Personnel Expenses	4,007.57
Real Estate Expenses	4,858.46
Operating Expenses	4,300.79
Ministry Expenses	175.00
Mission Expenses	0.00
Mortgage Expenses	2,577.83
Non-Budgeted Expenses	312.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 25,209.52
NET CASH FLOW	\$ 8,820.17

CHURCH COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 2025 MEETING SUMMARY

At its meeting on February 10, the Church Council took the following actions:

- Received Pastor Zimmerman's report that noted the funeral of Sally Davies on JAN 27 and outlined the 2025 Lent Worship Schedule.
- Received Treasurer Andy Barnes' report that indicated total income for JAN 2025 was \$34,029.69 and total expenditures for JAN 2025 were \$25,209.52 [7.5% of the 2025 approved budget]. Two expenditures greater than monthly budgeted amounts were (a) \$3,819.26 for utility bills [14.7% of annual budget line] and (b) \$2,194.50 for snow removal [31.4% of annual budget line].
- Reviewed reports from the various congregational boards, which highlighted some events being planned for 2025.
- Approved the formation of a new review group to evaluate proposals for potential revision of the constitution and bylaws. Karen Appel, Barbara Holzwarth, Ray Miller, and Briana Smith were appointed to serve in that role.

The Church Council's next meeting is scheduled for March 10.

MILITARY SHARE PROGRAM

Military Share food distributions continue on the third Wednesday of each month. We are currently serving 46 families, totaling 114 people. Our next distribution is scheduled for March 19.

NEW INITIATIVE IN PLANNING: ARMED FORCES SUNDAY PICNIC

The Operation Barnabas Chapter plans to partner with the Evangelism Board to plan and hold a picnic style event on Armed Forces Sunday, which will be planned for May 18. Additional information will be provided as plans are finalized.

ONGOING INITIATIVE: MOVE IN/MOVE OUT BOXES

The Operation Barnabas Chapter has provided 10 new plastic storage tubs to the American Legion Auxiliary in Mechanicsburg. They plan to start filling them in March, after which time we will deliver them to the TIP program.

ADOPT-A-CHAP PROGRAM

Calvary has adopted Chaplain Aaron Bell and his family. The Bells attended Calvary for several months while awaiting orders for his next duty station.

Mailing Address

Chaplain Aaron Bell
 4978 Jamestown Ct
 Columbus, OH 43220

Personal Email: naphshi@gmail.com

Military Email: aaron.bell@marines.usmc.mil

HONOR WALL

Any member of Calvary who is a veteran and would like their name added to our Honor Plaque, please speak with either Bob Ardner or Jeff Douden.

CHANCEL FLOWERS

Several openings are available for sponsoring Chancel Flowers for Sundays in May, July, and August. See the chart in the Social Hall to sign up.

If you will not be present on a day you sponsor flowers, please inform the Altar Guild of what to do with the flowers after worship.

CALVARY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

208 Woods Drive

Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Address Service Requested



Next *Calvary Comment* Deadline is Sunday, March 23, 2025.
Please send info to CalvaryComment@Verizon.net.

FEBRUARY 2025 VOTERS ASSEMBLY MEETING SUMMARY

The Voters Assembly held its first meeting of 2025 on February 2 after Divine Service.

At the meeting, the following actions were taken:

- Review and approval of the Treasurer's report that accounted for income and expenditures throughout 2025.
- Approval of Connie Grazier as a member of the congregation, following her transfer from Good Shepherd – State College, PA.
- Announcement of the 2025 Lent Worship Schedule, which begins on March 5.
- Reports from Program Boards and Auxiliary Groups about activities being planned for 2025, which included:
 - Special Sunday School class sessions tied to Ash Wednesday and Holy Week, as well as plans for Summer Sunday School in June–August 2025.
 - Evangelism event at 2025 Foundry Day (JUN 7) in Boiling Springs, PA.
 - Wrap-up of the Stewardship Bible Study series published in the newsletter.
 - Meeting of parish families to plan youth events (MAR 9).
 - Potential Homeless Veterans Stand Down event in November.
- Congregational Delegates for the 2025 District Convention were elected. Pastor Zimmerman will serve as the pastoral delegate. Karen Appel will serve as the lay delegate; Jim Blockus was chosen as the alternate lay delegate.
- Nominations for District President and District Vice-President were made.
- An overture to amend portions of the District Bylaws was adopted for submission to the District Convention.



Sacred music for the Season of Lent will be available for your listening 24/7 on LutheranPublicRadio.org beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 5.