

CALVARY COMMENT

SEPTEMBER 2026

Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
English District

208 Woods Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

The Rev. Luke T. Zimmerman, Pastor

Church Office Phone:
717.697.9771

Church Office Email:
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Parish Website:
www.calvarymechanicsburg.org

UPCOMING DATES

Saturday, October 24

Clothes Closet: 11:00am—12:30pm

Sunday, November 1

Voters Assembly Meeting: 12:15pm

Tuesday, November 3

Election Polling: 7:00am—8:00pm

Wednesday, November 25

Thanksgiving Vespers: 7:00pm

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Vespers: 7:00pm

Friday, December 25

Christmas Divine Service: 10:30am

Wednesday, January 6

Epiphany Divine Service: 7:00pm

Sunday, February 3

Voters Assembly Meeting: 12:15pm

September means that schools are fully in session in our area. Some school districts already have a week or two under their belt, starting the academic year in August. Most colleges based on semesters have held classes, while those still on quarters may yet have another week before commencing their courses.

When we think of our schools, we can ask about their purpose. Why do we enroll individuals as students? What's the goal of doing so? Answers to those questions will vary. At the elementary level, we want people to be able to read, write, and perform basic mathematical functions so that they can live in the world. Other learning is done to acquire particular skills for vocations, whether technical or professional training. Some schools provide tools for how to think or inspire people to explore deeply in areas of research.

Instruction, learning, and training are also part of our lives as disciples. The chief way that is done is through hearing the teachings of Christ. The importance of that is seen in Jesus' dialogue with His disciples. After presenting a series of parables about various aspects of the kingdom of heaven, Jesus asks His disciples: *"Have you understood all these things?"* (Mt 13:51) When they answer affirmatively, Jesus then tells them: *"Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."* (Mt 13:52)

How do we receive such education to prepare us for the kingdom of heaven? It comes from the Scriptures that testify about Jesus and transmit His teachings to us. The Apostle Paul urged Timothy to ensure that outcome for himself and his congregants: *"If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness.... Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."* (1Ti 4:6-7, 13)

What instrument was Timothy to use to achieve that outcome? In a later letter, Paul directs him to the Scriptures: *"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."* (2Ti 3:14-17)

This is why our congregation focuses so much on bringing the content of the Scriptures to the hearing of its members. Besides the preaching in the Divine Service on Sunday, there are other presentations: Sunday School, Confirmation Instruction, Midweek Study. Engaging with that teaching is part of the activities conducted by congregational groups. Then there is the reading done at home, such as using the *Portals of Prayer* or *My Devotions* given to members, subscribing to the *Lutheran Witness*, or listening to the webcasts from KFEO or *Issues, Etc.*

So as academic study is front of mind in September, don't forget to have the study of the Scriptures also be part of the agenda. For such study does have a purpose: to make us wise to salvation and to train us for godliness.

VOTERS ASSEMBLY MEETING SUMMARY

At its regular, quarterly meeting on August 2, the Calvary Voters Assembly took the following actions:

- Received reports from the Treasurer, Pastor, and Church Council.
- Accepted Edwin & Trudie Couser and Grant & Yijia Dietrich as voting members of the congregation.
- Ratified the revised Constitution and Bylaws that had received District approval. These will take effect on October 31.
- Adopted a Standard Operating Procedure Manual (SOPM) as part of the congregational governance reorganization implemented by the revised Constitution and Bylaws.

The Voters Assembly will hold its next meeting on November 1. That meeting's agenda will include election of congregational officeholders and adoption of the parish budget for 2027.

CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION

Confirmation instruction for parish youth will resume on **Sunday, September 6 at 12:30pm.**

Students will begin their second year of study, focusing on the content of Luther's *Small Catechism* and Scripture narratives that illustrate the teachings of the Commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments.

We anticipate confirming seven catechumens on Pentecost Sunday 2027, which falls on May 16.

TUESDAY MIDWEEK STUDY

Our Tuesday Midweek Study will begin a course to study the Epistles of Peter on **September 8 at 7:00pm.**

Sessions are held in the Adult Classroom in the Education Wing. All are invited to attend these more in-depth looks at two apostolic letters written to Christians living among unbelievers.

LADIES AID SOCIETY/LWML UPDATE

SCHOOL DAZE CRAZE SUCCESS! Thanks to everyone for your support of "SCHOOL DAZE CRAZE" at New Hope Ministries. Approximately 200 pounds of school supplies were delivered and happily received!

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE FOLLOWING EVENTS:

- **Sunday, October 11** - LWML Sunday
- **Saturday, November 14** - LWML Fall Rally
- **Thursday, November 19** - Christmas Cookie Baking for NHM, homebound members, and Military Share recipients

NEXT MEETING: Our next monthly meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, September 19 at 9:30am** in the Adult Bible Study Room. Pastor will lead a study from the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* and a short business meeting will follow - all wrapping up by noon. Hope to see you there!

SEPTEMBER 2026 MOWING TEAMS

SEPTEMBER 3-5: TEAM 4

Diane Rosenberg, Dave Rosenberg, Brandon Smith

SEPTEMBER 10-12: TEAM 1

Tom Watson, Bill Schirmer, David Knych

SEPTEMBER 17-19: TEAM 2

Chacha Mwita, Patrick LeFevers, Chris Kaufman

SEPTEMBER 24-26: TEAM 3

Andrew Settle, Trent Dietrich, Jim Mason

Thank you for helping to maintain the property that our Lord has entrusted to our congregation!

CLOTHES CLOSET UPDATE

Summer is nearly over; fall is just about to begin. Many special activities at Calvary come during fall: Reformation Day, All Saints Day, Thanksgiving, youth holiday events, Christmas cookie baking day. Tucked in-between all those fall activities will be our final Clothes Closet Event for 2026 on October 24.

Please remember this outreach of your church when switching out clothes for the season changes to fall and winter or having outgrown them for new sizes. We are in need of new or lightly-used warm clothing suitable for the upcoming cooler months.

There is also an ongoing need for volunteers for various aspects of the Clothes Closet. The first is to begin organizing the donations already received or that will be brought to us in the next two months. **Sorting will begin on Thursday, September 17 from 10:00am—1:00pm.** No experience is needed to participate!

More information about other aspects of the Clothes Closet will follow in Sunday bulletins. To volunteer or learn more information about this way of serving our neighbors, please contact Polly Pass [717-579-0296].

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Finance Committee will meet on **Saturday, September 12 at 9:30am** to begin drafting the 2027 Parish Budget proposal. Congregational boards were to have budget requests submitted by September 1.

PARISH CASH FLOW SUMMARY January 1—July 31, 2026

INCOME

General Offering	\$ 175,246.45
Mission Offering	14,544.25
Building Fund	10,604.25
Plate Offering	2,157.84
Memorials	104.90
My Neighbor Fund	0.00
1-1-1 Project	359.51
Initial Offering	230.00
Church Seasonal Service Offerings	3,531.00
Building Use	300.00
Refunds	0.00
Other Income	23,507.69
Thrivent Choice Dollars	247.00
Thank Offering	708.00
Lutheran Witness Subscriptions	273.15
Sunday School	90.91
Youth Group	488.98
Endowment Fund	789.88
Capital Improvement	4.90

TOTAL INCOME **\$ 233,188.71**

EXPENDITURES

Pastoral Expenses	\$ 62,263.78
Personnel Expenses	23,576.94
Real Estate Expenses	38,833.42
Operating Expenses	35,396.67
Ministry Expenses	3,046.49
Mission Expenses	15,400.00
Mortgage Expenses	43,062.40
Non-Budgeted Expenses	1,718.95

TOTAL EXPENDITURES **\$ 223,298.65**

NET CASH FLOW **\$ 9,890.06**

Full financial reports are provided to congregational members at the quarterly Voters Assembly meetings.



OPERATION BARNABAS

LCMS MINISTRY TO THE ARMED FORCES

MILITARY SHARE PROGRAM

Our Military Share food distributions continue each month on the third Wednesday. In August, we served 45 families totaling 111 people. Our numbers change monthly based on individual family situations and those families who did not attend the distribution.

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.

ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

The Operation Barnabas Committee continues to encourage the congregation to support Chaplain Aaron Bell through regular communication and prayer.

Please consider sending a note of encouragement.

Chaplain Bell's Personal Email: naphshi@gmail.com

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

COMFORT BAG PROGRAM RESTART

The Operation Barnabas chapter's first program was to provide comfort bags for homeless female vets and backpacks for their kids. The Veterans Outreach Office of the Harrisburg YWCA distributed the bags. We provided two bags per year—one in the summer and one in the fall.

The COVID-19 pandemic stopped the program as the YWCA was not allowed to take outside donations.

The Operation Barnabas Chapter has decided that we should "return to our roots" and start the comfort bag program again.

The Social Services Office at the Lebanon VA Hospital was contacted, and they are very enthusiastic about partnering with us in this effort.

Updates will be provided as details of this project are finalized with the Social Worker in charge of the Female Veteran Outreach Office.

PENNSYLVANIA MARCH FOR LIFE
HARRISBURG, PA | MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

CALLING ALL LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Gather with your pro-life Lutheran brothers and sisters prior to the 2026 PA March for Life at:
Hilton Harrisburg
One N. 2nd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Meet and Greet with Full Breakfast

10:00 AM
Welcome, and Keynote Speakers:
"That They May Have Life" Dr. Aric Penske,
Executive Director of Lutherans for Life
and Jill B. Hartman, Executive Director of A Women's Concern
Pregnancy & Parenting Resource Center

10:30 AM
Walk to the Capitol Steps for the Rally

12:00 PM
March Begins

For more information contact Jeanie Zentz at (717) 475-0271
or visit www.lancasterlutheran.com

Full breakfast graciously provided free of charge by
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Lititz, PA
Visit marchforlife.org/Pennsylvania for walk details

CALVARY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

208 Woods Drive

Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Address Service Requested



Next *Calvary Comment* Deadline is Sunday, September 20, 2026.
Please send info to CalvaryComment@Verizon.net.

PARISH MUSIC UPDATE

As many of you know, I spent some time at St. Olaf's College in Northfield, MN attending the annual Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM) Conference. It's composed mostly of Lutheran musicians, although it is open to all denominations.

The workshop's presenters are experts in their field. One of the workshops I attended gave me new ideas to ponder and try out when singing the hymns. For example, if you were at worship July 26, you were aware I stopped playing the first part of the last stanza of the final hymn. Then I joined in to complete the hymn. This was intentional, although I think many people thought otherwise. It's one of the things we learned to make hymn singing a bit more interesting. It is good to sometimes expect the unexpected.

Another surprising workshop I attended was on Psalms. There are so many resources available to make changes in how we present and sing the Psalms. This requires my working with Pastor as to what we might do. Unfortunately, some churches have decided that the Scriptures are not "modern" enough and have chosen to rewrite Biblical text into something more comfortable for parishioners to understand. I was appalled. How sad.

I attended several reading sessions where publishers presented their newest publications. I brought back three children's songbooks for Anna and Hannah to work through. Some have activities for the children to do which might spill over to Sunday School. This was made possible from a gift from an anonymous donor who wants to see our children's program grow. We all got to sing through the anthems and be exposed to new music that we otherwise might not get to hear. I'm hoping with several avenues to explore for music more easily acceptable for our cantors to sing, it will attract members of our congregation to join our group. I know singers are out there. I hear you sing from the pews every Sunday!

Karen Appel
Parish Music Director