

# CALVARY ANNUAL REPORT 2025

## GREETINGS FROM THE 2026 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OF CALVARY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Calvary Episcopal Church,

Grateful to the Bishop and Staff of the Diocese of Kentucky for continual support of Calvary Episcopal Church,

Gratified by the personal interest manifested by the Right Reverend Terry Allen White, Bishop of Kentucky,

Expresses its warm GREETINGS to the Bishop of Kentucky and his staff; and,

Expresses its APPRECIATION for the work of the Bishop of Kentucky and his staff throughout the Diocese;

THEREFORE: May God bless our Bishop, his staff, other clergy, and all the people of the Diocese of Kentucky. May God grant that we may fashion our lives according to the example of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior so that we may show the power of His love to all among whom we live.

### **Annual Parish Meeting Agenda**

May 17, 2026

1. Call to Order
2. Vestry Continuation Vote
  - a. Present option to continue current Vestry until January 2027
  - b. Voting
3. Rector Remarks
4. Finance Report
  - a. 2026 Budget
5. Music Program
6. Christian Education
7. Committee Reports
8. Questions and Answers
9. For the Good of the Church
10. Announcement of Vestry Continuation Results
  - a. Vestry Nominations from the Floor (if needed)
  - b. Voting
  - c. Announcement of Vestry Election results (if needed)
11. Adjourn

### **Rector's Remarks**

#### **Senior Warden Remarks**

The last year and a half at Calvary Church has been something of a whirlwind. Instead of flustered, I am left with an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the volunteers and staff of Calvary Church and our partners in ministry within the Diocese and Central Louisville Community Ministries (CLCM). Entering an interim period can be daunting. The underlying

uncertainty of 'what's next' runs counter to our normal rhythms of Sunday worship and the various ministries, rehearsals and other activities which take place during the week.

In October 2025, our Rector, the Rev. Dr. Lee F. Shafer, retired from the ministry. During her time with us, Calvary reaffirmed its mission to be a radically inclusive space in an increasingly divisive world. We have striven to ensure that the phrase 'Come as you are' is unaccompanied by any asterisks or caveats to anyone who walks through our doors.

In the past six months since Lee's+ retirement, Calvary Church's dedication to its mission, the continuity of Sunday worship and the continuity of its various ministries has not faltered. In some cases, we have seen ministries grow or be initiated to meet the needs of our congregation and our Old Louisville community. This is in no small part due to the dedication of our staff and volunteers.

A special thank you to all the leaders of our ministry teams who have kept us running smoothly on Sunday mornings: Owen Sammons, Jacob Cook and the Choir; Meg Scharre and the Altar Guild; Jeff Pellman and the Usher team; Judy Wilson and the acolytes; all the lay eucharistic ministers; Will Cary and his team with sound and service streaming. Also, to Callie Hausman and her team who are doing a fantastic job managing our growing Children's ministry.

Margaret Dickenson and the food ministry team who answered the call to meet an increased need last fall when federal SNAP benefits were in danger. The need has stayed at that increased level and the food ministry continues to meet it. To Taylor Howell, who has kept the Church office running efficiently and who helped schedule six months of supply clergy. To Terrance Griffith, who does so much to keep Calvary Church in fantastic shape and ensure the weekly operations run smoothly.

Finally, I would like to welcome our Interim Rector, the Rev. Donna Gerold. I am excited to work with Donna in the coming months! The role of the Interim is to help provide continuity in the Church's dedication to its mission through Sunday worship and the various ministries and programs offered throughout the week. And, to help the community take a step back to clarify its current identity, its future identity as a baseline to search for the next permanent Rector.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Weinberger

### **Treasurer Report with Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee in 2025 consisted of Stephanie Smith, Treasurer and Chair, Andrew Weinberger, Senior Warden, Donna Duvall, Junior Warden, Jamie Hendon, Jim Hill, JC Phelps, and Chuck Burg, with new member Dru Kemp joining us in June. Sally Reisz, longtime member and former Treasurer, resigned in May and is thanked and remembered for her contributions to our work.

We met monthly to review financials and any issues which arose, and additionally during the period of preparing the budget, for careful stewardship of Calvary's organizational funding to be consistent with our mission. The year-end financials are available in a separate attachment.

### **Christian Education for Children and Families**

Throughout the past year, we gathered for Children's Worship, Christian Education Class, and for special lessons and events. In addition, we held the traditional Easter Egg Hunt, Lenten Event, Epiphany Chalking the Door, Advent Event and visit from St. Nicholas, and last but not least, the annual Calvary Christmas Pageant. Our goal is to discover how we can each apply the message of Christ's love actively in our lives.

We are grateful for the leadership of Katie Cook who leads the Children's Music and Judy P. Wilson, who leads the acolytes. Lilly Howay and Avery Washam assisted with Children's Worship in the Spring, but upon graduating from high school, they left to begin their college careers. We are grateful to them for having been with us for almost two years. Throughout the summer of 2025 we had four graduates from Sacred Heart Model Academy assisting and leading, all of whom were exceptional. In the Fall we were thrilled to welcome MJ, a talented student at YPASS who not only helps with class and worship, but also assists and leads Children's Music occasionally. Darlene Clay and Joann Wingfield faithfully care for Calvary's children, creating a nurturing environment to add to their church experience. Every family and all volunteers also are part of the joy and love that Calvary shares. We couldn't flourish without volunteers like Burnell and Don Esbanshade, Donna Duvall, Meg Scharre, Lauren Anderson, and so many others, including committee members and chairs, the vestry, and Calvary's staff.

It is an honor to be part of helping the children at Calvary grow in faith with loving support from each other as we all seek to follow Christ's teachings.

Peace,  
Callie Hausman  
Director of Children's Education

## **Music**

Hello Calvary Family, this annual report comes well into the new year with plenty of things having already happened in 2026, but I would like to start by offering a recap of 2025 and the musical endeavors of last year.

In 2025 the Calvary Choir and musicians began straight after the Christmas season to get ready for an Evensong service on the Feast of the Presentation day as the calendar lined up well to celebrate that feast day with a festive Evensong. This then led us into the season of Epiphany and our preparation for Lent. During this calendar year, we had around 23 choir members rostered with a regular attendance of 18-20.

We once again prepared Holy Week services with the choir from Christ Church Cathedral who were under the direction of an interim music director, Jim Rightmyer. We presented Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil services with the Urban Partnership, and then we celebrated Easter Sunday on our own here at Calvary with music by William Byrd, Cecilia McDowall, and Handel's Messiah. Organist, Owen Sammons, provided the traditional Widor Toccata that our organist emerita, Margaret Dickinson, turned into our traditional postlude.

We had a great summer of participation from our volunteer summer choir and several soloists. Harvey Turner served as our cantor and soloists on many occasions. When summer choir was in session we had a solid group of regulars with an average attendance of around 12. During the

summer we learned that our Rector, Lee Shafer, would be retiring in October and this made the ending of 2025 a very different, and significant year in the life of our church. The Choir and musicians celebrated Lee's service to Calvary and her support for us (felt deeply by myself and Owen as we have often talked about her impact on both of us) with a festive Evensong in October a few weeks before her last Sunday. The choir also participated in Lee's reception singing a benediction/blessing by John Rutter.

Lee's ministry at Calvary and her constant support for me and the music area cannot be understated. On a personal note, I will cherish the 4+ years I was able to serve with her, and I will never forget that she guided me through my confirmation into the Episcopal church and that she baptized my daughter, Clara.

When we moved into a period of time with supply priests as we searched for an interim Rector, the choir continued to provide weekly music, and Owen and I worked hard to try to provide consistency to our weekly services while the officiant changed often. We are grateful to those who served us especially those who served multiple weeks such as Rev. Dick Schmidt, Rev. Emily Crouch, Rev. Georgine Buckwalter, Rev. Ben Sanders, and Rev. John Allen. They were all so pleasant to work with and brought different energy to each service. We are looking forward to continuing our work now with our new interim Rector, Rev. Donna Gerold.

2026 has started well for us. We are fully staffed in the choir, and we are averaging around 17 per Sunday. We once again participated in Holy Week with the Urban Partnership, and we are going to participate in the Ascension service on May 13th. We look forward to sharing more with you in music this year, and also hope to have our Casavant Organ completed and back in the church this year. I won't say any more about the organ because Owen has written about it extensively in his report. Both he and I are looking forward to having it back and the sound palette that we will have to work with in the coming years. Thank you for allowing us to serve this congregation, it is our great honor to do so.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Abby's Library**

Abby's Library is a memorial for a remarkable young woman who loved to read. Books are collected by donations from individuals and from Half-Price Books, which periodically supplies several boxes of children's materials. Those who come to the Food Ministry can choose books, in addition to food and other supplies

### **Acolyte Ministry**

Calvary Episcopal Church is proud of their young and vibrant acolyte community. Two torchbearers serve most Sundays, chosen from a group of active young parishioners of elementary and middle school age. After the Processional they attend the Children's Worship, rejoining us after the Peace, participating in the Great Thanksgiving and Recessional. As our acolytes mature and perform their acolyting tasks with ease, we have been adding skills little by little. You may have noticed an acolyte carrying in the Gospel or processing with it for the Gospel Reading. Since our core of acolytes have been young, we began with carrying unlit torches, graduating to lit torches, and this learning process will continue to grow as they grow. Acolyte Workshops are held throughout the year to hone skills and learn new ones.

These children and their families form a bonded group of parishioners committed to serving Calvary and building lifelong friendships. With our former priest's enthusiasm for welcoming young congregants and their children, in combination with the already established children's programming, we were able to rejuvenate this ministry following COVID with delightful energy and room to grow!

Here is a list of the Calvary Acolytes:

Clara Cook  
Nicholas Hecht  
Gray Howell  
Aurora Koch  
Clark Koch  
Quinn Rhodes  
Opal Walton  
Mabel Walton

It is my privilege and honor to work with these young people.

Judy Pease Wilson  
Acolyte Director

### **Altar Guild**

The Calvary Altar Guild is responsible for preparing the altar for services and maintaining the linens, as well as arranging flowers for the altar and chancel. We decorate the church for Christmas and Easter.

I am grateful to all who have served on the Altar Guild throughout 2025: Lauren Anderson, Margaret Dickinson, Donna Duvall, Burnell Esbenshade, Glenna Harris, Lynne Lyndrup, Ally Mason, Jeff Pellman and Andrew Weinberger.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Glenna Harris, who has decided to retire from Altar Guild after having served for several decades. Glenna, enjoy a well-deserved rest!

Many thanks to all Calvary parishioners who donated flowers in 2025. If you are interested in donating flowers for the altar and/or chancel in memory of or in thanksgiving for loved ones, to celebrate a special occasion, or simply to the glory of God, please contact Taylor Howell, Calvary Administrative Assistant.

The members of the Altar Guild look forward to serving Calvary throughout 2026.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meg Scharre

### **Arts at Calvary**

We're gearing up for an exciting summer filled with two major events that celebrate music, community, and connection. On Mother's Day, we were delighted to welcome the Louisville Chorus for their concert, "Echoes of Earth." This marked our first collaboration with the ensemble, and it proved to be a wonderful partnership from start to finish. The performance brought new energy into our space, attracted many first-time visitors, and created a meaningful

afternoon of reflection and celebration for families and friends. Based on the enthusiastic response from attendees, we are confident this will be the beginning of an ongoing relationship and future collaborations.

Looking ahead, we are preparing for one of our most anticipated annual traditions. On the last Saturday in June, we will host our annual Drag Me to Church: A Gospel Drag Show. This vibrant event continues to be one of our most joyful and progressive offerings to the wider community. It draws an audience of roughly 300–400 people each year and provides an uplifting, welcoming environment where creativity, faith, and celebration intersect. As always, we expect this event to be filled with music, laughter, and a strong spirit of inclusion that reflects our commitment to community engagement.

### **Education for Ministry (EFM) Class**

EFM (Education for Ministry) is a comprehensive course studying scripture, the history of Christianity and theology. The curriculum has been created by the Episcopal seminary at University of the South. The course features a combination of self-study, in-person discussions, online reading and videos.

Class participants this year include Justin Asher, Ally Mason, Jeff Pellman, Mary Redden and Andrew Weinberger.

We meet once a week at Calvary and will conclude the 2025-26 class in early June. We will start again in September. Participants need not be members of Calvary. If you have ever wanted to learn more about the Bible and Christianity, please consider joining EFM. You will learn a lot and enjoy the discussions! Contact Bart Brown ([bartbrown40203@gmail.com](mailto:bartbrown40203@gmail.com)) or Meg Scharre ([mescharre@twc.com](mailto:mescharre@twc.com)) for more information. We would love to have you join us!

Bart Brown and Meg Scharre, mentors

### **Endowment Advisory**

As of December 31, 2025, the following gives a review of the year:

- 1) 2025 Return: 14.7%
- 2) Withdrawals: \$506,232.00
- 3) Asset Allocation -
  - Cash Equivalents: 6.3%
  - Equities: 68.8%
  - Fixed Income: 24.9%

The Endowment distributions continue to fund approximately 80% of the Parish's operations as well as being a source for matching contributions to capital campaigns.

The Investment returns of three managed portfolios – PNC, Baird Trust and internal – have been very good over the past 25 years. What should not be forgotten is that gifts and bequests are the foundation of these assets. Remember Calvary in your Estate Planning.

Calvary Endowment Advisory Committee

## **Eucharistic Ministers**

This has been a year of growth and renewed energy for our Eucharistic Ministers. We are delighted to welcome three new members to our committee: Justin Asher, and—thanks to the successful revitalization of our Lay Eucharistic Visitors program—Ian Walton and Don Snow.

As we look ahead, we are focused on expanding our collaboration with other committees that serve alongside us around the altar to ensure a seamless and prayerful experience for our community. We are very excited to begin work with our new Interim Rector, Donna, and warmly invite anyone interested in this ministry to reach out and learn more about how you can get involved.

Justin Asher

## **Eucharistic Visitors**

Lay Ministry has been thriving at Calvary. In October we realized that pastoral care, a key part of the life of the Parish, was not going to happen unless we began to organize ways to provide care to one another. We responded with an invitation to form a group of licensed visitors. The response to that first informational meeting was overwhelming. We now have seven parishioners who have been trained by the Diocese and have completed all the requirements for special licensing. They will be sent out from our worship to take Holy Communion to parishioners who are homebound or unable to come to services in person. We began by contacting seventeen names given to us by members of the parish.

Since December, seven home visits have been made by teams of two. We have reconnected with others and offered this opportunity. Five of those contacted have been able to return to services in person. We were able to provide their final Communion to three terminally ill parishioners.

We are grateful for support from the Vestry, who purchased a travel kit, the Altar Guild who have provided flowers and worked preparing kits, Callie and the children for cards and drawings, as well as Taylor and Owen for bulletin changes and communication. We are fortunate to have help from our three retired deacons; Deacons Dru Kemp, Robert Devers and Burnell Esbenshade who have responded to emergency and weekday pastoral needs. We look forward to working with our new priest. If you find yourself in need of a visit while you recover at home, please contact the church office. We will come.

Burnell Esbenshade for our seven LEVs and supporters

## **Lectors Ministry**

We continue to hear scripture and prayer in a rich range of voices. Lectors are lay members of the congregation who are assigned three readings (first lesson, second lesson, prayers of the people) during each cycle (roughly twenty weeks). If there is a conflict with an assignment, we arrange to trade dates, and in the rare event that someone simply forgets and fails to show up, we have a whole set of excellent readers in the alto row of the choir, ready to step forward.

We remember with gratitude the faithful service in this ministry of Dean French.

I am grateful to all who volunteer, prepare, and show up to make this contribution. Special thanks to Owen Sammons, who prepares the bulletin, and Taylor Howell, who shares all the readings with me, so that I can distribute them ahead of time. If you wish to volunteer (the next

cycle on the schedule will start in September), please share your email address with me at [smith@hanover.edu](mailto:smith@hanover.edu).

Jonathan Smith

## **Organ Restoration**

Our organ renovation has experienced significant delays due to circumstances beyond our control, primarily stemming from a workforce shortage at the Schroth shop.

Until recently, Schroth has had a major project ahead of us: the construction of a new organ and console for Trinity Lutheran Church in Greenville, SC. During that project, Schroth made the strategic decision to begin manufacturing their own windchests—the essential components that support the pipes and distribute wind through a complex channeling system. Previously, windchests were built by contracted organ builders. While workable, that arrangement limited design flexibility and often placed Schroth’s projects behind the priorities of the contractor’s own workload.

To address this, Schroth expanded their facilities to produce windchests in-house. As with any growing operation, staffing has needed time to catch up with demand, which has contributed to our delay.

The good news is that the Greenville project is now complete, and our organ has become the primary focus of the Schroth shop until completion.

Our renovation includes four major phases:

- Pipe cleaning and revoicing — nearly 100% complete
- Console refurbishment — 50% complete
- Windchest construction and assembly — 10% complete
- Reinstallation and finishing — 0% complete

The \$64,000 question remains: When will the organ be finished? Based on the timeline of the Greenville project, we anticipate completion by the time we call a new Rector, though we are optimistic that we may have a completed instrument before then.

## **Outreach**

The expected and the unexpected

2025 has been an amazing year for our outreach efforts to feed and clothe those in need. Since the COVID year 2020, we have come to expect increases in numbers of our neighbors who have a difficult time in the face of rising prices for food, rent, and other basics of survival. Awareness of our ability to help received an unexpected boost from WLKY 32 in August with a Bell award that recognized our outstanding and valuable volunteer service to the community. Since then, the food pantry has been featured three times on WLKY news. AP, Episcopal News Service, and other national publications have penned articles, and the general public has responded with cash and food donations that have exceeded our wildest expectations. It's a revolving door ministry,

however, because the more we get, the more we give out. Our shelves are invariably empty after most sessions. This is a completely Volunteer operation that consists of various organizations, churches and fantastic daily volunteers. At last count, 104 people are directly involved in our ministry, and that doesn't include church congregation people who contribute regularly. In 2025, we gave out 36,175 bags of food and toiletries serving 41,225 people. (2024 it was 33,365 bags serving 37,512 !!). Our distribution hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings, (averaging now more than 130 clients per session) with many more hours of preparation needed each week. The Calvary Food Pantry is particularly proud, and almost singularly unique, in that we place no restrictions on how often our people can get food, or what zip code they come from. Motto: If you need it, you get it!

We also partner with Central Louisville Community Ministries, serving not only as their food arm, but also hosting and participating in the CLCM Clothes Closet. In 2025, eight or more volunteers served 510 clients with 7057 items of clothing. In addition, many more items were given out in the Calvary courtyard for our food clients. The Closet is open every Wednesday morning, averaging 25 neighbors each time, including houseless people and partnering with Kentucky Refugee Ministries.

Our food and clothing ministries expect the need in our community to continue to escalate. Our greatest thrills, possibly, have been experiencing the unexpected donations such as a truckload of canned goods, a carload of dog and cat food, or even 30 stuffed animals for the children. Our greatest sadness, however, is that such need exists right outside Calvary's walls. It is not only our privilege but our responsibility to help in any way we can. We are grateful for everyone who makes this volunteer effort possible, and we look forward to continuing our work for the rest of 2026. How can you help? Just ask me!

Margaret Dickinson

### **Parish Life/Hospitality**

Typical activities of the Parish Life Committee include making sure we have people signed up to host coffee hour, keeping up with and purchasing supplies needed for the kitchen (Terrance lets us know what's needed) and hosting large events. When there is a funeral or wedding that includes a reception we are expected to provide one of our committee to show the preparers where things are.

These are the events Parish Life hosted in 2025:

- Mardi Gras pancake supper
- Maundy Thursday Agape meal
- Parish Life picnic
- Bishop's visit
- Retirement reception for Lee Shafer
- Occasional Sunday coffee hour

The current members of the committee:

- Pattie Davidson
- Amanda and Ian Walton
- Jeff Pellman

Terrance Griffith

We are currently in need of a couple more people to volunteer for this committee. Please see or reach out to one of us if you are interested.

Respectfully submitted by Pattie Davidson

## **Property**

Emily Young and Kathleen Woolridge joined the Property Committee as a Landscape Committee in June 2025 with their focus on the garden. They immediately went to work, purchasing three urns and filling them with flowers to beautify the walkway. For 2026, the Landscape Committee has engaged Korfhage Landscape Company to support garden maintenance, including cleanup, replacement of dead boxwood, planting of holly trees and hydrangeas, and fertilization and spraying. The total cost for this work is \$5,000, as detailed in the attached estimate. In addition, the committee will purchase new plants for three existing planters located throughout the garden, with costs not expected to exceed \$500. Garden volunteers will continue to weed and prune throughout the summer and fall to maintain the grounds.

Will Cary contracted for the Ascension Window to be removed for renovation and a facsimile hung in its place while the renovations were underway. The Window was completed and rehung in 2025. The woodwork behind the Altar was restored by Bittners as part of the Ascension window project.

The rug which had been on the platform on which the Altar sits was removed during the Ascension window project. It was cleaned and is now fronts the Altar. The platform had an unfinished front, where the rug had been. That has been painted to match the rest of the platform.

The organ was dismantled and removed to be replaced by a new organ. A missing section of the marble step behind the organ was revealed when the organ was removed. A special order for a matching marble slab was placed and the step was installed.

The second story classroom windows were completed in 2025; resulting in all new windows on both the first and second floors in the new section of the church, including the office area.

Much of the marble floor has been replaced, repaired, or stabilized.

One of the old HVAC units have been replaced.

Will Cary continues to do an outstanding job of caring for our beautiful church. He is at the church nearly every day to be sure nothing else has gone amiss and handles many projects on his own without asking for the committee's help.

Committee members are Will Cary, Jerry Lyndrup, Ruth Robins, Jamie Hendon, Justin Asher, Jacob Middleton, Emily Young, Kathleen Wooldridge, Stephanie Smith, and Lynne Lyndrup.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynne Lyndrup

## **Stewardship**

I'm so grateful for the pledges from the people of Calvary, totaling \$192,415 for 2026. This community is strong and deeply caring—not just for our place of worship, but for the wider community as well. It reflects what Jesus taught, “to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself.” Calvary lives that out so naturally, and continues to do so. May God bless us all with kindness.

Donna Duvall

## **Ushers**

We currently have 11 active ushers in our rotation; with at least 3 people we can call on if there is an “usher emergency.” Anyone who would like to join as an usher please let Jeff Pellman or Andrew Weinberger, the usher liaison to the vestry, know.

This past year we have added a few new people. We've “sponsored” a coffee hour and helped with the parish picnic.

There is no lack of interest when we need special events, funerals or weddings covered. Email responses are quick and participation is plentiful.

Our greatest achievement of the year is the barrage of compliments I receive from long-time members and those new to Calvary or visiting telling me about the warm welcome they receive as soon as they walk in the door. The team we have now is exceptional in their warmth to visitors, those who need assistance and the houseless.

I intend to keep this high standard with this great team.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Pellman