



2024 ANNUAL REPORT
COMMITTEE REPORTS





Calvary Lutheran Church

1750 North Calhoun Road • Brookfield, Wisconsin 53005-5099 • (262) 786-4010 • E-mail: calvary@calvarylc.com

Sharing the life-changing message of Jesus Christ!

The 2024 Committee Reports reflect the activity of the various ministry groups at Calvary. We invite you to join one or more of these committees by contacting any of the members.

There are also activities and volunteer opportunities that may be of interest to you. The time commitment is minimal and we welcome your involvement. Please contact the Church office if you would like more information.

- Altar Guild
- Assisting Minister
- Children's Sermon
- Celebration Bell Ringers
- Greeter
- Lector
- Livestream Operator
- Men's Monthly Ministry Gathering
- Men's Weekly Breakfast
- Prayer Shawl Ministry/Knitters
- Pastor's Thursday Bible Study
- PowerPoint Operator
- Psallite Choir
- Sunday School
- Serenity Inn
- Usher
- Women's Monthly Book Group
- Women's Bible Study

BOARD OF DEACONS

Submitted by George Sedivec

Committee members: Ruth Brostowitz, Andy Foy, Pat Foy, Bill Graffin, Lenny Graffin, Judy Kestly, Everett Lambert, Darlene Louison (Secretary), Ed Ramthun (Co-Chair), Sue Rowe (Schedule Coordinator), George Sedivec (Co-Chair), Scott Langelin (Church Council Liaison)

Mission: Our mission is to care for the spiritual welfare of the congregation with every Deacon praying regularly for the members of Calvary.

Philippians 4:6- Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Mark 11:24 – Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Accomplishments and Highlights

- Assisted in the distribution of Holy Communion for all worship services and helped prepare the Acolytes for their responsibilities during worship and communion.
- Hosted a “Coffee with the Deacons” event to provide an opportunity for each deacon to introduce themselves to their assigned alpha group members.
- Presented cards and gifts to celebrate a young adult upon Confirmation, and students graduating from High School and College.
- Presented gifts to the congregation after worship service to recognize all the special people in our lives that we love and appreciate when celebrating Mother’s Day and Father’s Day.
- Prepared and sent “Care Packages” to college students in the fall.
- Communicated with assigned alpha groups using cards or other electronic methods when they have a significant life event occur like birthday, anniversary, illness, wedding etc.

CHURCH LIFE

Submitted by Julie Matthes

Committee Members: Julie Matthes (Chair), Paula Altman, Chuck and Jan Lukasik, Sue Rowe, Sallie Schulz.
Council Liaison: Peggy Langelin

Mission: This committee is responsible for coordinating and planning activities that provide opportunities for fellowship at Calvary.

Committee Objectives

- Provide a variety of activities throughout the year that promote fellowship within our congregation
- Ensure the activities are diverse to attract a wide range of age and interests over the year
- Promote and encourage participation in scheduled events/activities

Committee Responsibilities

- Partner with other committees as needed to ensure there is adequate support for larger, more complex events/activities
- Meet on a regular basis and prepare minutes which are submitted to the Calvary Office Manager, Church Council, and Pastor

Prepare an annual budget for the scheduled activities and operate within the approved budget
Ensure scheduled activities are adequately communicated to the congregation to allow for maximum participation

Committee Highlights/Accomplishments

The Church Life Committee organizes a wide variety of activities throughout the year that offer opportunities for fellowship and community outreach that appeals to a cross section of age groups and interests.

Committee Goals/Looking Ahead

Engage Calvary members in witnessing for Christ

Explore how we can provide opportunities to allow participants to witness for Christ during our fellowship events/activities.

Develop/design a fellowship event that focuses on being a witness for Christ.

Increasing the membership at Calvary

Develop a fellowship activity/event that expands the audience beyond Calvary's doors and involves community participation.

Investigate what kind of promotional materials/needs would be required to promote fellowship events to our surrounding communities.

Provide assistance (for example, financial, transportation, child care) that would reduce any barriers that may prevent people from attending a fellowship event.

Utilize the information gathered from the focus groups in order to develop future fellowship events and activities.

2024 Congregational Events

Sunset Theater Play (March 10)

Easter Brunch (March 31)

Walk for Water (May 18)

Lake Country DockHounds baseball game (June 30)

Flannel Fest & Hootenanny (October 19)

Anyone who is interested in being a part of this committee should reach out to any committee member. We'd love to have you join us!

ENDOWMENT

Submitted by Ernie Kretschmann

Committee Members: Pat Dieck (Council Liaison), Ernie Kretschmann (Chair), Cindy Rooks (Treasurer), Gordy Gunnlaugsson, Dean Schmelzer, Jane Taufner, Lee Tyne (term has expired as of 11/15/24) and Pastor Jerry Wittmus (Advisor).

The Endowment Committee provides and promotes planned giving opportunities that support the ministry of Calvary and local, regional, and international non-profits. The Committee also reviews and manages the Organ Fund so that adequate funds are available to maintain the pipe organ and the environment required by the organ. The Organ Fund balance at the end of 2024 is \$159,659.

The Endowment Fund had a balance of \$714,528 at the end of 2024 and distributed \$7,407 to organizations in the Education and Outreach categories.

The Education category included \$1,407 to the Institute of Lutheran Theology and \$2,300 to the NALC Seminary for the Bonhoeffer House. In the Outreach segment we distributed \$3,000 to Serenity Inns and \$700 to the Joseph Project. Endowment did not receive any requests for program support since all 2024 program activities were supported through the 2024 Calvary budget.

During 2024, the Calvary Council and Endowment Committee approved a change to the Calvary Bylaws. The current Bylaws encourage short-term planning for investments and distributions of the Endowment Fund. The recommended changes provide for longer, more consistent planning and are in line with the distribution policies of many other endowments. The change to the Bylaws will be voted on at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 2, 2025.

EVANGELISM

Committee Mission: To glorify God by proclaiming the Gospel to all the people as commanded in Matthew 28:18-20 and by moving people from membership to discipleship.

Committee Responsibilities: Promote Calvary Lutheran Church, increase membership, and develop an ever-increasing spirit of evangelism within our congregation.

Committee Highlights:

The committee is on hold until the new pastor is in place and provides the E-Team with his/her direction.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Submitted by Angie Schatz

Committee Members: Josh Brooks, Jessica Dudzik, Cindy Rooks, Angie Schatz (Chair), Andy Schatz (Council Liaison)

God is Good, All the Time! The Youth and Family Ministry Program was busy praying and playing throughout 2024. Angie Schatz continued as the part-time Interim Director of Youth and Family Ministry for the entirety of the year.

The Sunday School program continues to teach our youth from age 3 through high school. We are blessed to have Lizzy Dudzik (Little Lutherans), Cindy Rooks (2nd - 5th grades), Jessica Dudzik (Middle School), and Angie Schatz (High School) as lead teachers for this program. For the '24-'25 school year, the committee decided to again make our own curriculum for the program. The theme for this year is Superheroes of the Bible! Each month we focus on a superhero trait, and study a different Bible Hero each week that exemplifies this trait. We also decided to lengthen the class time to 60 minutes, with a "special" each week. On the first Sunday of each month, we have a visit from a real-life Bible Superhero! Congregation members have graciously participated in dressing up in costume and taking on these amazing personalities, to talk with our youth about their life, accomplishments, and faith. On the second and fourth Sundays each month, Nicole Moritz spends time with the kids leading them in music. The Mission and Outreach committee helps out on the third Sunday of each month to organize and lead the kids in a service project. The kids also did a wonderful job once again, sharing the Nativity Story with readings and songs to the congregation during Advent.

The confirmation program had some changes again this year. We thank Lynnae Douglas and Chet Elliot for being our instructors for the '23-'24 school year. Our Congregation celebrated the Confirmation of Xavier Griese in October.

As we moved into fall, we were faced with the challenge of filling in the role of Confirmation instructor, while we continue to be in this time of pastoral transition. The Faith Formation committee recommended to the Church council to move to participation in the NALC virtual Confirmation program and curriculum. We have gone ahead with this class and God is doing great things! Currently we have four youth in 7th grade who have chosen to participate. The class is taught LIVE, virtually on Wednesday evenings by a variety of amazing pastors, all coordinated through the NALC Youth and Family Ministry Director. These students have the opportunity to grow in their faith with peers from across the United States and in Canada. They also have required weekly readings, and monthly mentor meetings/discussions, along with congregation participation expectations. The NALC program is designed for completion in two years, usually in 7th and 8th grade.

Calvary hosted "SCUBA" Vacation Bible School this summer. It was a fun-filled week with the help of many wonderful and dedicated volunteers. We hosted 40 kids for the full-day VBS during the first week in August. This continues to be an amazing outreach event, welcoming a variety of families from our community into our church.

Winter Retreat and the summer trip were also big successes again this year. Our middle school and high school youth (5) attended Camp Timber-Lee in January for the Winter Retreat. We are proud to share that the kids made it to the semi-final game of broomball this year, working together with the youth from Messi Dai Church in Illinois! Thank you to Jeff Griese for chaperoning this great weekend.

During the summer, we sent 9 youth and 3 chaperones to San Antonio Texas for the first ever, Continental Youth Gathering of the NALC! The group had a fantastic time, growing in faith, and learning how "WE BELONG" to God, the church, the community, and to each other. They also participated in several service projects while there, and also got to enjoy some sightseeing and delicious barbeque! Everyone had a fun, safe, and faith-filled experience. Thank you to our chaperones Jon Sayas and Melissa Griese. The elementary and middle school youth groups continue to meet monthly alternating youth group at church and social events. The high school youth meet monthly, and have added bimonthly social events. We have continued to provide programming for our littlest Lutherans, Family Ministry and hold several Intergenerational events for the entire congregation throughout the year.

MISSION & OUTREACH

Submitted by Karen Pierce

Committee Members: Paula Altman, Lisa Grossman, Diane Knappe, Ernie Kretschmann, Karen Pierce (Chair), Judy Sayas, and Jan Lukasik (Council Liaison)

"Thank You" to Calvary from the Mission and Outreach Committee

We are grateful for the participation from all of you in 2024. Through the Mission and Outreach funds Calvary supports a variety of ministries. In 2024, over \$40,000 was collected in offerings for Missions of the Month, which included a \$12,000 transfer of surplus funds for benevolence from 2023. We support the international, national and local ministries described below with your offerings. Four of these missions are international, four are national, and four are Greater Milwaukee area missions.

International Missions:

Lutheran Bible Translators provide Bible translation and literacy work in more than 100 language communities throughout the world.

Compassion International programs provide health care, Christian teaching, education and vocational training opportunities for children in 29 countries.

World Mission Prayer League Global Workers provide training, support Seminary Education for

church workers along with Christian education for children in India and many other countries worldwide.

Opportunity International provides micro loans and banking services to people helping them to build sustainable livelihoods and access to quality education for their children to break the cycle of poverty.

Internationally these groups spread the gospel to the unreached, and provide education, training and health improvements and economic opportunities for families in struggling nations.

USA Missions:

Seminary Support for students preparing for the ministry at the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS) and Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT).

AbleLight is a ministry for people with physical and intellectual disabilities and provides numerous support services for these folks in several states including Wisconsin. Formerly known as Bethesda, this mission has roots in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

NALC Disaster Response has resources and capabilities to assist in early response and longer-term recovery for any disasters occurring within the nation. They are able to provide access to material resources, networking, counseling, training, and volunteers. Calvary's overall in-kind response to supporting Disaster Relief in 2024 included:

- Health kits: 71 (plus assorted bath towels, wash cloths, wipes, adult diapers, sanitary pads, bandages, deodorant, combs, nail clippers, soaps, shampoos, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toothbrush covers, dental floss)
- Kitchen kits: 8 (plus assorted kitchen cleaning supplies, utensils)
- Backpacks/School kits: 28 (11 Elementary, 17 High School)
- Bibles: 110
- Quilts and Blankets: 29 (plus prayer shawls, bedding supplies: comforters, mattress pads, sheets, pillows, pillowcases)
- Fleece Blankets: 32
- Flood Buckets: 17 (plus assorted cleaning supplies: buckets, paper towel, garbage bags, bleach, Pine-Sol, gloves, Comet cleanser, rags)
- Camping gear (tents, poles, chairs, sleeping bags, tarps, tablecloths)
- Cases of water
- Clothing (coats)
- Baby supplies (assorted diapers, wipes, baby formula, blankets, stuffed animals)
- Tools (shovels, rakes, spades, hoes)
- \$1500 in gift cards for families suffering from Hurricane Helene

Broom Tree and **Shepherds' Canyon Retreats** focus on restorative and healing retreats to pastors and their spouses from across the USA.

Greater Milwaukee Area Missions:

Serenity Inn is a residential center for men striving to overcome addictions. Calvary members prepare and serve supper once a month at Serenity Inn.

Hope Street provides housing and healing to the people whose lives have been affected by drug and alcohol abuse by providing a nurturing community life.

Redeem and Restore Center (Waukesha) provides recovery resources and services where women recovering from sex trafficking and exploitation can heal, discover their identities, and fulfill their God-given purpose.

Care Net Pregnancy Center of Milwaukee provides support to pregnant women and gives them hope and support to choose life for their babies through pregnancy and parenting classes, Bible studies, ultrasounds, baby and children's clothing, and baby supplies. These services are provided at no cost to

the women. Care Net also offers after abortion counseling for women grieving the loss of from an abortion.

Calvary Prayer Shawl and Knitting group provides hand made baby sweaters, blankets, mittens and caps for Care Net to distribute.

Other Missions:

Calvary collected the following in-kind items to distribute:

13 Christmas Child Boxes for Samaritans Purse International Relief and Evangelism Ministry.

Vacation Bible School children tied fleece blankets for Care Net.

Winter clothing items were distributed to our local mission partners: Serenity Inn, Care Net and Franciscan Peacemakers. Calvary members knit and crochet hats, mittens and scarves for these ministries.

Prayer shawls which were knit and crocheted by the Calvary Prayer Shawl group were given to people experiencing illness or grief throughout the year.

Food was collected for the New Berlin Food Pantry.

Twin size bedding supplies (17 sheets/pillowcase sets) were collected and distributed to Sleep in Heavenly Peace for use with delivery of volunteer-built beds to children of disadvantaged families; two Calvary members assisted in a 46-bed bunk build on April 20th, 23 Calvary participants volunteered in a 44-bed bunk build on June 22nd and nine Calvary participants volunteered in a 55-bed bunk build on September 7th for Sleep in Heavenly Peace – Waukesha Chapter

Thanks and Praise

All of these missions are the hands and feet of Jesus working through Calvary. The variety of ways and places Missions of the Month serve our neighbors is impressive. Our 12 months of financial contributions to these groups spread the love of Christ to the city, the nation and the world. Calvary also took part in the Hope Street Women’s Luncheon, Serenity Inn Celebration of Recovery Dinner, Hope Street Family Reunion Dinner and World Mission Prayer League Dinner. We are thankful for all the ways you have contributed to these efforts in 2024.

CALVARY BENEVOLENCE

Calvary provides benevolence in many different forms including monetary, in-kind donations, and services. This benevolence is highlighted and detailed in the Committee Reports.

Monetary Benevolence	2024	2023
NALC - From General Fund	\$ 26,500	\$ 26,500
NALC - 2020 Vision from Members	20,025	21,829
NALC - Disaster Response - Hurricane	10,302	-
NALC - WI/Upper MI Mission District	3,600	3,600
Mission of the Month Contributions*	40,230	29,079
Endowment Fund Benevolence	7,407	14,090
Teach Beyond - Leah Federwitz	3,576	-
Good Samaritan	2,375	1,635
Other Benevolent Disbursements	9,023	4,122
Additional Contributions for MCRCAD**	-	4,870
Total Monetary Benevolence	\$ 123,038	\$ 105,725

*2024 includes \$12,000 from 2023 General Fund transfer.

**MCRCAD - Montgomery Center for Research in Child & Adolescent Development - Dr. Sax Event

PASTORAL OUTREACH GROUPS

VISITATION MINISTRY TEAM

Submitted by Mary Ellen Thiede

Visitation Ministry Team Members: Terry Bzdusek, Judy DeBruine, Pat Foy, Wayne Johnson, Judy Kestly, Ernie Kretschmann, Barb Snyder, Mary Ellen Thiede (Chair), Lee Tyne, Pastor Jerry Wittmus.

The function of the Visitation ministry team is to work with our Pastor, and under their direction, to maintain contact with shut-ins in their homes and those who are experiencing short-term illness. We do this through communion visits on a regular basis. Due to the absence of a Senior Pastor, Pastor Jerry Wittmus is currently giving us direction by attending/advising at our meetings. Pastor Jerry also holds a monthly church service at Ruby Commons retirement home.

Each member visits their assigned communicants' depending on the needs of each member. Those meetings are by special requests, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. We share a devotion, serve communion and in some locations we provide a short Bible study and a hymn. We also pass out quarterly "Portals of Prayer" devotion booklets to them. We currently serve 11 church members and 25 non-members. Many of the non-members have joined us as guests of our church members in their nursing homes. Please contact the church office if you want a home visit.

Our team members are all spiritually dedicated people receiving great enjoyment from their involvement in this ministry. Our meetings are held three times yearly. If interested in joining us, call Mary Ellen Thiede (414-732-4257) for more information.

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:28

PASTORAL OUTREACH

Submitted by Peggy Langelin

Our Stephen Ministry is a one-to-one caring ministry which equips and empowers lay caregivers called Stephen Ministers to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who have experienced loss of some kind. Our Stephen Ministry Team is led by Scott and Peggy Langelin. We are a team of eight trained ministers with five of them currently in care-giving relationships, which can include non-Calvary members. We meet regularly for continuing education and peer review.

Continuing Education is on two fronts – care of people experiencing grief and it's stages and how to live through a grief-producing loss in life. In the upcoming year we plan new topics to keep our ministers fresh and knowledgeable about situations they may encounter in their care-giving relationships.

PERSONNEL

Submitted by Jon Sayas

Committee Members: Lynnette Anderson, Gordy Gunnaugsson, Jon Sayas, Andy Schatz and Keith Pierce (Council Liaison)

The primary purpose of the Personnel committee is to serve Calvary Lutheran Church by providing a resource to the Senior Pastor and Church Council in areas relating to personnel.

Objectives:

- Review and approve annual goals and objectives in conjunction with the senior pastor and parish staff to ensure alignment with the overall objectives of the congregation.
- To ensure that all staff members are fairly reviewed on an annual basis.
- To ensure that the salaries and benefits are fair and competitive.
- To assess on an ongoing basis the personnel, staff, and office equipment of the congregation to assure the fulfillment of the congregation's mission and objectives

2024 Personnel Committee Highlights

The committee would like to recognize and thank the entire staff for their outstanding work over the past year: Cindy Rooks, Sue Rowe, Cindy Zilske, Nicole Moritz, Angie Schatz and Katie Rooks. We would also like to thank Pastor Jerry Wittmus for providing the stability our church needed through preaching, pastoral care services, and Bible studies, as well as all of the additional pulpit supply pastors, as we continue the search for a new senior pastor.

Staff annual reviews have been completed and suggested salary adjustments have been submitted to Church Council along with the personnel budget for 2025.

PROPERTY

Submitted by Ernie Kretschmann and Philip Voss

Committee Members: Rick Kegel, Brian Kretschmann, Ernie Kretschmann (Co-Chair & Council Liaison), Jon Voerman, and Philip Voss (Co-Chair),

Mission: The Property committee is responsible for the prudent maintenance, care and improvements of the church buildings and grounds.

2024 Committee Highlights:

Throughout the year, the committee, along with congregational members, completed the following projects:

- Replaced kitchen double-oven
- Converted south end of building to LED lighting
- Choir microphones & flooring in the Sanctuary
- Refresh & maintenance of playground equipment

Overall, \$30,400 was spent on property projects and maintenance in 2024.

The committee continued to assess the overall condition of our church property. In 2025, the Committee has no larger projects planned but will focus on maintenance and preventive maintenance as well as planning for longer-term needs including the Sanctuary roof. In addition, the Committee is monitoring the need for any maintenance/refresh of the parsonage with the potential use by a new pastor.

Funding: At the end of December 2024, our Building Fund has a balance of \$125,481. The Property Committee has requested the Council allocate a good portion of the 2024 Surplus to the Building Fund to cover costs associated with our church building, including the Sanctuary roof, and property projects.

STEWARDSHIP

Submitted by Cindy Rooks

Committee Members: Judy Kestly , Keith Pierce (also Council Liaison), Cindy Rooks, Jon Sayas

The Stewardship Committee is responsible for assisting congregation members in the giving of their time, talent, and treasure back to God in grateful response for the gifts He has given to us. The committee developed the annual stewardship program – “A Community of Believers in Jesus Christ”. The campaign reminded members that the church is not a building but people who follow Jesus Christ. It reminded us that the Calvary Community of Believers was formed by past members, enables the Calvary of today and is necessary for the future of Calvary.

The stewardship campaign requested information on members’ involvement at Calvary. During the campaign, there was a display in the Narthex of Calvary’s spending of its gifts as well as opportunities to get involved at Calvary. Enhanced Fellowship on Commitment Saturday and Sunday concluded the formal campaign. This year’s campaign for Calvary resulted in a eleven percent decrease in the number of pledges received resulting in a decrease of about ten percent in the total amount pledged over last year’s numbers.

Pledges to the NALC 2020 Vision “To Ensure a Legacy of Faith Today, Tomorrow & Forever” made in 2022 were for one to three years. The campaign this year did not make a new request but urged members to continue to give to the NALC 2020 Vision. Contributions to the NALC 2020 Vision totaled \$20,025 in 2024.

A special thank you to the congregation for their continued support of Calvary with their time, talents, and treasures.

WORSHIP

Submitted by Sallie Schulz

Committee Members: Nicole Moritz (ex officio), Chris Dudzik (council representative), Sheila Kershek, Diane Knappe, JoAnne Krause, Nancy Wittmus, Pr. Jerry Wittmus (ex officio), Sallie Schulz (coordinator)

Our stated function is to support the Pastor and Director of Music in preparation and evaluation of worship services.

This past year presented a challenge in adjusting to the lack of a permanent called pastor, as Pastor Ken Nelson retired in June 2023. Pastor Jerry Wittmus assumed the bulk of the weekend duty, along with holding a Bible Study on the upcoming week’s readings on Thursdays. Beginning in June, Pastor Jeanette Thorpe began leading worship during the third weekend of each month, providing some relief for Pastor Wittmus. We also thank Pastor Mark Knappe for his service to the congregation.

Without a permanent pastor, our committee focused on supporting Nicole’s work with worship planning as well as offering as many of the congregation’s historic practices during the ecumenical seasons. We believe we were able to provide meaningful opportunities for worship. Once a permanent pastor is called, we can work with that person to merge their vision of worship with our historic practices.

We were able to organize lay leadership to hold Lenten study sessions, but we did have to forego midweek Lenten and Advent services, due to a lack of pastoral coverage. As is our tradition, Advent and Lenten devotionals were offered to the congregation.

This past year, Nicole started offering a monthly Hymn Sing, as an opportunity before service to sing favorite hymns. Normally, music is chosen to match the ecumenical season and the assigned reading in the lectionary. This monthly pre-service activity offered the chance to “visit” some old musical friends. We also offered a methodology for the congregation to submit hymn suggestions to be used during service. These suggestions needed to be appropriate for the ecumenical season and readings, so suggestions were not always able to be utilized as soon as received. This was a limited success, and probably needs to be revisited and advertised better.

We would welcome new members/voices to this group. Please contact any committee member for more information.



CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH NALC

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