



CALVARY LUTHERAN

CHURCH AND SCHOOL



Church Newsletter

January 2026

From the Pastors

Taking a Moment to Assess

⁷ "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ" (Philippians 3:7-9).

At this time of year, we often assess. We assess the good and the bad of the year gone by. We assess the possibilities and opportunities of the new year ahead. We assess where we are and where we want to be. We assess what is gain and what is loss.

So, how goes this year's assessment? Are things stacking up in your favor or does it feel like everything is stacking up against you?

- Where are you celebrating? Where are you mourning?
- Where have you seen gains? Where have you experienced loss?
- Where is God inviting you to take a step of faith? Where is God closing a door?

These are all important questions to consider. They are not meant to be another way of "beating" ourselves up for where we have fallen short. Instead, these opportunities, invite us to consider where the intersection of God's grace and promises with our current situation.

Paul knew what it was like to assess the value, meaning, and purpose of life in general, as well as his words and actions in particular. Many commentators have noted that in Philippians 3:4-14 Paul can be seen assessing his past, his present, and his future. It was a moment in which Paul certainly recognized the deep regrets of how he had been living, and yet it was a moment in celebrating the amazing grace of God that had forever changed His outlook on life. When Jesus came into Paul's life, there was a complete reassessment of everything he knew, believed, and practiced. It was such a great change in what he valued that he triumphantly proclaimed, "*But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord*" (Philippians 3:7-8). In Jesus Christ, Paul had stumbled upon the treasure hidden in a field and the pearl of great price. In Jesus, Paul found his true treasure, which changed how he evaluated everything else in his world. In Jesus, Paul had something of true value that the world could never take away.

Even some 2,000 years later we still have the same treasure of the gift of Christ Jesus our Lord in our lives. And we too have the same promise that He has forgiven our past, He is at work in our present, and He is leading us to a promised future. And it is for this reason that as you start to assess the conclusion of one year and the start of a new one, that we can first and foremost celebrate the gift of His grace that has forever changed our world and our lives. We can step into a new year with confidence because we know that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:13). And however this year's assessment may turn out, we can join in celebrating with John Newton, the author of the famous hymn Amazing Grace, that **"I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I want to be. I am not what I hope to be. But still, I am not what I used to be. And by the grace of God, I am what I am."**

May God bless you and yours in the new year, as we step forward in faith, knowing that there is nowhere that we can go that our Lord's mercy and grace does not go with us.

God's Peace, *Pastor Kurt Ebert*

General News



2025 Holiday Worship Schedule

CHRISTMAS EVE (Weds., Dec 24)

11:00 a.m. Children's Christmas Eve Service

5:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service with Handbell & Vocal Choirs

CHRISTMAS DAY (Thurs., Dec 25)

10:00 a.m. Divine Service with Communion

NEW YEAR'S EVE (Wed., Dec 31)

6:30 p.m. with Communion

Foundations of Faith Class

• 6 Sunday Morning Sessions starting Sunday, January 18, 9:25 a.m. Room 125

Twice a year Calvary offers its *Foundations of Faith* Class for adults, providing practical answers about faith, the Lutheran Church, and Calvary's mission. Our winter class will begin January 1 for 6 sessions (no class President's Day weekend.) If you are interested in becoming a member of Calvary, this class is a great opportunity to learn more about our ministries and to become better acquainted with our pastors and other individuals. All materials and refreshments are provided; Sunday School classes are available for children.

Questions? Email Kara Hiatt.

2026 Contribution Envelopes Available in Narthex

Using these envelopes helps Calvary efficiently and correctly record amounts for year-end giving statements supplied for your tax records. If you use online giving and would rather not receive an envelope packet, let us know. While not expensive, there is a cost savings if fewer envelopes are ordered. If you do not find your envelopes in the narthex, contact the church office

churchsecretary@clcs.org.

Thursday Afternoon Bible Study

Thurs., Jan 22 - Feb 26 1:00-2:30 p.m. (Rm 125)

Pastor Ebert will lead a six-week study of Andy Stanley's bible study title *Irresistible: Reclaiming the New that Jesus Unleashed for the World*. What made the message of the early church so compelling, so defensible, so irresistible? What can we learn from the early church of our Christian faith today.

There will be a signup table in January or you can email churchsecretary@clcs.org. An optional full-length book is also available online or in stores.

General News

Winter Weather Cancellation Reminder

Should winter weather cause us to cancel an event, we will ...

- 1) Post to our website (clcs.org) & Facebook ([clcs.org/fb](https://www.facebook.com/clcs.org/fb)).
- 2) Send out a mass e-mail to our e-mail lists.
- 3) As able, change our phone greeting for the church.

Join our e-mail list by contacting churchsecretary@clcs.org.

Above all, use your best judgment during this time of year.

Attention Thrivent Members—"Choice Dollars" Designation

If you have not directed your 2025 Thrivent Choice Dollars, please consider directing them to "Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church" or "Calvary Lutheran School". Visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-847-4836 to find out if you have Choice Dollars to direct.



January Memorials

In Memory of Larry Jupin:

Roger & Sally Wetzel, Phyllis Birdwell, Debra Stephens, Mark & Cheryl Janke, Ann Arnold, Paula Fisk, Karen Meyer, John & Deborah Higgins, Marv & Rhonda Hansen, Paul & Maribeth Haulter, Elise Wolf, Kevin & Becky Horn, Michael & Nancy Sawa, Margie Leive, Charles & Betty Bardonner, Joyce Raker, Rick & Julie Holmquist, Mr. & Mrs. Rosemark, Ken Kettler, Don & Patricia Meyer, Bob & Rosie Blazek, Robert Polk, Valerie Wacker, Kenneth & Vicki Berg

In Memory of Jill Radcliffe:

Elise Wolf, Bob & Sandra Wilson, Andy & Dee Hall, Roxanne Deardurff, Raymon & Loretta Wheeler, Denise Fix, Barb Sorgius, Patricia Finke, Sara & Jill Jupin, Janet Sanders, Margie Leive, Al & Chris Royer, Jake & Kyle Allen, Scott & Scott PC (Attorneys at Law), Duane & Sherri Lytle

Thank You! Thank You!

Your Christmas gifts to the teens of Lutherwood were fabulous! Once again, you went above and beyond to bless these girls with beautiful gifts! Your generosity certainly brought smiles to their faces, shedding a bright spot in their otherwise unhappy situations. Thank you once again for caring so beautifully!

Thanksgiving Food Baskets

Your contributions to the Good Samaritan Fund helped support 13 of our school and church families with gift cards for the holidays. They were so appreciative of the gift, helping bring some joy into their homes. Once again, your giving hearts brought great blessings!

India Mission

Calvary India Mission Thank You!

Many thanks to those that gave a Christmas gift from our Calvary India Mission giving tree. Also a special thanks to those who gave student sponsorships for the tailoring and tuition centers. We are blessed to be able to support God's work through your gifts. Please continue to pray for God's blessings as we reach out in God's love to our Christian, Hindu and Muslim neighbors in India.

Stewardship Ministry

Calvary's January Partner in Ministry – Lutheran High School

The Lutheran High School of Indianapolis is Calvary's designated partner in Ministry for the month of January 2025. The current school year is LHSI's 50th year of preparing young adults for a Christian life while providing academic excellence in a Christ-Centered environment. This year the school is providing these educational opportunities for nearly 300 students. Calvary annually provides monetary support for the ministry of Lutheran High School as part of our congregational budget. We will be celebrating Lutheran High Sunday at Calvary on Sunday January 25.

Also, please purchase your tickets for the annual LuFest celebration on February 6 at the Indiana Roof Ballroom (LuFest.org). As always, we will be collecting gifts for presentation in the Live and Silent Auctions. Please contact Jake Allen or Julie Pflug with any questions.

Information for this ministry and other Calvary Ministry Partners can be at the "Partners" page at our website. [Ministry Partners Calvary Lutheran Church and School](https://www.clcs.org/partners/)
<https://www.clcs.org/partners/>

1st Quarter Mission Gifts Designation – Lutheran Hour Ministries

Gifts received in the fourth quarter of this year (January through March) either in the red-lined "Mission" envelopes or designated generically for "Missions" in your online giving or on the regular offering envelopes will go to the support of Lutheran Hour Ministries. Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) has numerous resources that Calvary and other churches use in their ministry. Known by many primarily for the Lutheran Hour radio broadcast the extent of the LHM global outreach is impressive.

Scholarships available for those pursuing an education in church work

Scholarships are available for Calvary members studying to be church workers from both the Wessler Family Endowment and the Student Assistance Fund. Anyone who is considering pursuing an education in church work and would like more information on scholarship opportunities please reach out to the Stewardship Ministry Team.

Thrivent Action Grants and Direct Choice Dollars

Please remember that All Thrivent members are eligible to receive up to two Thrivent Action Grants a year. Action grants in an amount of up to \$250 each are available for many projects at Calvary. Recent projects that have been partially funded with Thrivent Action Grants include the Fall Mum Sale and materials for the Community Garden. Have questions about connecting your Thrivent membership to a project? Contact the Stewardship Ministry Team.

Adult Ministry

Lunch Out! (Wednesday, January 7, 11:00 a.m.)

For our "First Wednesday" in January outing, we're meeting at Sassafra Tea Room, located at 229 N. Madison Avenue, Greenwood.

Adults of all ages are welcome – come join us for good food and some fellowship.



Questions? Contact Barb Sorgius, 317-783-2000.

Lunch & Learn (Wednesday, January 21, 11:00 a.m.)

Presenter: Julie Covert, Director of South Life Centers of Indianapolis

Program: Activities of the Life Center & Programs

Lunch: French toast casserole, Sausage, egg, cheese, & hashbrown casserole, Fruit cups



Cost: Suggested donation: \$5.

Questions? Barb Sorgius, 317-783-2000.

Youth Ministry

FLIGHT (High School Youth Group)

The high school youth group meets weekly on **Sunday nights from 5:30-7:00 p.m.**

Contact Brian Krohmer to be added to the email list for event updates.



LAUNCH (5th-6th grades)

All 5th and 6th grade youth are invited to the next LAUNCH event on **Wednesday, January 21st from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**



SAIL (7th-8th grades)

All 7th and 8th grade youth are invited to the next SAIL event on **Wednesday, January 28th from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**



Executive Director

From Your Executive Director

According to the Pew Research Center, about 30% of Americans make at least one New Year's resolution – and by February 1st, 13% have kept none of them, and 28% have kept some of them. I personally adhere to what my favorite curmudgeon, Mark Twain, wrote about them: "Thirty days from now, we shall have cast our reformation to the winds and gone to cutting our ancient short comings considerably shorter than ever."

In other words, I guess the simplest way to keep New Year's resolutions is just to not make any resolutions. You'll keep 100% of those you don't make.

Yet just because we may not make formal resolutions, the new year gives us a *tabula rasa*, with the ability to start a new year afresh. I am reminded of Revelation 5, where we read "And he (God) who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.'" In this case, it refers to the New Heaven and the New Earth. But it also applies to us at Calvary.

In some ways, we are seeing this in our congregation, with several new things. From a facilities approach, we have a new café, a remodeled women's restroom, and more on the way. From an organizational approach, we have a new structure that has freed our ministry team leaders and members from administrative matters, letting them do why they are in those roles. We have new Associate Pastor as well.

And of course, we have a new direction for the congregation following the strategic planning we conducted in 2023, setting out new ways to Learn, to Care, and to Connect, out of Service to God. New programs have been implemented, and new ideas are consistently sought, to help us put these new ways into effect.

But you know what isn't new, and hasn't changed? Our commitment to the never-ending, never-changing word of God. We haven't changed our proclamation of Christ's saving Gospel. We continue to, as Lutheran Hour speaker Oswald Hoffman frequently proclaimed, to preach Christ Crucified. We remain a Liturgical and Confessing church, faithful to the works and writings of the reformers. We consistently seek to Engage People in Christ at Calvary.

So, if you happen to take time to make resolutions for the new year, here is one suggestion: resolve to reach out to others in our community and be a living demonstration of the love that Christ has given to us, telling our neighbors about His glorious story – and how they can experience that at Calvary.

In His and Your service,

Bill Laut

Recipes for Life

With the advent of the Internet one can simply type in a bunch of ingredients and an endless list of possibilities of products will be created. Combinations of the ingredients in different amounts create food choices for every taste and like. Throw in some spices and seasoning and the magnitude of each morsel really jumps to individual preferences.

Seeking options and answers to food choices are easily obtained by a simple search on the Internet. The choices provided will be readily available for every season and event.

One tradition that I grew up in my family was that we were all to try something new during the new year. It could be a food item, an activity, or a variety of other options. Trying something new was not always within my comfort zone. Especially when something new was selected for me by my parents. They wanted to stretch us and make us rise to this new challenge. Doing what was natural or had been experienced before was the norm.

God has created each of us with a variety of "ingredients and tastes." He has placed us according to His good will to work together in service to Him as His Name is proclaimed. The gifts contained within the ingredients and spices season our present with God's love and grace. Just as tastes change over the years, so we grow and change as God's people.

God instructs us to seek Him first in every circumstance. God has given to us ways of seeking Him. He invites us to study His Word, attend corporate worship, pray, and take part in His sacraments. During this New Year let us follow the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit as we share this Good News of our salvation. Let us commit to using God's gifts as He stretches us and opens doors that may be beyond our comfort zones. In faith we know that God goes before us and the He will provide for all our needs. Just like recipes are created from an abundance of singular ingredients, God creates His *recipe* for our good using the gifts bestowed from His hand. May God indeed blessed this New Year - 2026.

Christmas Vacation

Our final day prior to Christmas vacation is **Friday, December 19**. School will be dismissed at 3:00PM on that day. School will resume on **Monday, January 5th at 8:00 am**. We ask the Lord to be with all traveling during this Christmas break. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

2026-27 Preschool Kindergarten & First – Eighth Grade Registration Information

Preschool, Kindergarten, First – Eighth Grade registration for Calvary members, returning students and their siblings will begin on January 5th. Our early enrollment period will continue through January 31st. New applications for enrollment will be accepted starting on February 1st. Families are invited to call and schedule an appointment for a tour during the school day.

We are excited as we prepare and plan for the upcoming school year. Help spread the word to coworkers, neighbors, friends, and family. God has blessed us enabling us to be a blessing to others.

State Tax Credit Information

Too Good To Be True?! 50% TAX CREDIT for Indiana tax liabilities!

God has provided a unique opportunity to help fund the Christian education of our Calvary students. The Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization of Indiana has been identified as a Scholarship Granting Organization. Scholarships through private and corporate donations are granted to Calvary student families whose income is less than 400% of the Federal free or reduced hot lunch guidelines.

Multiple Benefits for Calvary Lutheran School students, the private or corporate donor, and Calvary Lutheran Church

1. Students and their families accepted in this program will receive a scholarship grant per child enrolled in Preschool 4-5 year olds, Kindergarten-8th grade at Calvary.
2. The donor will receive a 50% Indiana State tax credit for every dollar donated. Example: A donation of \$1000.00 will result in a tax credit of \$500.00 towards your Indiana income tax liability. Private as well as corporate donations will receive this benefit. A Federal charitable deduction may also be realized.

Creative donations

Put your donation on a credit card that offers special incentives. Reward points, airline miles, etc. in addition to the tax savings. Reap the rewards while assisting others to hear God's Word.

How may I help? \$95,500.00 is needed to fully fund all applications

We are currently about \$45,000.00 short of this goal. Donations are currently being accepted. Please submit your donation directly to the Lutheran SGO of Indiana online by December 31. Please note: Be sure to clearly mark Calvary Lutheran School, Indianapolis as the recipient of your donation. The entire process is found online at www.LutheranSGO.org.

What happens in the future?

Children will have the opportunity to hear God's Word through your giving. God continues to open doors to others once thought closed due to financial restrictions. Your assistance in this program is so greatly appreciated! Your gift is multiplied in so many ways.

National Lutheran Schools Week

Calvary will join with thousands of other Lutheran School students and teachers during the week of January 25th-February 1st as we celebrate NLSW!! Many exciting activities are planned during this week-long celebration. A calendar of events will be distributed following our Christmas Vacation. Sunday, January 25th will be celebrated as Lutheran High School Sunday. Our Calvary Lutheran School focus will be on Sunday, February 1st as we share the exciting events and activities enjoyed during NLSW.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No school

Calvary Lutheran School will be closed on **Monday, January 19th** in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. We ask the Lord to eliminate the sin of prejudice that still exists in our world today. We ask God to reveal "the Dream" of Dr. King to all people.



Women in Mission

Ladies' Pinochle Club (Monday, January 12th)

Whether it's your first time or you're an old pro, join us for Pinochle! We meet the 2nd Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. Pinochle will meet **January 12th**. Questions?

Contact Sandra Wilson.



Ladies' Bible Study, Saturday, January 3rd, 8:30 a.m.

The November Ladies' Bible study will be on **Saturday, January 3rd** and will be from the Lutheran Women's Summer 2025 Quarterly and shared by everyone.

Join us in the Church Library on **Saturday, January 3rd** at 8:30 a.m.



Extravagant Sharing

Emmaus Lutheran Food Pantry in Fountain Square appreciates Calvary's continued support through the donations brought to the Extravagant Sharing shelves in the narthex. Many families depend on the generous donations made at Calvary and taken to Emmaus for the support of their food needs. In the month of January let's continue bringing boxes of cereal. **Canned meat, tuna, and canned or boxed potatoes** would be so helpful for providing a meal for a cold night. Again, thank you to all of you who reach out to help meet the needs of many in our community with your food donations.

God loves a cheerful giver!



Blankets for Babies Fall Schedule

Blankets for Babies will **not** meet during the months of January or February.

We will start back up in March for Spring!

Questions or interested in joining? Contact Susan Daniels.



Worship Anew

Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc.

Toll-Free: (888) 286-8002 www.worshipanew.org

Sunday 7:00 a.m. - WRTV-TV 6.1 (ABC) Sunday 11:30 a.m. - Direct TV Channel 377

January 2026

Where's Jesus?

January 4, 2026 – Second Sunday after Christmas

Rev. Scott Zeckzer

The season of Christmas is coming to an end. The Christmas decorations are put away but don't put Jesus away. Jesus is still present, but where?

Sermon Text: Luke 2:46

Readings: Psalm 119:97-104; 1 Kings 3:14-15; Luke 2:40-52

Featured Choirs: St. Paul Lutheran High School Choir, Concordia, Mo.; St. Paul Lutheran School Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Lincoln Lutheran High School Choir, Lincoln, Neb.

Featured Art and Architecture: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, New Haven, Ind.

The Baptism of Jesus

January 11, 2026 – The Baptism of Our Lord

Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III

At the Baptism of Jesus there was clear, powerful evidence that He was not only a man but also God—the Son of God. Christ had to be human and divine in order to be the Savior of the world. As the Savior, Jesus closely identified with the human race, and that is why He submitted to being baptized with John. This is wonderful, good news for us today.

Sermon Text: Matthew 3:13-17

Readings: Psalm 29:1-4; Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 3:13-17

Featured Choir: St. Paul Lutheran School Choir, Munster, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Muncie, Ind.

Who Is "The Real Jesus"?

January 18, 2026 – Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

What are people's first and lasting impressions of Jesus? Who do you think that He is? Will the "real Jesus" please stand up?

Sermon Text: John 1:29

Readings: Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42a

Featured Choirs: Holy Cross Lutheran Men's Chorus, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Paul Lutheran School Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: Emanuel Lutheran Church, Tipton, Ind.

Fishers of Men

January 25, 2026 – Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Rev. Shayne Jonker

Formerly, the disciples fished for fish. Now, they would fish for men, catching men for the kingdom, dropping the dragnet of Jesus' own sacrificial death and resurrection into the sea of this world and dragging whatever they caught onto the shore and into the church.

Sermon Text: Matthew 4:19

Readings: Psalm 27:1-9; Isaiah 9:1-4; Matthew 4:12-25

Featured Choirs: St. Peter's Lutheran School Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. John Lutheran Church Choir, Indianapolis, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: Faith Lutheran Church, Roanoke, Ind.

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

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Return Service Requested

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

Worship: Saturdays 5:30 PM

Sundays 8:00 & 10:45 AM

Family Education Hour (Bible Study & Sunday School) 9:25 AM

Senior Pastor: Kurt Ebert

kebert@clcs.org

Associate Pastor: Mark Schumm

mschumm@clcs.org

Youth & Family Pastor: Sam Troemel

stroemel@clcs.org

Tamil Indian Ministry: Pastor Udhay Raji

revudhay@hotmail.com

Dir. of Children's Ministry: Heather Marrero

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Dir. of Connection & Engagement: Kara Hiatt

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Dir. of Adult Ministry: Barb Sorgius

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Youth Ministry Director: Brian Krohmer

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Music Director: Ryan Rosenau

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