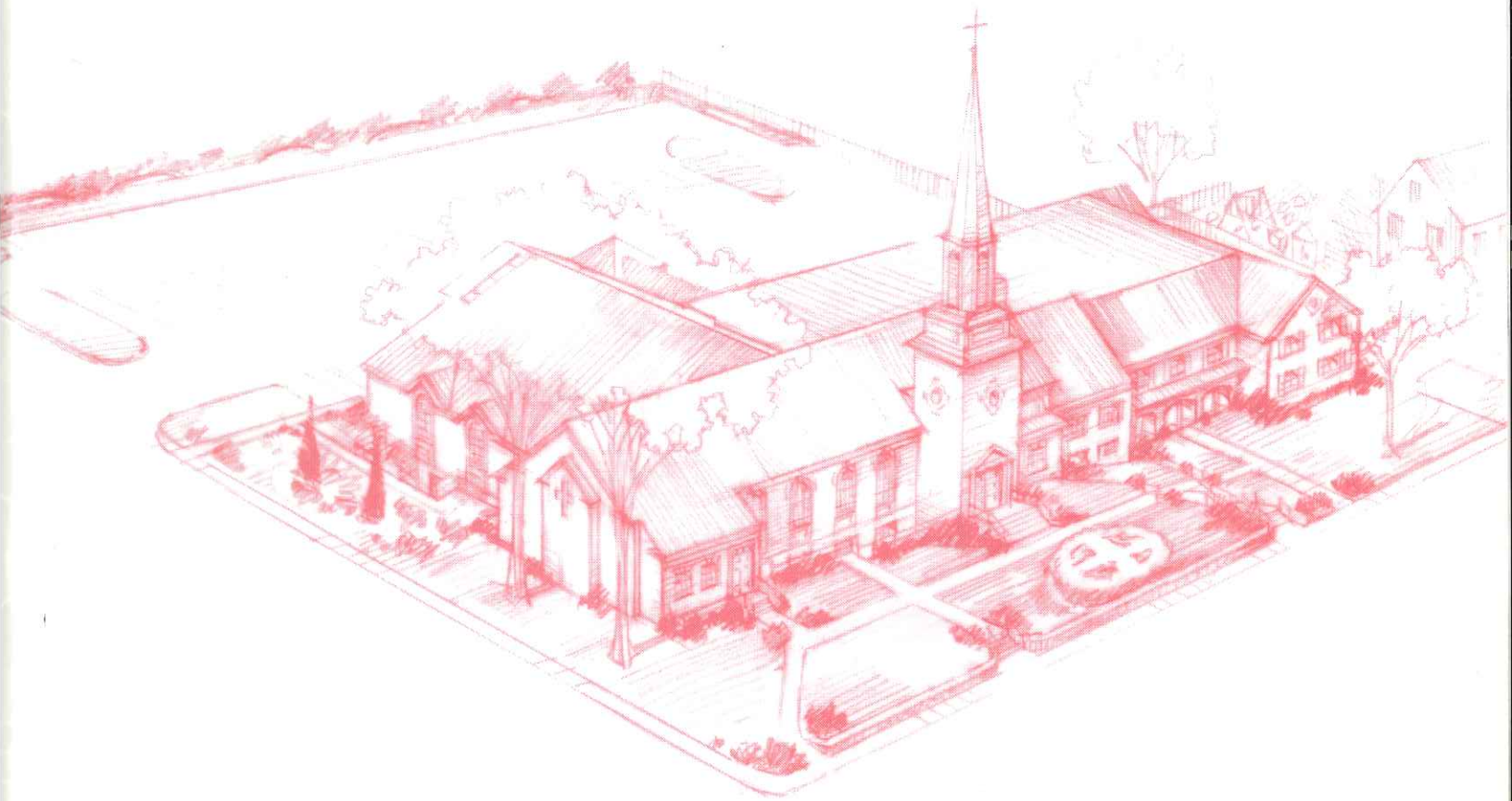


# Through 75 Years



**Calvary Lutheran Church**  
West Chester, Pennsylvania  
*1923-1998*





*Through Seventy-five Years*

*Calvary Lutheran Church*

**Pastoral Leaders**

Dr. Carolus P. Harry . 1923;1934-36  
 Dr. Silas D. Daugherty ..... 1923-24  
 Willis S. Hinman ..... 1924  
 Lloyd M. Wallick ..... 1924  
 Irvin M. Lau ..... 1924-26  
 Harry E. Wieand ..... 1927-28  
 Luther W. Evans ..... 1928-34  
 John H. K. Miller ..... 1936-42  
 Charles J. Harris ..... 1943  
 William H. Ralston ..... 1943-61  
 Dr. Robert H. Gearhart, Jr. .... 1962  
 Elwood W. Reitz ..... 1962-84  
 William L. Mattis ..... 1964-66  
 Roy G. Almquist ..... 1984-94  
 Stephen E. Godsall-Myers .... 1987-  
 William F. Seamon-McGowan.1995-

**Directors of  
Christian Education—Youth**

Theona M. Hasley ..... 1969-71  
 Sister Janice E. Painter ..... 1976-  
 Craig Miller ..... 1998-

**Leadership in  
the Ministry of Music**

Miss Ritter  
 Miriam V. Peacock  
 Robert Carl  
 Marilyn Dennish  
 John Gutscher  
 Julia Anderson  
 H. Ray Hunsicker  
 Drucilla D. Schutte  
 Kendra L. Werner  
 Janine Ruch

**Directors of  
Volunteer Ministries**

Josephine Cochran  
 Jane Blandy  
 Diane Pryor  
 Linda Haldeman  
 Fran Cook

**Treasurers**

Howard Miller ..... 1925-65  
 Richard Freshley ..... 1965-72  
 Henry H. Skillman ..... 1972-

**Financial Secretaries**

Ada Holman ..... early 1930s  
 Jacob Walters ..... 1948-68  
 Herbert Ressler ..... 1968-

**Lay Leaders**

*Until 1963, the Pastor was the  
Congregation's President*

Howard M. Malick ..... 1963  
 T. H. Frain, Jr. .... 1964  
 Henry H. Skillman ..... 1965  
 Robert E. Carlson ..... 1966  
 Robert Taylor ..... 1967  
 Jack M. Peterman ..... 1968  
 William R. George ..... 1969  
 Jay L. Olson ..... 1970  
 Norman A. Cochran ..... 1971  
 Allen C. McAfee, Jr. .... 1972  
 Martin L. Bowers ..... 1973  
 Everett A. Landin ..... 1974  
 Henry Huber ..... 1975  
 Robert B. Wassall ..... 1976  
 Michael A. Peich ..... 1977  
 Ronald Reents ..... 1978  
 Baxter D. Wellmon ..... 1979  
 Richard W. Gott ..... 1980  
 Ira F. Moyer ..... 1981  
 Allan S. Livingston ..... 1982  
 Allan S. Livingston ..... 1983  
 James D. Murphy ..... 1984  
 James D. Murphy ..... 1985  
 Charles T. Keller ..... 1986  
 Ralph S. Freed ..... 1987  
 Timothy Gau ..... 1988  
 David M. Ellis ..... 1989  
 Ronald J. Lux ..... 1990  
 Louis F. Allenbach ..... 1991  
 Stephen Crum ..... 1992  
 Christine Bennett ..... 1993  
 Joan Wagner ..... 1994  
 Donald K. Bassett ..... 1995  
 Donald K. Bassett ..... 1996  
 Richard M. Cordivari ..... 1997  
 Russ H. Neubauer ..... 1998

## PREFACE

**“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.” —HEB 12:2-3**

With these words, the writer of *Hebrews* concludes the dramatic depiction of the “great cloud of witnesses” begun in Chapter 11. The writer was sure the witness of those who had gone before would encourage early Christians to embrace their mission to be disciples of Jesus.

As I read Dr. Carlson’s manuscript of the 75-year history of Calvary Lutheran Church, I am sure the witness of those who have gone before us will encourage coming generations of Christians to embrace their mission of discipleship. As I read Bob’s manuscript, I cannot help being humbled and impressed by the “great cloud of witnesses” who have faithfully toiled in the vineyard of West Chester to make possible a Lutheran presence and witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary booklet is a treasure—a treasure to read—a treasure to share. It is not just a history, it is an adventure story, recalling the adventurous faith journey of men and women through one local congregation. They were committed to their Lord; they were dedicated to gathering a community of faith; they were resourceful and tenacious in their efforts. In meeting the challenges of an often difficult present, they laid the foundation for our promising future. They established a spirit of cooperation and outreach that has continued to welcome new members and encourage new ministries.

With thanksgiving to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; with gratitude to our forebearers in faith at Calvary; with appreciation for the research and scholarship of Bob Carlson; I commend this booklet to your reading. May it be an inspiration to you in your faith journey and an invitation to join the “great cloud of witnesses” through your local congregation.

*Pastor Stephen E. Godsell-Myers*

## FOREWORD

This is a good time for Calvary to celebrate. We have served God and our fellow men and women well for three-quarters of a century — no small achievement. We look forward to another century and a new millennium with a vision, a vision that reminds us that there is much to be done. We have been preparing for this new era, by fearlessly building a beautiful church in the 1950s and a much-needed Education wing in the 1960s, and by making needed improvements to both since then. We have revitalized that vision with our pledge to remain in the borough and close to the University. With our “reoriented” nave, additional classrooms and office space, alternate worship area, and professional staff and many volunteers, we are well-prepared to continue some “old” roles and undertake a host of “new” ones.

Calvary’s beginnings in West Chester were tentative and, quite frankly, not very impressive. One could argue that Calvary existed, perhaps struggled is a more-descriptive word, during the first two decades of our history. A renewal of faith in action in the 1940s, the population growth of the 1950s, and a succession of superb pastoral leaders enabled Calvary to become a leader among Lutheran churches in southeastern Pennsylvania. We are what we are, not only because of the faith of our founders but also the willingness of our people to lift high the cross for a region that needs Jesus Christ and His message of salvation.

This informal account of Calvary through 75 years is drawn from many sources — council minutes, church committee records, reports of organizations, previous histories, interviews, newspaper and magazine articles. Many people helped in many ways. Some served on the “Heritage” section of the “75th Anniversary Committee,” some shared records that were part of their family’s role among us, some were interviewed, many offered encouragement. I deeply appreciate the good advice and skilled help that Alberta McAfee, Ann Bedrick, and Richard Merrell have provided. I sincerely thank all who helped.

We are part of a great congregation, who proudly proclaim that charter of salvation — “one Lord, one faith, one birth.” We pray that God’s blessing will rest on each of us.

*Robert E. Carlson*

## Chapter 1

### “I believe they have good work to be done”

**Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, West Chester, dates its origins to the early 1920s. Although accounts suggest that earlier attempts were made (one in about 1903, another in 1914) these did not develop into a functioning congregation.**

We know that The Rev. Carolus Powel Harry (1884-1958), secretary for college and university work of the United Lutheran Church in America's Board of Education, came out from Philadelphia monthly during the 1919-1922 school years to hold worship services for Lutheran and Reformed students at West Chester State Normal School and Darlington Seminary. These services were held in the Normal School's Chapel. He believed that the 100 or so Lutheran students at the Normal School as well as interested townspeople could form the nucleus of a congregation. It was from Dr. Harry's devoted work that Calvary Church came to life.

Dr. Harry directed a church-membership survey of borough residents in November 1922. The results were indicative — there were 23 townspeople, 36 students from Normal, and one person from Darlington Seminary who said they were interested in forming a Lutheran congregation. Although the students were on campus only from September to June, he repeated his belief that there was a sufficient number to hold services every Sunday, call a pastor, and seek a charter. This was Calvary's beginning; almost two years passed before an organized church emerged.

There were Lutheran congregations in Chester County from the time of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (“The Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America”) who founded Zion, or Old Organ Church near Spring

City in 1743. In subsequent years, other congregations were begun; among these were St. Peter, Chester Springs (1771), St. Paul, Lionville (1838), St. John, Phoenixville (1872) and Messiah, Downingtown (1902). Furthermore, other Christian denominations had organized congregations in West Chester well before the 1920s. The Roman Catholics date their beginnings here to the 1790s and the Society of Friends to 1810. There were flourishing congregations of Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians (in fact, two of the last) in the borough before the end of the 19th century. Seen in this context, Lutherans were late-comers in West Chester.

In the months following the 1922 survey, meetings were held but we have no minutes for some of them. We do know that on Sunday afternoon, February 25, 1923, one of these meetings was held at the home of Thomas A. and Cora L. Bock, 620 S. Walnut St., West Chester, “to consider the establishment of a Lutheran Church in West Chester.” The Rev. Dr. Silas Davis Daugherty (1857-1939), Superintendent of Home Missions for the East Penn Synod, was present. We do not know how the ten persons who attended were selected, but they came from the three constituencies that were expected to form a congregation. Mr. Bock was named temporary chairman and Miss Lucille Donmoyer, dean of the Seminary, served as secretary. It was resolved to hold a service on March 11, 1923 at the



**FLAG RAISING:** The latter part of May 1925 members and friends of Calvary witnessed a flag raising on the lawn of the Parsonage. The Glen Mills Band furnished the instrumental music. Prof. Hausknecht, of the Normal School, led the singing of patriotic hymns, and Dr. Heathcote delivered an address

New Century Club, corner of S. High and Lacey Streets, and a congregational meeting to follow “to effect the legal organization” of a church. An Executive Committee, with Dr. George R. Cressman as chairman, was directed to review the ULCA’s uniform constitution for congregations. Anna Moore, Clarence Holman, and Esther B. Kerwin were appointed to the Membership Committee. One could argue that this day was Calvary’s beginning, not only because of this meeting but also because communion was offered that morning at the Normal School service; 67 of the 70 persons present participated.

If Dr. Harry can be said to have “planted the seed” (he continued to be a positive influence on our congregation throughout the 1920s and 1930s) it was now Dr. Daugherty’s turn to nurture this tiny flock. He conducted the March 11 service at which Dr. Harry preached on the feeding of the 5,000. The choir of Normal School students sang the anthem “How Amiable Are Thy Dwellings,” beginning the tradition of great

music at Calvary. At that day’s congregational meeting the ULCA uniform constitution was adopted. Seven persons, including Dr. Daugherty, became a Church Council *pro tem*, and it was agreed to hold a public worship service at the New Century Club at 10:45 AM “every Lord’s Day morning.” Another congregational meeting of the then-known “The Society of the Lutheran Church in West Chester” was called for the following Sunday. Dr. Daugherty promised that the events of March 18 “should be ones never to be forgotten by all those who participate.” At that morning’s service the Church Charter was laid on the table for signatures and at the congregational meeting that followed, consideration was given to three names for our church: St. Paul, Christ, and St. Mark. For unknown reasons the decision on a name was postponed. “Affiliate Membership” was offered to the students; there was no intention to disturb the student’s home-church membership. It was agreed that Church Council would consist of six deacons and that an annual meeting of the congregation would be held.

Easter Sunday, April 1, 1923 was a landmark day for our first communion was offered; eight persons partook of the bread and wine. The number was small because the Normal School students were not on campus that weekend.

Meetings of the congregation were held almost every Sunday after The Service during the late Spring 1923. On May 6 the first Church Council was elected. Six men, all local residents, were chosen: Dr. Charles W. Heathcote, Harry J. Griffith, Albert C. Gruber, Dr. Charles M. Kerwin, Joseph M. Kerwin, and Dr. George R. Cressman. One can sense that townspeople rather than the students were now seen as the most likely foundation on which church membership would be built. The next week "Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church" was chosen as our name and on May 20 the Church Council was installed. Dr. Daugherty was named *ex-officio* president of Council. The Flower, Music, Advertising, Property, Finance, and Benevolence Committees were appointed with virtually every member needing to serve on at least two committees. The Ladies' Aid Society, organized on May 7, was asked to take the lead in forming a Sunday School, and an Every-Member Canvass was conducted on May 27. Dr. Daugherty promised that "a high-grade man" would be secured for pastor and, in the meantime, he expected to provide "a suitable person" to serve as supply pastor. He felt certain that the various mission and education boards of the Synod and the ULCA would contribute much-needed funds toward Calvary's support.

While the search for a pastor is often a time-consuming process, Calvary needed 16 months before a call was accepted. One "highly recommended" candidate after another preached from the pulpit at the New Century Club. On one occasion no call was extended "because he read his sermon." More often, the candidate was not interested or was expecting a call from another congregation. There was a series of acting pastors and supply pastors, some from the Seminary faculty and student body, each for just a Sunday or two. When a call was extended, no letter of acceptance followed. Was it because there were so few townspeople in the congregation, or was the lack of a church building and parsonage the determining factor? Knowing that the average Sunday plate collection was \$4.50 during the early months surely influenced some candidates. It was not Dr. Daugherty's fault. On September 6, 1923 he wrote to Dr. Cressman: "You may say to your people that we will give them all the pastoral attention possible, until a pastor is secured, and I believe they have good work to be done and will find it progressing under the care of a regular pastor."

Dr. Daugherty worked hard to assist our congregation in many ways. He wanted advertisements placed in the local newspaper and a sign ("good design, good size, well-lettered") placed in the Club's front yard (the Club would not hear of it); he suggested a portable sign, and again the Club refused. He wanted cards printed for the students to refer to, ones that showed when and where services were held; he paid for these. A Church

Record Book was purchased and duplex envelopes and 100 hymnals were ordered. A reception for students, townspeople, and friends was held on October 3. He recruited a superintendent and teachers for the Sunday School. When it opened on December 9, the school had five classes and 28 students. Finally, Dr. Daugherty helped Church Council prepare an application for aid for pastoral support for 1924. Like the

An early report

Sept. 1st 1923.

Mr. Thos. G. Bock.

Dear Sir,

To date we have \$447.20 in pledged subscriptions. \$78.00 of that amount is for the Benevolence fund. The plate collections average about \$4.50



---

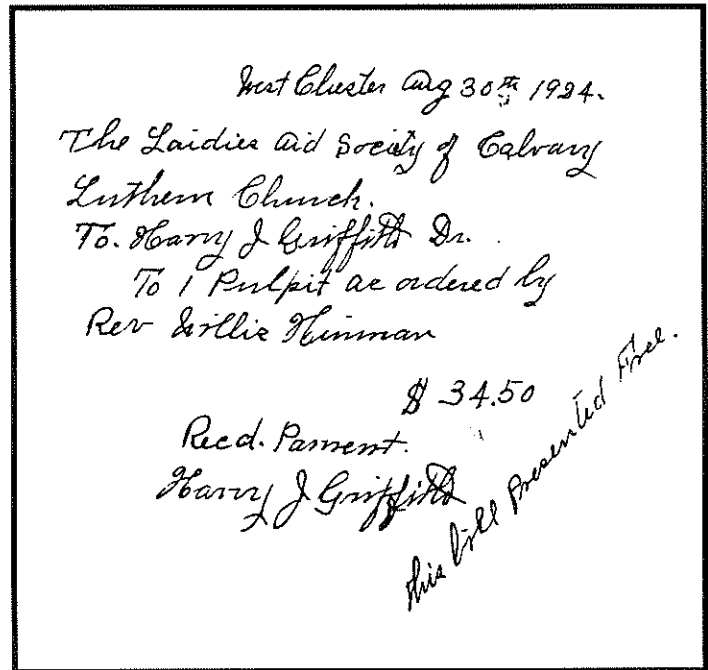
## The problem: why had the congregation not grown?

---

“good administrator,” he cautioned Council not to ask for as much in 1924 as had been received in 1923 “with the hope that this shall encourage you to reach self support at an early date.” In fact, self-sufficiency was years away from being achieved at Calvary.

In the midst of this flurry of activity, Council did not forget to provide a Christmas gift for Miss Ritter (“our pianist”) and a \$2.50 gold piece for the New Century Club’s janitor.

Calvary was moving ahead, primarily because Dr. Daugherty spent a good portion of his time here “in the field.” On one occasion, when a candidate declined our call, he wrote, “I ask you not to take this too seriously. God has other men. Tell the people to be strong and of good courage.” He began a catechetical class (Kathryn Christman, Frances and Pauline Huber, and Dorothy Lucas) that met on Tuesday evenings at a member’s home. He recruited prospects for membership. The congregation, however, was uneasy with this arrangement; it did not think that its interests were best served by having a pastor on hand only on some weekdays and Sundays. It indicated it preferred “active pastoral aid during the week.” Fearing that our financial shortcomings were the reason for no acceptances, Council asked for more money from the Home Missions Board. This brought a prompt reply from Dr. Daugherty: “We have been making a faithful effort...and have suffered many disappointments. I believe that God will, at the right time, give us the right man.” In the meantime, he suggested that Calvary and Trinity, Manoa, become a single charge served by one pastor. At the moment this proposal was the only viable option that Calvary had so a call was extended to The Rev. Willis Stuart Hinman. A Gettysburg Seminary graduate, he was “most heartily” endorsed by the Synod’s Home Missions Board. Mr. Hinman began his pastorate on April 1, 1924. He preached at Calvary on Sunday mornings, because of the Normal School students, and at Trinity on Sunday evenings. Rev. Hinman faced a daunting challenge. In our first year (March 3, 1923 to February 25, 1924) the average attendance at The Service was 60, but the contributing membership was only 37. We needed help,



“Calvary Builders” have always been present. Harry Griffith made the pulpit and lectern for the Church services in the New Century Club

for the rent of the Club (\$8 per Sunday) was devouring our very limited funds. But then, he wasn’t the first novice pastor to face such circumstances.

Despite all of this, Calvary began to do the kinds of things a newly-established congregation usually does. New Council members were elected and installed and congregational officers were chosen. A budget for 1924-1925 was prepared and discussions about a building fund were initiated. A confirmation service was scheduled, a Men’s Club was organized, and a date was set for Pastor’s installation.

These “best-laid” plans did not resolve Calvary’s problems. Rev. Hinman found travel between West Chester and Manoa burdensome, especially when he had to use the night trolley. Then again, he was perplexed as to why both congregations were so small and had not grown in membership. On July 1, 1924, he resigned his pastorate at Calvary, having served just 91 days.

For the moment, Dr. Daugherty assigned The Rev. Lloyd Merl Wallick, pastor-elect of Grace, Drexel



“NEW CENTURY CLUB—Where Calvary Lutheran Church, West Chester, Meets for Worship”

Hill, to supply at Calvary for about six weeks. With no students on campus, Rev. Wallick focused his ministry on the townspeople. The highlight of the summer was the “First Annual Picnic of the Calvary Lutheran Sunday School.” Held at Valley Forge on Wednesday, August 13, the picnic featured wheelbarrow, potato, and three-legged races, quoit pitching, and a ball game. Free bus transportation from the Railway Station on South High Street was provided “for all who go.” This was the first of many successful Sunday School picnics that became an annual summer event.

Concurrently, Dr. Daugherty continued his search “for the right man” for Calvary. In mid-summer he highly recommended The Rev. Irvin Martin Lau for our congregation’s consideration. Rev. Lau, a graduate of the Gettysburg Seminary (1911) had previously served congregations in Littlestown and Catawissa, Pennsylvania. In an effort to provide “the right financial arrangements” Dr. Daugherty expected Calvary to

contribute \$600 to pay the rent of a parsonage while he promised to pay Pastor Lau’s salary from funds provided by the Synodical Education and Home Missions Boards. The call was extended on September 7, 1924 and was accepted.

It goes without saying that the \$600 for rent was a major challenge for Calvary’s few members; this meant that their giving in 1924-25 had to increase by about 75% over that of 1923-24. At the moment there was a balance of \$38.86 in the Current Expenses fund. One member was disturbed by the funding problems and wondered if Rev. Lau “knows the actual facts.” Dr. Daugherty persisted; he promised that “young churches” usually showed a 100% increase in membership and giving during a pastor’s first year. He wrote, “We never allow our missions to suffer when they are doing their whole duty.” Moreover, he encouraged us both to “trust in God and do our best to win men to know Jesus Christ and His salvation.” These were reassuring words.

---

## A surge of urgency and effort now emerged!

---

One can sense the surge of energy and effort that now emerged. Council investigated properties that might be rented or purchased for a parsonage; one stipulation was that the parsonage had to be within walking distance of the Normal School. Again, if a parsonage was purchased, the congregation assumed the obligation to find money for a down payment and for amortizing a mortgage.

After a thorough search in the southern part of the borough, the congregation agreed (the vote was 16-0!) that a house and lot at 420 South Walnut Street offered the best combination of affordable price (\$7,900) and location. Providing a parsonage was truly a venture of faith, for our people had to borrow \$1,500 from the Board of Home Missions and take a first mortgage of \$5,000 and a second of \$800. Along with the \$600 item in the church budget for rent there was sufficient money to go to closure.

Calvary now owned a three-story, square, white-plastered brick house and garage on a lot approximately 110' by 150' in size. The two rear rooms on the first floor were reserved for the congregation's use for Sunday evening and weekday services and meetings; these were called the "Assembly Rooms." The remainder of the house was used as a parsonage.

---



The parsonage at 420 South Walnut Street  
(a former farmhouse)

## Chapter 2

### “Let’s Start”

**S**hortly after the arrival of Pastor Lau in October 1924 and the purchase of the parsonage, Calvary applied to the Chester County Court of Common Pleas for a charter of incorporation. Granted on December 22, 1924, the charter was signed by Rev. Lau as president of the congregation and Dr. Cressman as secretary. We continued to be a “mission congregation” under the care of the East Penn Synodical Board of Home Missions and remained in this status for more than a decade, primarily because we depended on the Synod’s annual grants of money to provide for “pastoral support.”

Having served as pastor of other congregations, Rev. Lau knew the importance of open communications between himself and the members. With this in mind, he published “The Little Messenger,” a monthly newsletter in which he offered brief sermons, thanked members for their support, and identified “Who Is Who” among the church organizations. His slogan—“Let’s Start”—appeared in one of the early issues. The Ladies’ Aid Society went into action almost immediately; they held bake sales and raised \$60 to help pay Pastor’s moving expenses. Rev. Lau called the ladies “My Booster Club.” Eight members joined the church in January 1925, and Charles Lucas and Mr. Griffith met with architects to discuss “a church edifice.” A Building Fund was begun and \$522 was collected within one month. The collection offered in the Lenten Self-Denial Envelopes was used to augment this fund. Members and friends donated a piano, a lectern, and offering plates, as well as a stole for Pastor, while Mrs. Laura Graul, Mrs. Lucas and Mrs.

Lau cleaned one of the Assembly Rooms and papered it. Calvary was “active.”

A budget for March 1925-26 was prepared in which line items included \$416 for rent of the New Century Club (\$8 per Sunday for 52 weeks), \$600 for parsonage amortization, \$300 for Benevolence, and \$484 for Administration. This \$1,800 budget was a challenge because the members had contributed only \$1,027.14 in the previous year. The power of faith and vision were clearly evident. Council directed that Sunday School be held at 9:45 AM and The Service at 10:45 AM at the Club, and advertised this in the local newspaper and by a sign placed on the parsonage’s lawn (Dr. Daugherty prevailed!). Sunday Vespers and Wednesday evening Prayer Services were held at 7:45 PM in the Assembly Rooms. Membership increased to 82 by April 1925, 40 new members having been added in less than a year. Dr. Daugherty’s prediction was being fulfilled. Among those



who joined were Helen and Howard Miller, active members of Calvary for over five decades.

A "New Chapel Fund" was begun in January 1926 and an architect was instructed to prepare a set of plans. He recommended that the congregation consider a basement first (at a cost of about \$20,000) and build the chapel later. Council wisely moved "to look upon the expenditure...as impossible." To many members this decision hinged on determining our priorities, that is, should we pay off the parsonage mortgage or build a chapel first? Although Council promised to continue to

"look into the matter," there was little possibility that a chapel could be started at this time. The Sunday offerings (March 1926, total of \$139.25; April, \$146.58) were a reality that could not be disregarded.

It is not clear whether there was a cause-and-effect relationship in all these issues, but on September 7, 1926, three families representing ten people requested letters of dismissal, and on the same day, Pastor Lau read a letter of resignation, explaining that he had accepted a call to serve the people of Augsburg Lutheran Church in York, Pennsylvania.

PAGE 2 THE LITTLE MESSENGER APR. 1925	
<p><b>THE LITTLE MESSENGER</b>            Issued Monthly as the Publication of            CALVARY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  <b>West Chester, Pa.</b>  <b>Rev. IRVIN M. LAU,</b>            Pastor and Editor  <b>420 South Walnut Street</b>  <b>Tel. 976-J</b>            Chas. E. Lucas, Business Manager            Tel. 475 &amp; 977-w</p>	<p><b>ACCESSIONS</b></p> <p>Infant Baptism—Leonard Rhineland Purdy, Frederick John Fessenbecker, William Karl Fessenbecker, Fredericka Carolina Fessenbecker, Mildred Cora Fessenbecker, George Charles Haffner, Nancy Agnes Haffner.            Adult Baptism—Mrs. Carolyn Hagner Parke.            Confirmation—Ruth Ellen Hippie, Edith Holman, Martin Jacob Young.            Profession of Faith—Mr. Fred Vesper, Mr. Geo. E. Hammond, Mr. John G. Bless, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Todd.            By Letter—Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Hay, Miss Emma Hagner, Mrs. Fred Veit, Mrs. Clarence Holman.</p>

An early publication

## Chapter 3

### “The depressed condition of Calvary”

**I**t had happened again. Calvary did not have a full-time pastor. Supply pastors and acting pastors, sent by Dr. Daugherty, had to suffice. Another family transferred its membership in January 1927 and receipts for that month totaled less than \$100. Little wonder Dr. Daugherty was concerned about “the depressed condition of Calvary.”

One pastor was sent for our consideration but the congregational vote on a call was a tie (9-9) so there was no “election.” In February 1927 The Rev. Harry E. Wieand (1866-1932) was appointed Acting Pastor. An older man, he had served several congregations elsewhere. He became a stabilizing influence while he was in West Chester. Services were held every Sunday. He encouraged the people not to give up on their hopes for a church building. It was truly an Act of Faith on his and the members’ parts, for receipts from all sources for June 1927 were \$59.85. Council reported that some bills could not be paid. The Ladies’ Aid Society was asked to help (often there was more money in the Ladies’ treasury than in the Church treasury), and Synod was petitioned to reduce our Benevolence apportionment. Council took the sorrowful action of directing that the Church picnic could be held only if it was self-supporting.

A building, whether a chapel or a church, was essential to Calvary’s future; it was virtually a matter of survival. Once again an architect was hired and told to keep the costs below \$25,000 for whatever he designed. To fund this ambitious project, Council asked the Board of Home Missions for a \$6,000 loan to liquidate the parsonage mortgage (on which virtually nothing had been paid, including interest) and to place a new first mortgage to cover the cost of construction. The Board,

wisely for the times, was not sympathetic. It wanted more details about costs of construction and our ability to repay the loan. In the meantime, the Board proposed that Dr. Wieand should serve both Calvary and St. Paul, Lansdowne. Our Council would have none of this; the earlier experience with Trinity, Manoa, was still too clear in our members’ memories. Calvary needed a full-time pastor and a building, but, in fact, could not afford either at the moment.

Dr. Daugherty renewed his effort to find ways to finance a loan or a mortgage because he wanted to hold “the field.” Calvary had a future; he was certain of that. As he wrote to Dr. Cressman, “I hope that you will live to rejoice that you had the opportunity...to help establish a church that will make its influence felt very far beyond West Chester.” (Dr. Cressman did live to see this happen.) In the spring of 1928, Dr. Daugherty presented The Rev. Luther Witmer Evans for the congregation’s consideration as pastor. By a unanimous vote, Rev. Evans was called to begin his ministry on June 1, 1928. At that moment, Calvary had 143 baptized, 90 confirmed, and 77 communing members. The Sunday School had 16 teachers and 104 “scholars.”

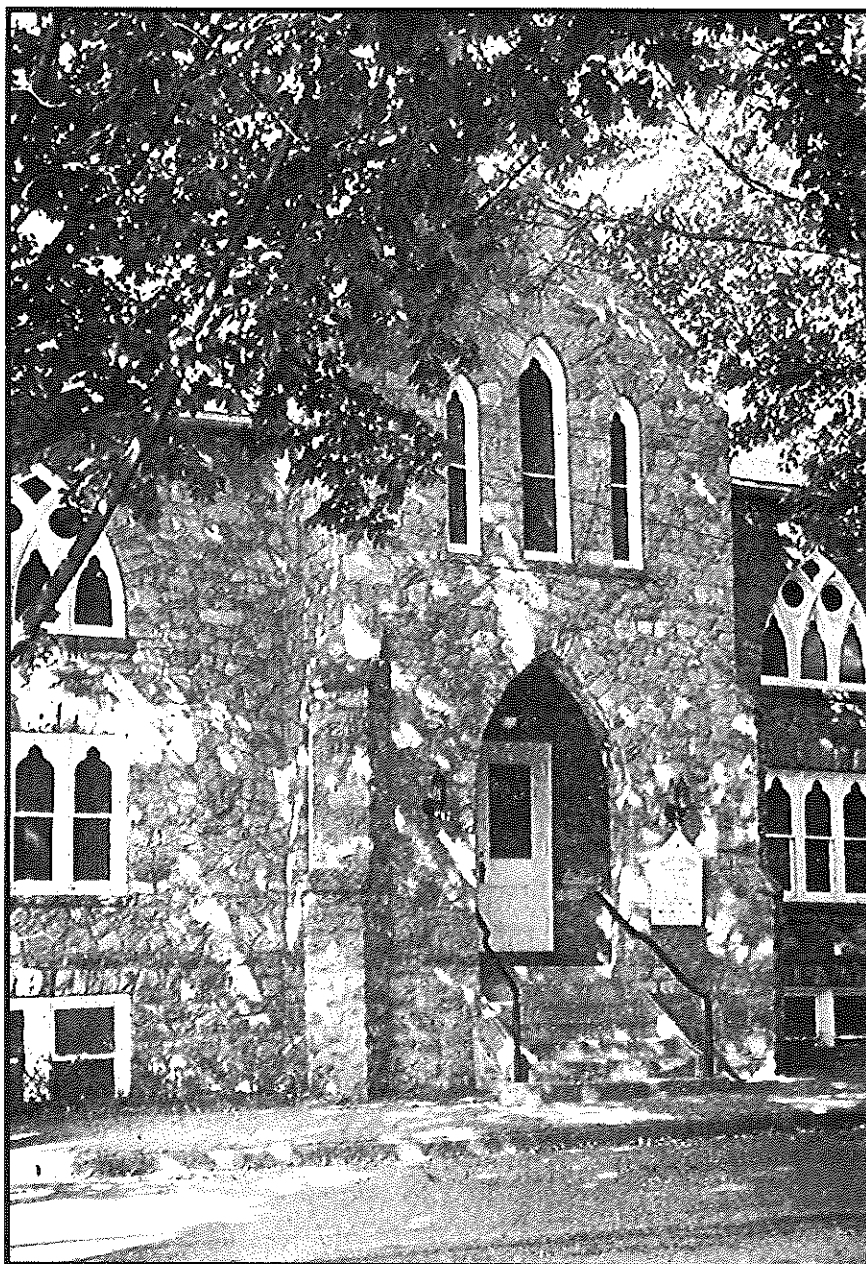
Rev. Evans (1904-62) was a graduate of Annville (Pa.) High School and Gettysburg College. He had

completed his studies at the Gettysburg Seminary just two weeks before coming to West Chester. He spent the summer of 1926 at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem where he worked under the renowned archaeologist William F. Albright. Rev. Evans also held a Second Lieutenant's commission in the U.S. Army Reserve. With his wife Anna, he moved into our parsonage.

Rev. Evans knew there were problems at Calvary. Receipts for all purposes in May 1928 were \$87.20 so it was evident that there was much work to be done. On June 1 bills in the amount of \$207.77 were outstanding. The average attendance at Sunday service during January through March 1929 was 62, but attendance at Vespers and mid-week services for these three months averaged less than 15. Every month Pastor reported to Council about his calls on members and prospects but the results were meager. There were, at the moment, 161 Lutheran students at the Teachers College so opportunities for ministry abounded there. With only 42 contributing members now, Calvary needed every ounce of Pastor's youthful energy.

Early in 1929 several members visited Pastor to discuss the possible purchase of the building, land, parsonage, and equipment of Olivet Baptist Church, located at the corner of South New Street and Union Street in West Chester. Dr. Daugherty and the Church Property Committee visited Olivet but found that the "building was in need of quite a few repairs." Although the trustees at Olivet set a then-reasonable price of \$20,000 for their property, our representatives decided that this amount was more than we could afford.

Current Expenses income continued to be a problem. With the onset of the Great Depression in October 1929, the outlook for Calvary was no better than before. Council paid the rent for the use of the Club and



Calvary Lutheran Church, 1936-56

for coal for the parsonage, but unpaid bills had to be considered "at the earliest date possible." At year's end another application for pastoral financial aid was sent to the Board of Home Missions as well as another request for renewal of the \$1,500 loan. Both were granted.

The years from 1930 through 1936 severely tested the faith and resolution of Calvary's members. Council could not prepare a budget for 1930 because it had no idea of the church's probable income. Several church organizations were asked to assume the

responsibility for buying coal, office supplies, and the like. The circumstances appeared insurmountable to the remaining 41 communing members. Happily there was one "brighter light;" the Sunday School, now with 14 teachers and 95 students, gave \$35 for our Benevolence apportionment and promised to provide enough money to "take care of the amortization of the loan," a rather tall order!

In March 1930, 131 Teachers College students petitioned Council to meet with Synodical officers to find a way to provide a building for Calvary church. We do not know who took the lead in this endeavor but it did generate some interesting ideas. From our present perspective, the outcome of this meeting with Synod was startling. Synod agreed that a building costing approximately "\$40,000 to \$50,000" and designed to accommodate a congregation of from 250 to 300 townspeople and students should be erected "on our site." To raise the money, Synod appointed a lay committee of eight, all members of Lutheran churches in the East Penn Synod. As part of this plan, the students were to be given equality with the townspeople in their rights of membership. Calvary's by-laws were to be changed to create an advisory committee of five "affiliated members" (that is, students) which was to sit with our Council and have "voice and vote" on all matters except the purchase and sale of property. It was stipulated that construction could not begin until a minimum of \$40,000 had been pledged. This was the best news Calvary had had in years!

The Lay Committee reported its findings to the 1931 annual meeting of Synod. How wonderful it would have been had the committee come forward with a plan for raising the money and beginning construction. The report was straightforward: "The present is not a favorable time for launching a campaign for soliciting contributions." Further, the committee was fearful that an unsuccessful first attempt would be detrimental to future campaigns. Nothing was said about implementing the plan for an "advisory committee." In light of the economic realities of both the nation and Calvary in 1931, the proposal was hardly practicable. This was underscored by the fact that the total offerings for the

last two Sundays in February 1931 amounted to \$33.04. Despite these setbacks, a Lutheran Church was needed in West Chester. In March 1931, six adults joined Calvary and on Easter Sunday that year, two children were baptized. God's work was being done.

In October 1931 "the seriousness of the financial situation was discussed at great length" by Council. In an economy move, Sunday services were held that summer in the Assembly Rooms instead of at the Club. Another letter was sent to members asking for new pledges and another loan was requested from the Board of Home Missions. It was suggested, almost as a last resort, that Calvary be relieved of our Benevolence obligation for the year. All of this was none too soon. Outstanding bills in January 1932 totaled \$400 and the balance on hand was \$12. Pastor Evans volunteered to accept a reduction in his salary, the Sunday School's Primary Class gave a "small amount" toward paying for a new parsonage boiler, and the Ladies' Aid Society made another donation. Surely, sometime during that summer and autumn of 1931 Pastor must have preached from Luke 12:32 in which we are told "Do not be afraid little flock..."



Pastor Evans

Calvary continued to serve God and man throughout all of these tribulations. Kathryn Pfuhl and Frances Huber were elected to Council and Ada Holman became the Church's Financial Secretary, all firsts for our women. A pre-confirmation class was begun; there were young people ready for an active church life. Pastor Evans reported that he made 710 calls on members and prospects in 1932, but that only 49 members communed during that year. An Altar Guild for girls and young women and a Luther League were formed. Although we paid \$67 on interest and \$25 to the Club for back rent, we were behind in our payments to both obligations in



---

## There were a few bright spots, but there weren't many.

---

February 1933. We could not depend on the Synod or the national church for help, for they were faced with similar shrinkages of funds.

Perhaps the worst moment came when Pastor said he needed \$1.20 for stencils and mimeograph paper, and Council had to tell him that he would have to wait "until funds were available." Even more ominous was the news that the private holder of the parsonage mortgage was taking the first steps toward foreclosure. During the summer of 1933 there were, on average, less than 30 people who attended worship services. On the other hand, the Ladies' Aid Society gave money for coal,

rent and Pastor's salary and the Luther League contributed \$23.50 to the Church treasury. These were a few bright spots, but there weren't many.

The first several months of 1934 tried the heart and soul of Calvary. In January the private holder of the parsonage mortgage repeated his notice that the unpaid amount had to be paid in full to settle an estate. In February Rev. Evans announced his resignation, effective April 1, to accept an appointment as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army's Chaplain Corps. Having come to an amicable arrangement with the congregation regarding his unpaid salary, Pastor Evans began a 28-year career as an Army Chaplain.

## Chapter 4

# “We Lutherans have a message needed...in West Chester”

**H**istory had repeated itself. Once again, Calvary had no pastor. Because the College students represented the largest of the three constituencies (College students, townspeople, and seminary students) that formed the congregation, it was decided by the Synodical boards that Calvary should be “assigned” to the Synod’s Board of Education in place of the Board of Home Missions. We were no longer a “mission field” but were now an “education project.”

<p>January 12, 1936</p> <p>Summaries:</p> <p>The Congregation</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Membership—baptized 140; confirmed 107; communing 65. Received 14 confirmed members—one by baptism; 7 by confirmation; 2 by renewal; 2 by letter; 16 baptized members of whom the Pastor baptized 12.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Service—116; Holy Communion 18; attendance average 38 at the Morning Services.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Pastor made 362 calls and held 862 interviews in the work of the parish and spent 193 days in the field.</p>	<p><b>FINANCES:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Pastor’s Expenses</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$349.50</td></tr> <tr><td>Pulpit Supply</td><td style="text-align: right;">7.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Postage &amp; Telephone</td><td style="text-align: right;">3.32</td></tr> <tr><td>The Messenger</td><td style="text-align: right;">44.91</td></tr> <tr><td>Music</td><td style="text-align: right;">22.01</td></tr> <tr><td>Service Books &amp; Bibles</td><td style="text-align: right;">29.56</td></tr> <tr><td>Envelopes for Offering</td><td style="text-align: right;">12.45</td></tr> <tr><td>Subscriptions to LUTHERAN</td><td style="text-align: right;">15.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Printing, tracts, etc.</td><td style="text-align: right;">41.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Entertainment</td><td style="text-align: right;">7.55</td></tr> <tr><td>JGLL</td><td style="text-align: right;">3.95</td></tr> <tr><td>Miscellaneous (Palms, Candles, Song sheets, etc.)</td><td style="text-align: right;">22.34</td></tr> <tr><td>For Students</td><td style="text-align: right;"><u>48.42</u></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right;">\$607.41</td></tr> <tr><td>Rentals-New Century</td><td style="text-align: right;">340.00</td></tr> <tr><td>624 S. High</td><td style="text-align: right;">240.00</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$580.00</u></td></tr> <tr><td><b>TOTAL</b></td><td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$1187.41</b></td></tr> <tr><td>Paid by the Congregation</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$300.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Students</td><td style="text-align: right;">50.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Synod</td><td style="text-align: right;">300.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Board of Educ.</td><td style="text-align: right;"><u>587.41</u></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right;">\$1187.41</td></tr> <tr><td>Apportionment</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$240.00</td></tr> <tr><td>National Lutheran Council</td><td style="text-align: right;">19.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Jewish Missions</td><td style="text-align: right;">5.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Total Benevolence</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$ 264.00</td></tr> </table>	Pastor’s Expenses	\$349.50	Pulpit Supply	7.00	Postage & Telephone	3.32	The Messenger	44.91	Music	22.01	Service Books & Bibles	29.56	Envelopes for Offering	12.45	Subscriptions to LUTHERAN	15.00	Printing, tracts, etc.	41.00	Entertainment	7.55	JGLL	3.95	Miscellaneous (Palms, Candles, Song sheets, etc.)	22.34	For Students	<u>48.42</u>		\$607.41	Rentals-New Century	340.00	624 S. High	240.00		<u>\$580.00</u>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1187.41</b>	Paid by the Congregation	\$300.00	Students	50.00	Synod	300.00	Board of Educ.	<u>587.41</u>		\$1187.41	Apportionment	\$240.00	National Lutheran Council	19.00	Jewish Missions	5.00	Total Benevolence	\$ 264.00
Pastor’s Expenses	\$349.50																																																						
Pulpit Supply	7.00																																																						
Postage & Telephone	3.32																																																						
The Messenger	44.91																																																						
Music	22.01																																																						
Service Books & Bibles	29.56																																																						
Envelopes for Offering	12.45																																																						
Subscriptions to LUTHERAN	15.00																																																						
Printing, tracts, etc.	41.00																																																						
Entertainment	7.55																																																						
JGLL	3.95																																																						
Miscellaneous (Palms, Candles, Song sheets, etc.)	22.34																																																						
For Students	<u>48.42</u>																																																						
	\$607.41																																																						
Rentals-New Century	340.00																																																						
624 S. High	240.00																																																						
	<u>\$580.00</u>																																																						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1187.41</b>																																																						
Paid by the Congregation	\$300.00																																																						
Students	50.00																																																						
Synod	300.00																																																						
Board of Educ.	<u>587.41</u>																																																						
	\$1187.41																																																						
Apportionment	\$240.00																																																						
National Lutheran Council	19.00																																																						
Jewish Missions	5.00																																																						
Total Benevolence	\$ 264.00																																																						

**Financial Report for 1935. Notice our commitment to Benevolence**

The Rev. Dr. C. P. Harry assumed pastoral responsibility for our church on July 1, 1934. He made his headquarters in “Pastor’s Study” at 624 South High

Street close by “Old Main.” He wrote, “The student work dare not be abandoned and services must be conducted for them.” At the same time, there were about 30 families

---

**“If we bear witness faithfully Christ will always provide sufficient resources...”**

---

that were “interested” in Calvary and who needed pastoral care. Dr. Harry promised to hold Sunday services at the Club as often as he was able to be in West Chester. Early in his ministry here he told the congregation: “We Lutherans have a message needed in the world and needed in West Chester. If we bear witness faithfully Christ will always provide sufficient resources to do His work. We may not have as much as WE think we need...but we have NOW and we always will have enough to do what He wants us to do for Him, if we but use what He has given us fully.” No finer statement of one’s faith has ever been so well-put.

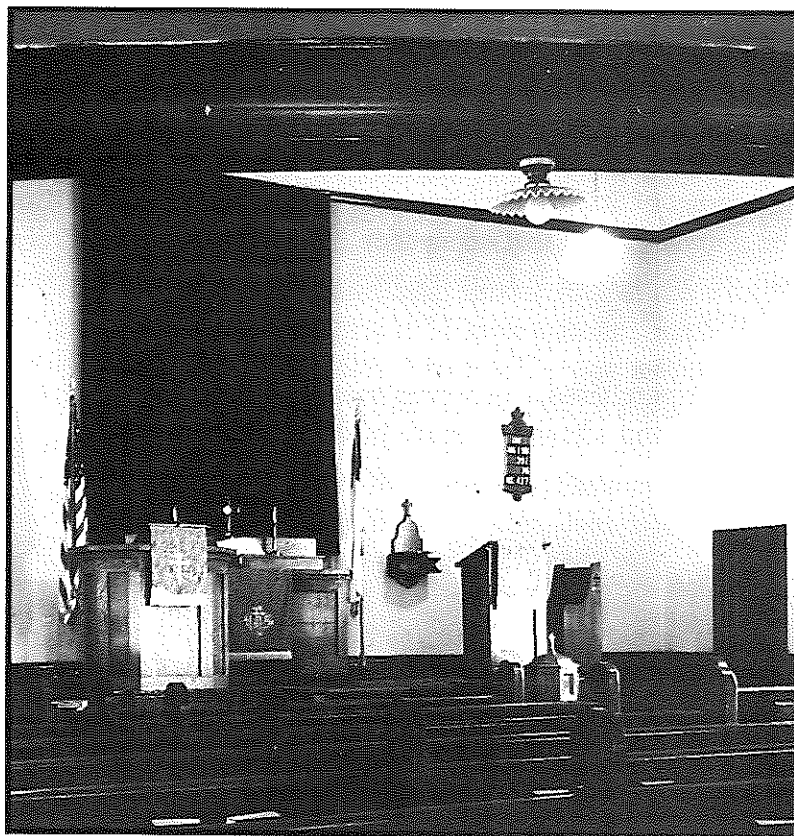
Dr. Harry balanced “depressing Church Council meetings” with his reports of having made numerous pastoral calls. He prepared a bulletin for each Sunday’s service in which he urged the members to remain strong in their faith. Classes for six catechumen and meetings of the Altar Guild, Ladies’ Aid Society and Sunday School staff were held on schedule. Attendance at Sunday’s service was steady but Pastor noted that some members seldom came. He candidly admitted that few new members were found. Although Rev. Harry referred to his one-year assignment to Calvary as “an experiment” he was accomplishing much. God’s work was being done.

The congregation understood that the parsonage mortgage was about to be foreclosed, yet the members resolved in January 1935 to keep the “present plan of operation” in effect. They promised to raise at least \$300 a year to fulfill our Benevolence apportionment. Attendance in February was encouraging — 40, 34, 40, and 45 on consecutive Sunday mornings. Pastor conducted many small group sessions with the students. Frederick John Fessenbecker and William Carl Fessenbecker (by confirmation) and Mrs. Granville Wright (by transfer) were among the 14 members added to the rolls. The Luther Gra-Y Club and the Junior Girls Luther League were begun in April. In May Dr. Harry reported that “the response of the congregation to the

Services...has been good,” and that activities were “fine.” One thing bothered him and he made it known to Council: “The most discouraging feature of this field is the hesitancy on the part of most of the members to undertake responsibility....”

In late 1935 and with the prior agreement of all concerned, Pastor Harry and Church Council recommended that Calvary be transferred from the care of the East Penn Synod to that of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. While this change did not alter our status as a chartered congregation, it did ultimately work to our advantage, for the Ministerium took a more active role in assisting Calvary, especially in financial support. The transfer was completed on May 21, 1936.

At about the same time, it was announced that the parsonage on South Walnut Street had been sold at Sheriff sale. Pastor Harry reported to the congregation:



The Church at S. New and Union Streets before “Calvary Builders” redid the nave to be more suitable for Lutheran services

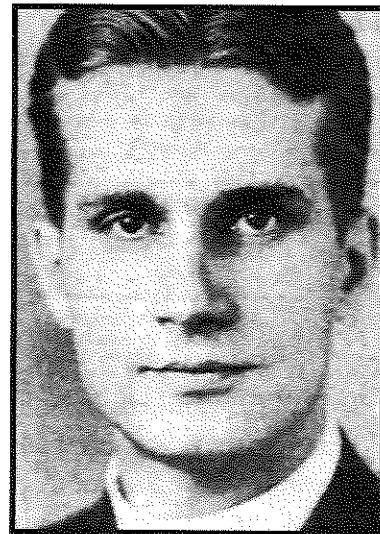
“WE HAVE NO PROPERTY except furnishings and NO DEBT.” It was as if a tremendous burden had been lifted from the congregation’s collective shoulders. It was almost a moment of joy! Now a budget could be presented in which the congregation and the organizations would have to be self-supporting, and we could “restart” virtually everything. Pastor suggested that Calvary might even seek “a modest church plant with facilities for worship” as well as a parsonage. It was as if a page had been turned and new life was possible.

1936 was the turning point in Calvary’s history. While there were problems yet to be solved, good things began to happen, slowly at first but with positive long-term results. Attendance at Service increased by almost 100%. Ninety-six persons attended the Palm Sunday services that year and there were 50 at the Good Friday service. Nine children were confirmed and there were 84 communing members. The Rev. U.S.G. Bertolet, superintendent of the Ministerium’s Board of Missions, encouraged us by saying that “a permanent location is necessary for the [Calvary] program” and urged us to investigate possible sites. In a fortuitous turn of events, Olivet Baptist Church was “on the market” once again at a price (now \$7,500) that Dr. Bertolet and the congregation found very attractive. With the understanding that only the church building and the lot at the corner of South New Street and Union Street were to be purchased and that occupancy by Calvary would occur on September 1, Calvary took a major step into the future.

We purchased a lot approximately 70’ by 143’ in dimensions and a blue limestone building located on a

very desirable site and a sanctuary with seating for 350 worshippers. The \$2,500 down payment was formed by combining \$2,000 provided by the Ministerium and \$500 collected in a church “Progress Fund.” The congregation assumed a \$5,000 mortgage, placed with the First National Bank of West Chester, the first of several made with that institution over the years.

To complement these arrangements, the Ministerium sent a “Field Missionary” to serve for one year as our Acting Pastor and at no cost to Calvary. This succession of decisions—the Sheriff sale, the transfer to the Ministerium, the purchase of the Olivet Baptist property, and the assignment of an acting pastor—positioned Calvary favorably for the next two decades.



Pastor Miller

The Ministerium assigned The Rev. John Henry Koons Miller to serve as our Acting Pastor. He is the son of a Lutheran minister and a graduate of Muhlenberg College (1932) and the Philadelphia Seminary (1935). He served elsewhere for one year as a Ministerium field missionary before coming to West Chester. At first, Rev. Miller lived with Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Holman at 311 Dean Street; later he moved to 249 Dean Street.



## Chapter 5

### “It is fitting that you should...rejoice”

**The “new” Calvary began on October 11, 1936. Rev. Miller conducted the two Sunday services at which Dr. Harry preached in the morning and Dr. Bertolet in the evening, as if to signify the transition from the old to the new. In all, 145 people attended that day. Dr. Bertolet was enthusiastic about Calvary’s future for he told the congregation, “This attainment being a marvel, it is fitting that you should...rejoice.” Emergency repairs were made to the building and paid for by the Ministerium.**

The Ladies’ Aid Society went right to work. With only 20 members, the Society conducted missionary programs, served two congregational dinners (one in honor of Dr. Harry in recognition of his valuable services to Calvary), held a Christmas tea, prepared jars of fruit and vegetables “in our own church basement” and sent these to the Germantown Home, and sold vanilla extract, wax paper, and Christmas cards. The ladies bought two gas stoves for the church kitchen with the proceeds from these sales. God bless the Ladies!

Pastor Miller’s six-year ministry (he was officially called in July 1937 and installed as our pastor on September 26, 1937) was marked by the persistence of old problems and the beginnings of needed initiatives. The congregation continued to depend on the Ministerium for financial assistance; while the dollar amount diminished over the years, the aid was requested and provided annually. We were not self-sufficient, not just yet. Council faced the monthly dilemma of deciding which bills to pay and which to hold “until money becomes available.” In May 1937 Treasurer Howard

Miller told Council that “the treasury [is] depleted,” and that we faced a \$350 to \$400 shortfall in receipts for the year. This was hardly surprising because, as so often happens in many churches, “A little group of about a dozen families contribute almost 70% of the total.” At first, the Ministerium Missions Board made up the deficiency, but in time Pastor Miller was asked to accept reduced monthly salary payments. As was true with Pastor Evans in 1934, Pastor Miller was owed salary when he completed his ministry at Calvary in 1942. The brightness of 1936 began to dim, even within the first year.

There were the “usual” reasons for the shortages. Some members were unable to fulfill their pledges and some could give nothing (these were depression years). In September 1938 Council noted the “steady falling off in receipts as compared with last year” so Dr. Bertolet was called in “to go over our financial situation.” The church building was the next problem. We had purchased a “previously-owned” structure. We soon learned that repairs and renovations of some magnitude had to be

---

## One could almost say that Calvary was beginning "to flourish."

---

made to fit the building to our needs. This should not have surprised anyone. When these costs were added to interest payments, the cost of coal, water, and electrical service, and the other "usual bills," there wasn't enough money to go around. The maintenance costs would have been much higher had it not been for a genuine spirit of voluntarism that motivated some members. This tradition was established early on at Calvary and has been a hallmark of our members ever since. In addition, we have been blessed over the years by having diligent Property Committees as well as hard-working sextons (Mrs. Wright, the Supplees, and Mr. Stull come to mind).

Calvary was a functioning congregation and Rev. Miller was an aggressive advocate of Lutheranism. In June 1937 he made 37 calls and in October, 44 calls on "prospects" which resulted in 16 members. He continued this kind of hard work every month. In 1939 he reported that he made 748 calls on members and prospects; the result was 23 members. Although not everyone attended service every Sunday, Pastor was laying a firm foundation. He was calling the people of West Chester to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

During these years the church organizations continued the kinds of ministry that made them such an important part of our church life. Sunday School attendance increased from an average of 36 per Sunday to as many as 60. Each year the Sunday School held a picnic at Lenape Park and the children presented a

program and pageant every Christmas. The Ladies' Aid Society held peach festivals and rummage sales, started their soon-to-be-famous sauerkraut dinners (adults, 50 cents, children, 30 cents) and made generous contributions to the Church treasury. One year the ladies thoroughly cleaned the interior of the church building. The Altar Guild held strawberry festivals, block parties, and a Christmas social, while the Luther League hosted district rallies, went on treasure hunts, and held swim parties. The Brotherhood conducted an annual service and banquet, sponsored the congregational Halloween party, and underwrote the cost of some youth activities. The Brotherhood also kept our more than 20 service people in World War II in touch with Calvary by sending them the Sunday bulletin and a variety of pamphlets. Not to be forgotten, the College students held annual receptions and suppers, and met as a Sunday School class taught by Francis A. Schlegel. By the beginning of 1942 the communing membership was 110 persons and the average attendance at Sunday service was 65. One could almost say that Calvary was beginning "to flourish."

With the entry of our country into World War II, Pastor Miller decided to "terminate our delightful association" in order to accept an appointment as a Chaplain in the U.S. Army. His parting words were prophetic: "I know that this congregation under Almighty God's direction will become more effective day by day in the cause of Christ and His Kingdom." Pastor Miller conducted his last service here on September 27, 1942.

## Chapter 6

### **“The full measure of my love, my strength, and my loyalty”**

**Calvary Church was served by supply pastors provided by the Ministerium during the final three months of 1942. In January 1943, The Rev. Charles J. Harris from the Philadelphia Seminary was named Acting Pastor and a congregational committee began the process of calling a pastor. At a special meeting on May 23, 1943, a call was extended to The Rev. William Hartline Ralston.**

His acceptance letter set the tone for his ministry among us: “I pledge to you, my people, the full measure of my love, my strength, and my loyalty.” Even at this early moment in his ministry, we were already his people; we retained this relationship for 18-1/2 eventful years.

Pastor Ralston was born on March 7, 1918, the son of Ralph W. and Bertha (Gonder) Ralston of Pottstown, Pennsylvania. He attended North Coventry High School (where he was the football team’s quarterback), the Hill School, and Muhlenberg College. He graduated from the Philadelphia Seminary in 1943, was ordained on June 13 of that year, and installed at Calvary on July 11. Pastor and his wife Alice E. (Newton) Ralston lived at 121 Dean Street.

During the first three weeks of his pastorate Rev. Ralston conducted Sunday services (attendance 51, 59,

71), made 31 calls on members, placed three members on the inactive list, and offered communion privately to one member. By September, Pastor “put the church filing system in order,” bought a new “Parish Record Book,” and welcomed two persons into membership by profession of faith. He urged Council to initiate a “Debt Reduction Campaign.” Pastor was an “activist for Christ” in the best sense of that term. His nickname was “Pep” (like that of his father who had been a professional baseball player at one time) and he brought to his ministry the same enthusiasm that marked his interest in sports. At congregational meetings, he announced his goals for the following year; those for 1945 were typical: (1) 100% communing; (2) better and regular attendance; (3) add 40 new members; (4) increase Sunday School enrollment and attendance; and (5) have 250 people attend Easter 1945 services (there were 150 people at Calvary on Easter Sunday 1944).

# Lutherans Win Opener In Church League

Two Extra Innings Needed For Champions To Top Methodist Softball Rivals

The Lutherans, last year's champions, got four runs in the ninth inning to defeat the Methodists, 8-5, as Church Softball League competition got under way on Schramm Field last evening.

The game went into extra innings when each team got a run in the seventh for a 4-all tie. After the Lutherans tallied their four in the top of the ninth, the Methodists fought back to get one marker but could not sustain their rally.

A 12-hit attack, led by Lem Brittingham and McKinney, with three bingles apiece, won for the Calvary Evangelical Church team. Hoffman went the distance on the winning hill.

Charley Gibson, who pitched for the Methodists, also led their 9-hit attack with three safeties.

### LUTHERAN

	AB.	R.	H.	O.	A.	E.
L. Brit'gham, ss	5	2	3	0	1	0
McKinney, 3b	5	1	3	6	1	0
Leith, cf	5	1	1	2	1	0
Mitter, lf, c	5	2	1	3	0	0
Volk, 1b	4	0	0	7	0	0
Frain, 2b	3	1	2	1	1	0
Ralston, c	2	1	1	1	1	0
J. Brit'gham, rf	1	0	0	1	0	0
Hoffman, p	2	0	0	1	1	0
Hutchinson, rf	3	0	1	2	0	0
Dopp, lf	3	0	0	2	0	0
Fens'macher, p	2	0	0	0	1	0
Holdman, 2b	2	0	0	0	0	0

Totals ... 42 8 12 27 6 0

### METHODIST

	AB.	R.	H.	O.	A.	E.
Mosteller, ss	4	0	2	5	1	2
Hutton, 2b	3	0	0	1	0	1
Thomas, 2b	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pyle, 3b	4	0	0	1	3	1
B. Clark, cf	4	0	1	1	0	0
Saylor, lf	3	2	1	9	0	0
Kenworthy, 1b	2	1	1	5	0	0
J. Clark, c	4	1	0	3	0	0
Fitch, rf	3	0	1	2	0	0
Schiner, rf	1	0	0	0	0	0
C. Gibson, p	4	1	3	0	1	0

Totals ... 33 5 9 27 5 4

# Hoffman And Lutherans Cop Second In Row

Defending Champions of Church Lead Over Route After Big First Inning

### League Standing

	W.	L.	P.C.
Baptist	2	0	1.000
Lutheran	2	0	1.000
Westminster	1	0	1.000
First Presbyterian	0	0	.000
E'nai B'rith	0	1	.000
Methodist	0	2	.000
Nazarene	0	2	.000

This evening's game: Baptist vs. E'nai B'rith.

The Lutherans and Pitcher Pete Hoffman made it two straight in the Church Softball League last evening with a 13-2 verdict over the Nazarenes at Schramm Field.

Defending champions of the circuit, Hoffman and his mates got off to a six-run lead in the first inning and were never threatened. They added singletons in the third, fourth and fifth and rounded out the attack with a four-run explosion in the seventh.

McKinney led the 16-hit Lutheran bombardment with a home run and two doubles. J. Brittingham also hit a homer for the victors, while George tripled and Hoffman doubled.

Hoffman kept six Nazarene singles so well scattered that their run-scoring effectiveness was at a minimum. He struck out four and walked one.

### LUTHERAN

	AB.	R.	H.	O.	E.
L. Brittingham, ss	3	2	1	2	0
McKinney, 3b	5	3	3	1	2
Leith, cf	3	1	2	1	0
Mitten, lf, c	5	0	1	4	0
Frane, 2b	2	2	1	1	0
Clouser, 1b	3	0	0	3	1
Ralston, c	2	1	1	1	0
Holman, rf	1	1	1	0	0
Hoffman, p	4	1	1	1	0
Reppert, lf	3	0	0	3	0
George, cf	2	1	1	1	0
J. Brittingham, rf	2	1	2	1	0
Hutchinson, 2b	2	0	1	1	0
Verngeren, 1b	2	0	1	1	0

Totals ... 39 13 16 21 3

applied to the anecdote or news item, the Gospel was explained, and the congregation was called on to "go and do likewise." He followed The Liturgy, often sang with the Choir (he had studied vocal music for four years), and after service greeted the congregation at the front door. He did all this with a warm smile and a friendly word for each person who had come to worship.

Although there were only 95 communing members in January 1944, Calvary soon began to benefit from Pastor's hard work as well as the shifts and growth in population that occurred in the late 1940s and early 1950s. For instance, in 1950, 46 accessions were recorded and in 1951 there were 51 more. This was impressive, even phenomenal, for we had never experienced such growth in so short a time. A catered reception was held on occasion for these new members; sometimes an orchestra entertained. A "Young Married Couples Club" was begun in 1951, and communing membership soon reached 100, then 150. Obviously, Calvary was reflecting the realities of the post-war era.

This growth in the size of the congregation had a major impact on Calvary's age-old problems — mortgage, parsonage, inadequacy of the church building, and self-sufficiency. The mortgage was "tackled" first. In 1944 Council created a "Caldic Fund" and raised approximately \$5,000 within a year. Never before had the members and church organizations contributed so generously. The money was applied to the mortgage and, with a little more from current sources, Council had enough to "burn the mortgage" on the church building on December 4, 1944. The Daily Local News called the fund-raising campaign "almost phenomenal" and described Calvary's work as "a story of love for your Church and the Church's Master."

A parsonage for Pastor and Mrs. Ralston was the next problem faced. Simple, good business practice dictated that the congregation should stop paying rent for the Dean Street house and buy a parsonage. In July 1945 the congregation bought a lot in the 400 block of West Nield Street and announced plans to build a parsonage on it in the near future. These plans were postponed in 1946 when it was decided that renovations to the church building were needed more than a

The Lutherans ended the year with a 12-0 record. Softball League manager T. Hathaway Frain was presented the winners' plaque from Harold E. Zimmerman, director of the Community Recreation Commission at a dinner honoring the team

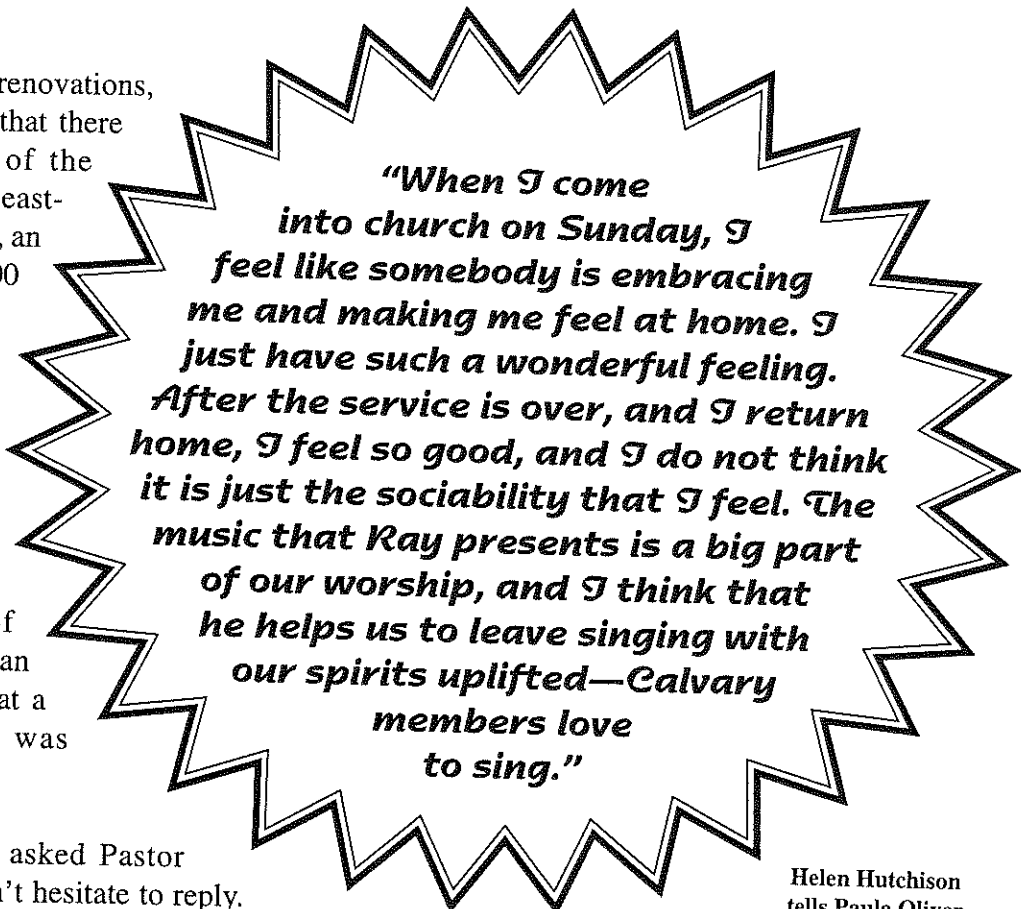
While Pastor Ralston was not always able to report that his annual goals were achieved, he did not waver in his efforts and prayers. His sermons were carefully thought out, typed and placed on the pulpit, and delivered in a straightforward manner. An anecdote or an item from recent news was used as an introduction, then the two Lessons and the Gospel for the Day were

parsonage. In the process of these renovations, the church nave was "turned" so that there was a north-south orientation of the sanctuary instead of the existing east-west one. New pews were installed, an "Assembly Room" seating about 200 was put in place, and a two-manual pipe organ, purchased by the Ladies' Aid Society, was installed. The renovated sanctuary was "rededicated" on November 12, 1950.

The congregation did not forget a parsonage. Instead of building, the congregation bought an 8-room house at 304 Dean Street at a cost of \$13,500; another loan was negotiated.

Someone must have once asked Pastor Ralston "what do you do?" He didn't hesitate to reply. In addition to conducting services — Sunday, mid-week, Christmas, Lenten, Easter, baptisms, confirmation, weddings, funerals — he taught catechetical classes, encouraged the Lutheran Student Association, organized new groups such as the Intermediate Luther League, published "Lutheran Echoes," attended choir rehearsals, prepared and mimeographed the Sunday bulletin, and mailed virtually everything that came from the church. Pastor taught a Sunday School class, served as president of Church Council and attended Council's committee meetings, participated in the activities of the Synod, and, without hesitation, urged the members to contribute generously of their time, talent, and treasure. For years he had no secretarial help, so Mrs. Ralston did much of this work. Even so, on January 4, 1951, he told the congregation, "You are a wonderful people." We were and we are!

We reached a milestone in 1951 when we paid our Benevolence apportionment in full for the first time. It took us 27 years. This experience provides us with a good lesson in compassion and understanding when present-day mission congregations need "a little more time" before achieving this goal.



***"When I come into church on Sunday, I feel like somebody is embracing me and making me feel at home. I just have such a wonderful feeling. After the service is over, and I return home, I feel so good, and I do not think it is just the sociability that I feel. The music that Ray presents is a big part of our worship, and I think that he helps us to leave singing with our spirits uplifted—Calvary members love to sing."***

Helen Hutchison  
tells Paula Oliver

The second half of Pastor Ralston's ministry was much more than a continuation of the first half. Calvary now had a recently-renovated church building that, in fact, was not adequate for our rapidly-expanding membership. Seventy-five adults became members in 1952 (now there were 305 communing members) and contributions were running ahead of the budget by as much as from 10% to 15%. Because of our size, we began two communion services in November 1952, the first at 8:30 AM and the second at the traditional 10:45 AM. The first Sunday this was done, there were 132 communicants at the earlier service and 190 at the later. We had congregational committees—Worship and Music, Membership and Evangelism, Welfare of the Sick and Needy, Finance, Property, and Publicity. We even had a Director of Athletics (to head up our championship ball team)!

Calvary had to expand, but what was the best way in which to do this? Some members wanted to purchase lots adjacent to the church property and add on to the building. This idea was thwarted when it was found that no suitable lots were available. Consequently,



Church Council formed a committee in December 1952 "to undertake the very necessary expansion program." No committee in Calvary's 30-year history had assumed such a heavy burden of responsibility nor had any performed its duties so capably. By February 1954 the committee, consisting of J. Carl Empie, John Powell, Walter S. MacLaughlin, William Thomas, Horace Leith, T. Hathaway Frain, Paul Williams, and others, formed itself into four sub-committees: Executive, Survey and Design, Finance, and Promotion.

First, the committee asked itself, on behalf of the congregation, whether we should expand the present building to its limit or sell the building and lot and establish our church at another location. To do this, they made a careful study of our congregation — our present status, our plans for the future — and came up with both startling information and innovative ideas. The committee projected a confirmed membership of 700 in 1960 (it was 404 in December 1953) and attendance at

Sunday School that would rise by about 75%. Pastor and this committee had "vision," too. Our present building could not satisfy our anticipated needs, so the committee told the congregation that we should find a new location and build there.

The congregation, at a special meeting on March 21, 1954, endorsed this recommendation and gave the committee authority to proceed. Perhaps some even recalled Luke 12:32.

The committee's selection of a site for the new church building was done with skill and imagination. It was agreed that the site had to be in the vicinity of the College but also located so that it would conveniently serve members who lived in the borough as well as those in East and West Goshen, East Bradford, Westtown, Thornbury, and West Whiteland Townships. The site had to be affordable and have ample space for future expansion and for parking. At least 16 sites were

considered; the committee recommended the one located at the northwest corner of South New Street and West Rosedale Avenue in the borough with 158' frontage on Rosedale Avenue and 210' frontage on New Street. The cost was \$5,000. The choice was an excellent one, for it met all the requirements.

To help pay the cost of the land and the proposed new building, Council placed the present building and lot on the market. The Bible Presbyterian Church made an acceptable bid for the land, building, pews, and organ (\$45,000). An agreement regarding joint tenancy was reached; Calvary promised to vacate the site no later than September 1, 1956.



Ground-breaking ceremony: George Cressman, Howard Miller, Carl Empie, Pastor Ralston, Horace Leith, Paul Nagle.

Concurrent with this, a vigorous fund-raising campaign (newsletters, visits, temple talks, all locally-organized) resulted in pledges of more than \$75,000. This entire effort, accomplished during 1954, was carefully planned, skillfully conducted, and enthusiastically supported. Now, at last, Calvary was ready to assume the mantle of leadership in the area's religious life. It has continued in this role for almost half a century.

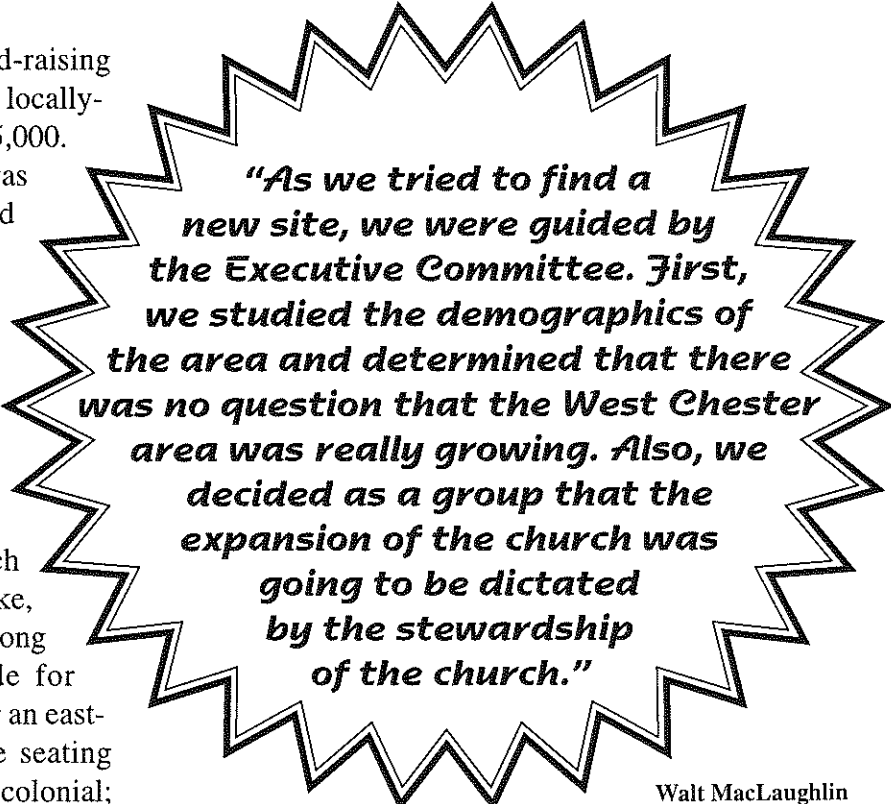
From the summer of 1954 until the summer of 1957, the Building Committee and the Church Council spent untold hours planning and directing the construction of our new church home. As designed by Dollar, Bonner & Blake, architects, the building was 60' wide and 100' long with a full basement; provision was made for extending the north end of the building and for an east-west orientation of the nave, if needed. The seating capacity was about 400. The architecture was colonial; steel, concrete and brick were used in construction. When Pastor announced that 89 members were added in 1954, the need for this larger church facility was even more obvious.

When the architects' designs and specifications were ready for bid by contractors, Koedding, Inc., Lansdowne, Pa. won the contract with a bid of \$147,415. Following a brief service of blessing the church site and a ground-breaking ceremony on July 10, 1955, construction was begun.

Construction work moved along during 1955-1956 as planned except for a slow-down in the delivery of steel that set the schedule back about five months. More than 75% of the pledges were paid on time and in full, a good sign that the members fully supported the project. While some memorials from the "old" church were placed in the "new" building, other memorials, such as nave pews, the crucifix window in the south wall of the nave, nave windows, and the organ were solicited.

The cornerstone was laid on June 24, 1956.

In late August 1956, the Bible Presbyterian congregation took possession of the old church. Once



***"As we tried to find a new site, we were guided by the Executive Committee. First, we studied the demographics of the area and determined that there was no question that the West Chester area was really growing. Also, we decided as a group that the expansion of the church was going to be dictated by the stewardship of the church."***

Walt MacLaughlin  
tells Paula Oliver

again Calvary's members did not have a church building in which to worship. The solution was almost obvious, at least to the "older" members — return to the New Century Club. Beginning on September 2 and continuing until early March 1957, Lutheran services and activities were held at the Club. The change of location did not diminish attendance at services. In September 1956 the average was 295 persons; in October, 351; in November, 310; and in December, 335. Pastor reported another large increase in membership for 1956 when 86 adults were received and 25 children were baptized. Some members wondered if the building now under construction was going to be adequate even for the 1960s.

All of this demonstrated that, as Pastor put it, for Calvary "Christ Comes First." The 1950s was a decade of great achievement in many facets of church life. The choirs, especially the Junior Choir, led by Jane Leith, and later Karlene Brittingham, added much to our worship life. The Ladies' Aid Society made gowns for the choir, catered dinners, sold candy and cakes, pledged \$1,500 to the Building Fund, and honored Ernest Waxbom and Edward Harshberger, sons of Calvary who were preparing for careers in the ministry. The Altar Guild was faithful in its work for our communion



Cornerstone Ceremony: Carl Empie, Harry Hutchison, Howard Miller, Paul Williams, Fred Bauman (hidden) and an unknown member with Pastor Ralston

month of dedications was held on the evening of March 17 when an organ recital was presented.

Pastor Ralston put the month's events into perspective when he said, "A church is valuable only as it is used and serves its people. May the Cross of Jesus ever point the way to all who enter or pass by, to Him whose glory this church is built."

Other changes soon followed. Marilyn Dennish, the church organist, resigned and John Gutscher, the choir director, stepped aside to enable Council to appoint an organist-choir director. Council auditioned (we had never

services. The Brotherhood sponsored the softball team that played in a local league. A new group, "Lutheran Church Women" supported our missionary ministry. On Pentecost Sunday 1952, we welcomed Heinrich and Hermine Komnick, displaced Evangelical Lutherans from war-ravaged Europe, into our membership.

On Sunday, March 3, 1957 and for the remainder of the month, we dedicated our new church building. Beginning with the opening lines of that Sunday's first hymn — "Open now thy gates of Beauty, Zion, let me enter there..." to the closing hymn on March 10, "Now Thank We All Our God," our members and the community gave thanks to God for this great work. At the dedication service on March 3, The Rev. George F. Harkins, Assistant to the President of the ULCA, preached. That evening "Community Night" was observed when ministers and people from the area participated. Monday night was "College Night," at which Rev. Harshberger preached and Mr. Waxbom was the liturgist. On Ash Wednesday, Communion services were held at 6:30 AM and 7:30 PM. The Rev. Henry B. Luffberry, pastor of Tabernacle, Philadelphia, and a close friend of Rev. Ralston, preached at the earlier service. Our pastor preached at a "Service of Special Thanksgiving" on March 10. The final event in this

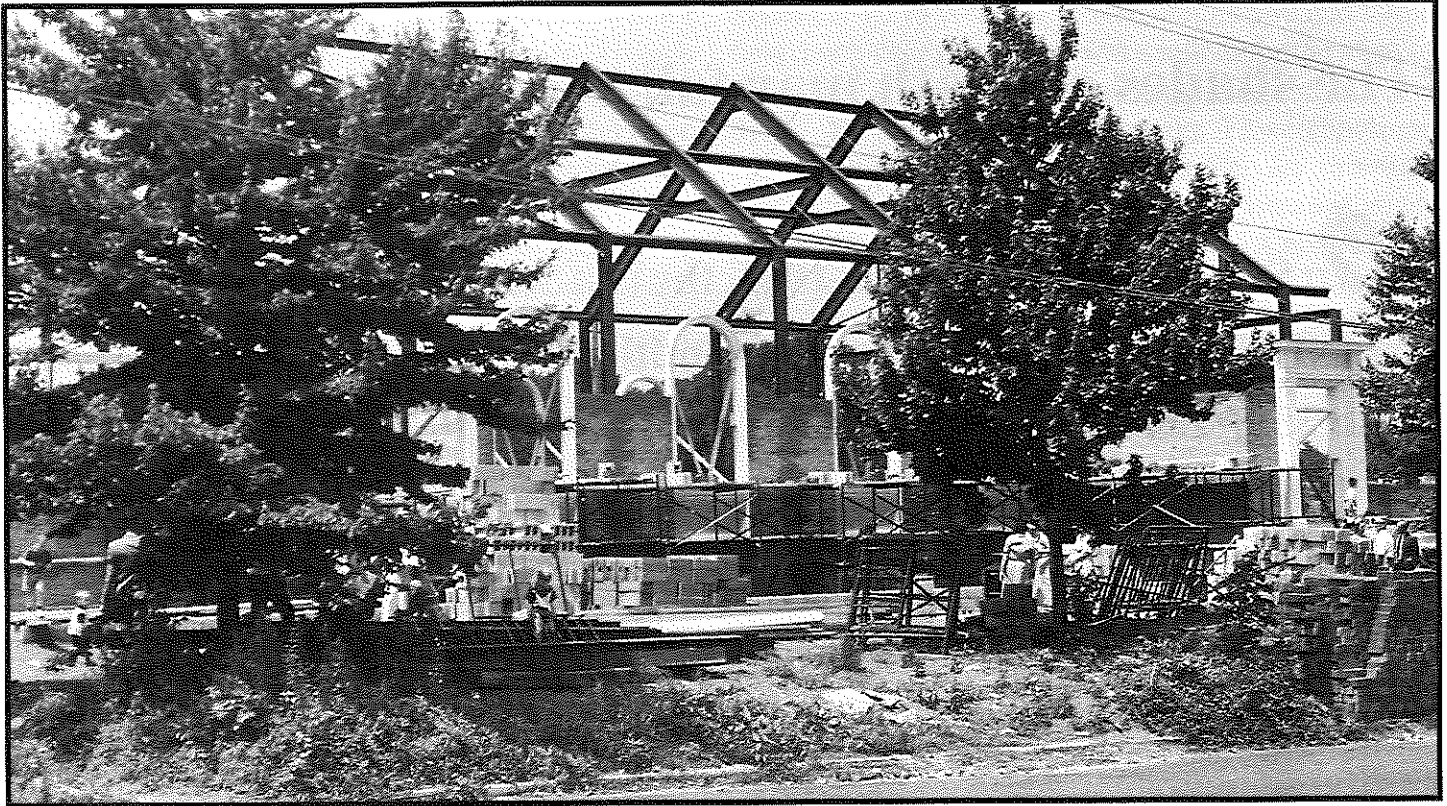
done this before) Miss Julia Anderson and drew up a contract appointing her to this new position. Miss Anderson promised to use "due diligence...to promote the church music...to a high degree of excellence and efficiency." During the next ten years she fulfilled her appointment admirably, developing the choirs and introducing the congregation to the best in sacred music. A spirit of professionalism seemed to infuse everything that Calvary did.

The net gain of 101 members in 1957 was something never before thought possible. In fact, the building designed to serve 700 confirmed members in 1960, was home to 691 confirmed members on December 31, 1957. In typical fashion, Council set 1,000 confirmed members as the new goal for 1960. When the call went out for volunteers to clean the Sunday School room floor, Pastor took the lead and "the call was oversubscribed." The Luther League asked permission to hold a monthly dance at church in a "canteen setting;" we encouraged them to do so, "with proper supervision." We made "extra payments" on the mortgage, hired a much-needed part-time secretary, and developed "a more sophisticated budget system." Rather than make repairs to the parsonage at an estimated cost of \$3,000, the congregation purchased a lot on South

---

**“A spirit of professionalism seemed to infuse everything that Calvary did.”**

---



Members frequently inspected progress of the new church building

New Street below Rosedale and built a parsonage “that not only would be adequate for any pastor and his family, but, would also speak to the community of our congregation’s concern for her pastors.” The parsonage was a two-story, four-bedroom, 2-1/2 bath home with a 2-car garage. It was built by Schmidt & Nyce of West Chester during the summer and fall of 1958 and was dedicated on December 14, 1958. The Dean Street parsonage was sold.

By the end of the 1950s, Calvary annually gave over \$10,000 for Benevolence purposes, in marked contrast to our earlier experiences. We made generous contributions to Lutheran World Action as well as the other synodical and national Lutheran agencies. Our men parked cars in our lot during football games at the West Chester State Teachers College Stadium across South New Street and used the proceeds to support our

softball team. Our ladies were so successful in their activities that they were able to donate \$1,200 to the Church in 1958 and another \$1,000 for kitchen equipment in 1959. Testimonial dinners were held every year to honor our choirs and the Sunday School staff of teachers and leaders; this was an appropriate way to show the congregation’s appreciation for the good work done by these volunteers. The crowded conditions in the Sunday School rooms made it necessary to hold Primary and Beginners classes at 8:30 AM. Early in 1961 the women were organized into circles (Pastor said it was done with “harmony”) and the Mixing Bowl “got off to a good start.” Some found it hard to believe that in 1961 there were 882 confirmed members in our congregation and that the Sunday School had 375 students enrolled. At last, Council hired Maida Merrick as Church Secretary (and for Pastor, too). She was the right person for this demanding position and served capably for nearly 25 years.

## Chapter 7

### **“The shades of death may fall over our human lives”**

**O**n Sunday, November 26, 1961, the last Sunday of the Church year, Pastor Ralston preached a sermon entitled “The Holy Way.” He used Isaiah 35:8-10 as his text: “And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way.” He said, “There is no guarantee that more time will be forthcoming; that perhaps tomorrow’s dawn will not be seen; that at any moment the shades of death may fall over our human lives.” He called on each member to “Live each day walking in the Way of Righteousness.”

This sermon burned its way into every member’s heart, if not on that day, most certainly during that week. Next day, Monday, a day some pastors use as a “day off,” Pastor Ralston visited a prospective member who lived south of town. While driving back to West Chester on Route 202 Pastor suffered a heart attack. An attendant at a nearby service station rushed him to Chester County Hospital. Attempts were made there to revive him but these were unsuccessful. Pastor was dead; he was 43 years old.

We viewed Pastor’s body at Calvary on December 1 and the Service for the Burial of the Dead was conducted on December 2. Pastor was buried in Highland Memorial Park, Pottstown. He was survived by his wife and their son, Mark, and by his brother Ralph W. Ralston, Jr.

There are innumerable Bible passages that one might read when thinking about Pastor Ralston and his

ministry at Calvary. Isaiah 62:10-12 speaks to us most directly: “Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the high way, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples...And they shall be called the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.” To this we say “Amen.”

In late spring 1962 our congregation began a Ralston Memorial Fund, the proceeds from which were used to add a steeple to the church building. Built of steel and faced with anodized aluminum to match the colonial lines of our building, the steeple reached a height of 100’ above street level. It was dedicated on December 9, 1962. A plaque, placed inside the front door of our church, reads, “The steeple of this church has been erected by members and friends as a token of gratitude for Pastor Ralston’s loyalty to his calling, his love for his people, and his devotion to God.” We remembered the words of his 1943 letter in which he accepted our call.



A testimonial to Rev. Ralston's pastorate was the skillful way in which Council and the congregation performed God's work during the pastoral interim. A Pulpit Committee (they were known as the "Five H's"—Helen Miller, Helen Hutchison, Howard Malick, Horace Leith, and Henry Skillman) began the search for a pastor. It was Calvary's good fortune that The Rev. Robert Harris Gearhart, Jr. was available to serve as our Interim Pastor. Dr. Bob, a veteran of World War I and a long-time pastor to college students in the Philadelphia area, was a wise and friendly person. He was the kind of leader that Calvary needed in this dark hour. We were a large church

(our confirmed membership in January 1962 was 950, reflecting the addition of 91 adults in 1961), one that needed the attention of an experienced person. He conducted Sunday services (on February 25, 1962, he asked us "Have you ever looked around you and found how much very good work was spoiled, for the want of doing just a little more?") and he visited the sick and dying. Dr. Gearhart instructed the 13 catechumen, founded the "Order of St. John" at Calvary to attract youngsters to serve as Crucifers, and attended every session of our 1962 Vacation Bible School. Calvary could not have found a more devoted and loyal pastor to serve us during the interim.



Search Committee  
(known as the Five H's)—  
Helen Hutchison, Howard Leith,  
Helen Miller, Howard Malick,  
Henry Skillman

## Chapter 8

### “The best years of my life”

**The Pulpit Committee, having attended services at each of the three candidates' churches and interviewed each man, recommended the “one man who stood out above all others,” Elwood William Reitz, to be Calvary's pastor. He preached here at both services on May 27, 1962, and was called “by an overwhelming majority” at the congregational meeting following the service. He began his ministry among us on August 1, 1962.**

Pastor Reitz, the son of William O. and Flora (Brown) Reitz, was born on June 5, 1921 at Leck Kill, near Sunbury, Pennsylvania; he graduated from Upper Mahanoy Township High School, Muhlenberg College (1942) and the Philadelphia Seminary (1945). His first pastorate was Zion, Leacock (a few miles north of Lancaster) where he served from 1945 to 1950. His second was St. Michael, Sellersville, from 1950 to 1962. Pastor, his wife Delphine, and their daughters Doris, Carol, and Mary Beth moved into the parsonage at 800 South New Street.

Pastor set several “ground rules” for his ministry when he attended his first Council meeting. He said he would not accept additional compensation from any member for special services, and that he intended to initiate as many person-to-person visits with members as were possible. He wanted to keep one night a week free of meetings (a goal seldom achieved), and he announced that confirmation would be a three-year program. He, too, had goals that he identified, in this instance for 1963: (1) Education—more space; (2) Staff—Assistant Pastor; a Director of Christian

Education; (3) Debt reduction; (4) Benevolence; (5) Strengthening the Sunday School teaching staff through Bible study; (6) A larger program for the youth and young adults; and (7) Conduct a talent survey of the membership. This was an ambitious program, meant not to be accomplished in the first year, but as a series of on-going goals.

Calvary continued to grow, both in membership and program, in the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, late in 1962, 45 Luther Leaguers attended a social held at church and 135 College students enjoyed a Lutheran Student Association dinner and meeting. This was phenomenal! To accommodate the overflow of youngsters, the Sunday School added classes at 8:30 AM. Never before had so many young people been so involved in church activities. In part because of this, the Christian Education Committee and the newly-formed Parish Planning Committee undertook a study of our space needs. They found that attendance of children at Sunday School had doubled in the previous decade and that there were 743 children and youth members presently on our rolls. Not only did we need more space



Construction begins in 1966 on the Education Wing



Pastor Reitz (far left) at the Dedication Ceremonies of the Education Wing

for our young people, but we also needed more space for the staff and for a parlor, library, choir room, and storage. If we were to build we needed more land, so we purchased the lot and house owned by Gordon and Edna Birchard on South New Street just to the north of our property. Rather than demolish the house, we used it for Sunday School purposes until June 1966 when a "house-moving company" bought it and hauled it away.

In January 1966 the design for additions to and alterations of our church building were completed by Mansell, McGettigan & Fugate, our architects, and approved by the congregation. Concurrent with this and without the use of professional fund raising services,

some 93 church men visited the membership and gathered \$145,312 in pledges. A contract for the construction was signed in June with the Phoenix Building & Construction Company, Phoenixville, Pa. and ground was broken on June 24, 1966. We began to use our "Education Wing" on Rally Day, September 10, 1967.

The addition of classrooms, offices, and other spaces was "the right move" for Calvary. Not only were we able to better serve our needs but now we began to receive requests from "outside groups" that wanted space for their meetings. At first we welcomed the 4-H Club and the Roslyn Garden Club and others but, because so many were asking, Council ruled in 1969 that only groups with a Calvary connection could use our building. However, we did lease classroom space to the Chester County Intermediate School Board and to Head Start. Both the congregation and the community were making good use of our facilities.

Many other changes occurred in the 1960s. The Lutheran Church Women and their Circles (Deborah, Elizabeth, Hannah, Abigail, Sarah, and Esther) served dinners, visited shut-ins, and delivered flowers. Although Pastor Reitz said he had been trained in Seminary to be the only pastor of a church, he recognized the need for assistance. At a special congregational meeting on March 1, 1964, The Rev. William L. Mattis, a graduate of Drexel Institute of Technology and a senior at Seminary, was called as Associate Pastor. He was installed in June.

Our Evangelism Committee, one of the most effective of the ten congregational committees, urged Council to sponsor a "Lutheran mission" in the West

Chester area. Because this committee's members made many calls on prospective members each month, they had some sense of trends in local population growth and housing developments. After meeting with the ULCA Board of American Missions, the committee made a church survey of the area east of West Chester borough. From this preliminary work on the part of Calvary in 1965 and 1966, Advent Lutheran Church, located near the intersection of Routes 3 and 352, was formed. We encouraged 116 adult and 55 child members of our church to consider joining this mission; 65 persons accepted.

The story of Advent's birth and early growth was told in the November 9, 1966 issue of *The Lutheran*. Calvary received appropriate recognition for our generous efforts. The Evangelism Committee also started a "Shepherding" program that served to bind our members more firmly in their Christian fellowship. The Social Ministry Committee began its work in January 1963. It extended Christian compassion and helpfulness to members and non-members alike.

There were many other significant events that occurred. A Church Directory was published, the first of many. Lay members, approved by Council, served as Lectors and Communion Assistants, and we broadcast our worship services over a local radio station. The congregation extended generous hospitality to John Wealer and Henry Kwekwe and the latter's family, all from Liberia, during the time the two men pursued graduate degrees at West Chester State College. Mrs. Vashti Humanick was elected to Church Council in 1966, the first woman to serve since the 1930s. In 1965, after 40 years as our Treasurer, Howard "Pop" Miller declined reelection. Herbert Ressler was elected to serve as our Financial Secretary in April 1968 when "Jake" Walters, who had served us for two decades, resigned.

In the mid-1960s Julia Anderson decided to pursue a graduate degree in music and, after a year's sabbatical from her position as our Organist-Choir Director, resigned in order to complete her studies. During her absence (1966-1967) H. Ray Hunsicker and others substituted at the console. When the Music and Worship Committee recommended Mr. Hunsicker to be our Organist-Choir Director, he accepted and officially

began his duties on July 2, 1967. In the meantime, Pastor Mattis, having received a call to serve Immanuel, Philadelphia, submitted his resignation.

From time to time, Pastor Reitz made reports to Council on what could be called "the state of Calvary Church." In June 1969 he made a study of the "mobility" of our members. In answer to the question, "How many years have you been a member of Calvary?" the results produced these interesting statistics:

- 181—Members for 15 or more years**
- 213—Members for from 10 to 15 years**
- 276—Members for from 5 to 10 years**
- 450—Members for less than 5 years**

One of the most amazing parts of this survey was the evidence that 726 members, that is, 65% of the total respondents, were members for less than 10 years. Calvary was, indeed, a young church and a mobile one as well.

In 1976 Pastor presented the results of another of his studies for the congregation to ponder:

- 40% of those who joined in 1972 have moved**
- 26% of those who joined in 1973 have moved**
- 20% of those who joined in 1974 have moved**
- 8% of those who joined in 1975 have moved**

He added, possibly in desperation or perhaps frustration, that some who had joined in 1976 had already moved.

Despite the mobility of our members, Calvary continued to grow in attendance at services, in contributions, and in service to the community. Pastor set a standard in this last category by serving as President of the Ministerial Association in 1970, the West Chester Religious Council in 1976-77, and the West Chester Rotary Club in 1980.

Several times in the 1960s and 1970s Pastor and Church Council experimented with a variety of time schedules for Sunday School classes and worship

---

**“...pastors have confessed that ‘things work at Calvary because Sister Janice is here’.”**

---

services. The most popular, at least to many congregants, was 8:30 AM, Worship Service; 9:45 AM, Sunday School; and 11:00 AM, Worship Service. Because the Sunday School continued to grow (on September 10, 1967 there were 400 persons present), another pattern had concurrent Worship Services and Sunday Schools at 8:30 AM and 9:45 AM. There were other configurations, each with its supporters (and, of course, critics) so that fine-tuning the Sunday morning schedule tended to be an on-going process. Council did direct that Holy Communion be administered on the first Sunday of each month.



**Luncheon for Sister Janice celebrating 20 years as deaconess: Rev. Ed Saling, Sister Collette Brice, Barbara Painter, Sister Janice, James Murphy, Pastor Almquist, Joanie Peterson**

To assist Pastor, especially in our ministry to our Youth, Elton Grunden, John Koons, and Fritz Ruccius, students at the Seminary, served in a part-time status from time-to-time. In September 1969 Theona M. Hasley was named Director of Education and Youth Work. Miss Hasley had seven years of prior experience in this field and provided a high level of professional leadership for our youth program. However, because of diminished Current Expenses receipts in mid-1971, her appointment was terminated. In April 1974 The Rev. Lowell A. Anderson joined our staff as Pastoral Associate, not only to work in Christian Education but also to preach at least once a month. He served for more than a year before accepting a call from a congregation in Texas.

The need for Pastoral assistance was not fully met until September 1976 when Sister Janice Painter was installed as Director of Christian Education and Youth Work. Sister Janice is a graduate of Thiel College and the Lutheran School for Church Workers in Baltimore. She was set apart as a Deaconess in September 1965. Sister served congregations in New Philadelphia, Ohio, and Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania before beginning her work with us. Over the years other duties were added so that she made hospital calls, visited members in their homes, preached on occasion, and eventually became our Parish Administrator. More often

than not the pastors have confessed that “things work at Calvary because Sister Janice is here.”

From almost the moment of his appointment as Organist-Choir Director in 1967, Mr. Hunsicker expanded our music ministry into areas not thought possible in the past. Our Senior, or Chancel Choir grew in size until 30, sometimes 40, and even 50 or more voices made a “Joyful Noise” Sunday after Sunday. Other choirs (Youth, Junior, and Cherub) were expanded or begun in order to serve every age group. Drucilla Schutte assisted with these choirs; in time, she was appointed Associate Director of Music. The Christmas and Easter seasons were made even more beautiful by the Choirs’ special music; Dubois’ “Seven Last Words” in March 1968; Handel’s “Messiah” in December 1970; Mendelssohn’s “Elijah” and Schubert’s “Mass in G” presented with string and brass instrumental accompaniment were typical. When Menotti’s “Amahl and the Night Visitors” (first performed at Calvary in 1968) was presented at two performances in December 1981, more than 700 people attended. Our children played an important part in this ministry when they presented “Moses and the Freedom Fanatics” (1980), “Babble at Babel” (1981), “Barbecue for Ben” (1983), “Oh, Jonah” (1997) and others, all to the delight of parents and friends. On occasion, the Chancel Choir joined the choirs from the local First Presbyterian Church

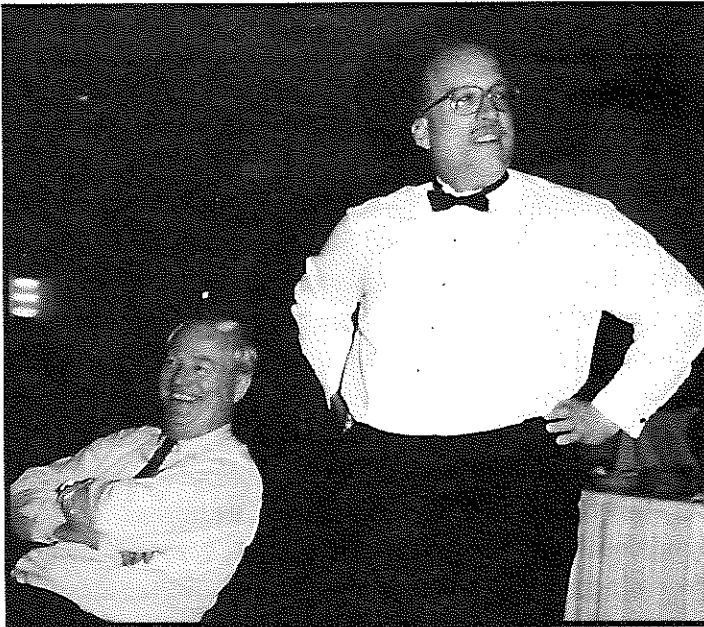


---

## “Calvary...a place where people do ‘sing unto the Lord a new song’.”

---

or The Methodist Church of West Chester in these special performances, giving the program at Calvary one week and at the cooperating church another Sunday. Several of the Chancel Choir’s special projects attracted considerable congregational support. In 1979 the first of two 33- 1/3 rpm stereo recordings entitled “Christmas at Calvary” was cut; the second was done in 1983. Another recording entitled “Festival of Favorite Anthems” soon followed. When nearby Longwood Gardens offered area choirs the opportunity to sing there during the Christmas season, our choir was one of the first to receive an invitation (1980). This wonderful tradition continued every other year. Our music ministry was further enhanced in 1979 by the addition of handbells presented to the Church in memory of Dr. Charles Hamilton (1919-1978) by his family. It was not long before we had several well-trained handbell choirs under the direction of Drucilla Schutte and Kendra Werner.



Jim Murphy enjoys a laugh with Ray Hunsicker during the 25th anniversary celebration of Ray’s music ministry

The one thing lacking in Calvary’s ministry of music was a first-rate organ. In March 1976 a special organ committee recommended that a new organ be purchased and used in conjunction with the three-manual console that had been installed in 1971. Although some parts of the original 1957 instrument were used, it is

proper to say that the Austin Memorial Organ of 1978 is a new organ. Along with the beautiful hymns in our new hymnals and the leadership of the choirs, Calvary has acquired a well-earned reputation as a place where people do “sing unto the Lord a new song.”

Early in 1967 several members suggested that, with the space now available in the Education wing, Calvary should have a Nursery School. After several committees reacted favorably, Council gave its approval in January 1970. It was understood that the school would be self-supporting, only accredited teachers would be employed, class size would be small, Calvary children would be given priority in enrollment until a preannounced deadline date, and tuition would be charged. Barbara Reis was appointed to head the school. In September 1971, classes began when 14 four-year olds attended sessions for three mornings a week. Soon an afternoon session was added, then classes for three-year olds, and, more recently, a class for two-year olds. Almost every class was fully-enrolled every year. The Nursery School is operated in a professional and business-like manner and has received much praise from parents and educators. The school makes an annual monetary contribution to the church treasury.

In the late 1960s area Lutheran pastors asked their congregations to provide a housing allowance for them rather than a parsonage. At Calvary, the idea was first discussed in 1968 and again in 1970, but no action was taken. In 1977, however, Council recommended and the congregation (in 1978) approved the sale of the parsonage. A line item was entered in the annual budget to provide a monthly pastoral housing allowance. Pastor Reitz purchased a home at nearby 701 South Brandywine Street, whereupon the South New Street parsonage was sold. This arrangement has worked to the advantage of both Church and pastor.

The Social Ministry Committee was one of the most active groups at Calvary during the 1970s. It arranged dinners and collected clothing for the guests at Pocopson Home and sent 200 blankets to Lutheran World Relief. The committee collected and sent canned food

to the Inner City (Philadelphia and Chester), adopted local families during the holidays, and recommended that Benevolence funds be sent to the Chester County Migrant Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, and the West Chester Community Center. We came to realize that all members of Calvary are part of the Social Ministry Committee.

With a congregation that continued to grow in numbers, a building that provided ample space, and an efficient staff and committee structure, Calvary moved into an extensive program of congregational activities. Sunday School attendance remained firm in the late 1970s and early 1980s and there were Junior High and Senior High Youth Groups. The young people held pancake breakfasts and gave the proceeds to World Hunger Relief, cooked almost 2,000 hot dogs for the Special Olympics for the Handicapped, and collected funds for UNICEF. They participated in West Chester Borough's "Old Fashioned Christmas," went caroling at the homes of shut-ins, and enjoyed roller-skating, bowling parties, and tubing on the Brandywine. Kevin Kauffman, Kelly Whitney and Mike Vetrulli assisted with many of these activities. On Sunday afternoons our younger members helped Pastor Reitz conduct services at area nursing homes. The annual Vacation Church School attracted about 125 youngsters while the Confirmation Classes varied in size from a low of 19 students to a high of 42 (1964). Council and the congregation recognized the important work done for Calvary by our youth by designating a seat on Council exclusively for a younger member; Rick Merrell, Anand Rayapati, Don Wiening, and Amy Baker are among those who served.

The Lutheran Student Association for college-age students was supplemented by the Ecumenical Campus Ministry in 1976. This ministry was supported by a number of local Protestant churches. Calvary provided funds, office space, and support services. Bible study, counseling sessions, attendance at conferences and retreats, and visits to church-related sites were led by The Revs. Darryl Clements, Mark Randall, and Lauren L. Chaffee.

Our older congregants were equally active. Koinonia, small groups of caring members who share

Christian fellowship, study, and prayer, was introduced to Calvary in September 1980. Jim and Janet Murphy took the lead. Within two years, there were several Koinonia groups that met biweekly. Mixing Bowl provided a combination of dinners, fellowship, speakers, and other programs for our "senior" members. A Lay School of Religion flourished for a number of years; Dr. Richard Jeske from the Seminary faculty was a popular presenter. "Lutheran Night at the Phillies" was well supported, for it offered not only a night at the ball park but also the knowledge that a portion of the admission price was given to the "Lutheran Charities Appeal." For a number of years, about 20 couples and singles prepared "Lenten Devotions" booklets which were meaningful helps in our private Lenten worship. At Christmas members rang bells at the malls for the benefit of the Salvation Army. Twice each month we prepared food and served dinners to the homeless at the Army. Many Calvary members also served on the Army's board. Food was collected for the Community Food Bank, meals were delivered for "Meals-on-Wheels" and we hosted the Red Cross blood drive. We recorded our Sunday worship service for use by our shut-ins. This accumulation of service to our fellow men and women is the "heart of Calvary" in action.

For several years Calvary supported Mrs. Elizabeth Schlenker, a Lutheran missionary in Guyana, South America. We also sponsored the Seangly Chum family from Cambodia in 1976. Although the family remained in our area for less than a year they felt warmly welcomed. In September 1983, Janusz, Stanislaw, and two-year old Lukasz Kuzniar from Poland became a part of our congregation. Janusz had been active in the "Solidarity" movement in his homeland and had been imprisoned there for some time. We arranged for an apartment and provided food and clothing for the family until Janusz found work. A member provided dental care and another, pediatric care, both at no cost. When the Kuzniar family moved to Northeast Philadelphia in 1985, Janusz wrote, "We will never forget how caring you all were towards us." Calvary was "a caring place."

The church's work was usually led by our Council committees: Christian Education, Evangelism, Stewardship, Finance, Property, Social Ministry, Worship

and Music, Youth, and Campus Ministry. The Finance and Stewardship Committees developed many successful "Every Member Responds" campaigns (conducted by personal visits and by mail) in which they stressed the "3 R's" of giving — Responsively, Regularly, and Rejoicingly. The monthly and annual financial reports of Treasurer (since 1972) Henry H. Skillman were models of clarity and detail. Council also initiated a Repair and Capital Fund, an Organ Improvement Fund, and a General Memorial Fund. A Permanent Endowment Fund was created when we learned that Calvary was a major beneficiary in the wills of Mary Elizabeth Cope and Beverly Drumm. A Business Advisory Committee was formed to advise Council on the investments that were a part of these funds. In 1983 Council took the first steps toward modernizing our church office equipment.

On Easter Sunday 1980, 947 persons partook of the bread and wine of Holy Communion. In 1981, 97 persons were received into membership. Pastor reported that our congregation had 865 communing members in February 1983, and that our annual unified budget exceeded \$220,000. The growth continued.

Several times in the early 1980s, Pastor Reitz told Council that he did not expect to continue his ministry at Calvary for much longer. In April 1982, he wrote, "I find it more difficult and wearying to be out almost every night of the week" and again "I do not expect to keep up the pace." In December, when Council formed a Personnel Policy Committee to monitor job descriptions, job performance, and the working conditions of all staff members, Pastor wrote a memo to Council in which he described the duties of each staff person, and then concluded with a one-line description of his duties: "He [the Pastor] does the rest that is left." It hardly came as a surprise, when in August 1983, Pastor Reitz told Council that he planned to complete his 39-year ministry by retiring on January 15, 1984. He felt that Calvary, after 21 years of his ministry, "needs new, younger, more vibrant leadership." He called his ministry at Calvary "the best years of my life" and told the congregation that we were "wonderful" and "committed" and that he hoped we would "keep moving forward."

Before Pastor completed his work, he gave us a summary report of his service. He said he had preached more than 1,000 sermons, made more than 20,000 pastoral calls, received 1,909 new members, and baptized 731 persons. He reiterated a statement he had made more than once—"No one pastor can adequately do the work at Calvary that is required."



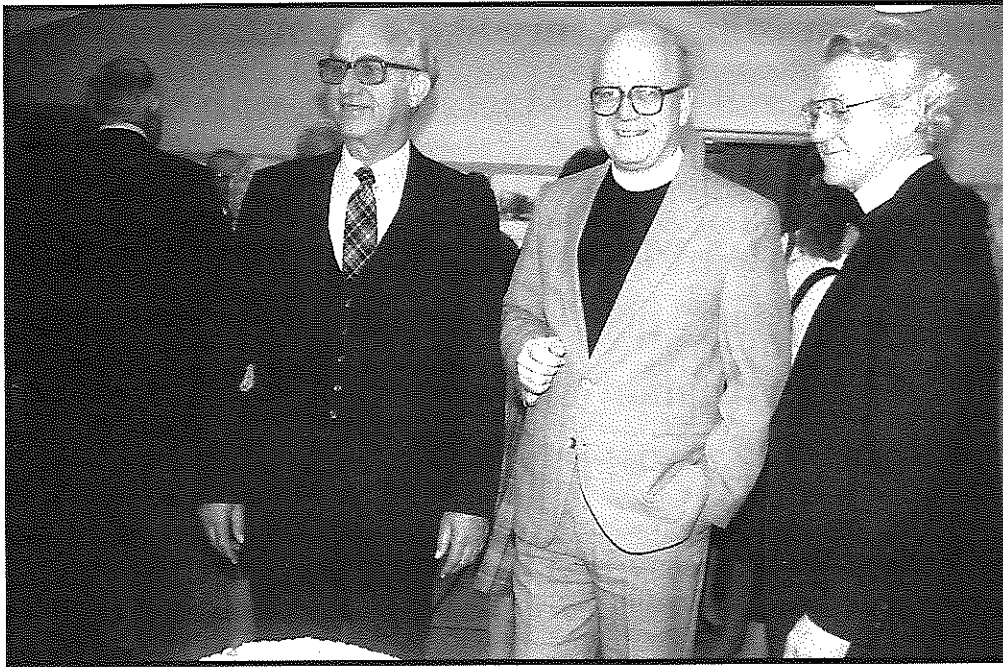
Delphine and Pastor Reitz cutting the cake at a retirement reception

On January 7, 1984, a Retirement Dinner in honor of Pastor Reitz, Delphine, and their daughters was held at the Downingtown Ramada Inn. Carefully planned by a committee chaired by Mrs. Jody Skillman, the evening featured speeches by Pastor's brother, other clergy, friends, and Bishop Lawrence L. Hand. Ray Hunsicker, Dru Schutte, Tim Lutz, and Howard Wood entertained us with their beautiful music. Pastor received a number of gifts and a purse and gave a gracious response. Subsequently, Pastor Reitz was named Pastor Emeritus of Calvary Church. Pastor and his family continued their membership at Calvary for more than a decade after his retirement. In that 1984 summary report, he made one more thing very clear to the congregation—"Pastoral rights cease when Pastor Reitz ceases." It

worked! In 1997 Rev. and Mrs. Reitz moved to Allentown, Pennsylvania.

During the ensuing interim, Sister Janice, in addition to her normal duties, instructed the Confirmation class with the assistance of The Rev. Ralph Peterson of Advent Church. She reported to Council that in January 1984, she made 26 hospital calls, visited five shut-ins,

and attended 16 meetings and "1 rock dance." The Treasurer announced that our Benevolence contributions in 1983 were \$52,700, the highest in our history. The congregation approved the 1984 budget of \$242,100, again the largest in history. Plans were laid for Vacation Bible School, and Marge and Bob Carlson were asked to take the lead in organizing an observance of Calvary's 60th Anniversary.



**Pastor Reitz, Pastor Almquist and Bishop Hand at  
our 60th Anniversary Celebration**

---

## Chapter 9

### **“I shall endeavor to serve...in a manner faithful to the vows I have taken”**

***H*aving received instructions from the Synodical office, Council elected a Pulpit Committee consisting of Henry Skillman, Allan Livingston, Shirley Schimke, Norman Irsch, and Walter MacLaughlin, with Kris Slack, Michael Peich, and Joan Wagner available as alternates. A congregational self-study was completed, the results of which were used by the Pulpit Committee in their search. Supply pastors, provided by the Synodical Office and the Seminary, served the congregation during the interim.**

After interviewing four candidates and hearing each preach, the Committee recommended and Council endorsed the nomination of The Rev. Roy G. Almquist as Calvary's pastor. Rev. Almquist was born in Patterson, New Jersey on April 7, 1940, the son of George J. and Helen Almquist. Pastor graduated from Muhlenberg College (1962) and the Philadelphia Seminary (1966). He holds a Master of Arts degree from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana (1964) and a Doctor of Divinity degree conferred by Muhlenberg College (1992). Rev. Almquist served Gloria Dei, New Milford, New Jersey (1967-1973) and Zion, Saddle River, New Jersey (1973-1984). On June 4, 1984 he and his family visited Calvary and, at the evening service, he preached a trial sermon. The call from the congregation was extended and, in accepting, he wrote, "I shall endeavor to serve...in a manner faithful to the vows I have taken in my Confirmation and in my Ordination." Pastor fulfilled that promise admirably.

Pastor Almquist began his ministry at Calvary on August 19, 1984. His wife Shannon and their

daughters Ingrid and Karin joined him at their home at 701 Goshen Road.

Pastor's installation took place at Calvary on September 10, 1984 at which Rev. Peterson preached and Rev. Reitz served as Lector. (In his letter of invitation to Rev. Reitz, Pastor wrote, "It would mean a lot to me if you do so.") The friendship among the pastors pointed to a very smooth transition. Mrs. Merrick decided to retire as Church Secretary at this time and was succeeded by Mrs. Laurie Strange Swenson.

Before coming to West Chester, Pastor attended a conference on "Computers and the Church" at which his advocacy of the new technology was reinforced. He urged Council to make our Church Office a "state-of-the-art" workplace. Virtually all record-keeping is now done on the computer and, with the later addition of more powerful equipment, Calvary is "fully automated." An improved filing system makes it easier to retrieve records and a more sophisticated telephone system gives the office staff more flexibility. With the help of




knowledgeable church members, Council keeps us abreast of technical improvements. It has not been hesitant to incorporate these into our day-to-day work. Even so, the office work is completed only because there are so many volunteers who put information in the computers and who get the bulletins ready for Sunday and the newsletter for a monthly mailing.

Late in 1983, Council began a study of our Fellowship Hall, its uses and its shortcomings. To virtually no one's surprise, it found we needed more space for Sunday School purposes as well as for meetings and dinners. A new heating system for the church building and more efficient lighting for the hall were also musts. Both Council and the congregation, having reviewed the report, authorized a fund-raising campaign for what came to be known as "RENOVATION — 85." The goal was "an attractive and multi-purpose facility that will truly be a PLACE FOR TOMORROW." Even at this early moment we were looking forward to the 21st century. The alterations and improvements were done with a minimum of interruption of on-going activities. When the work was completed, the church building had new heating and ventilating systems, while fluorescent lighting and synthetic carpet were installed in the hall. "Modernfold" acoustical panel partitions created a quieter environment for Sunday School classes and church meetings. The Community Room was renovated and redecorated and named the "Reitz Room" while the Junior Choir Room was renovated and named the "Ralston Room." We truly have "a place for tomorrow" for the hall and the dedicated rooms were soon put to good use.

During Pastor Almquist's ministry, Calvary moved into many areas of mission that made our church even better known as "a caring place." A "Ministry to the Grieving" was begun in which Pastor and congregants offered care and compassion for those who had lost a loved one. "V-Teams" were formed to provide transportation and meals for members who needed these, and to serve "Bereavement Luncheons" following funerals. A "Prayer Chain" was begun, and more Koinonia groups were organized. As part of our on-going improvements to our property, a ramp was built from the parking lot to a door on the west side of our building. Persons with mobility problems and those in wheelchairs now had easier access to our sanctuary. We made "a ministry of compassion and service which will address the needs of people" one of our congregational goals. To help achieve this and assure that the work was done in a professional manner, Council created the position of "Coordinator of Volunteer Ministries" in October 1986. As successive coordinators, Josephine Cochran, Jane Blandy, Diane Pryor, Linda Haldeman, and Fran Cook conducted time and talent surveys, found people to fill specific needs, and reached out to those who were hesitant to volunteer.

Pastor Almquist impressed upon us the Christian duty of "hospitality" from almost the first moment of his ministry. He and his family set a good example by hosting exchange students from foreign countries and welcoming people into their home. In October 1984 Pastor attended a meeting at which he was introduced to clergy from the Soviet Union. These men were in America as part of a program called "US-USSR Bridges for Peace," bridges suggesting that the possibilities of world peace might be enhanced through exchange visits by Christian leaders of both countries. Pastor suggested and Council approved a visit by two Soviet clergymen to Calvary in 1986 and a return visit by two Calvary members to the Soviet Union later that year.

Father Albertus Budze, a Roman Catholic priest, and The Rev. Uldis Saveljevs, a Lutheran pastor, both from Latvia, were a part of Calvary for a week in April 1986. They worshiped with us, lived with the Kellers and Murphys, visited area churches, schools, businesses, and historical sites



**RENOVATION-85**  
A PLACE FOR TOMORROW

A COMMITMENT

In order to support the  
RENOVATION - '85 Project of  
Calvary Lutheran Church, I/we  
pledge the following gift:

I/WE WILL GIVE \$ \_\_\_\_\_ over the two-year period of the  
Appeal (July 1, 1985 - June 30, 1987).

This gift will be given in the following way:

A one-time gift  3 equal gifts  Monthly  Weekly

name \_\_\_\_\_

name \_\_\_\_\_

(Detach)

A COMMITMENT TO "RENOVATION - 85"

I/We have committed to support the  
RENOVATION - '85 Project of Calvary  
Church with a gift of

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

to be given over the two-year period of  
the Appeal; the gift will be given  
 One-time  3 Equal  Monthly  Weekly

Commitment to RENOVATION-'85

and, most of all, taught us about the realities of being a Christian while living behind the Iron Curtain. We exchanged gifts at a farewell banquet and we wept, unashamedly, tears of joy and love for these brave men and their people. Later that year, Pastor and Nellie Freed, who is fluent in the Russian language, visited the USSR. From 1989 to 1991, Pastor Uldis studied at the Lutheran Seminary in Chicago; once again we had the privilege of hearing him preach the Gospel from our pulpit. Calvary's participation in "Bridges" was described in the December 1986 and May 1987 issues of "The Lutheran." We pray for our fellow Christians worldwide who face fearful challenges to their faith in Jesus Christ.



Logo for *US-USSR Bridges for Peace*

Several congregational committees that became important parts of our church life were formed in the 1980s. The Parish Life Committee planned activities that were designed to "build a better feeling of community within our congregation" and provide ways for members to become better acquainted with one another. Bridge Club, Men's Bowling, an annual dinner-dance, trips to nearby cultural and historical sites, Dinner Groups, and Book Club were among the things this committee energized. A Youth Committee sought to involve young people in our church life and to train adult leaders to work with our youth. Dave Ellis, among others, took the lead in moving our youth program away from being "adult-oriented" into one that was "youth-oriented." Our young people sang in the choirs and rang handbells, served as acolytes and crucifers, were responsible for an annual Youth Sunday, attended regional and national gatherings of their peers, and participated in many social events. Our youth are Calvary's future and we seek to help them grow in their faith.

The Global Mission Committee, formed in April 1988, planned a Sunday worship service at which they hosted our missionaries, began a person-to-person exchange with members of Tabernacle, Philadelphia, and represented

us at "Global Mission Events" held annually at various places in the United States. This committee took the lead in supporting Marty and Mary Peterhaensel and their family, our missionaries in Liberia. The Long-Range Planning Committee, formed at about the same time, set goals for the congregation and annually reviewed the strengths and shortcomings of the parish. Calvary's committees work hard and set a worthy example for us.

Taking a cue from Pastor Reitz's recommendation and from his experience during his initial years at Calvary, Pastor urged Council to provide "additional staff assistance to strengthen our congregation." Our membership had grown so much (there were 1,177 people at the three 1985 Christmas Eve services) that a third Sunday morning service, this one at 8:00 AM, was started. Pastor Almquist also needed help with recruiting new members, developing small groups, and ministering to the youth and to College students. On September 14, 1986 the congregation authorized a search for an Associate Pastor.

The Search Committee presented The Rev. Stephen Elliott Godsall-Myers who, on May 3, 1987, preached a sermon entitled "Seven Mile Evangelism" for our consideration. The call was extended and, on July 1, 1987, Pastor Steve (as he soon became known) began his ministry at Calvary. Pastor Steve was born on September 2, 1950 near Boston, the son of Jack K. and Audrey (Fitzgerald) Myers. At the University of Michigan, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree (1971) and a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree (1976). For several years he practiced law in Philadelphia. Like others of his generation, he changed his career goals and enrolled at our Philadelphia Seminary, from which he was graduated in 1983. He served St. John, Overbrook, from 1983 to 1987. Pastor, his wife Jean, and their sons Robert and Timothy moved into their home at 204 Fowler Drive, West Chester.

At about the same time, Pastor Almquist urged Council to form a Mutual Ministry Committee. He explained that this committee was needed to give support and encouragement to the professional staff, resolve problems, and help establish goals and priorities. With four professionals (the two pastors, Sister Janice, and the Coordinator of Volunteer Ministries) now serving the congregation, this committee proved its worth many times over.

When the Ecumenical Campus Ministry at West Chester University decided to withdraw from campus in December 1986, Council formed a Campus Ministry Committee. Again and again, this committee demonstrated the "caring" character of the congregation. Not only were we interested in the students at WCU but we were also concerned about our young people attending colleges elsewhere. The committee's famous "care packages," sent each semester during final exam week, were the most visible evidence of this concern. Calvary members helped WCU students and their families on "Move-in Day" each fall when the students occupied their dormitory rooms. An "International Night" was held annually to welcome students from foreign countries. Starting in February 1988 until the building was razed, Calvary offered affordable living space for several students in our Bonhoeffer House. Calvary's "Hospitality Ministry" was appreciated by many students and their parents.

The Sunday School continued to instruct about 235 children and youth each week. Classes for adults were focused on current social issues. For instance, representatives of the Jewish and Islamic faiths described their respective beliefs and practices. These sessions provoked many thoughtful questions. We began a "Theologian-in-Residence" program in late 1988; The Rev. George Forrell and The Rev. Timothy Lull, both from our Philadelphia Seminary, helped us to understand the meaning of "faith-in-action." We reviewed plans for the creation of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and for our Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, the latter formed on June 6, 1987.

In 1987, the Stewardship Committee introduced a novel method for conducting our annual "Every Member Responds" campaign. Instead of visits to members' homes or solicitations by mail or phone, the committee used the "Pony Express" scheme with its "saddle bags" and "Trail Boss." The scheme worked to our advantage for the committee reported "intended giving" for 1988 was almost \$300,000. This was 15% more than had been pledged for 1987. At about the same time, the Evangelism Committee visited 124 new homes in the Plum Run development off Lenape Road. Our visitors found about 15 householders who were interested in hearing more about Calvary. We called our church "A Welcome Place" and did all we could to make it so.

Calvary became well-known as a church that responded to those who sought hospitality or needed help. In our outreach ministry we paid the tuition costs for several Cheyney University students from Ethiopia. In March 1989, the Lutheran Children and Family Services agency of our Synod asked us to sponsor an Amerasian child and its family. A group of volunteers and several Council Committees developed a plan. Because we needed to raise funds from sources outside the annual budget, a drive for pledges was begun. Within a month, 65 Calvary families promised more than \$12,000. In February 1990, two Vietnamese women each with an Amerasian daughter arrived in West Chester. Nancy Neubauer, Barbara Keller, and Kris Slack found living quarters, collected clothing and food, arranged for tutors for the high-school aged girls and found jobs so the families could become self-supporting. Ted Frain helped in the job search and John Lathrop provided dental care. By January 1991 the families were taking care of most of their needs.

The Junior Fellowship Club, later renamed "Calvary Kids Club," offered fellowship, Bible study, crafts, choir practice, and dinner on Tuesday afternoons for youngsters who were in kindergarten through fifth grade in school. Sister Janice took the lead and was ably assisted by Kimberly Barickman, Judy Grim, and a host of other volunteers.

When Bill and Beth Lockard joined Calvary in 1991, the pastors and Council developed a ministry to the deaf community in our area. At first, an American Sign Language interpreter was present at one Sunday morning service each week. This person also conducted a class for Calvary members who wanted to learn to "sign." To provide leadership for this initiative, Council formed a Deaf Ministry Task Force. Because the response was so positive and the Synod was supportive, The Rev. Joseph Varsanyi was called as part-time pastor to the deaf community. He began his ministry on January 1, 1993 as a "mission developer." Soon there were more than 30 people attending services and Christ the King Lutheran Church of the Deaf was formed as a mission congregation of our Synod. Although Pastor Joe accepted a call from another congregation in 1995, this ministry continued under the leadership of Beth Lockard, who, in the meantime, became a student at our Seminary. Christ the King Church continues to hold its services and activities in our building.

In the latter part of 1992 our Synod announced a capital funds drive, known as "Time To Act," and set a goal of \$2,000,000. The funds were used for mission development, revitalization of urban churches that were experiencing difficulties, and assisting churches that had merged. The churches of our Chester Parish, of which Calvary is one, were very aware of the significance of "Time To Act" for we had just begun to support The Rev. Richard Grove as a mission developer in the Honey Brook area. At Calvary, Chuck Keller and his committee recommended that we raise not \$50,000 as suggested by Synod but rather \$70,000, in honor of our 70th anniversary. Within a year more than \$100,000 was pledged and more than half of the money was on hand. It appeared to some that ours was a church "that likes to give." In part, because of this campaign, The Rev. Ralph Peterson, having resigned his pastorate at Advent Church, was called as a mission developer in the Oxford-New London area.

There seemed to be no end to the kinds of things Calvary's members wanted to do in our many ministries. When the congregation became aware of the terrible conditions in Pastor Uldis's parish in Latvia following the collapse of the USSR, we sent 144 boxes of winter clothing. Pastor Almquist was in Riga early in 1993 and was assured that the clothing was received by the elderly for whom it was intended. Pastor called this ministry "nothing short of an incredible response to a simple request."

Attendance at services continued to increase. Four services were held on Christmas Eve 1992, the most ever, and 1,420 people attended, again a number never before attained. Communion was offered at least at one service every Lord's Day, members gave fresh-baked bread for the service, and nonalcoholic wine was available for those who preferred it.

The parking problem became so critical in March 1994 that Council rented vans and, with the cooperation of West Chester University, shuttled our members between the University's Sykes parking lot and our lot. We kept spaces adjacent to our building open for use by older members, those who were physically challenged, and single parents with small children. The shuttle was greatly appreciated by those who used it, but it also reflected a recurrent problem, not unique to Calvary, that an adequate parking area was essential to successful church life. Todd Peterson took the lead in this ministry.

Early in May 1994, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod held its annual meeting at King of Prussia. An item on the agenda read "Election of Bishop."

On that first day, Pastor Almquist's name was placed in nomination for this office, and, using the ecclesiastical method of voting, the Synod chose him as our Bishop-Elect. To all of us—Pastor, his family, and Calvary Church—a major change was about to occur.

While his resignation from Calvary and his term as Bishop did not begin until July 1, Pastor Almquist told the congregation, "...the nature of the office I am about to assume and the manner in which I must prepare myself will simply consume a tremendous amount of my time..." Nonetheless, he preached at Calvary as scheduled, continued the Bible Study classes, made final communion visits to shut-ins, and completed the Confirmation ministry for that class. On-going projects and planning for Calvary's future were now the responsibility of Council, Pastor Steve, and Sister Janice. Pastor Almquist told us, "These have been wonderful years for me and for my family, years we shall never forget." It was Calvary's good fortune that Bishop Almquist and his family retained their memberships at Calvary and continued to live in West Chester.

It was fitting that the congregation gathered on June 19, 1994 to celebrate Pastor's ten-year ministry at Calvary. Pastor and Shannon were quite surprised when the Kellers "took them out for a quiet dinner" and ended up by dining with several hundred parishioners. Allan Livingston and Jim Murphy spoke on behalf of the congregation and Pastors Peterson and Godsall-Myers offered congratulatory remarks. The choir "adapted" several well-known songs to fit the occasion. Of course, Pastor Almquist thanked us for the opportunity to serve Calvary and asked us to pray for him and the Synod as a new era was about to begin. It was a great evening.

Pastor Almquist was installed as Bishop of our Synod on October 16, 1994 at a service held at The Cathedral of the Savior, Episcopal, in Philadelphia. It was a beautiful setting for an inspiring worship service and installation. The Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, was in charge. Ray Hunsicker was the organist and our Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir played prominent parts in The Liturgy and with their anthems. About 200 members of Calvary attended and were rightfully proud for we were confident that the Synod had found the leader needed for these times. Fred Fessenbecker wrote a poem in which he expressed our feelings; the final three lines read:

*"All his flocks join in worship  
to thank God, and ask in prayer,  
For Him to bless our new Lutheran Bishop."*

---

## Chapter 10

### **“Where there is vision, the people flourish”**

**I**n a letter of July 20, 1994, addressed to the membership, Pastor Steve wrote, “These have been exciting times in the life of our congregation.” As evidence, he enumerated the election of Pastor Almquist as bishop, the congregation’s 70th anniversary, and the more than \$100,000 raised to support “Time To Act.” He added, “We have a Long Range Planning Committee hard at work to help us establish a vision for the future of ministries at Calvary.” This comment set the tone for Calvary’s mission and Pastor Steve’s ministry.

On December 31, 1993, Calvary had a communing membership of 1,066 persons. It grew to 1,125 on December 31, 1994, to 1,172 in 1995, and to 1,185 in 1996. On any Sunday there were as many as from 600 to 700 adults and children in church. Three services continued to be held each Sunday—at 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, and 11:00 AM (this was further fine-tuned in 1997 so that services began at 8:00 AM, 9:00 AM, and 10:30 AM). Attendance on Easter Sunday was so large that four morning services were needed, while on Christmas Eve there were a 4:30 PM service of Holy Communion in our beautifully-decorated nave, a 6:00 PM Family Service, and identical 8:30 PM and 11:00 PM Candlelight Services. Our sanctuary was nearly 40 years old and it was showing evidence of very heavy use.

Calvary in the 1990s kept abreast of the many needs created by this growth. The first need was to select a pastor. Most members were certain Pastor Steve was fully prepared to assume the senior pastor’s responsibilities, not only because of his education and experience but also his faith and many talents. When formed, the Call Committee considered Pastor Godsall-Myers for our pastor and, in like manner, considered

Sister Janice for our deaconess. Council President Joan Wagner told the congregation, “We feel truly blessed to have these two fine people anxious to continue serving their Lord with us at Calvary.” On September 11, 1994, Pastor Steve and Sister Janice were called by the congregation (the vote was virtually unanimous for each) and each accepted. At the same time, the congregation indicated our desire to call an Associate Pastor.

When the Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Chester decided to leave the borough and relocate south of town along Route 202, some members asked whether a similar move might be in Calvary’s best interest. Although the question was never brought to a congregational vote, it was the consensus that Calvary should remain where we were, in the borough and in close proximity to the University. It was also the consensus that our membership should continue to grow. On Council’s recommendation, the congregation purchased two parcels of land adjacent to our property, first the Monaghan lot and house at 309 West Rosedale Avenue and then the Chamberlain lot and house at 718 South New Street. The Monaghan house was razed early in 1995. With these properties, we owned sufficient land

so that we could adapt our building not only to fit the needs of present ministries but also to undertake new ones.

About a year before he resigned, Pastor Almquist initiated a discussion in Council about the kind of facility that we might consider to serve our future needs. He used, as his example, the experiences of the Community Church of Joy, Glendale, Arizona. Described as the "fastest growing" Lutheran church in the United States, it had about 200 members in 1978 and some 6,500 in 1993, with a full- and part-time staff of about 100 persons. Its primary goal is to reach the unchurched, especially those under the age of 40 by becoming "worshiper sensitive." Pastor did not suggest that Calvary should duplicate this model, but rather that we should rethink our mission, size of membership, and needed staff. He added that "the future will not go away" and that "those who plan for the future will be much better positioned to face it than those who want only to hold on to the past." He said, in effect, that we should respect tradition but also be always open to change.

In response, Council restructured the Long-Range Planning Committee in late 1994 to "help chart the course for Calvary in the remaining years of this century." After careful study, the committee presented statements of Calvary's Mission, our Vision, and our Values. The 1994 Mission statement reads: "Calvary Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation, is committed to worshipping the living God whom we have come to know through Jesus Christ. Our Mission is to continually be healthy, energetic, and dedicated to individual spiritual growth, through Word and Sacrament, Christian Education, Nurture, Outreach, Compassion and Service." Never before had Calvary had such a forthright statement to guide us. The report continued, "Calvary's vision is to continually grow in the West Chester community and to be known as a welcoming place, OPEN to all people, RESPONDING in Worship, ENCOURAGING each other, MAKING A DIFFERENCE in our world, SEEKING to love God, SUPPORTING one another, and BEING CHANGED by the Spirit." Finally, five Values which would help our members achieve "individual spiritual growth" were identified: Involvement; Preparedness; Team Ministry; Leadership; and Community.

Calvary's congregation worked hard to fulfill these goals during the last years of the 20th century.

First, the congregation directed that an Associate Pastor be called, so a call committee was formed in September 1994. While the process took a little longer than expected, the committee and Council presented The Rev. William F. Seamon-McGowan. He preached at services on June 18, 1995 and accepted our call. Pastor Bill (as he quite promptly became known) was born in Philadelphia on February 17, 1951, the son of Joseph and Catherine McGowan. He is a graduate of LaSalle High School there (1968) and earned the Bachelor of Science in Philosophy and the Master of Divinity degrees at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, also in Philadelphia. He was ordained in May 1976. After 17 years of ministry as an Associate Pastor, faculty member, chaplain, and Director of the Newman Center at the University of Pennsylvania, Pastor Bill left the Roman Catholic Church and entered our Lutheran Seminary. He served two Lutheran churches in our Synod before coming to Calvary. He began his ministry with us on August 1, 1995. He and his wife, Kathy (a student at our Seminary) moved into their home at 1407 Belvidere Circle. The addition of Pastor Bill was a significant step toward fulfilling our mission goals.

In December 1994, Church Council hired an architect "to study the possibilities for Calvary." Three months later, Sabatino Knabb, of Wayne, Pennsylvania, architects, told us that "we need more space." They suggested that we identify the present and future programs that we intended to support and from this they could then plan renovations to the present building or design a new church building. The Long-Range Planning Committee named adult education, alternative forms of worship, deaf ministry, lay leadership, and youth ministry as programs that needed support and assistance.

Council next formed a Building Expansion Committee in March 1995. Chaired by Dan Harpstead and given a budget of \$5,000 to begin its work, this committee soon concluded, "In order to continue growth at our present site, we must expand our building space." The architects then made a series of preliminary drawings from which Karin Wohlert made a "model" of a proposed "expanded" building. This showed an east-west



orientation of our nave, an alternate worship center in place of our open court, rearranged administrative offices and Sunday School rooms, more space for the choirs, an elevator, a library-archival center, air-conditioning, and, of course, additional parking spaces.

At the same time as these important steps were being taken, our congregation continued our service to the community as well as to the larger church. Along with 800 other congregations nationwide, we provided a beautiful Cross-centered quilt that was hung at the 1993 national assembly of the ELCA. Dale Kendall and her committee showed great devotion and determination in this work. "Prayer and Praise" services began in June 1996. Held every Thursday night for part of the year, these services featured "a more updated and casual worship style" with drama, contemporary music, and brief meditations. At the late Sunday service, a "Family Service" was conducted from time-to-time. This featured a children's message, an intergenerational message, responsive readings, and hymns. Calvary was becoming more "worshiper sensitive."

We did not forget that Calvary was a "Welcome Place." In December 1995 the "Welcome Team" was formed to greet newcomers in the community and the unchurched to our services. Because our guests sometimes needed help in finding a Sunday School classroom or the Parlor, church members wearing "Ask Me" badges stood at the front door and in the parking lot and gave directions.

Our heart was in the local community. Calvary members became very involved in recently-formed area agencies such as "Safe Harbor of Greater West Chester" shelter for the homeless, the Care Center for Christ (a haven for young children), and the Domestic Violence Center. Our Benevolence offerings provided financial support and we occasionally offered our building for their use. In 1993, Pastor Steve and about a dozen members ("Calvary Builders") did construction and rehabilitation work for a week at St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Homestead, Florida (following a devastating hurricane), at Union, West Virginia in Appalachia (1995) and near Barnsboro, Pennsylvania (1996, 1997 and 1998 rehabilitation of a building). Other members did similar kinds of service in Chester County for "Good Works"

and Habitat for Humanity. Under the leadership of Don and Alice Bassett and with funds from contributions and an auction, we purchased a van for Tom Hutchins to use.

Stewardship and Evangelism continued to be a major focus of Church Council and the congregation. Our Stewardship Committee conducted successful "Every Member Responds" campaigns annually. In 1994 the drive was named "Lift High the Cross," using the first line of one of our favorite hymns as the theme. Total pledges annually exceeded \$400,000 and even \$500,000 for the support of our many ministries. On April 21, 1996 the Evangelism Committee sponsored a "Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday. Our members welcomed 150 guests on a beautiful Lord's Day. The combination of a worship service, a huge tent, good food, and friendly conversation made this "an uplifting day of celebration for all."

Not to be forgotten, the Global Mission Committee arranged for Darina Kushnirova, a graduate of a seminary in Slovakia, to spend a year with us (1996-97). Darina lived with Calvary members, studied and did research on her doctorate in New Testament studies at our seminary, preached from our pulpit, and shared with us her dreams of serving as pastor or a seminary professor in her native country. During part of 1997-98, Violka Brtanova, another seminarian from Slovakia, was part of our community; she continued her studies at the Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg. This committee, with the help of others, took the lead in creating a "Sister Synod Relationship" between our Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA and the Northeast Diocese of the Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Several Calvary members later visited our fellow Lutherans in Africa.

At the January 1996 meeting of the Church Council, the "Building for Vision" Committee presented the architect's site and building plans. It was decided to devote the annual congregational meeting later that month to a question-and-answer discussion of these plans. The congregation, in turn, agreed that small group meetings should be held to review each part of the proposal before a vote of acceptance or refusal could properly be taken. The meetings, held during February, addressed such topics as the Construction Process, Project Cost Review, The Organ, Sound Systems, and Space Allocation. Except for some limited fine-tuning,

the participants at these sessions were supportive of the Building for Vision Committee's work. On June 16, at a Special Congregational Meeting, the congregation considered the full proposal and, by a vote of 103-15, authorized the expenditure of \$200,000 by Council to contract with the architects "to actually design the building expansion." Soon Calvary's members could expect to know the scope and cost of the overall project.

On March 10, 1997 the revised plans were approved by Church Council and presented to another Special Congregational Meeting held on April 6. It was clear that the importance of this meeting was equaled by only one meeting in our history, that of March 22, 1954 when we opted to build at New and Rosedale. Paul DeJuliis reviewed the work that had been done and the studies that demonstrated the financial potentialities of our members. Several people questioned our ability to fund such an ambitious effort and several others hoped that we would not forget to support our many Benevolence ministries. When the question was called, the vote was 190 Yes, 43 No, that Calvary Church begin a fund-raising program, with professional assistance, to raise \$1,500,000 over a three-year period and assume a mortgage for the remainder of the projected \$3,200,000 cost of construction and renovation. With God's help, the prayers of our members, and the firm determination of everyone, we were confident that we would succeed.

The Capital Funds Campaign, co-chaired by Jim and Janet Murphy and Paul and Denise DeJuliis, was conducted during the spring and early summer of 1997. Rather than personal visits or repeated telephone calls, the committee explained the details of the expansion and our financial obligations through temple talks, articles in the Sunday bulletin and monthly newsletter ("Calvary Clips"), and individual mailings. Each member, had he or she heard the talks and read the printed materials, certainly gained a full understanding of the project.

June 8, 1997 was designated "First Fruits Sunday" at which members were asked to make their financial commitment. Calvary responded! Two hundred sixty "giving units" pledged \$1,305,000 toward the newly-established goal of \$1,700,000. This was a marvelous demonstration of commitment and devotion to Calvary. To no surprise to many, \$377,032 was already on hand, so that construction could begin on the parking lot. Equally remarkable, the funds on hand were more than 50% of those pledged and were "coming in" at the rate of about \$50,000 a month. For a three-year campaign, this was an excellent beginning.

Unfortunately, the extent of commercial and public construction that was then underway in Chester County made it impossible for Council to engage a "reputable" contractor to undertake the work. It was just a momentary delay, but it did dull the sharp edge of enthusiasm and expectation that had been generated during those earlier months.

We were saddened when, in 1996, long-time member Isabell Gray passed away and then, in 1997, her husband Warren died. Mr. and Mrs. Gray remembered Calvary in their will, so that their property on West Miner Street and the value of their estate were deeded to Calvary. Council sold the property and assigned a portion of these funds to the Capital Funds



Ground Breaking Ceremonies: Gary Drumheller, Mark Davis, Paul DeJuliis, Fran Cook, Eldon Stolfus, Dan Harpstead, Pastor Steve Godsall-Myers, Beth Lockard, Richard Cordivari

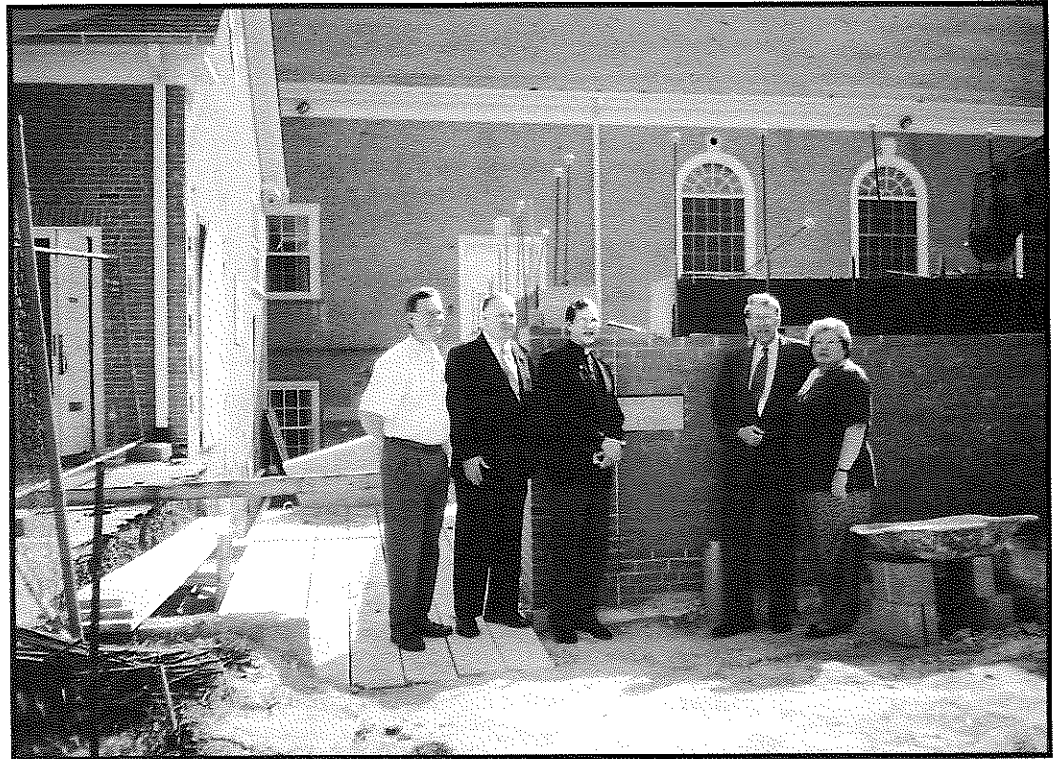
---

## “On January 14, 1998 the third ground breaking in Calvary’s history...”

---

Campaign. This legacy of the Grays will be a vital part of Calvary’s future.

Council reviewed the expansion and renovation project during the last months of 1997 in hope of finding ways to reduce costs. After a thorough search Council and the congregation agreed that we would have to spend \$3,900,000 to do everything that we hoped to do. This decision was reaffirmed on January 11, 1998 when the congregation voted 95 Yes, 6 No on a motion to move ahead at this level.



Laying of the Cornerstone: Pastor Bill Seamon-McGowan, Charles E. Swope, Pastor Steve Godsall-Myers, Fred Kemmerer, Sister Janice Painter

On January 14, 1998 the third ground breaking in Calvary’s history celebrated the beginning of our 75th anniversary as well as the beginning of our “Building for Vision” expansion. Council found our “reputable” contractor in the firm of C. Raymond Davis and Sons, Inc. of Kimberton and the next day major excavation work was begun. Calvary was moving boldly into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We knew that we would have to vacate our sanctuary in June, but the move was made much easier when we learned that our Sunday services would be held at the Newman Catholic Center just a block away on South New Street. Once again our Catholic friends were generous to Calvary. In 1984 Monsignor Kelly and St. Agnes Church were represented at our 60th anniversary celebration, in 1994 Monsignor Craven and St. Agnes hosted a service at which Pastor Almquist was honored on becoming our Bishop, and now the Newman Catholic Center is available. We thank them for their interest in us and their generosity.

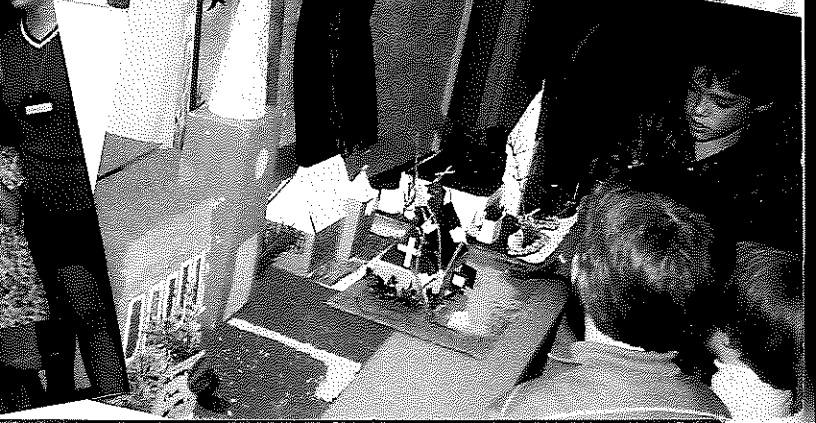
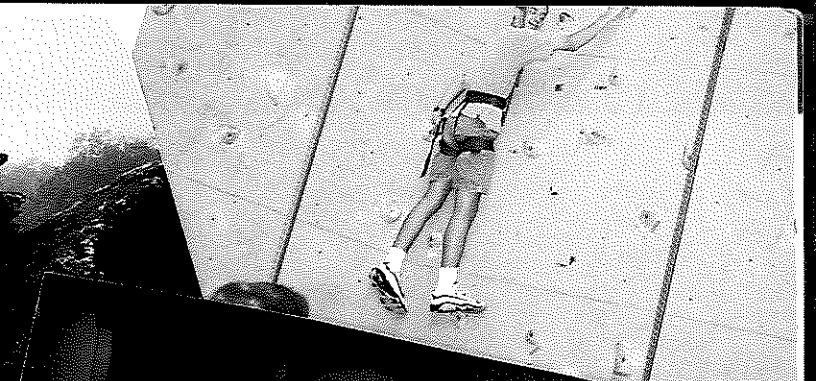
Pastor Godsall-Myers made a very relevant statement on the occasion of the ground breaking in January 1998. He said, “We have come to a defining moment at Calvary. A defining moment that reflects excitement and enthusiasm for the mission of Calvary, a love for Calvary, an acknowledgment that Calvary has been blessed with many resources and has the opportunity to provide leadership in this community and this Synod. This proposal to expand our facilities defines us as a people: with a commitment to continue and expand our outreach ministries, with a desire to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with a desire to meet the challenges of mission with the rich blessings we have been given. As we come to this defining moment in our congregational life, I know we can only move forward if we are grounded in the defining moment of the Cross of Jesus Christ.”

# A 1998 Calvary Lutheran Church

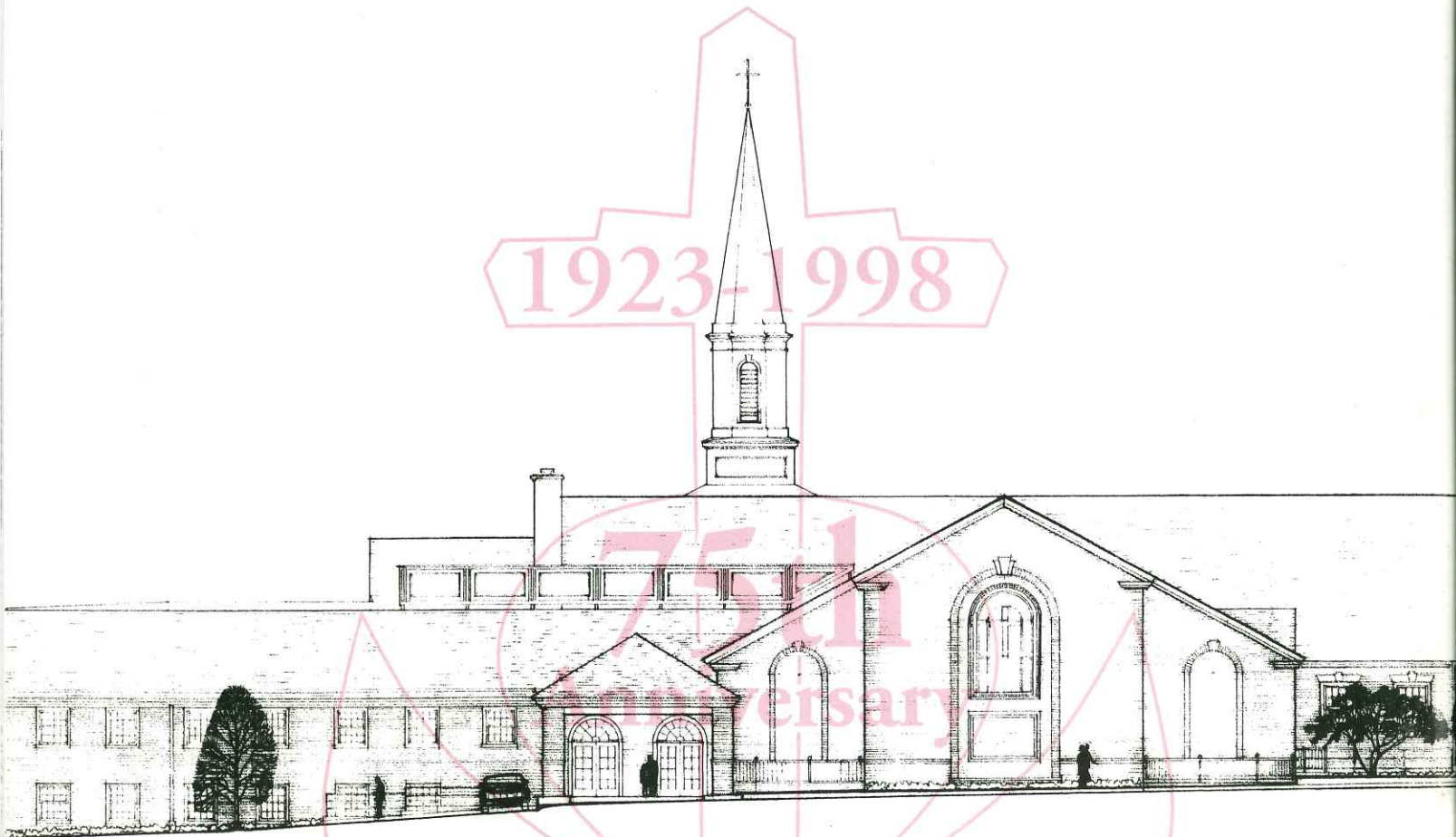
## Chronology

- December 8, 1997** ..... Council learns all bids now total \$3.9 million
- December 14** ..... Gray property sold; youth went caroling at Pocopson Home; congregation collects 550 cans of food for Salvation Army
- December 24** ..... Four Christmas Eve services
- January 14, 1998** ..... Groundbreaking
- January 25** ..... Annual Congregational meeting
- March** ..... Christ the King Church for the Deaf announces 50 members; offices and classrooms moved
- April 12** ..... Three Easter Morning services; Bible Study an ongoing event; Calvary Women of ELCA hold retreat; choirs join those of Westminster Presbyterian Church in performing Mendelssohn's "Elijah"
- May** ..... High school seniors and college graduates recognized
- June 7** ..... Last service in nave
- June 14** ..... Begin worship at Newman Catholic Center
- June 21** ..... Craig Miller joins staff as Director of Youth and Family Ministries
- July** ..... "Calvary Builders" at Barnsboro, PA; summer cottage meetings
- August** ..... Youth attend regional meeting at Troy, NY; Tim Freed begins studies as seminarian
- September** ..... We learn that delays in deliveries of material will postpone our return to New and Rosedale until February 1999
- October** ..... Begin our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Observance; former pastors Reitz and Almqvist preach





1923-1998



*Life*

*Vision*

*Heritage*  
**Calvary Lutheran Church**