

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



Congregational & Staff Reports

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Calvary Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Agenda

January 28, 2026 – 6:30 pm

Meeting Agenda

1. Determination of quorum
2. Call to Order
3. Opening Prayer
4. Approval of agenda – any additional new business
5. Approval of January 29, 2025, annual meeting minutes
6. Approval of written reports
7. End of year financials and approval
8. 2026 Budget and approval
9. Endowment distributions and approval
10. Elections
11. New Business
12. Adjournment

Closing – The Lord's Prayer

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY

Dear friends in Christ,

As Lutherans, we are set free to love our neighbors and seek justice. In Colossians 2, we read: “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving” (6-7).

I am abounding in thankfulness for you, church. You are an integral part of this mission as we envision a world experiencing the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. The ministries of congregations including yours, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together today and every day so more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. From providing food to people experiencing hunger, to helping train the next generation of leaders that will lead this church, your support is at work here at home and around the world.

Your generosity to each of the three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has made it possible for us to do this work

together. Your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices are so valued.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to continue to walk in Christ, remembering you are rooted and established in faith, and free to love and serve your neighbors. Thank you, church, for the ways you connect with and support our siblings across the ELCA and in our communities.

In Christ,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yehiel Curry'.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

—Colossians 2:6-7



Dear South Dakota Synod,

Grace and peace to you in Christ's name! This year reminded me that the Church is always a blend of plumbing and poetry. The steady, unseen pipes that keep ministry flowing, and the surprising grace that breaks in when we least expect it.

And together, across South Dakota, you lived both.

Because of your faithfulness:



- The **\$1.1 million** Lilly grant continues to strengthen rural ministry through an expanding rural ambassador program and brings learning to your recliner at home through Pasque (<http://www.sdsynodlearns.org/>). Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs) experience intentional community with peers, and seminarians get to experience rural ministry through a paid immersion program.
- **1/4** of all SD Synod congregations have received a STAR (Small Town and Rural) grant through funds raised in SD for South Dakota congregations. These grants have helped to cover unexpected expenses across our synod.
- **\$1.3 million** supports children and families through the "Holy Playground" Initiative, reminding us that every child deserves to flourish.
- **Micro-grants** to alleviate hunger in our communities have been a tangible way to multiply Christ's compassion, feeding the stranger, stocking shelves, warming homes, and empowering congregations to respond in real time.
- **New pastors, deacons, and lay leaders** stepped into their callings, shaped by your encouragement and the Spirit's persistence.
- **Congregations in transition** found guidance, courage, and companions on the path.
- **Partnerships with Native, immigrant, and global communities** deepened our witness and expanded our imagination for what the body of Christ looks like.



South Dakota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

These are numbers and facts, yes, but behind every number is a story, a face, a kitchen table, a worshiping community, a moment when the Gospel became flesh again in South Dakota and across our world.

And that is the poetry.

Thank you for granting me the gift of serving another six-year term as your bishop. I receive it with humility and with deep gratitude for the trust you place in me. The work before us is honest and holy, and the Spirit is already ahead of us.

As we enter a new year, may we continue to be a synod that holds plumbing and poetry together, a church grounded enough to meet the needs of today, and bold enough to imagine what God can do next.

With gratitude and hope,

Rev. Constanze Hagmaier
Bishop of the South Dakota Synod, ELCA



Dear Members of the South Dakota Synod,

Grace and peace to you in this holy season of Advent.

As we look once more for the light that points us toward the birth of the Christ child, we are reminded that Advent is not a passive season, but one filled with hope, expectation, and faithful preparation.

This packet is being made available to you now—not to add another task to an already full season, but so that it may be ready when you and your congregation need it. We recognize the brief window between the New Year and the time when many congregations gather for annual meetings, and we hope these materials will serve you well.

Included in this packet are several important resources for your congregation:

- Annual Report from Presiding Bishop Curry and the ELCA
- Annual Report from Bishop Constanze Hagmaier
- 2025 Ministry Celebrations
- Five-Year Vision of the South Dakota Synod: *Journeying Together in Christ*
- South Dakota Synod Mission Plan
- Annual Report from Lutheran Planned Generosity
- Statement of Intent for 2026 Mission Support*
- Congregational Leadership Form*

These resources are offered as tools to help us celebrate the ways God has been at work among us and to discern how we will continue to journey together in Christ.

The **Statement of Intent for 2026 Mission Support** is especially important, as it assists the Synod Council in prayerfully planning for the year ahead. We invite you to consider, with your congregation, the shared ministry to which we are called. Mission Support is the undesignated gifts shared with the synod and churchwide organization. The **Congregational Leadership Form** helps us stay connected with your congregation's leadership so that we may continue to share information, resources, and opportunities for collaboration.

Please return both forms to the synod office following your annual meeting. They may be found online at sdsynod.org/yearend. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the synod office at **605-274-4011** or synod@sdsynod.org.

May God's blessing and presence be felt ever near to you as you reach into the world with the Word who has always been—and who comes to us again.

In Christ,

Pastor Jonathan Vehar

Associate to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
2026 Proposed Mission Plan
02/01/2026 - 01/31/2027**

	Adopted 2025	Revised 2025	Proposed 2026
Revenue			
Mission Support			
Undesignated Mission Support	1,807,603	1,694,857	1,741,590
SD Synod Mission Support	23,800	24,711	25,000
Total Mission Support-Congregations	1,831,403	1,719,568	1,766,590
Program Ministry Income			
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center Income	45,000	45,000	45,000
Total Program Ministry Income			
Other Income			
DEM Support Staff Income	10,000	10,000	10,000
Interest Income	50,000	65,000	65,000
SDS Travel LLC Income	5,000	5,000	5,000
Misc Income	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Other Income	66,000	81,000	81,000
Total Revenue	1,942,403	1,845,568	1,892,590
Expenses			
Churchwide Ministries	42%	41%	41%
Churchwide Support	759,193	694,891	714,052
Region III			
Region III Support	8,004	8,614	8,614
South Dakota Ministries			
South Dakota Partnership Ministries			
SD Ministries Support	9,996	10,132	10,250
Luther Seminary	71,974	50,383	51,761
Church Colleges (ELCA Pool)	6,227	5,847	6,006
Lutheran Social Services	71,974	67,579	69,427
Campus Ministry	126,916	119,166	122,425
Lutheran Outdoors	35,895	33,704	34,625
South Dakota Supported Ministries			
Heartland Ephphatha	6,227	5,847	6,006
Youth Ministry	7,200	2,400	2,400
Campus Ministry Capital	0	0	0
Good Samaritan Society	1	1	1
Chapel in the Hills	1	1	1
Woyatan Lutheran/Wambli Ska	19,000	19,000	19,000
Lutheran Planned Generosity	58,300	58,300	58,300
Total Shared Ministries	413,712	372,360	380,203

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
2026 Proposed Mission Plan
02/01/2026 - 01/31/2027**

	Adopted 2025	Revised 2025	Proposed 2026
Executive Leadership			
Bishop	108,101	108,100	110,612
Assoc/Director of Ev Mission	12,974	13,799	14,075
Assoc-Mobility/Candidacy	89,953	89,953	91,952
Executive Staff Benefits	73,818	73,736	75,211
Exec Travel/Continuing Ed	40,800	52,800	52,800
Program Ministries			
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center-Director	92,967	96,857	98,488
Youth Gathering Synod Coordinator	0	0	0
Companion Synod Coordinator	19,902	21,139	21,542
Support Staff and Office			
Support Staff Salaries/Benefit	185,791	165,824	164,091
Synod Office Expenses	78,000	102,850	102,850
Augustana University Occupancy Fee	32,300	32,300	32,300
Synod Committees			
Synod Council	5,000	5,000	5,000
Support to Ministries Committee	3,100	3,100	3,100
Candidacy Committee	9,000	9,000	9,000
Multi-Cultural Ministry Committee	1,000	1,000	1,000
Companion Synods Ministry Committee	200	200	200
Evangelical Outreach Committee	1,500	1,500	1,500
Mission & Outreach			
Mission Congregation Start-up	4,000	4,000	4,000
Mission Strategy Table	2,000	2,000	2,000
Contingency	1,088	0	0
Total South Dakota Ministries	761,494	783,158	789,721
Total Expenses	1,942,403	1,859,023	1,892,590
Net Total	0	-13,455	0

Lutheran Planned Generosity of South Dakota—A Gift to You

As a ministry of the South Dakota Synod and our partners for over 40 years, Lutheran Planned Generosity is here for you as a gift to encourage and support all forms of generosity, with no obligation, minimums or fees.



Smarter Giving Today:

- Do you own **stocks/bonds/mutual funds** that have increased in value? Gift shares through LPGSD to your church and favorite ministries to avoid capital gains tax AND receive a tax deduction.
- Are you over 70 ½ with **retirement accounts**? Make a direct gift from your IRA with a qualified charitable distribution to avoid income tax, lower your adjusted gross income used to calculate Medicare premiums, and meet your required minimum distribution if over age 73.
- Holding onto stored **grain**? Selling **livestock**? Make a gift at the grain elevator or auction market to support God’s work through your local congregation or favorite ministries. Avoid all income and self-employment taxes while retaining production cost deductions.
- Seeking a larger tax deduction now, but unsure which organizations you’d like to support? Give cash or assets, including **real estate, farm machinery, business equipment** or **stocks** today to establish a *donor-advised fund* and take your time in deciding how and where the gifts are distributed. This is a great way to involve your children and grandchildren, teaching them the importance of your family’s faith and legacy of generosity.

Income for You and Your Family

- Make a gift with cash or any of the assets mentioned above and receive a **lifetime of tax-advantaged payments**. You decide which non-profit ministry receives any remaining balance.
- Create a “Give It Twice” trust with **depreciated business assets** to avoid taxes and create a lifetime of income with the option to continue payments to your children for 20 years after your death. Make a gift of the remainder to your favorite ministries.

Do you have a current legacy plan?

- No matter how old you are or how much wealth you have, writing a will is essential to secure your future and protect your loved ones. The **FreeWill tool** helps you write or update your legal will, protect your loved ones and assets, and can even be used to support the causes you love.

Congregational Endowment Support

- Whether your congregation’s endowment needs a revival or you’re taking the first steps to establish a fund to provide perpetual support for the church’s mission and ministry, we can help with endowment and gift policy templates that make the process easy.
- Through our partnership with the ELCA Foundation, your church can invest in the Ministry Growth Fund, a long-term, well-diversified, socially responsible endowment of more than \$1 billion designed specifically for congregations and other ELCA ministries. Your congregation retains ownership of funds, receives quarterly statements, and has online access to monthly performance reporting.

Take the Next Step

For more information or to create a FREE, password-protected legacy plan, visit www.lpgsd.org. Contact Kathy McHenry at 605-274-5030 or kmchenry@sdsynod.org for assistance. Together, we can make a difference through thoughtful planning and faithful generosity.

your life can make a difference

2025 Ministry Celebrations



Our Synod's vision of Journeying Together in Christ has continued to be the focus of our work. We invite you to take a few moments to review the list below, which celebrates some of the ministry we shared together in 2025. **Journeying together in Christ as the South Dakota Synod, in 2025 we have:**

- Received **3 new first call** candidates, completed **18 Ministry Site Studies**, and extended **24 calls**.
- Ensured that nearly every congregation has a called pastor, interim pastor, Synod Authorized Minister, or lay leader to care for God's people (**thank you** to all of you who are helping out with area congregations and filling in!).
- Walked with **28 people** in various stages of **candidacy** in the SD Synod in 2025, with **18** others inquiring and in discernment.
- Completed Year 2 of the **\$1.13 million** "Journeying Together in Christ" grant and Year 1 of the **\$1.25 million** "Holy Playground Initiative" grant; both grants were awarded by Lilly Endowment, Inc.
- Welcomed Pr. Renae Boehmer as Director for the Holy Playground Initiative. Gave out subawards to **3 Neighbors in Solidarity communities** and have recruited a cohort of over **20 congregations** who will journey together in 2026 to create intergenerational opportunities for young children to fully engage in worship and prayer.
- Continued to support rural congregations through the work of Pr. Joel Pakan, **Director for Rural Ministry**, and 4 part-time **Rural Ambassadors**. In 2025, our Rural Ministry Ambassadors led or participated in over **100** worship services in over **50** South Dakota ELCA congregations. They also led, helped facilitate, or attended over **100** meetings in congregations, conferences, and the synod.
- Continued to promote Spirit-led growth and faith formation through our Pasque Learning Community (sdsynodlearns.org). In 2025, Pasque received over **6,500** unique site visits, with over **400** site accounts created and nearly **500** active enrollments in resources.
- Received a **\$50,000** CaSTLE Grant from Wartburg Seminary for 2025 and was awarded another **\$50,000** CaSTLE Grant for 2026 to support Rural Ambassadors, the Synod Authorized Minister retreat, and resource creation.
- Granted **\$129,231** in South Dakota Synod Educational Scholarship Awards, including the Fund for Leaders program.
- Distributed **\$96,263** through the Seminary Debt Reduction Program, including paying off the loan balances of 5 rostered leaders.
- Awarding **\$21,447** in Storm Micro Grants to help members and congregations recover from severe weather events and **\$10,500** in Micro Grants to the feeding ministries of our congregations and worshipping communities.
- Held a **Synod Assembly**, where we gathered as a community to conduct the business of the Synod.
- Hosted **Spring** and **Fall Theological Conferences**, where we continued to support the continuing education of our Rostered Ministers.
- Supported the congregations and ministries of the Synod through **visits by Synod staff**, both **digital** and **in-person**.
- Hosted **"Coffee with the Bishop"** for Retired Rostered Ministers, Spouses, Widows/Widowers.
- Hosted **"I've Been Elected to Council, Now What?"** to support congregational lay leaders and supported rostered lay leaders with regular **in-person and virtual meetings**, such as monthly rostered minister virtual check-ins, Synod Authorized Minister, Senior Pastor, and Interim Pastor check-ins, and a First Call and Senior Pastor Retreat.
- Supported the work of congregational office administrators with a **Synod Office Administrators Monthly Check-In**. **32** administrators have signed up to participate in these check-ins and to share resources in a dedicated Pasque course.
- Continued the work of the Rural Ministry Table, including awarding **\$80,127** in **Small Town and Rural (STAR)** grants.
- Received **\$108,033** in Churchwide grants for our Neighbors in Solidarity ministries.
- Awarded **\$53,038** from Endowment and Listen! Endowment funds to congregations, rostered, and lay leaders

Thank you for all the ways you have supported the ministry of the South Dakota Synod. Together, we continue to serve as the hands and feet of Christ, sharing Jesus' love and grace. As we step into 2026, we trust in God's guidance and look forward to walking this journey of faith together.



At the beginning of Bishop Hagmaier's first term as bishop, the South Dakota Synod engaged in an intentional listening and learning process.

These results shaped our strategic vision and mission over the last six years and will continue to do so over the next six.

Here is a brief summary of the results:

What gives you joy?

- Music
- Multi-generational ministry opportunities
- Purposeful gatherings
- Purposeful volunteering
- The Gospel

Why even be "synod?"

We are synod because it unites congregations together in shared mission, mutual support, and collective witness, so that we can do God's work in the world more faithfully and effectively than any of us could alone. In short, we are called to journey together in Christ. (Luke 24:13-35)

What keeps you up at night?

- Economic hardships
- Polarization in our society
- Mental Health
- Fear for the future of "the Church"

How will we journey together in Christ?

- **Relating** with intentionality
- **Networking** across the church
- **Equipping** leaders for ministry
- **Sharing** leadership

How do you envision your relationship with the Synod staff?

- Resources
- Relationships
- Programs
- Communication
- Faith formation

With confidence in Christ's Love for All.

"Fitting who we are into pews made for who we were."

- Participant from 2019 Listen, Learn, Care Event

"Let's imagine every moment as a classroom, an opportunity to learn, grow, adapt, and lean into the vision God has for the church of today and tomorrow." - Bishop Constanze Hagmaier



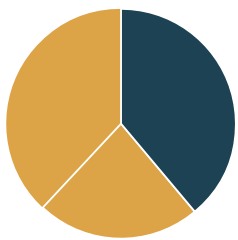
MISSION SUPPORT: WHAT DOES MY OFFERING DO?

South Dakota Synod

Every week, Lutherans across the country gather to worship. Many of us give to our congregation as part of this experience. ELCA members give about \$1.6 billion annually as regular offerings to ELCA congregations and worshipping communities. When you give your offering, most of it stays with your congregation to fund its vital work. A portion — about 5%, on average — becomes Mission Support, given by your congregation to your synod. In FY2024 the South Dakota Synod shared \$698,143 in Mission Support for ELCA churchwide ministries. Because of Mission Support, our hands can do God's work in more places than any one person or congregation could alone. Together we experience the way of Jesus; discover community, justice and love; and help more people experience the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.



Your **MISSION SUPPORT** funds a variety of churchwide ministries.

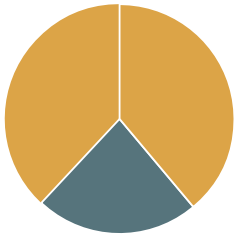


38% BUILDS CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES in the United States by enabling us to:

Thank you for \$265,294 from the South Dakota Synod for these ministries!

- Plant and support hundreds of worshipping communities.
- Revitalize congregational ministries and reach out to their surrounding communities.
- Promote leadership opportunities, discernment and education through leadership initiatives.
- Support the work of seven ELCA seminaries and 27 ELCA colleges and universities.
- Host events and leadership opportunities for youth and young adults.
- Support regional work through directors for evangelical mission as well as candidacy and leadership managers.
- Prepare and implement a system for recruiting and assigning rostered ministers.

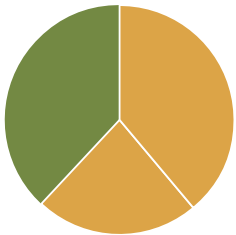




Another **23% GROWS THE GLOBAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** and addresses issues around the world, enabling us to:

Thank you for \$160,573 from the South Dakota Synod for these ministries!

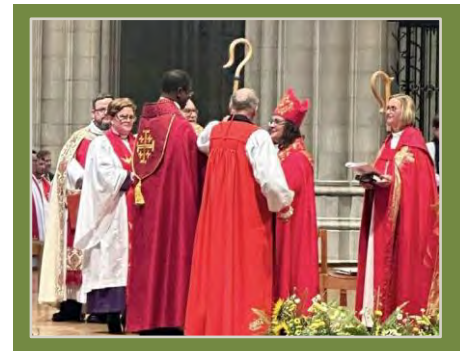
- Accompany new Lutheran churches, expand ministries and train leaders and evangelists.
- Send missionaries to accompany communities around the world.
- Address social inequities and work for justice.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with 149 other churches through the Lutheran World Federation to strengthen the church and its global work.
- Foster relationships between ELCA synods and 65 companion churches, for a total of 127 official relationships.
- Work with leaders and members of our African-descent, American Indian, Alaska Native, Arab, Middle Eastern, Asian, Pacific Islander and Latiné communities.



Finally, **39% STRENGTHENS AND SUSTAINS THE MINISTRY and MISSION** of the whole church, enabling us to:

Thank you for \$272,276 from the South Dakota Synod for these ministries!

- Offer ministry resources and opportunities to lay leaders for networking.
- Develop social messages of the ELCA as topical documents to focus attention and action on timely, pressing matters of concern to church and society.
- Sustain ecumenical and interfaith relations.
- Partner with congregations and ministries across the church as they explore new, innovative ways of being church in a constantly changing world.
- Invest in technology and communications.
- Engage in research and strategic planning.
- Create and share resources for faith, discipleship, prayer, stewardship and worship.



Thank you for your ongoing support and faithful partnership! For stories of your impact, visit LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA. To find additional Mission Support resources, visit ELCA.org/SOFIA. Scan the QR code to view the new Mission Support video “What Does My Offering Do?”





**Rebecca
Kiesow-Knudsen**
President and CEO
LSS of South Dakota

MEET AVERY, the impact of a healthier, safer and more accepting South Dakota

When I think about the important work LSS is doing across the state, I think about Avery*, a client at Arise Youth Center. For her, every day was focused on just making it to the next. Alone, mistreated and rejected, far from home and trapped in circumstances beyond her control, she found a sense of safety in our 24/7 shelter care, where young people move beyond the justice system and toward a brighter future. Arise became a space for her to heal and rediscover the joy and stability that's possible when you rest in your first safe space.

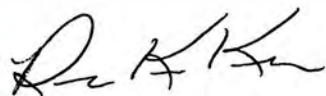
We are so grateful to be entrusted with this sacred work. As I reflect on 2025, I am reminded of both overwhelming joys and tremendous challenges. Our organization has shown great resilience as we have adapted to funding changes beyond our control. These external forces have resulted in reductions in the scope of services at the Center for New Americans, Behavioral Health and our Family Stabilization services. These changes have been hard but necessary decisions as we look to maintain the health and sustainability of the agency as a whole.

In spite of all these challenges, I feel certain that together we can continue the important work of meeting the growing needs of South Dakota's families.

- In September, LSS entered into a new contract with the State of South Dakota to provide enhanced kinship and foster care licensing services. The new contract means more families will be equipped to care for children across the state, creating stability and improving quality of life.
- In Lake Andes, a new program called Preserve & Prosper began this spring as a way to address food insecurity. LSS's Older Adult Resource Network and other community partners are teaching residents how to garden and can the produce they've grown, and we know the seeds planted through this program will reach far beyond the pantry.

Whether it's children in foster care who are safer statewide, older adults and caregivers connected to resources in the southeast or Avery who feels safe and accepted once again, with your support, LSS is making a difference across our state.

Thank you for your partnership with us.



*Arise client's name changed to protect her identity.

YOUR IMPACT IN 2025

- 603 kinship and foster care home studies were completed.
- 257 older adults and caregivers were connected with resources in Bon Homme, Charles Mix, Douglas and Hutchinson counties.
- 1,000+ people were served through the LSS Center for New Americans' education program.
- 133 clients were helped through a Debt Management Program.

Statistics for 2025

New Members – 2025

March 2025 - Alyssa Armentrout & Jacob Larson; Chris & Aftin, Spencer Eich; Levi & Shayna Silva; Craig Chapman; Shelly & Todd Larson

Transfer Outs – 2025

Jared, Carrie, Elizabeth & Meribelle Regelin; Diana Patos & family; Doug & Michelle Gab, Randy & Mary Isaacson

Confirmands – 2025

Berkley Larson, Brecken Pekarski, Brecken Schreiber, Cole Foreman, Edward James Morrison, Frankie Hansen, Hudson Nopola, Jack Hendrickson, Jenna Hallen, Kadlin Wheeler, Katie Hendrickson, Kylee Muth, Keighton Steever, Loralye Mitchell, Reagen Younie, Sarah Cochran, Taylor Steever, Thorian Olson-Buks

Weddings – 2025

Jacob Larson & Alyssa Armentrout, David Moore & Susan Ford

Baptisms – 2025

Everly Young, Hazel Jean Young, Ronan John Martin, Bensen Thomas Avvampato, Hadley Jo Larson, Gyda Charlotte Snyder, Sterling Cody Young, Mallie Ann Shreeve, Haven James Oliver, Andie Grace Brandsrud, Ainsley Willow Haase, Lola Ruth Marie Salwei, Theodore John Paul, Ruth Jean Winter, Sutton Daniel Wegner

Deaths – 2025

Marvin Kahl, Melvin Wolfe, Scott Sebbo, Gerry Harms, Bill Singer

2025 Calvary Lutheran Church Staff

Interim Pastors - January -June 2025, Pastor Steve Brandsrud, June - October 2025

Senior Pastor - Tim O'Shields (October 15, 2025-Present)

Deacon Tom Martin - High School Youth, Kin Ministry, Visitation Coordinator

Business Manager - Tammy (Singsaas) Drewitz

Office Manager - Lee Ann Henry (to November)

Custodians - Full-Time...Daniel Whittaker (Started April); **Part-time...**Jim Simons, Wayne Rosby (retired April), Nathania Knight (resigned April)

3-year old – 5th Grade Coordinator - Hayden Nesland

Pre-Confirmation (6th) and Confirmation Coordinator (7th-8th) - Audra Nesland

Family Ministries Coordinator/Web Site/Social Media - Kellie Meissner

Director of Music & Worship/Choir Director - Al Spreizer - (resigned December)

Children's Library Coordinator - Lori Watson (Volunteer)

Wednesday School Music Director - Johnny Sundby and Mark VanAlstyne (January–April) Ted VanAlstyne (September-December)

Blue Grass Music Director - Deb Martin

Hospitality Coordinator - Carrington Pulaski (Jan. - August), and Aftin Eich (Sept.-Dec.)

Audio Visual Support - Kirk Guymon (resigned December)

Wednesday Music Team Leader - Michelle Skoog

Education Staff Support - Nathania Knight (resigned April)

2025 Church Council

COUNCIL MEMBER OFFICERS:

President - Joey Younie (resigned October), **Vice President** - Sara Odden, **Secretary** - Troy Kilpatrick, and **Treasurer** - Jayne Kraemer

Other Council Members Cindy Kinzley (resigned November), Gina Nelson, Rod Rice, Julie Richter (resigned October), and Zach Finley

Calvary Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Minutes

January 29th, 2025

Welcome – Jessica Gromer< Council President welcomed congregational members to the Annual Meeting.

Quorum – Was established by Church Council (minimum 50 members).

Devotion – Provided by Deacon Tom Martin

Approval of Agenda – Motion made by Sara Odden, 2nd from the congregational floor. Approved unanimously.

Approval of 2024 Minutes – Motion made from congregational floor, 2nd by Joey Younie. Approved unanimously. Presidents Report – Jessica Gromer provided a brief recap of her letter but expressed thanks to the congregation, staff, and council for support during her tenure. Jessica closed as excited to hand over the leadership and expressed confidence in the new council team.

Call Committee – Jon Johnson – Jon reminded us of all that our search began in June which to many of us feels a long time ago, but he reminded all that it has been in fact only 7 months. In 2024 4 candidates were interviewed without success in finding a match for our church. Already in 2025, a new candidate has shown interest and again interviews are taking place. Jon reminded all that new leaders may respond to our posting through the ELCA or perhaps be found through recommendation of the congregation. Jon thanked the congregation for their involvement noting that over 40 names had been forwarded to the committee for consideration and vetting. Lastly the call committee understands the competitive nature of the process as currently there are over 30 churches in South Dakota with leadership openings.

Financials – Martin Kerkenbush – Martin started by thanking everyone for support and noting this was his last year on the church council. He provided acknowledgement to the Finance Committee and its members in helping provide steering to the church. Final Operating Incomes were \$911,135 or a positive +\$56,735 over budget. Final Operating Expenses were \$811,381 or below budget (\$43,019) Resulting in a positive year. Church member generosity was significant and well timed as the following expenses were incurred in and paid for out of the MIF Money Market Account. Golden West (\$30,081) and Roof Repairs (\$101,700). Additional key expenses paid for out-of-church checking included the following. Oven for kitchen (\$12,849), Restaurant supply items (\$1,321), Signs/lights (\$3,392), and the elevator (\$2,602). Good news shared is that we have operating funds and we were able to work through expenses as the year progressed. Putting ourselves in a strong position entering 2025.

2025 Operating Budget requested as \$855,973 for the coming year (monthly average \$71,331). Motion was made from the congregational floor to accept and was seconded by Julie Richter. Approved unanimously.

2025 Constitutional Approval – Jessica shared that all proposed changes were in alignment with the ELCA. Jessica reminded congregational members that copies have and are available at the church. Approval requires a simple majority. Motion to approve made by Julie Richter, and 2nd by Matt Odden. Constitutional approval met the majority requirement and passed.

Endowment Distribution Report - Matt Odden - Matt provided fund totals that currently represent the CLC Endowments as of 12/31/24. ELCA Endowment Fund \$532,654.86, BH Community Foundation \$16,217.53, and SD Community Foundation \$1,175.48. Endowment recommended that 5% of the ELCA Endowment Fund be utilized and provided recommended distribution percentages in the following categories and activities. In ELC Support - 25% - 12.5% to Lutheran Social Services and 12.5% to Outlaw Ranch. In Community Outreach in SD -25% - 12.5% to Church Response and 12.5% - to One Heart Campus. In CLC Distribution Requests – 50% - 18.77% to High School Mission Trip, 15.39% to confirmation, 8.7% to Summer Camp Scholarships, 5.63% to Youth Ministry Camp, and 1.5% to High School Winter retreat. Recommendation to re-invest at both BH Community and SD Community Foundations. A Motion to accept Endowment Committee recommendations was made by Martin Kerkenbush, 2nd from the congregational floor. Passed unanimously. Committee Nominations and Approvals – The following congregational members were presented and approved though vote by the congregation for the following committees.

Church Council – Cindy Kinzley, Jayne Kraemer, Rodney Rice, and Zach Finley

Nominating Committee – Jessica Gromer, Martin Kerkenbush, and Sonny Magnuson (Jessica and Martin satisfy Calvary by-law’s requirement of 2 former Council Members on this committee).

Endowment Committee- Beth-Anne Ferley, Laura Davies, and Debra Niemi Synod Delegates – Malcolm Chapman, Bill Eldridge, Steve Helmers, Cindy Kinzley, Jo Prang, Julie Richter, and Lois Wuesterwald All votes were determined by simple majority and all candidates were elected.

Outgoing Recognition of Service –

Church Council – Jessica Gromer (6 years), Martin Kerkenbush (6 years), Dan Kueker (3 years), and Mark Massa (2 years).

Endowment Committee – Matt Odden, Jennifer Baloun, and Ed Toms Joey Younie presented plaques to both Jessica and Martin who were in attendance. Motion to adjourn made by Jennifer Baloun, and 2nd by Bill Eldridge. Approved Unanimously. Deacon Tom Martin conducted the closing prayer.

3 Year Olds – 5th Grade Education Program

Hayden Nesland

This year, our Children's Ministry welcomed 84 students from 3-year-olds through 5th grade: 16 preschoolers, 9 kindergarteners, 8 first graders, 10 second graders, 8 third graders, 15 fourth graders, and 18 fifth graders. While our numbers are smaller than previous years (110 students in 2024 and 139 in 2023), we are so thankful for every child who joins us and for the energy and joy they bring to our classrooms.

Due to lower class numbers and limited teachers, we offered only one session this year, from 5:40 to 6:25, instead of two sessions as in previous years (5:00 to 5:40 and 5:45 to 6:25). Music was offered for preschool through second grade from 6:10 to 6:25, while third through fifth graders focused on deeper class work to prepare for confirmation and explore their faith more fully. Each third grader also received a bible that they use through third to fifth grade and take home at the end of fifth grade.

For the first time, we did not use the Augsburg Spark curriculum. In the past, purchasing curriculum for 3-year-olds through 5th grade and middle schoolers cost thousands of dollars in bibles, lesson plans, and materials, much of which could not be customized or reused. This year, we created our own curriculum, tailored to our students, and our September to March schedule. It allowed us to include special elements often missing from commercial programs, such as traditional prayers and the seasons of the Church year.

We also want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our parents and guardians. Your support in bringing your children to class, helping them at home, and assisting in the classroom makes a huge difference. Faith formation happens not only at church but also at home, and we are so grateful for your partnership in helping your children grow in their faith every day.

By making these changes, we were able to reduce costs, minimize excess materials, and focus on what matters most: helping each child learn, explore, and grow in their faith. We are excited for all the ways God will continue to work in the lives of our children.

Blessings, Hayden Nesland

Pre-Confirmation & Confirmation Coordinator

Audra Nesland

This year, Pre-Confirmation (6th grade) and Confirmation (7th–8th grade) students continued using the Colaborate Bible under the overarching theme Faith Forward, guiding students as they grow in faith, understanding, and service.

6th Grade – Roots of Our Faith:

Students explored key stories from the Old and New Testaments, building a strong foundation that connects God's story to their own lives. The Pre-Confirmation program includes approximately 18 sixth-grade students divided into two small groups led by parent guides. Through Bible stories, worship, prayer, and hands-on activities aligned with the Church Year, students are grounded in the basics of faith. In early December, sixth graders participated in a mission night, painting Christmas ornaments that were shared with elderly members of the community.

7th Grade – Exploring Our Faith:

Students deepened their understanding of core Lutheran beliefs, including grace, the Apostles' Creed, and the sacraments, while learning how faith is lived out within the church community. The 29 seventh graders build upon their biblical foundation through discussion, questions, and reflection.

8th Grade – Living My Faith:

Students focused on applying faith to daily life through service, spiritual practices, reflection, and writing personal faith statements as they prepare to affirm their faith. The 18 eighth graders reflect on lessons, discuss school and upcoming activities, share celebrations, and close each gathering in prayer, integrating faith into everyday experiences.

Calvary's Confirmation program is a two-year program for 7th and 8th grade students that combines fellowship, service, and faith formation. On Wednesday nights, following worship, students begin with a large-group session led by the Confirmation Coordinator and the pastor. During this time, two student-submitted questions from the weekly worship notes are selected and addressed. Students then move into small groups with their guides for discussion and connection.

Confirmation students have also been actively engaged beyond weekly gatherings. In October, more than 20 seventh and eighth graders attended the Confirmation Retreat at Outlaw Ranch near Custer, joined by the Confirmation Coordinator, Pastor Randy, and five adult guides. The 24-hour retreat provided meaningful time for worship, reflection, fellowship, and faith growth in the beautiful Black Hills. Later in October, several Confirmation students helped with Trunk or Treat, enjoying great weather and a busy evening of welcoming families both inside and outside the church. In December, seventh and eighth graders signed over 125 Christmas cards for elderly members of our community. Additionally, one seventh-grade Confirmation group spent an afternoon at the Black Hills Center for Aging, making Christmas crafts and ornaments as part of their Faith Project.

Audra Nesland,

Confirmation Coordinator

Family Ministries/Website/Social Media

Kellie Meissner

Family Ministries is comprised of two areas: **Milestone Ministry** and **Family Events**. Milestone Ministry continues to be one of my favorite ways of partnering with parents as they pass on their Christian faith. I love how it brings an awareness of God's presence into the home while also connecting the events of everyday life with our congregation. Through Milestones, we celebrate with children and their parents/guardians from birth through 12th grade — most often on Wednesday evenings, and some on Sunday mornings.

Family Ministries also had a meaningful and joy-filled year of events:

- **February — Valentine Cards:** Family Ministries and members created **113 Valentine cards** for members.
- **Lent — Prayer & Easter Experience:** We created an interactive **Lenten Prayer Room** with stations available for individuals and families throughout the 40 days of Lent. We concluded the season with **Journey to the Cross**, an immersive Stations of the Cross experience featuring five Holy Week stations for families.
- **March 29 — Nerf Games with the Police:** A fun afternoon of connection and community-building.
- **Summer — VBS & Fellowship:** Calvary hosted **Outlaw Ranch VBS** June 30–July 2 for **31 children**, and we gathered for **Calvary Swimming Pool Day** on July 17.
- **Fall — Faith, Fun & Fellowship:** The Education team hosted a Fall Festival on September 3. Family Ministries also hosted “**Be a Hero — Shine God's Light**” **Trunk-or-Treat** and a **Feeding South Dakota Food Drive**, collecting **240 lbs of food and \$917** (including \$300 from Calvary Quilters). Special thanks to **Sherry Dwyer** for using her **Thrivent Action Team** to provide \$250 in seed funds. We also displayed our **Veterans Day Memorial Wall** honoring past and current members who have served our country.
- **November 29** —Family Ministries helped coordinate Calvary's **first-ever Parade of Lights float**.
- **Advent — Christmas Caroling:** Families and members gathered for **Christmas Caroling on December 6**.

In addition to Family Ministries, I continue to manage Calvary's **website, Facebook pages, bi-monthly newsletters, announcement slides, Education registration, and Stewardship materials**. This year, Calvary also launched a **monthly generosity focus**, highlighting and supporting local organizations:

September — One Heart Campus; October — Feeding South Dakota; November — WAVI; December — Children's Home Society

I also assisted with securing our new **electronic display sign** for the front of the church. I look forward to learning new ways to share the story of Calvary Lutheran through our website and social media.

I am proud to share that Family Ministries has continued to offer all of these ministries and events on a **\$2,500 annual budget**, as we have since 2018.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this wonderful congregation.

Sincerely,

Kellie Meissner

Music Ministry Report

The Music Ministry at Calvary Lutheran Church continues to enrich worship and support the congregation's spiritual life through a wide variety of musical offerings across multiple services and age groups. We are grateful for the dedication and leadership of our music coordinators and volunteers.

Leadership and Coordination

- **Music Coordinator and Organist – Al Spreizer**

Al provided leadership for the music ministry for Sunday worship and Saturday worship, except for the Blue grass and supported music across worship services with piano and organ. He led both a **Christmas Cantata** and an **Easter Cantata**, offering meaningful and well-prepared musical experiences that enhanced these major celebrations of the church year.

- **Wednesday Music Coordinator and Band Leader – Michelle Skoog**

Michelle coordinated and led music for Wednesday services, working with the band to provide contemporary and engaging worship music. Her leadership helped foster meaningful participation and consistency in midweek worship.

- **Saturday Bluegrass Music Coordinator – Deb Martin**

Deb coordinated the Saturday Bluegrass worship music, offering a unique and welcoming style that continues to be appreciated by the congregation. This music ministry adds diversity and warmth to our worship life. Attendance at the Blue grass service usually is double to the attendance on any other Saturday service.

- **Wednesday Children's Music Coordinator (Younger Group) – Ted Van Alstyne**

Ted led music for the younger children during Wednesday programming, helping them grow in faith through song and active participation. His work supports both worship and faith formation at an early age.

The South Dakota School of Mines Community Choir provided music for the 9:30 AM service on All Saints Sunday. They provided beautiful and powerful music with about 50 singers.

Our vision is to continue to grow our music ministry in and through Calvary Lutheran Church. Particular attention for 2026 will be to enhance and grow the children's singing and musical opportunities.

Calvary Quilters

Nancy Steever

Our mission: warming hearts and hearths through gifts of quilts.

The quilting group has a membership of 16 that gathers on Thursdays from 9:00 AM to 12 PM in rooms 102 and 103. We work together to assemble quilts from start to finish for various charities benefiting the needy. We prepare kits for those wishing to sew at home, then return to us for completion

In 2025 we made **228 quilts and donated 128 quilts** to various local charities. We also made a monetary donation to Lutheran World Relief shipping expenses for several hundred quilts to be shipped wherever needed. Lutheran World relief is now assisting disasters in the United States and beyond.

We purchased a much-needed new dryer for the church.

We welcome anyone to join us for our heartwarming mission. No experience is necessary. There are several tasks other than sewing. Fabric donations and thrive in action team cards are appreciated.

We want to thank our church family for your support and prayers.

Blessings,

Nancy Steever

Baptismal Stitching Ministry

Julie Richter

The Baptismal Stitching Ministry began on November 5, 2025, following a conversation between Pastor Tim O'Shields and Julie Richter. Pastor Tim asked Julie if she would be willing to start a ministry at Calvary to create and provide quilts for babies baptized at the church. Within days, seven experienced quilters, all current or future members of Calvary, agreed to participate and launch the ministry.

The purpose of the Baptismal Stitching Ministry is to provide a handmade baptismal quilt or crocheted blanket to each person baptized at Calvary, as a symbol of welcome, love, and the church's support for families. In 2025, the group completed six baby quilts, and the first quilt was presented to the final baby baptized that year.

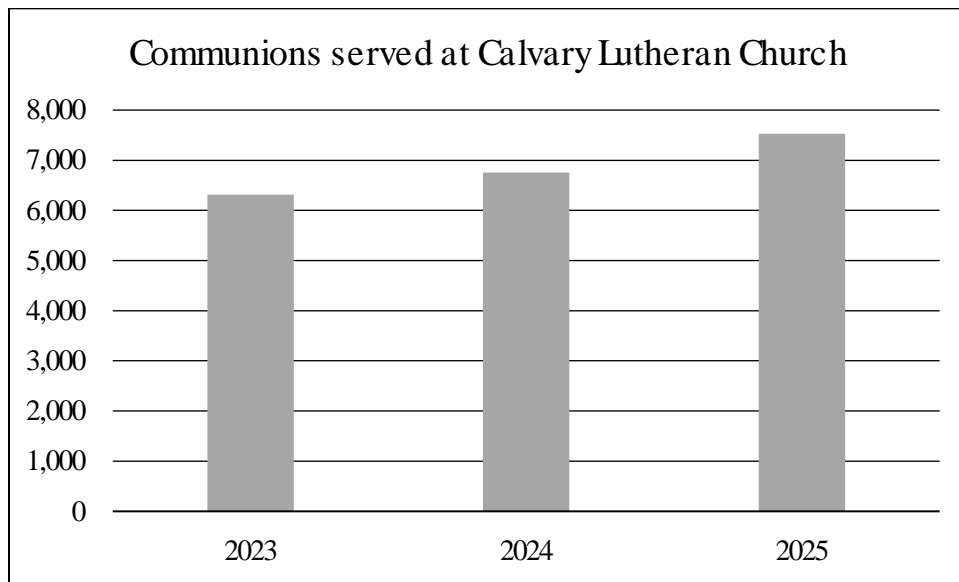
Members currently work on these projects from home using their own equipment and generously provide all fabric and supplies themselves. Meetings are held as needed, with most communication taking place through text messages.

Pastor Tim currently oversees the inventory of quilts and blankets. As of December 31, 2025, the ministry has five completed baby quilts on hand. Looking ahead, the group would like to have a designated closet or cabinet at the church to store finished quilts and a small supply of materials.

Altar Guild
Bill Eldridge

The Calvary Lutheran Church Altar Guild provides essential support to the congregation by preparing the sacrament of Holy Communion for church members and visitors. Altar Guild is a wonderful way to support worship at Calvary by preparing the communion sacrament while fostering friendship by working together in service. The Altar Guild is organized into four teams, and each serves once every three months throughout the year. Part-time members and substitutes assist as their schedules permit. Business meetings are held approximately five times annually to coordinate activities and support ongoing ministry needs.

In 2025, the Altar Guild assisted with preparing and serving communion to 7,528 people, an increase from 6,756 in 2024 and 6,314 in 2023. Altar Guild team members assisted with special services including Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Easter services, Pastor O’Shields’ installation in November, and the Christmas services. During Easter services, 645 people received communion, which was continued growth from 492 in 2024 and 494 in 2023. Additionally, the Altar Guild prepared communion for the first Christmas Day service in recent church history, serving 90 people. Altar Guild member Deb Rich provided leadership in the display and maintenance of paraments and altar candles, and member Juli Doerr led the preparation, care, distribution, and clean-up of candles for the candlelight services on Christmas Eve.



At the end of 2025, Altar Guild membership included 19 active members, 8 substitutes, and 3 inactive or retired members. Altar Guild grew by 4 members from 2024. For additional information about Calvary Lutheran Altar Guild, please contact the church office (605) 342-9043 or Bill Eldridge at (660) 864-4805 or william.eldridge2@gmail.com.

Calvary Council Executive Committee

Dear Members of Our Church Family,

As we reflect on the past year, one word captures the season we have been walking through together: transition. While change often brings uncertainty, it also invites renewal, growth, and a deeper reliance on God's guiding presence.

This year marked a significant milestone in the life of our congregation with the acceptance of the call by our new Senior Pastor, Tim O'Shields. We are grateful for the discernment, prayer, and faithfulness shown by our church family throughout this process. Welcoming new pastoral leadership is both a sacred responsibility and a joyful moment, and we look forward with anticipation to the vision, energy, and spiritual leadership that lies ahead.

As we turn our eyes toward 2026, we recognize that this coming year will also represent the end of an era. We will honor and celebrate the retirement of a Deacon Tom Martin, whose years of service have left a lasting impact on our congregation. His faithful leadership, dedication, and a servant's heart have helped shape our church in ways that will continue to bear fruit for years to come. We are deeply thankful for his legacy and the example it sets for future leaders.

At the same time, we are preparing to welcome a new Associate Pastor, another important step in the ongoing life and ministry of our church. This call represents opportunity—an opportunity to strengthen our ministries, support our staff, and continue growing together in faith and service.

Through all of these transitions, one thing remains constant: God's faithfulness to this congregation. As we move forward, may we continue to support one another, pray earnestly, and remain open to where God is leading us next.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment, your grace during times of change, and your continued dedication to the mission of our church. We look ahead to 2026 with gratitude for the past, confidence in the present, and hope for the future.

With thanks and anticipation,

Sara Odden, Vice President

Troy Kilpatrick, Secretary

Jayne Kraemer, Treasurer

*Deacon, Volunteer Coordination, Visitation Coordinator,
High School Youth Group, and Worship Leader*

Deacon Tom Martin

CALLED TO CARE MINISTRY:

We are in the 10th year of our organized visitation program. We made the decision to rebuild our program in 2025 so that it is a better fit for those visiting as well as those that we are visiting. The plan has been put together and we are searching for a coordinator to execute this plan in 2026. Together, we will explore ways to connect with members of our church community who may be: Homebound due to life circumstances, living in a nursing home, or unable to attend worship in person. Caring connections will be available in many forms, such as face-to-face visits, phone calls, sending a note or card, sharing communion, watching a worship service together, and/or providing a meal.

At our first meeting on October 16, 2025, we had approximately 23 Calvary members who attended and were presented with the vision for this ministry.

Our hopes and prayers are that Called To Care can be another meaningful ministry at our church. It's more important than ever to embrace new solutions and to foster meaningful relationships while sharing God's love. It's time to reimagine our outreach ministries and build new connections with those that are isolated.

Taking the time to pause and have meaningful conversations with those in our church family is essential to the health and growth of Calvary.

This is a big responsibility, and we can always use more caring and compassionate Visitors. If you are interested in helping others in our congregation, please give us a call at the church office 605-342-9043.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP:

High School Youth Group is alive and well at Calvary! We have grown to know each other, as well as to know Christ better. We have matured in our relationships and grown stronger in our bonds to one another. We have truly discovered the Godly blessings of one another! Our average weekly Wednesday Nite attendance was 34 students.

On March 21-22, eleven of us gathered for our annual High School Youth WINTER RETREAT WEEKEND right here in the Black Hills. One of our Calvary families was gracious enough to donate a weekend at their beautiful lodge near Lead/Deadwood.

From July 25 - August 4th, we embarked on our MISSION TRIP to Nashville, TN. Myself and 9 students visited and helped families in need, worked at a large church for one day, helped in a shelter for mom's and little ones, and helped out 3 families who had special needs in their family or were helping other families with this. Wonderful experiences for all of us!!

Thank you for all of the support from the congregation all of these wonderful years, and most of all...THANK YOU FOR LOVING OUR STUDENTS!

VOLUNTEER COORDINATION:

I have enjoyed talking with so many of our members and watching them grow into ways to serve the church through the gifts that God has equipped us with. It takes a lot of people to run three worship services each week. We have Wednesday evening, Saturday evening, and Sunday morning worship service.

Sandra Littrell did all the legwork this year, lining up all the necessary people to run our services. MUCH APPRECIATED!!

From Scripture Readers to Communion Servers to Ushers...we do it all. We also have Puppeteers, Greeters, and Coffee Servers. Imagine this: it takes at least 55 volunteers to help with worship services every month. It is gratifying and honoring to be able to help in worship services.

WHAT A GREAT WAY TO MEET OTHER WONDERFUL PEOPLE!!

If you are interested in participating in any of these life-giving areas, please give us a call at the church office 605-342-9043. With deep appreciation! Deacon Tom Martin

DEACON - WORSHIP LEADER:

As an ELCA Deacon—Minister of Word and Service, I have been called to bridge the church and the world, equipping the congregation to live out Christ's love through service, care, and justice.

At Calvary Lutheran Church, my role centers on connection, compassion, and coordination...They break down as follows.

1. Ministry of Care & Compassion

- Develop and oversee caring ministries that support congregational members.
- Coordinate visitation for those who are: Homebound, Hospitalized, Living in nursing or assisted living facilities
- Train, support, and encourage lay visitors
- Ensure spiritual care through: Presence and listening, Prayer, Assisting in Holy Communion
- Respond pastorally during times of illness, grief, or transition

2. Connecting Worship to Daily Life

- Help the congregation understand how worship sends us into the world to serve
- Assist in worship as appropriate (reading scripture, assisting with communion, etc.)
- Reinforce that service is an extension of God's Word lived out in daily life
- Collaborate with pastors to support meaningful worship participation

3. Volunteer Coordination & Equipping

- Identify, invite, and support volunteers for ministry roles
- Match individuals' gifts with meaningful opportunities for service
- Coordinate worship volunteers, including: Ushers, Readers, Communion servers, Greeters, Other worship support roles
- Encourage new members into active service
- Build relationships that help volunteers feel valued and supported

4. Youth & Family Ministry Support

- Lead and support High School Youth Ministry
- Plan faith formation opportunities, retreats, and mission trips
- Foster a safe, welcoming, Christ-centered environment for youth
- Equip youth to serve others and grow in leadership
- Support parents and families in faith development

5. Outreach & Community Engagement

- Develop ministries that extend Calvary's presence beyond church walls
- Build partnerships with local organizations and service agencies
- Lead or support mission projects and service opportunities
- Encourage congregational participation in outreach and justice work

6. Leadership, Collaboration & Administration

- Work collaboratively with: Pastors, Church staff, Church council, Ministry teams
- Communicate ministry needs and opportunities clearly to the congregation
- Help envision and implement new ministries as community needs change
- Provide reports and updates as needed

7. Embodying the ELCA Deacon Call

An ELCA Deacon:

- Proclaims the Word through action and service
- Models compassionate leadership
- Encourages the church to see Christ in those who are marginalized or isolated
- Lives out the baptismal call to "serve all people, following the example of Jesus"

In Summary

As Calvary Lutheran Church Deacon, my role is to:

Care deeply, connect intentionally, equip faithfully, and serve boldly—
so that God's love is known both inside and beyond the church.

Senior Pastor
Pastor Tim O’Shields

October 15 – December 31, 2025

Scripture Reflection (NRSVUE) »I.am.about.to.do.a.new.thing.now.it.springs.forth?do.you.not.perceive.it? I.will.make.a.way.in.the.wilderness.and.rivers.in.the.desert? — **Isaiah 43:19** (NRSVUE)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ, Here at Calvary Lutheran Church, we are in a season of transition and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

The year 2025 has been a significant season of transition for Calvary Lutheran Church, marked by faithful leadership, renewed energy, and the unmistakable movement of the Holy Spirit among God’s people. I give thanks first to God, who continues to guide, sustain, and renew this congregation, and to the members of Calvary Lutheran Church for your openness, prayerfulness, and commitment during this time of change.

Earlier in 2025, Pastor Steve Brandsrud faithfully served as Interim Pastor, providing steady pastoral care and worship. I am deeply grateful for his ministry, which helped prepare the congregation for this next chapter and ensured continuity in worship, mission, and care.

I officially began my call as Senior Pastor on **October 15, 2025**, and in the short time since, it has been clear that the Holy Spirit is actively at work within this congregation. There is a palpable sense of expectation, renewal, and readiness for what God is doing now—and what God is preparing us to do together. All of this comes with some changes—both expected and those that are completely unexpected. One thing remains: God is guiding us through the turbulence of change.

Signs of Vitality and Growth

Several encouraging signs point to a strong and hopeful trajectory for Calvary Lutheran Church:

- **Spiritual and Congregational Life**
Attendance and participation in worship and congregational life have trend upward, reflecting renewed engagement and a hunger for connection, worship, and service.
- **Financial Strength**
The congregation closed the year with a **strong year-end financial performance**, demonstrating faithful stewardship, generosity, and confidence in the ministry and mission of Calvary Lutheran Church.
- **Embracing Change**
As with any new pastoral leadership, some changes have naturally begun to take shape. These shifts are being guided by prayer, discernment, and a shared desire to respond faithfully to God’s call in this season.

Looking Ahead: Opportunities for 2026

As we move into 2026, several exciting opportunities are emerging that will help shape the next phase of ministry at Calvary Lutheran Church:

- **Strategic Building Utilization**
Developing a thoughtful plan for how our facilities can best serve worship, ministry, outreach, and community engagement.
- **Evangelism, Outreach, and Membership Committee**
Establishing a dedicated committee to help us more intentionally welcome new people, engage our community, and strengthen pathways into membership and discipleship.
- **Anointing and Healing Prayer Services**
Adding regular opportunities for Anointing and Healing Prayer, offering sacred space for prayer, healing, and spiritual care.
- **Senior Adult Ministry – “Our Time”**
Continuing to nurture and expand the Senior Citizens Social and Educational Group, Our.Time, as a vital ministry of fellowship, learning, and care.
- **Calvary Homegrown Vacation Bible School**
Hosting a locally developed, “Calvary Homegrown” Vacation Bible School platform during the summer, engaging children, families, and volunteers in faith formation and joy.
- **Evolving Worship and Ministry Offerings**
Continuing to evaluate and evolve worship and ministry offerings to meet the changing needs of Calvary Lutheran Church while remaining rooted in our Lutheran identity.
- **Robust Visitation Ministry**
Engineering and sustaining a strong, intentional visitation plan to ensure pastoral presence, care, and connection for homebound members, those in care facilities, and those in times of need.

Closing Thanksgiving

I am deeply grateful for the warm welcome, trust, and partnership extended to me by this congregation. I believe God is doing a new thing at Calvary Lutheran Church, and I am honored to serve alongside you as we listen for the Spirit’s leading and step forward together in faith.

May we continue to perceive what God is bringing to life among us—and may we follow with courage, compassion, and hope.

In Christ’s service,

Pastor Timothy M. O’Shields

Senior Pastor, Calvary Lutheran Church

**Calvary Lutheran Church
Comparative Historical Balance Sheet**

Account Name	12/31/2025	12/31/2024
<i>Asset</i>		
Petty Cash	100	100
Wells Fargo Operating Checking Account	320,356	275,043
Wells Fargo Designated Checking Account	70,225	91,916
Mission Investment Fund Checking	32,507	32,313
Total Cash	\$423,188	\$399,372
Wells Fargo Investment	100	100
MIF Money Market Fund	236,880	123,206
We Care Certificates Inventory	800	1,165
Total Current Asset	\$237,780	\$124,470
Land	443,906	443,906
Building & Equipment	7,803,014	7,780,569
Organ	391,783	391,783
Total Land, Building, & Equipment	\$8,638,703	\$8,616,258
Total Asset	\$9,299,671	\$9,140,099
<i>Liabilities</i>		
Payroll Tax Payable	5,036.36	3,558.60
Total Current Liabilities	\$5,036.36	\$3,558.60
Total Liabilities	\$5,036.36	\$3,558.60
<i>Fund Balance</i>		
Unrestricted General Fund Balance	316,320	272,849
Capital Fund Balance	8,908,090	8,771,777
<i>Total Special - Restricted by Event Balance</i>	23,729	15,441
<i>Total Restricted for Children's Activities Balance</i>	16,811	16,811
<i>Total Restricted to Facility Balance</i>	500	15,550
<i>Total Restricted - Memorial Balance</i>	0	3,520
<i>Total Restricted Fund Balance</i>	29,185	40,593
Total Fund Balance	\$9,294,634	\$9,136,541
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	9,299,671	9,140,099

**Calvary Lutheran Church
Treasurer's Report - Unrestricted General Fund**

Account Name	2025	2024
Income		
Undesignated Offering		
Regular Offering	813,822	781,061
Loose Offering	29,110	25,397
Non Member Gift	14,900	7,885
Christmas Offering	23,275	34,451
Easter Offering	10,431	250
Undesignated Memorial Gift	1,971	3,191
Total Undesignated Offering	\$893,509	\$852,234
Other Receipt		
Kitchen Meal Donation		
Kitchen Meal Income	485	3700
Kitchen Meal Expense	-375	-2385
Total Kitchen Meal Donation	\$110	\$1,315
Coffee Hour Receipt		
Coffee Hour Income	3,021	3,038
Coffee Hour Expense	-2,585	-2,217
Total Coffee Hour Receipt	\$436	\$821
Wednesday Meal Donation		
Wednesday Meal Income	23,495	27,092
Wednesday Meal Expense	-19,464	-19,462
Total Wednesday Meal Donation	\$4,030	\$7,630
Facility Use Income		
<i>Facility Use Income</i>		
Classroom/Dakota Room Income	1,854	9,725
Wedding Income	350	1,665
Fellowship Hall Income	4,558	6,598
Funeral/Celebration of Life Income	100	525
<i>Total Facility Use Income</i>	<i>6,862</i>	<i>18,512</i>
Total Facility Use Income	\$6,862	\$18,512
Interest Income - Unrestricted Fund	1	0
Other Offering	0	940
Thrivent Choice Donation	2,919	5,618
Total Other Receipt	\$14,357	\$34,837
Total Income	\$907,866	\$887,072
Total Witness Expense	\$26,388	\$19,972
Total Worship Expense	\$8,200	\$19,521
Total Education Expense	\$5,272	\$13,112
Total Building Expense	\$172,750	\$183,720
Total Support Expense	\$530,078	\$525,830
Total Administration Expense	\$21,719	\$24,844
Total Capital Fund	\$-	\$319
Total Expense	\$764,407	\$787,318
Difference	\$143,459	\$99,754

2025 Budget

	January Budget	February Budget	March Budget	April Budget	May Budget	June Budget	July Budget	August Budget	September Budget	October Budget	November Budget	December Budget	Total Budget	Average Budget	879,900.00
Income															
General Income	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 75,120.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 56,980.00	\$ 56,980.00	\$ 48,840.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 81,400.00	\$ 81,400.00	\$ 117,680.00	\$ 844,000.00	\$ 70,333.33	
General Income 1	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 75,120.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 56,980.00	\$ 56,980.00	\$ 48,840.00	\$ 65,120.00	\$ 81,400.00	\$ 81,400.00	\$ 117,680.00	\$ 844,000.00	\$ 70,333.33	
General Income 2	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 2,900.00	
Special / Holiday	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 2,900.00	
Other Income	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 908.33	\$ 908.33	\$ 908.33	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 3,686.11	\$ 35,900.00	\$ 2,916.67	
Other Income 1	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 2,777.78	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 2,083.33	
Other Income 2	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 708.33	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 708.33	
Other Income 3	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 200.00	
Coffee Hour	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Expense															
Staff / Admin	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 48,480.00	\$ 581,760.00	\$ 48,480.00	66%
Staff / Admin 1	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 38,089.49	\$ 457,073.88	\$ 38,089.49	
Staff / Admin 2	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 2,901.60	\$ 34,819.19	\$ 2,901.60	
Staff / Admin 3	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 7,422.24	\$ 89,066.93	\$ 7,422.24	
Staff / Admin 4	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 66.67	\$ 800.00	\$ 66.67	
Facility	\$ 18,093.83	\$ 13,891.83	\$ 20,991.83	\$ 14,155.33	\$ 13,621.83	\$ 19,703.83	\$ 14,289.33	\$ 15,411.33	\$ 20,577.33	\$ 13,801.33	\$ 14,619.33	\$ 21,352.83	\$ 200,500.00	\$ 16,708.33	23%
Facility 1/2	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 1,791.67	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 1,791.67	
Facility 3/4	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 250.00	
Facility 5	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	
Facility 6	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 541.67	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 541.67	
Facility 7	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 658.33	\$ 7,900.00	\$ 658.33	
Facility 8	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 391.67	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 391.67	
Facility 9/11	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 433.33	\$ 5,200.00	\$ 433.33	
Facility 10	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 241.67	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 241.67	
Facility 12	\$ 5,912.50	\$ 4,020.50	\$ 4,020.50	\$ 3,784.00	\$ 3,074.50	\$ 3,784.00	\$ 3,784.00	\$ 3,784.00	\$ 3,784.00	\$ 2,838.00	\$ 3,784.00	\$ 4,493.50	\$ 47,300.00	\$ 3,941.67	
Facility 13	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 833.33	
Facility 14	\$ 188.00	\$ 188.00	\$ 188.00	\$ 188.00	\$ 564.00	\$ 846.00	\$ 1,222.00	\$ 1,598.00	\$ 1,410.00	\$ 1,880.00	\$ 752.00	\$ 376.00	\$ 9,400.00	\$ 783.33	
Facility 15	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 19,500.00	\$ 1,625.00	
Facility 16/17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Facility 18	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	
Facility 19	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 450.00	
Youth / Education	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 12,800.00	\$ 1,066.67	1%
Youth / Education 1	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 1,066.67	\$ 12,800.00	\$ 1,066.67	
Ministries	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 6,653.33	\$ 1,653.33	\$ 1,653.33	\$ 10,542.22	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 5,542.22	\$ 10,542.22	\$ 74,840.00	\$ 6,236.67	9%
Ministries 1	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 758.67	\$ 9,104.00	\$ 758.67	
Ministries 2	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 3,888.89	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 2,916.67	
Ministries 3	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 200.00	
Ministries 5	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
Ministries 6	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 694.67	\$ 8,336.00	\$ 694.67	
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL	\$ (4,366.61)	\$ (174.61)	\$ (12,274.61)	\$ 9,561.89	\$ 95.39	\$ (16,015.50)	\$ (7,601.00)	\$ (16,863.00)	\$ (11,860.11)	\$ 16,195.89	\$ 15,377.89	\$ 39,924.39	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 1,066.67	

2025 ENDOWMENT FUND

The Calvary Lutheran Church Endowment Fund, Rapid City, was established in 1985. In 2017, the funds were moved from Wells Fargo bank to the ELCA Fund Pooled Trust. Oversight is provided by a five-member elected committee made up of Calvary Lutheran Church members. All gifts to the endowment fund are tax deductible. Up to five percent of the fund's value at the end of the calendar year is made available for distribution as accrued interest by the CLC Endowment Committee the following year.

In 2022 the committee established two new funds for endowment donations to provide donation options for donors. These are the Calvary Lutheran Church Endowment Fund held by the **Black Hills Area Community Foundation (BHACF)** and the Calvary Lutheran Rapid City Endowment Fund held by the **South Dakota Community Foundation (SDCF)**. Similarly, up to five percent of the fund's value (as accrued interest) at the end of the calendar year is available for distribution the following year. Since these fund totals are still relatively small, distributions have not been made from these funds since their inception, allowing these funds to grow for future use.

Current Endowment Committee Members:

- Peg Seljeskog - Chair (Term expires 2026, eligible for additional term)
- Laura Davies - Secretary/Treasurer (Term expires 2028, eligible for additional term)
- Holli Mitchell, 2nd term (Term expires 2028, eligible for additional term)
- Beth-Anne Ferley (Term expires 2028, eligible for additional term)
- Debra Niemi (Term expires 2028, eligible for additional term)

The Committee is governed by the CLC Endowment Resolution (revised February, 2011) and the Endowment Committee Bylaws (revised November, 2022). Management of the actual funds are handled by the ELCA Endowment Fund, South Dakota Community Foundation, and Black Hills Area Community Foundation. Fund Statements are reviewed during committee meetings.

Endowment Committee has a page on the Calvary website. Along with Calvary program requests, Rapid City not-for-profit organizations dealing with human services are eligible to submit applications for funds via a link in the page.

<https://www.calvaryrapidcity.org/about-us/endowment>

Current available balances of the funds are:

- CLC Endowment Fund held by ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust: **\$580,622.08** (11/30/2025)
- Black Hills Community Foundation Endowment Fund: **\$18,696.48** (12/31/25)
- South Dakota Community Foundation Fund: **\$1353.55** (12/31/2025)
- The Endowment Committee recommends that in 2026, the sum total of the funds available for distribution on December 31, 2025, from the Calvary Lutheran Church Endowment Fund, held by the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust, be distributed to Calvary Lutheran Church, Rapid City.

Since the final figure of distributable dollars from the ELCA Fund were not available during the committee meeting that determined the CLC distribution decisions, the **recommendations for distribution are set by percentage** and will be applied based on the year-end dollar value of the fund, as provided by the ELCA Foundation.

These three percentage categories are determined by the 2007 Endowment Fund Resolution, are as follows along with the percentage of 2025 distributable dollars assigned by the Committee to selected programs:

25% to ELCA supported missions

- Lutheran Social Services (LSS) - 12.5%
- Outlaw Ranch - 12.5%

25% Community Outreach in SD

- Church Response - 12.5%
- One Heart Campus - 12.5%

50% Calvary Lutheran Church programs

- Confirmation Program request - 15%
- Pre-School-5th Grade Education request - 15%
- Vacation Bible School Program request - 20%

The Committee continues to recommend that in 2026, no distributions be made from the South Dakota Community Foundation & Black Hills Area Community Foundation funds in order to let them continue to grow for future usage.

The Generosity Forest, located on the Narthex south walls continues to have names of capital and other funds donors. Individuals, couples, or families donating \$2000 or more to the endowment fund, any of the capital or remodeling campaigns, special youth programs/fundraising activities, memorials, or anything beyond regular stewardship donations for church operations are eligible for recognition. Please contact the church office to complete a form to be recognized on the Generosity Forest. The form is also on the church website on the Endowment page (lower right).

www.calvaryrapidcity.org/media/Endowment/generosity-wall.pdf

The committee is committed to its duties 2026, encouraging endowment fund growth, reviewing pertinent materials, and keeping its online information and forms up-to-date.

Respectfully presented by the 2025 Endowment Fund Committee:

Peg Seljeskog, Beth-Anne Ferley, Holli Mitchell, Laura Davies, Debra Niemi

