

# January 2025

## Mount Calvary Lutheran Church & Preschool

2055 S. Franklin St. Rd  
Decatur, IL 62521  
217-428-0641

Pastor Brett Hinrichs  
[pastor@mtcalvarydecatur.org](mailto:pastor@mtcalvarydecatur.org)

## Office Hours

Monday - Thursday  
8am - 12noon

The office will be  
closed 12/24-1/5

Regular Office hours  
resume January 6th

## Worship With Us on Sundays

Worship Service  
at 9am

Christian Ed. Hour  
at 10:30am



# *A Message from Pastor Hinrichs*

*“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.*

*-Ephesians 1:17-19*

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

Although people have begun to take them down already, every year I really enjoy seeing all of the Christmas lights that decorate our streets, stores, and especially our homes. In fact, just the other night, as I was relaxing on our couch, I found myself mesmerized by the twinkling lights on our Christmas tree (yes, we're those people who keep it up for a long time). But that night, the lights looked a bit different than normal. For some reason, that usually clear glow seemed kind of blurry, as if the lights were working overtime. “I wonder what is wrong with the tree,” I thought before my mind wandered to other things. As it turns out, the problem wasn't the tree. It was me! I had forgotten that I had taken my glasses off! Of course the lights weren't in focus!

As January begins and New Year's Resolutions abound, there is often a big push for us to “refocus” on things that we want to be different in this year. As I thought about that idea, I began to realize how powerful (and Biblical) this concept really is! You see, just like I needed some help to see the lights on my tree clearly, we all need help seeing Jesus, the light of the world, clearly. And God gives us that help through the gift of the Holy Spirit!

In fact, the Bible has a whole lot to say about the way the Holy Spirit works in us so we can see clearly, not just as we look at the world, but also as we look at Jesus!

- **The Spirit lets us see ourselves as we are.** In Psalm 51, a psalm written by David after the prophet Nathan confronted him about his adultery with Bathsheba, David writes, “*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me,*” literally meaning “right in front of my eyes.” Without the Spirit's work in us through our conscience and through the Word, a gift given at the beginning of creation, we'd never know our need for a Savior.
- **The Spirit lets us see Jesus as He truly is.** In Ephesians, Paul writes about the “Spirit of wisdom and revelation” and prays that the “eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people” (Eph. 1:7-8).
- **The Spirit lets us see others as Jesus sees them!** In Mark 6:34, we hear that “*When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.*” All people matter to God. It doesn't matter who they are or what they've done or even what they believe. Christ died for them, Jesus loves them, God has a plan for their lives, and he wants them to have a relationship with him.

Knowing that this same Spirit continues to be at work in us today, my prayer for you is that, no matter what this year brings, that you would be “refocused” on Jesus every day as we “fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.”

*Pastor Brett Hinrichs*

# Grow Together

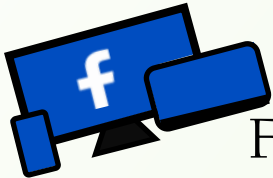
## **Worship Life at Mt. Calvary** Sunday Opportunities

Worship Service at 9:00<sub>AM</sub>

— A “relaxed” traditional service with hymns and standard orders of worship —

Christian Education Hour at 10:30<sub>AM</sub>

— Adult Bible Study, Confirmation Class, Additional Classes —



### Connect at Home

Facebook Live Worship: Sunday at 9:00<sub>AM</sub>

Radio Worship: Sunday at 9:00<sub>AM</sub> on 100.9FM WZUS

## **Weekday Bible Studies**

Men’s Bible Study: Monday Evenings 6:30<sub>PM</sub>

Location: Conference Room at Mt. Calvary (across from office)

The first Monday of each month join the men at Primrose Living Center.

Women’s Bible Study: Tuesday Mornings at 9:00<sub>AM</sub>

Location: Conference Room at Mt. Calvary (across from office)

The 3rd Tuesday of each month join the ladies at Mt. Zion Rehab Center or Evergreen Living Center. See the Calendar for details.

Thursday Bible Study: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays



**\*\*NEW TIME\*\*** (Winter months only) AFTERNOONS @ 2:00pm

Location: Conference Room at Mt. Calvary (across from office)

*All Bible Studies have call-in options. Please contact the group leader for more info*





# Serve Together

## Ladies Guild Breakfast & Planning Meeting

Saturday, January 19th @ 8:30 am is the Ladies Guild yearly planning meeting. All ladies are encouraged to join us for breakfast and then planning our events and setting our calendar for 2025.

## Valentines for Veterans

We will be collecting Valentines to take to Veterans at the Veterans Home in Danville.

The basket will be in the Narthex on January 19th. The cut-off date to drop Valentines in the basket is February 2nd, 2025. Thanks to the Normans for delivering



## What we'll do in January

- Solar System Model
- Make a Snowman without Snow
- Star Machines
- Melting Experiment
- Magnet Day
- Opposite Day
- Clown Day
- Circus Day

## January Bible Stories

Wise Men and Stars  
 Jesus is Named  
 Flight to Egypt  
 Jesus Grows  
 January Jubilation  
 God's Snow  
 Jacob and Angels  
 Up, Down & All Around



Space and Planets

Earth

Day and Night

Winter Season

## A Prayer Before Meals

Come Lord Jesus, be our guest.  
Let thy gifts to us be blessed.  
Amen.

God is great. God is good.  
And we thank Him for our food.

By His hands, we are fed.  
Thank you, Lord, for daily bread.

*We are in need of empty oatmeal containers. If you have any please bring them to the Preschool room. Thank you!*

## JANUARY ACTIVITIES

Jan. 6th	4S	Return to School
Jan. 6th	4S	"Mitten Day" Bring your mittens to school
Jan. 9th	3S	Return to School
Jan. 17th	3S	"Toasty Toes Day" Bring your slippers to school



# Venezuelan News - Volume 4-01

I am writing this in December. Saturday December 14 there were earthquakes in Venezuela in the evening. No one was hurt. Miranda's home had some bumps and bruises. Yili fared the best out of all of them. Yili's house suffered some cracking, unfortunately in mama's bedroom. When I first started this ministry in the beginning of 2020 I got Yinette money to fix all the cracks and paint from the last earthquake that damaged their home. It does look like it's mostly cosmetic. The homes are concrete covered with plaster stucco - inside and out.

Their homes have glass windows but only the rich had insect screens. The home wasn't designed to be opened up - having the air conditioning running the year round. Unfortunately they can't air condition the whole home and use Window type or bigger to cool their bedrooms. That means they have open windows a lot. As I've explained before it is hot year round, no real change of seasons. They start getting cold when it's 70. That also means they are exposed to mosquitoes year round. They get a lot of sickness from the mosquitoes. Often fevers and flu-like symptoms for a few days. Both Yinette and mama just got over this. It's a very common thing. The city doesn't spray for mosquitoes - almost all the infrastructure is in shambles.

We have ordered a large Christmas meal for the three households - that will be shared amongst the seven families we feed. I invite you to visit the Facebook page and look at what a typical Venezuelan Christmas meal consists of. Nope, not a lot of turkey down there.

It's so hard to believe that a country that was so well off has fallen so far. The people cry out for change and there is no answer. There are so few jobs and the ones that are available are menial and pay only a few dollars a month. I ask you to continue to pray for our friends. If you like to put names in your prayers here you go: mama, Yinette, Luis, Yili, Santi, Miranda, Sonia, Camellia and mama's three friends Nancy, Mirian & Ninfa. Mama's three friends have almost nothing to support themselves with. One of the women has had a lot of problems with her grown son - to the point of abuse (he was jailed for a while). Yinette feels if they have something to eat these women should as well. Pray for them.

Just a reminder, if you are an online church giver, you can now designate funds to be given to The Least of These and the church treasurer and financial secretary will make sure your donations get there. You can also give at church, just designate that it is for The Least of These. But please, always put Mt. Calvary first.

Pray for our friends in Venezuela. If you are interested in this mission or want to help you can talk to me anytime. You can email me personally.

## Contact Info:

If you are interested in this mission or want to help, you reach out to me, Dan Reynolds, at any time via email at [on30ng@gmail.com](mailto:on30ng@gmail.com) AND/OR join our Facebook Group, "The Least of These" (to join, contact me or my daughter Katie Gambrell on Facebook so we can add you to the group)

## Support Info:

Our PayPal address is: [theleastofthese3@yahoo.com](mailto:theleastofthese3@yahoo.com)  
Our Venmo is: Kaitlyn-Gambrell



# COUNCIL

# CORNER

## Summary from December Voters Meeting

Although it was a very short meeting, there was a lot of important information shared at our December voters meeting.

After significant cuts were made in many areas, the Church Council presented a 2025 budget that has a deficit of only \$9,200. This is a notable change from previous years because the intentionally large deficits we ran during those years are no longer sustainable. The voters accepted the proposed budget unanimously.

It was also noted that we recently received a few significant gifts toward our MRO efforts. Due to all of the gifts which have been given over the past 3 years, we are in a very reasonable place to pay off the mortgage by the end of 2025! This would free up \$62,000 a year starting in 2026! The Church Council will be sharing more information about this and a potential mortgage burning celebration as the year progresses!

As we begin this new year, we thank all of you for your continued prayers and support for the amazing ministry that God is doing in and through His people at Mt. Calvary!

### 2024 Budget Update (January 1—December 22, 2024)

<i>Budgeted General Funds</i>	<i>Received YTD</i>	<i>Projected End of Year</i>
Weekly Offerings	257,477.86	260,000.00
Pre-School Tuition	28,128.75	30,000.00
Thrivent Funds	1,977.00	1,450.00
Special Services Offerings	4,357.00	6000.00
Other Offerings	**10,900.00	500.00
Building Fund Offerings	33,747.71	43,000.00
Mortgage Interest Refund	3,976.61	5,000.00
Other Income	6,443.19	2,700.00
	347,008.12	348,650.00

<i>Designated General Funds</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Gift-In-Kind	133,56
Memorial	6,064.00
MRO	144,383.35
Sunday School	786.55
Venezuela	3,535.00
Pre-School Scholarship	1,110.00
<i>Separate Account</i>	
Elders' Fund	2,992.00

<b>Surplus or (Deficit)</b>
(-1,641.88)

\*\* \$10,000 has been earmarked for new HVAC. Therefore deficit is actually -\$11,641.88.



# Share Together

## Join the Ladies for Lunch...

The first Tuesday of each month the ladies enjoy lunch together after Bible Study. Join them this month at:

**January 7th—The Wharf**

Contact *Beth Little* if you have any questions.

## ADULT VBS 2025!!

Adult VBS planning is already beginning! It isn't hard to dream about Summertime and the month of June during January!

If you would like to be part of the planning committee please contact Beth Langdon via email at [ducky1bl@aol.com](mailto:ducky1bl@aol.com).

Planning meetings are: January 22, February 19, April 23, May 7th and May 28th. All meetings are in the conference room at 10am.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Adult VBS will be the Wednesdays in June (4, 11, 18, 25)

This is a fun, FUN way to grow in the Word and in your fellowship. It is also an excellent opportunity to invite others!

More details to come...

Stitches of Love did not meet in December. They will reconvene in January and give us details of their donations in the February Parish Pulse.

## Take-Home Chili Sale



On February 9th we will have chili for you to take home and warm-up for the Super Bowl! Order your chili on the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall by

**February 2nd. Then pick it up after church on the 9th. A quart of chili will be \$12.**

**There will also be some desserts available for purchase that day wrapped up and to-go.**



We will be having a Youth Gathering Trip Fundraiser evening at Monical's Pizza on January 14th. All funds raised will go toward the Youth Trip next Summer.

You can grab your form (bright orange) in the Narthex. The South Shores and North Decatur locations are participating. Thanks for helping support our kids!

*“Lord God, bless Your Word wherever it is proclaimed. Make it a word of power and peace to convert those not yet Your own and to confirm those who have come to saving faith. May Your Word pass from ear to heart, from heart to the lip, and from the lip to the life that, as You promised, Your Word may achieve the purpose for which You send it; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen”*

-Martin Luther







# MTC KIDS CORNER

## Events and Activities

### Junior & Senior High Youth!

Mark your calendars for Saturday, January 4<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:30pm for an epic afternoon of LASER TAG at Urban Warfare Bloomington with our friends from Trinity! Scan the QR code for all of the details and to RSVP.



## Confirmation Connections

### Confirmation Class Resumes!

Be sure to join us after worship on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> as we start back in on our regularly scheduled Confirmation Class. We will be covering the following topics in January.

- We will be wrapping up our unit on the 10 Commandments!
- We will start on from the Old Testament (Part 1)

We can't wait to have you back with us as we learn and grow together!

## Children's Church

For those students 6<sup>th</sup> grade and under attending Sunday School, we will be resuming class on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> during our Christian Education Hour!

## General Reminders

**We love kids in worship!** The following is from a Facebook post going around! It is so true!

Bring them to church. Saturate their lives with the Word of God. Even if they lay on the floor. Even if they need 437 goldfish and a sucker to be quiet. Even if you stand in the back swaying back and forth holding them. Even when it's hard. Even when your row looks like a small hurricane just came through. Bring them to church. Let them see you worship. Let them see you pray. Let them see you running toward the Savior ... because if they don't see and learn these things from you, who are they going to learn them from?

The world will teach them it's not a priority. The world will teach them it's okay to lay down, not to pick up their Bibles. The world will direct them so far off course, confuse them, and misinform them that just being "good" is enough. The world won't teach them about Jesus. That's our job. Bring them to church.



# SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE IN JANUARY

## ELDERS

Dec 29	Dan Reynolds
Jan 5	Sherman Kramer
Jan 12	John Graff
Jan 19	Russ Jozwiak
Jan 26	Merle Collingwood

## READERS

Dec 29	Marsha Warnick
Jan 5	Ashley Robinson
Jan 12	Krista Gerhardt
Jan 19	Sheila Norman/Bonnie Seeforth
Jan 26	John Graff/Roger Harting

## A/V TECHNICIANS

Dec 29	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
Jan 5	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
Jan 12	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
Jan 19	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
Jan 26	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher

## ORGANISTS

Dec 29	Lisa Peterman
Jan 5	Steve Ford
Jan 12	Steve Ford
Jan 19	Peter Miller
Jan 26	Lisa Peterman

## OTHER SERVANTS

ALTAR FLOWERS	Sandy Haseley & Marsha Warnick
BANNERS	Sharon & Rod Butler
BUILDING & GROUNDS	Roger Harting
CHANCEL CANDLES	Dale & Barb Jones Debbie Koester
COFFEE/TEA	?
NURSERY	Sharon Goers
PLANTS	Debbie Goveia
RECYCLING	Lyn Stevens
SOUND & VIDEO	Jim & Lyn Stevens Joel Fletcher
SUNDAY SCHOOL	Gale Krueger Dan Reynolds
TABULATOR(S)	Brenda Roland & Marsha Warnick
HEAD USHER	Andrew Napier

## MEALS ON WHEELS

1/7	Sharon & Rod Butler
1/14	Lyn & Jim Stevens
1/21	Karen & Larry Lange
1/28	Barb & Roger Harting

Meals on Wheels Coordinator:  
Lyn Stevens

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/1	Ryker King
1/2	Sue Perryman Jeff Robb
1/3	Caroline Dull Nadine Meyer
1/5	Debbie Roberts Donna Schenkel
1/6	Jane Fiesler
1/9	Carol Sulwer
1/10	Frank Dunmire
1/14	Richard Walters
1/16	Everly Burns
1/19	Krista Gerhardt
1/20	Dan Reynolds
1/21	Tom Little
1/22	Jeff Sites
1/25	Mary Aukamp Bobbi Jo McCoy
1/26	Joe Robinson
1/28	Preston Scott Herring Marcia Sleeth
1/30	Bill Peter Finley Stock

## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1/5	Ron & Vonda Lamb
1/7	Carl & Sandy Derhake

### "Just a Thought"

If you are reading this, you have survived Christmas 2024, congratulations! Now it is time to turn over a new leaf, at the start of the new year. As a part of that change, let me encourage you to try being a part of this church family in a new way this year. Never been to a Bible Study? Try attending. Not been going to the fellowship hour after church? Give it a shot! Never attended a midweek service at Advent or Lent? Commit to doing so this year.

There are many, many opportunities to be involved in this church. Find one that fits in your schedule and give it a try. I am certain it will change your life for the better. How can you go wrong by serving Him and His church by spending more time than just Sunday morning honoring and thanking Him?

-B Langdon 2025

**"speak , LORD, for your servant is listening."**

*1 Samuel 3:9*

**Your 2024 Contribution Statements should be in your mailboxes by January 19th.**

# Partner Ministry Updates



**UNITY CHRISTIAN LIONS**

PREPARING LEADERS FOR LIFE

— A Ministry of the Lutheran School Association —

## The LSA ReSale Shop

All donation items should be put in bags or boxes of a manageable size with clothing separate from household items. A good question to ask yourself before donating: *“Is the item I’m going to donate something that I would buy?”* If the answer is “yes”, then the ReSale Shop would love to have your donation. Volunteers are always needed. You can stop by anytime or call the Shop for details.

The LSA ReSale Shop is located at 421 E. Cerro Gordo in Decatur.

The phone number is 217-423-0122.



## Coming up at Camp CILCA

### Events Happening at Camp CILCA in 2025



February 28– March 1 2025—ACT LIKE MEN Woodcutter’s Retreat

March 15, 2025—FREE Pancake Dinner

March 28-29, 2025—Women’s Retreat

April 5, 2025—Spring Work Day

April 25-26, 2025—Spring Women’s Scrapbooking Retreat

May 23-26, 2025—CID Campout (no hog roast)

### **CILCA is celebrating its 75th Anniversary in 2025!**

As part of the celebration, all summer camp session (even weeklong camps) will be offered for only \$75! This is a \$200-\$300 savings!!!

To take advantage of this deal, campers must be registered before April 1st

Call 217-487-7497 for more information or email Pastor Theilen at [director@cilca.org](mailto:director@cilca.org)



**CENTRAL ILLINOIS  
DISTRICT**

of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



Small Church Summit—Jan 11, 9:30am at Faith Lutheran , Mt. Vernon

Small Church Summit—Feb 22, 9:30am at Trinity Lutheran, Pekin

CID LLL District Convention—March 1 at Camp Cilca

New Witnessing Helps are available online at <https://www.everyonehiswitness.org>.  
The 2025 Dollars for Missions Project is a new water heater for Cristo Rey Lutheran in East Moline. Thank you to all who have supported the 2024 Dollars for Missions projects!



