

Agape

The Newsletter of
Calvary Episcopal Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

JANUARY 15, 2023

Responding in Faith

On January 4, 2023, I received a call from a friend in town, Jamie Gibson, who is the Rabbi Emeritus at Temple Sinai. He offered his condolences and wanted to make sure we knew he, Temple Sinai, and the local Jewish community were supportive of us. This was in response to breaking news that a Protestant (Anglican-owned) cemetery in Jerusalem had been attacked with 30 graves desecrated. Vandals used stones to smash graves. Crosses and headstones were toppled. The same cemetery was desecrated in 2013.

It is located on Mt. Zion, a hill outside the old city walls to the west of Jerusalem. The land was purchased by the Anglican bishop there in 1848 to serve as a Protestant cemetery. Legend holds it is the site of the Last Supper Jesus held with his disciples. Another holds that area is the burial place of the biblical King David.

The desecration and destruction of the cemetery, partially caught on security footage, is alleged to have been committed by at least two young men who were wearing kippahs (skullcaps) and tzitzit (knotted fringes). The attackers were Jewish or dressed to look like they were Jewish.

The Anglican Archbishop, Hosam Naoum, called the act a “clear hate crime.” Further condemnations have come from the Archbishop of Canterbury and from all over the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim world.

Rabbi Gibson told me, “You (Calvary/Episcopalians) stood with us (the Jewish community) after the Tree of Life attacks and we are going to stand with you.”

We greatly appreciate and honor the friendships we have forged. In no way do we want to belittle the support. In my mind, however, the incidents at the Tree of Life on October 27, 2018 and the cemetery in Jerusalem in 2023 are in different galaxies in terms of impact.

The first was the most deadly anti-Semitic attack in history on US soil. That was a direct attack on the living to hurt, kill, and cause fear and intimidation, (presumably) because of hate. It was also an indirect attack on all Jews, all Pittsburghers, and ultimately on all people judged evil or “other” by the attacker. There are still some who will not go to synagogue or “look Jewish” from fear. That attack also happened to our neighbors one mile down the same street so the effects are much more immediate and personal. We know people whose lives were lost or changed that day.

The second was a direct attack on the dead, also to cause fear or intimidation, (presumably) because of hate. It was an indirect attack on all Christians and ultimately on all people judged evil by the attackers. There have been other recent reports of Christians and Muslims being threatened or assaulted in the Old City. While there is a connection to Christians and Episcopalians there, it is half a world away. There is little, if any, personal connection.

That said, both are manifestations of hate and “othering” in different orders of magnitude. Both

—continued on page 2

Honoring James Knight

Please join us on Saturday, January 28 at 6 p.m. to honor James Knight, our sexton at Calvary for 41 years, for his last day at Calvary before retirement.



We will honor James at Chili Fest, a social occasion to eat warm chili, be with friends, and make new ones during the cold winter months. At Chili Fest, we will present James with a large card signed by parishioners. The card is in the parish hall and may be signed at any time. We will also present him with a financial gift. ■

Responding, continued from page 1

are powerful symbols to provoke responses of fear, anger, intimidation and disunity.

How might people of faith in Jesus respond?

The immediate response of many is to condemn the attacks. While that might express support and solidarity, in addition to one's hurt or outrage, it will do little or nothing to stop attacks like this from occurring in the future. Virtually everyone in the world still agrees smashing graves is unbelievably disrespectful, unspeakably rude, and utterly useless to inspire anyone to your cause. If someone does not know that already, another condemnation will not convince them.

To be abundantly clear, trying to hurt, kill, or "other" people, in any way – dead or alive – because of their race or religion, or you simply don't like them, or trying to force everyone else to believe and behave like you believe and behave – or else – is evil and goes against everything about the Kingdom of God that Jesus proclaimed.

Rather than condemn the action, we could ignore it or learn to live with it, but that does not seem to embody a life of love either.

Some wise people taught me many years ago, to ask oneself in such situations with moral clarity or ambiguity, does my response address the need or help alleviate suffering, or effectively prevent evil from occurring, or actively do good, or make the world a more just place, or follow the life and example of Jesus, or simply make you feel better?

In addition to considering the motivation of response, we might also recognize that adding fuel to a fire or increasing the pressure in a situation rarely achieves the outcome we desire. If people are constantly driven by anger or fear, they cannot think as objectively, or put oneself in another's shoes, and can be much more easily manipulated.

At Calvary, our consistent response to evil (specifically to religious or racial prejudice) is to do good, to counter othering and alienation with hospitality and friendship, and to meet hate with love. Rather than simply aspirational ideas in a classroom or coffee house, we put our faith in action. It is who we are and what we have done for more than 125 years.

Here are few recent examples of that witness:

When the attack occurred at the Tree of Life, we reached out in prayer and offered help in ways we have

expertise that they might need. That is, we offered to share space, for free, for worship, meetings, or offices. It never occurred to me the synagogue would choose to come. They did and a holy relationship was forged.

The Islamic Center of Pittsburgh responded in another powerful way. They raised a considerable sum to give to the synagogue. The Muslims also offered to stand guard so the Jews could worship without fear. That is a gift to them and the world.

The Faith Night of ice skating was to bring Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, Jews, and Muslims together at a personal level. Rather than other, we befriend.

The Priest and Rabbi Walk into a Classroom sessions are to learn more about our own faith and that of our neighbors. We are not trying to convert each other, but be more deeply converted ourselves. As Rabbi Aaron Bisno has said on many occasions, "Because I am right does not mean you are wrong. Because you are right does not mean I am wrong."

We are planning a pilgrimage together in October for forty Jews and Christians from Pittsburgh (more info later), led by Rabbi Bisno and the Rector, to learn together in the very place our faiths emerged.

We are engaged in Beloved Community conversations to learn together and confront racism in our country and communities through a diocesan ministry imagined at Calvary.

Our resident Ethiopian Orthodox congregation has become more deeply connected with Calvary in multiple ways through the Bazaar, the Beginnings preschool, the Christmas pageant, and friendships.

Last month, we shared a Christmas pageant and Hanukkah party. That only happens at Calvary and has become surprisingly normal, expected even. An article on Christmas Eve in *The Wall Street Journal* told a story of two communities, representing two traditions, working together to do good and make the world a better place through the focus of that day. That is a model that different people can be friends and partners.

People that play Mah Jong together may disagree about a score but don't kick over each other's tombstones. We put our faith in action in creating partnerships and friendships. When people know each other as human beings, they don't behave in appalling ways to one another.

This is more than simple tolerance but mutual respect, recognition of dignity, earnest understanding, and even

friendship. Through acts of faith like these we can begin or more deeply see strangers as friends and others as neighbors and even dare to imagine all people, including those whom we revile, are created in the image of God who deserve dignity and even love.

We respond by putting our faith in action and a model and witness to the world there is a better way.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because God first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. I John 4:18-21

+ + +

Greater Pittsburgh Jewish Clergy Association

Formerly the GPRRA, Greater Pittsburgh Rabbinic Association

“We, the Greater Pittsburgh Jewish Clergy Association, condemn unequivocally the heinous desecration of graves in a Protestant Cemetery in Jerusalem this week. We also decry the rise in violent acts by Jewish extremists against non-Jews in Israel. We reject any justification for acts that target any religious sites in Israel. We stand with our friends and allies in the Christian and Muslim communities against all religious violence.”

January 5, 2023

Greater Pittsburgh Jewish Clergy Association

Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh

—Jonathon ■



Shrove Tuesday, February 21 – Calvary’s Pancake Supper

Wednesday, February 22 – Ash Wednesday

Sunday, February 26 – First Sunday in Lent

Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday

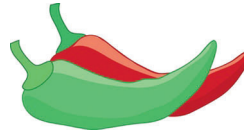
Sunday, April 9 – Easter Day

Sunday, April 16 – Bishop’s Visitation; Vestry and Parish Council Nominating Sunday

Sunday, May 7 – City of Pittsburgh Marathon

Sunday, May 21 – Annual Parish Meeting ■

CHILI FEST



Please join us on **Saturday evening, January 28, 2023**, for Calvary’s beloved congregation-wide, family-friendly event! This year’s event will

be extra special, as we will be celebrating James Knight’s retirement after 41 years as a sexton at Calvary. We will honor James before the serving lines open at 6 p.m., so please plan to arrive between 5 and 5:30 p.m.

You are invited to bring your favorite, winning-recipe chili (enough for 10 – 12 servings) or a salad or cornbread. Contributions of beer and wine are also appreciated. If you are bringing chili, please prepare a legible card listing all of the ingredients.

The sign-up sheet is posted on an easel in the Parish Hall on Sundays and across from the reception desk during the week. In addition to signing up to bring food, you may also sign up to volunteer as a helper during the event. Please do sign up in advance to help with planning, even though last-minute attendees are always welcome!

If you have any questions, would like to volunteer now, or RSVP, please contact Kim Pieratt at 412.661.0120, ext. 111 or e-mail kpieratt@calvarypgh.org. ■



Brown Bag Monastery

Join us in the Nave at Calvary at noon on Tuesdays for public readings from great literature

Upcoming Readings

January 17: Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *The Grand Inquisitor*

January 24: Edgar Allen Poe’s *The Purloined Letter*

February 7: Selections from Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand*

February 14: Selections from Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon*

February 21: Selections from Zora Neale Hurston’s *Moses, Man of the Mountain*

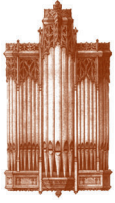
February 28: Selections from Frederick Douglass’ *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Please contact Deacon Geoffrey Royce at groyce@calvarypgh.org for details on the readings. ■

The Envelope Please...

Offering envelopes for those who have requested them are available in the Parish Hall. Please pick them up to help defray the unnecessary costs of mailing. ■

MUSICAL NOTES by Alan Lewis



As this new year of grace begins, I want to thank all whose work in the Choir across the past year has made Calvary's musical ministry possible. The opportunity to continue making music together has, I know, helped us remain calm amid the evolving uncertainties of this stage of the pandemic, and has helped us, too, to keep our focus on what St. Paul called, "things above, where Christ is." In particular, thanks to all whose outpouring of song enriched our Advent and Christmas observances.

Looking ahead, monthly Evensong on the first Sunday of the month will resume on February 5 at 5 p.m. This service, a defining part of our liturgical history, is one of the signature contributions of Anglicanism to Christian worship. First conceived as a way of distilling the cloistered prayer patterns of monasteries into a service of public worship, over the centuries it has inspired composers to create a huge body of music that continues to complement and elevate the spoken words of the service.

For February 5, most of the choral music is by the turn-of-the-twentieth-century composer Charles Wood, an Anglo-Irish musician whose music beautifully embodies the spiritual ethos of his time, and continues to be heard regularly around the Anglican world. One of the pieces we will sing is based on a nineteenth-century translation of a fourth-century Greek prayer – a prayer which was incorporated into the Evensong liturgy in the 1979 American prayerbook. Sometimes translated "O gracious light," or "Glad light of worship," the translation by the Oxford Movement priest and theologian John Keble runs:

*Hail, gladdening light, of his pure glory poured,
Who is th'Immortal Father, Heavenly, Blessed,
Holiest of Holies, Jesu Christ, our Lord.*

*Now we are come to the sun's hour of rest,
The lights of evening round us shine,*

We hymn the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Divine.

*Worthiest art Thou at all times to be sung
With undefiled tongue,*

Son of our God, Giver of life alone;

therefore in all the world thy glories Lord, they own. Amen.

These words take on particular resonance when sung, as they are at this season of the year, at dusk. Wood's setting is itself luminous, richly scored for eight voice-parts, with the two sides of the choir singing both in alternation and together.

Please join us for this service of musical prayer, followed by an "extended postlude," consisting of César Franck's Chorale in B minor and the first movement of Edward Elgar's Organ Sonata, as we continue to celebrate the rehabilitation of Calvary's Casavant organ. ■

www.calvarypg.org

Calvary Movie Nights

Third Thursdays in the Parish Hall at 7 p.m.

February 16: Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close. A son loses his father (Tom Hanks) in the World Trade Centers bombing on 9/11.



March 16: To Kill a Mockingbird

Harper Lee's classic novel becomes a film starring Gregory Peck as a defense attorney who defends a black farmer.



April 20: Dead Man Walking.

Susan Sarandon stars as Sister Helene Prejean still fighting capital punishment from Louisiana. Sean Penn plays the felon.



May 18: WAJIB. An Arab Christian father and son handle one another with cranky bickering as the daughter-sister prepares for her wedding. ■



A Priest and a Rabbi Walk into a Classroom

Rabbi Aaron Bisno and the Rev. Jonathon Jensen will continue to teach a class together on the parables of Jesus. We will learn together from Jewish and Christian perspectives and how we all might benefit from this wisdom. The classes will be in person in McClintic Hall, also known as the choir room, on **Sundays starting at 10 a.m.** Sessions are recorded and available on Calvary's YouTube page with a link in the Friday email. All are welcome to attend.

For class titles, please visit the Calvary website at www.calvarypg.org, or check the Friday email blast. ■

Staying in Touch

Please contact Calvary's Parish Administrator Kim Pieratt at the Church office if you have any questions about flower memorials, prayer list additions, or scheduling of events. Kim can be contacted at 412.661.0120, ext. 111 or send an email to kpieratt@calvarypg.org. We ask that you keep us informed if you have a home address, phone or email change. ■

Please Note

The Church and offices will be closed on
Monday, January 16, 2023
for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day ■

The Bookstore at Calvary

The Bookstore Monetary Donations in 2022

The Bookstore supports many worthy causes including being the sponsor of the 2022 Calvary Episcopal Church Used Book Sale, which netted a record amount of \$7,500! The money raised from this fundraising event benefitted eleven local organizations:

■ Allegheny County Library Associate Mobile Services (Bookmobile) has three buses that serve as a library on wheels providing free service to low-income preschool and daycare facilities with an emphasis on Head Start Programs as well as to senior centers, senior high-rises, independent living, and assisted living facilities throughout Allegheny County. To learn more, visit www.aclabookmobile.org.

■ Kathy Garrison's Backpack Project focuses on the children of women in POWER: Pennsylvania Organization for Women in Early Recovery. Kathy personalizes each child's backpack with fun and educational materials that she collects on a child's interest, whatever it is, from dinosaurs or pandas to Louisa May Alcott or baseball. She fills the backpack with personalized notepaper, word searches, books and puzzles, on the child's topic, as well as school supplies like colored markers and Kleenex®. Further information is available at www.power-recovery.com.

■ City of Asylum builds a just community by protecting and celebrating creative free expression. They provide sanctuary to endangered literary writers, so that the writers can continue to write, and their voices are not silenced. They offer a broad range of free literary, arts, and humanities programs in a community setting to build social equity through cultural exchange. And by transforming blighted properties into homes for our programs, they anchor neighborhood economic development. More information is available at www.cityofasylum.org.

■ Donor Choose helps a classroom in need. A donation was made to fulfill the request for ukuleles by a teacher within the Sto-Rox School District. Further information is available at www.donorchoose.org.

■ Homeless Children's Education Fund's (HCEF) mission is to advance the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness, guiding them to be productive, empowered citizens. As a national model for addressing the educational needs of unstably-housed children and youth, HCEF leads a collaborative effort among regional partners by providing educational programs and services in Allegheny County and advocating for policy and system improvement. To learn more, please go to www.homelessfund.org.

■ Homewood Children's Village has their own signature initiatives and with the help of partner organizations they are building a strong village of support for every child from cradle to career. Together they are working towards a future

where all of our youth graduate from high school ready to thrive in college, career, and life. To learn more, go to www.hcvpgh.org.

■ Liberty Elementary Academic Fund (LEAF) is the parent teacher organization (PTO) of Liberty K-5, a Spanish magnet located in Shadyside. LEAF provides necessary classroom supplies, supplemental educational tools, Spanish cultural celebrations, field trips, extracurricular activities, and student scholarships for advanced learning opportunities. Teachers and parents collaborate to address and prioritize financial needs. Additional information is available at www.pghleaf.org.

■ Libraries: Braddock and Homestead – These libraries uplift and improve the lives of youth, families and the elderly, by serving as a community activities center for residents with Homestead serving the Mon Valley and Braddock serving Turtle Creek, East Pittsburgh, Braddock, North Braddock, and Chalfant.

■ Literacy Pittsburgh (formerly known as Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Association) offers literacy programs for adult and families in Allegheny and Beaver County. Free classes and tutoring move students from learning to earning and help them succeed as workers, parents, and neighbors. For more information, please go to www.literacypittsburgh.org.

■ Pittsburgh Prison Book Project (changed name from Book 'Em) is an all-volunteer project of the Thomas Merton Center which sends free books to prisoners in Pennsylvania. In addition to donating books, the Bookstore's monetary donation is used primarily for mailing costs. To learn more about the Pittsburgh Prison Book Project, please visit www.pghprisonbookproject.org.

Additional donations included:

■ A portion of the proceeds from the 'yinzers' related items available at the Bookstore to Sheldon Calvary Camp located in Conneaut, OH. Established in 1936, Harry E. Sheldon Calvary Camp is a camping ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh. To learn more, please go to www.calvarycamp.org.

■ The Women of Calvary to support the Calvary Bazaar.

■ A pledge to Calvary Episcopal Church.

■ The Beloved Community Initiative (BCI) in Pittsburgh for each Pittsburgher for Jesus shirt sold. The BCI seeks to promote the liberating and reconciling love of Jesus Christ, particularly as it relates to racial justice and reconciliation. For more information, please go to www.bcpittsburgh.org.

■ The Pittsburgh Community Food Bank on behalf of the Bookstore volunteers during the Christmas season.

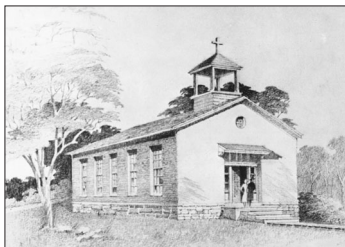
As a result of the congregation's continuous support of the Bookstore, a total of \$11,950 was donated to the above organizations in 2022. Thank you! ■

Notes from the Archives

January is an important month in the history of Calvary Episcopal Church.

The first service of the Episcopal Church in the village of East Liberty was held on January 7, 1855. In his history of Calvary, found in the church archives, Ernest James Edsall writes the service was held in the small house of worship then used by the area's German Lutherans. Edsall was a former secretary and treasurer of Calvary, and he wrote his history in 1942. "The little band of church folk were so encouraged by the attendance that they secured a lease of the Lutheran Church."

The brick church was used by both St. Peter's German Lutheran Church and St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church. Calvary paid a monthly fee of \$12.50 to hold services there. The church was located on a lot



on the corner of what was then called Mill Alley and Plum Street. The lot was a short distance north of Penn Avenue between what are now known as Collins Avenue and Sheridan Avenue.

On January 23, 1855, a meeting was held and the parish was organized under the name "Calvary Church." A charter and bylaws were adopted and a vestry elected. The Reverend William H. Paddock was elected as rector. The Rev. Paddock, a missionary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Western Pennsylvania, held the first service at the church.

About 16 months later, Calvary bought the church building for \$850, Edsall wrote. In front of the small church was a flour mill, built in 1849 by David Rittenhouse Kuhn. Soon after, Calvary became known as "the little old church behind the mill." A drawing of that church can be seen in the elevator lobby outside the Evans Room. ■



The Soup Group will be cooking on **January 20, 2023 starting at 9 a.m.** in Calvary's kitchen. We welcome cooks and recipes at any time. We'll be making some soups for our annual Souper Bowl Sale on February 12. We encourage soup deliveries to fellow Calvary members, friends, and family members. Please contact me if you have any questions. Thank you.

—Adele Eley, adele.eley@gmail.com
412.371.6921 (home); 412.719.9637 (cell) ■

Spiritual Reflection – Ross Gay



Adult spiritual formation may be described as the step-by-step discovery of God's presence in our lives and our personal transformation along the way. Calvary's Spiritual Reflection meetings continue to be a regular and familiar forum for small group peer ministry.

For this term we are using Ross Gay, author of four books of poetry and short essays. Our group will use *The Book of Delights*, a New York Times bestselling book of essays celebrating ordinary delights in the world around us. You may want to check out an interview about the book in a February 2020 episode of NPR's *Living on Earth*.

Meetings are held in the Evans Room from 7–8 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday evening of each month. The meetings are hybrid, allowing "in person" conversation while using Zoom so others can join remotely. Email Matt Muldoon (mattmuldoon@msn.com) or Sondra Krimmel (sskrimmel@gmail.com) for information or to be added to the email list. Please feel welcome to join at any time. ■

Agape Deadline

The deadline for submission of news and notices for the next issue is **Friday, February 3, 2023**. Please e-mail your text to calvary@calvarypgh.org or deliver it directly to the church office.

Agape, the newsletter of Calvary Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is published monthly (except July), and is mailed to active members and friends of the Parish. You may opt out of receiving a printed copy and read each issue online at www.calvarypgh.org. Contact the Parish office at 412.661.0120 for details. ■



Save the Date Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 21, 2023
from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Full details
will be announced ■

Please remember Calvary Church
in your will.

If you missed the fall semester sign-up, no worries--we'd love to see you this spring! Contact vrispoli@calvarypgh.org for more info.

Children's Faith Formation

Spring 2023



When:

Sundays, 10:00-10:50 AM

Where:

Level A Classrooms and Conference Room

For more info, email vrispoli@calvarypgh.org

calvarypgh.org



Thank You!

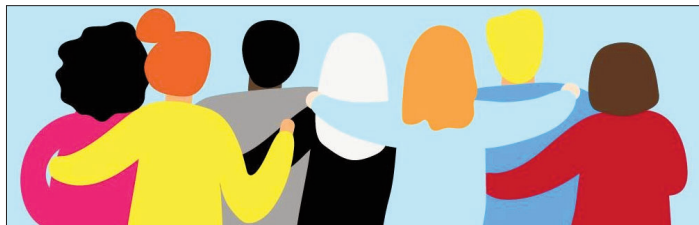
Thank you to everyone who helped make the Christmas Pageant and Hanukkah party so successful! A special shout out to the parents for supporting our youngest participants and to our friends at Tree of Life for the post-pageant food and fun. These events made the season extra special and created memories to last a lifetime – what a tremendous gift to all of us!

The Wall Street Journal printed a wonderful story on December 24, 2022: Tree of Life Massacre Survivors Find Comfort and Joy in Episcopal Sanctuary.



Additional photos may be viewed on the online version of this issue

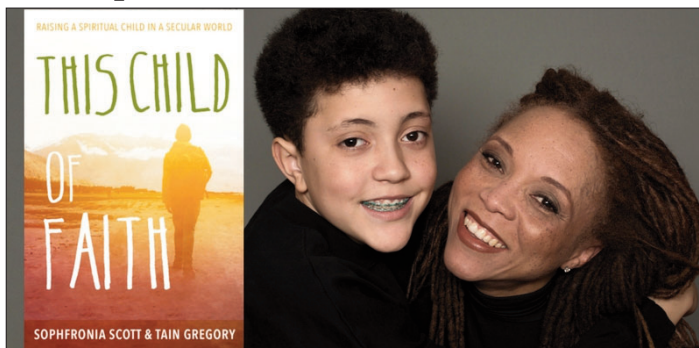
Raising Tweens, Teens, and Young Adults



Are you a parent or caregiver of a tween, teen, or young adult looking for a safe place to share your thoughts and feelings? If so, you are not alone! This group provides a space where we can support each other, share ideas, collaborate, and commiserate while discussing the challenges of raising older children in today's rapidly changing and complex world. We are in this together!

Our next meeting is on Monday, January 23, 7–8 p.m. via Zoom. Please email vrispoli@calvarypgh.org to receive updates and a link to Zoom meetings.

Guest Speaker



Please join us on **Monday, February 27, 7–8 p.m.** as author Sophfronia Scott discusses her book, *This Child of Faith: Raising a Spiritual Child in a Secular World*. This will be a great opportunity to ask questions and learn more about her parenting journey and life as a writer. More about Sophfronia at www.sophfronia.com. This event is FREE and open to ALL. Register here for reminders and Zoom link: <https://forms.gle/cJTJiKxqwcLcVket9>

About the book

Tain Gregory was present in his third-grade classroom on the morning of the Sandy Hook shootings. As part of the healing process for the community after the tragedy, Tain was asked, "What's the most important thing in the world to you?" His mother expected an answer about a video game or Pokémon trading card. Tain thinks for a moment, then answers with one word. "God." Until that moment, his mother had no idea how close to the surface his faith existed. Taking the events of that tragic day, but also the years preceding it, and the days of recovery and healing that followed, Sophfronia and Tain share stories, experiences and ideas to help parents get to the heart of the question: How do you help a child have faith – real faith that they own – in the challenging world we live in today?

–Faith Formation is continued on the next page

Sheldon Calvary Camp

It may be cold and dreary right now, but summer will be here before we know it! Registration for Sheldon Calvary Camp is now OPEN. Visit www.calvarycamp.org to learn more.



NAMI Conference



The pressure to meet unrealistic expectations is difficult to maintain, especially for young people, and it's taking a toll on their mental health. From juggling the demands of academics, athletics, and other extra-curricular activities, to keeping up appearances on social media, young people are under a lot of stress to overachieve. While the pursuit of perfection isn't new, it is getting more intense.

NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania's annual Child, Adolescent, and Transition Age Youth Mental Health Conference, Pursuit of Perfection and the Impact on Youth Mental Health, will address the research and trends related to perfectionism, the challenges young people are facing, and how adults can offer support in reframing the concept.

The conference will take place on **Friday, February 10, 2023**, at The Westin, Pittsburgh. Continuing Education Credits and Act 48 Credits are available. More info at <https://namikeystonepa.salsalabs.org/CAMHCon2023/index.html> ■

Thank You!

A heartfelt thank you to Robin Kamin, Abigail Schauf and Emma Schauf who worked with me in placing the 168 poinsettias in the sanctuary Christmas Eve morning. Blessings to you. *–William Stevens* ■

Holy Baptism

If you, or someone you know, desires to partake in this sacrament, please contact the Reverend Neil Raman at nraman@calvarypg.org or 412.661.0120, ext. 112 as soon as possible, so that the appropriate preparation and arrangements can be made. ■

Have you returned your
2023 Pledge Card?



Happy New Year from Beginnings!

Our Yellow and Orange Teams (ages 2 – 3) are starting the new year off with a “bang!” They are using colorful paint and recycled cardboard rolls to create fireworks in celebration of 2023. Later this month, these same teams will combine and host a parent event to celebrate the Lunar New Year. Having both Chinese and South Korean students on their teams, our families are preparing to make the event quite special.



Our teams have also begun their winter-themed units with lots of sensory play. One of the Blue Teams STEM projects was to make snowflake slime. In small groups, they measured, mixed, added sparkles, and kneaded while observing matter changing form. Using their senses, they described the process and outcome. The children were so excited that comments included “This is the best day of my life”, “It feels like FUN”, and “My beautiful slime” (while kissing the slime container). Also pictured is our new Orange Team member from China, who mixed purple paint with shaving cream to create snowy art.



The Red Team (youngest) have filled their sensory bins with small winter animals and cotton balls. Some days, they replaced the soft, warm cotton with homemade fake snow and ice that they froze themselves.

The Purple and Blue Teams began learning about animals in winter. They plan to go on camping trips to different habitats to learn what it takes for animals to survive. For dramatic play, the students will make igloos, sleds, caves, and tents while snuggling up in their sleeping bags brought from home. We are also making pine cone bird feeders to hang from trees near the playground.

Exciting news: The Purple Team is planning to get a pet turtle for the classroom and they are all involved as a learning experience. Before purchasing the turtle, they are researching answers to these questions: “How do we create a safe habitat? What will it eat and drink? Do turtles need sunlight? Will it need a bath? How will we keep it from getting too cold or too hot? Will it need to see a doctor? How much will it cost, and where can we buy one? Can we rescue a turtle instead? We will post pictures of our turtle next month. Stay healthy and warm this winter!

–Tammy Lewis, Director ■

Renovation

A Reflection by the Rev. Geoffrey Royce

Soon, we will look back over 2022 with at least a sense of relief. Some will have been ready to be done with it long before the new year arrived. Others will gather the treasures last year brought them and look forward to promises yet to come. These perspectives are tempered by many things we cannot control. But, still, it is tempting to imagine that we are masters of our fate and fortune.

In most ways our lives as Christians really don't revolve around common notions of self-realization. Even with the practice of self-examination, any picture we develop of ourselves or our progress will eventually fall apart, and we will begin again. Once this happens several times in a life, it becomes like tilled soil in which humility can grow.

I have generally found that being conscious of something is not necessarily a helpful thing in this process. If we focus on details or experiences of which we are conscious, we can begin to erect idols or even worse imagine that we have a leading role to play in seeking the perfection to which Christ calls us.

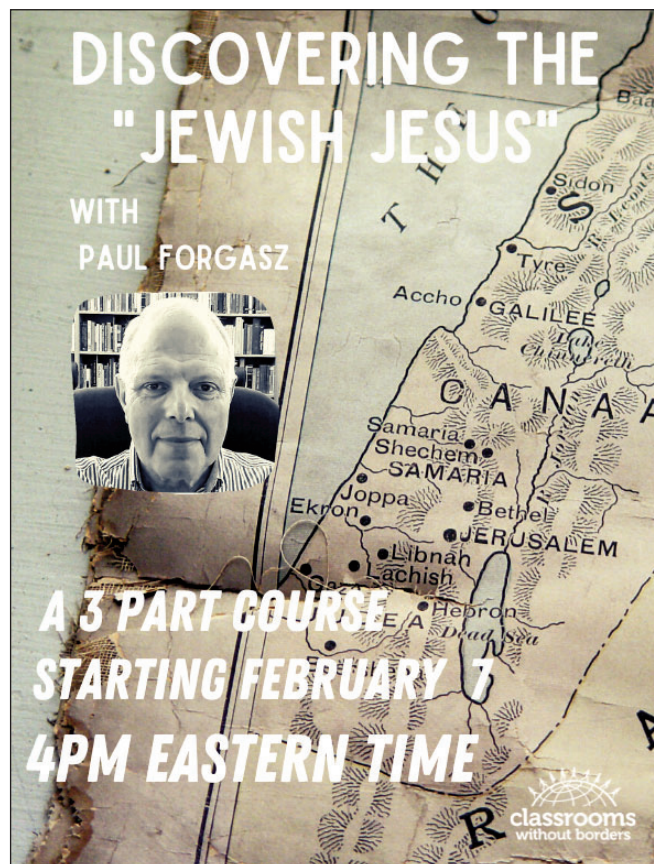
St. Paul describes the infancy of faith in terms of what a believer can be fed. He describes the nurturing process as something that develops gradually, not controlled by the believer. It progresses from eating easily digestible foods to more mature meals. Clearly infants do not feed themselves. They are fed by someone else, a spiritual parent or God.

I believe all of our ongoing conversions involve processes and even experiences of which we are not even conscious. We are not aware of their meaning either. Nevertheless, these things accumulate and create in us new patterns, new wiring. It is quite enough to notice that the goals of our self-realization have fallen apart or not delivered us to our imagined destination.

Maybe your season of epiphany will find your soul in a state of renovation. This can be a very good thing, especially if it affords you the opportunity to invite the Architect to do what only He can do, making you who and what you were meant to be. ■



315 Shady Avenue ■ Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15206
 email: calvary@calvarypg.org ■ www.calvarypg.org
 telephone: 412.661.0120



“Jesus the Jew”: a 3-part On-line Seminar February 7, February 21 and March 3

The fact that Jesus was a Jew is well known. However, how Jesus was understood within his own community and how this man from Nazareth saw himself is less familiar. Why the difficulty? Because, while the New Testament contains a great deal of information about the life and teachings of Jesus, there is a multi-decade gap between the life and death of Jesus and the account contained in the Four Gospels.

Join us as Interfaith educator Paul Forgasz leads us in recreating the religious milieu of late Second Temple Judaism (the time period in which Jesus lived) by drawing on the Gospel writers to elucidate the nature of Jesus’ relationship to Judaism, to explore Jesus’ relationship with the Jews of his day and consider whether, as some argue, the New Testament is an anti-Jewish document. Finally, in the days leading up to Passover and Easter, we will delve into the substance of the commonly held view that Jesus’ Last Supper was a Passover (seder) meal.

Register for this FREE class at

<https://cwbpg.org/event/discovering-the-jewish-jesus/>

This is a 3 session course. You only need to register ONCE and will be sent the ZOOM link before each session. ■

Classrooms Without Borders (CWB) is a non-profit educational organization founded in 2011 by Dr. Zipora Gur as an independently funded program of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh



Formation Classes for Adults

This winter, Calvary is offering three series of Christian formation classes for adults. Please consider joining us for one or more of these classes.

■ Rabbi Aaron Bisno and the Rev. Jonathon Jensen continue to teach **A Priest and a Rabbi Walk into a Classroom** during the ten o'clock hour on Sunday mornings. The class is held in McClintic Hall (also known as the choir room). For further details, see the article elsewhere in this issue of *Agape*.

■ **The Gospel and Breakfast** class is offered through February 19 during the ten o'clock hour on Sunday mornings for young adults and parents of young children. The class is held in the Evans Room. For further details, see the article below.

■ A six-week evening class will be offered a little later in the winter for adults who want to **learn more about the Episcopal Church and being an Episcopalian**. If you are newish to Calvary, this class will also give you a chance to connect with others in the parish and learn more about Calvary. The class will serve as preparation for those who are interested in confirmation, the reaffirmation of baptismal vows or reception in the Episcopal Church when Bishop Solak visits on April 16. More details will be coming soon. If you have questions about this class, or about confirmation, reception or the reaffirmation of baptismal vows, please contact the Rev. Neil Raman (nraman@calvarypgh.org). ■



Gospel and Breakfast

Sundays, 10–10:45 a.m.
through February 19

This class is an opportunity for all parents of young children and all young adults to meet for fellowship, light breakfast, and a discussion of the Gospel passage appointed for the day. We will gather in the Evans Room on the Sundays after Epiphany during the Christian Formation hour (10–10:45 a.m.). The nursery will be open at that time, or you can bring your little one(s) along if you prefer.

If you are a young adult and/or the parent of young children, please join us! Questions? Please contact Cameron at csoulis@calvarypgh.org or 412.661.0120, ext. 123. ■



Calvary is seeking a wheelchair for use by visitors to the church. If you have one that you no longer need, please consider donating it to the church. Please contact Kim Pieratt at 412.661.0120 (ext. 111) for more information. ■

CALVARY YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

It's a new year! The Young Adult Ministry and the Parents of Young Ones are co-sponsoring Gospel and Breakfast (GAB) during the Christian Formation hour on Sundays in the season of Epiphany. See the accompanying article for details. Additionally, Holy Happy Hours will continue through the spring on the fourth Wednesday of the month (except in February). The next Holy Happy Hour is January 25 at 5:45 p.m. at Church Brew Works (3525 Liberty Ave., 15201).

Please contact Cameron if you have any questions or want to be added to the Young Adult Ministry email list. She can be reached at csoulis@calvarypgh.org or 412.661.0120 ext. 123.

Sunday, January 15, 10–10:45 a.m.

Gospel and Breakfast in the Evans Room at Calvary

Sunday, January 22, 10–10:45 a.m.

Gospel and Breakfast in the Evans Room at Calvary

Wednesday, January 25 at 5:45 p.m.

Holy Happy Hour at The Church Brew Works
(3525 Liberty Ave., 15201)

Sunday, January 29, 10–10:45 a.m.

Gospel and Breakfast in the Evans Room at Calvary

Sunday, February 5, 10–10:45 a.m.

Gospel and Breakfast in the Evans Room at Calvary

Sunday, February 12, 10–10:45 a.m.

Gospel and Breakfast in the Evans Room at Calvary

Wednesday, February 15 at 5:45 p.m.

Holy Happy Hour at Lorelei (124 S. Highland Ave., 15206)

Sunday, February 19, 10–10:45 a.m.

Gospel and Breakfast in the Evans Room at Calvary ■

Chalichists truly serve God and their neighbors.

Do you aspire to this ministry?

Please contact Fred Roth at

lcb@calvarypgh.org

To inquire.

To learn.

- and -

To share the Sacrament.



An expanded version of this issue of *Agape*,
with additional content may be viewed
on the Calvary website at

www.calvarypgh.org

Out of the Mouths of Babes

In the Priest and Rabbi Walk into a Classroom study of the parables of Jesus, we have had a wonderful time learning together as Jews and Christians.

One of the most enjoyable and inspirational parts of the class for me is to witness others experiencing a parable of Jesus for the first time. Hearing and seeing Jesus and the stories he told through the ears and eyes and life of another can be a profound witness. I have read them countless times but witnessing someone else hear them for the first time makes them fresh and alive in a new way and makes me appreciate their power of transformation even more. I am also learning more about them, through the people present, than I have ever known.

Recently, we studied two stories of Jesus from Chapter 25:31-46 of the Gospel of Matthew, the Parable of the Talents followed directly by a dream-like vision of Christ's return in Glory. In the season of Advent, we prepared for Christ's first coming that we celebrate at Christmas and the return in Glory envisioned, in part, in this story.

The latter is the famous passage on sheep and goats when Jesus says, "I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me something to drink... As you have done it (served or did not serve) to the least of my brothers and sisters, you have done it to me."

Rabbi Aaron Bisno pointed out that it has long been part of the Jewish tradition to identify with the stranger, orphan, and widow or the outcast in society. What is new is that Jesus calls us to identify with the outcast, following his tradition, but takes that much further. The person in need, the neighbor, is also identified with Jesus. That is, when we love and serve our neighbors we are, in fact, loving and serving God. We meet Jesus, or not, in other people.

The Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus's main message, was not about where we go when we die, but the quality and meaning of life we can experience now as individuals and as a community. Kingdom-life is active participation in God's will on earth as it is in heaven. That is putting our faith in action. It is recognizing Jesus in the person we hate (love your enemies), the person we love, those in our own identity group, and everyone in between.

Recognition of God in the other, whoever the other may be, is entrance into the Kingdom-life that Jesus taught, lived, died, and was resurrected to proclaim and enact. Sometimes we get it and sometimes we don't. That is part of the reason we have a church community (or larger faith community) to help us see the Kingdom already arriving in ways and people we could not on our own.

Steve Kinsel, a parishioner who teaches Sunday School and helps with video production, told a story about recognition of the Kingdom his seven-year old daughter, at the time, discovered.

"It was the afternoon on New Year's Eve. Tania was, perhaps, seven years old. She and I went to Sheetz to get some snacks and drinks. A man came up to me and asked if I could help him. He was wearing work clothing and there were dirt and grease spots on his shirt and pants. I assumed he had just left work. He said that he was taking his two young daughters to their grandmother's house for New Year's Eve but his car wouldn't start. I said that I had jumper cables and would help him. We got his car started in short order. He said "Thank you" and drove off with his two little girls in the back seat smiling and waving. After I had put the jumper cables away and got back in the car, Tania said, "Pappa, you know how Jesus said when we do something for someone else we are doing it for him?" I said that, of course, I remember that teaching (and was secretly proud that she remembered it, also). Then, with a slight smile on her face, Tania said "We just started Jesus's car!" Steve said he still smiles at her irreverent reverence. That is precisely right.

The Kingdom of Heaven is always there when we are ready to see and embrace it.

You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants flow praises to silence the power of the enemy. *Psalm 8:2* —Jonathon

We will resume a study of Jesus's parables with other topics, suggested by participants, beginning on January 15 at 10 a.m. on Sundays in the choir room. We have had about sixty people join us in person each week and invite you to join us. All are welcome. Videos of the sessions are also available on Calvary's YouTube page. Follow the direct link listed on the front page of our website at www.calvarypgh.org. ■

James Knight Retirement Celebration

On **Sunday, January 29** we will be honoring James Knight for his 41 years of exemplary service to Calvary Church. We hope that you will be able to join us at this celebration after the 11 a.m. service.

James has requested a "old style" Coffee Hour as he bids farewell to his Calvary friends.

If you would like to participate in this celebration by bringing your favorite appetizer for the table or help prepare and serve for this celebration, please be in contact with Judy Wootten by phone (724.733.1660) or by email at jcwootten@comcast.net. In order to properly plan for this event, please contact Judy by Thursday, January 26.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the celebration for this very special occasion. Come help us celebrate James! ■

www.calvarypgh.org



The Write for Human Rights event at Calvary on Thursday evening, December 8, 2022. Pictured in the photo (L-R) are Ayres Freitas from Amnesty International Group 39, District 8 City Council person Erika Strassburger (who read out a proclamation from the City Council) and Allegheny County Controller Corey O'Connor (who presented Group 39 with a Certificate from the county). -photo courtesy of Stephen Shandor



The Holy Eucharist will be celebrated on Wednesdays in the Lady Chapel at **12 Noon**. ■

Menbere Tsebaot Kedist Selassie Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church at Calvary

In October 2022, for the second year in a row, the Menbere Tsebaot Kedist Selassie Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church held its Meskel (which translates to Epiphany) in Calvary's parking lot. In the Ethiopian tradition, the Meskel is one of the most celebrated events in the calendar year.

It is a celebration of the finding of the crosses upon which Jesus and the two by his side were crucified. This however is not only done in reverence for just the Ethiopian Church but for all Christians. So, that is why we have had all faith traditions participating in the ceremony. We celebrated by burning the damera (a bonfire) and marching around it in song. The damera is a remembrance of the smoke that led to the finding of the true cross. Once it was over, we ate really good Ethiopian cuisine in community. The children played, the adults spoke, and eventually we all left.

The October 2021 Meskel opened a spiritual pathway that I never anticipated. Like most Christians looking for a new church, I dipped my toe by attending a couple of services and sitting in the back. I was welcomed and invited to have



some really good coffee and bread after the service. The services are reminiscent of our Wednesday Eucharist services. Currently, the congregation is searching for a permanent priest. So, the Deacon of the church Nahom describes the services as a gathered group in the instruction of a priest. But, they are in Amharic and in the Refectory with a daily prayer to Saint Mary.

There is no organ, only the congregation's voices and a drum. But, there is still a coffee hour with delicious bread afterwards. After a couple of services, I felt welcomed and moved from sitting in the back to right behind the clergy. Because I do not know Amharic, I usually go around during the coffee hour asking what happened during the service.

Not knowing Amharic has two effects on me. The first is that it makes it very easy to zone out and think through the rest of my weekend. But that then allows me to go through the exercise of staying present in the moment and take in the beauty of the church. Once I become present to the moment, I take in the singing, drums, the lighting of the refectory and can feel God's presence around me.

From this ongoing experience, I have learned two things. The first is that there are many ways to worship and being in a community. And that the Christian tradition is diverse in ways to celebrate Jesus.
—Matt Lancaster ■

WEB VERSION

CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION



On-Going at Calvary

EECM Food Pantry

East End Cooperative Ministry operates the second largest food pantry in Pittsburgh. Donations can be dropped off at Calvary during office hours: Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday mornings. Below is a list of items particularly requested at this time. **Thank you to all who have continued to donate to the EECM food cart.** Your support is greatly appreciated.

- Bottled Water
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Canned tomato sauce, vegetables, beans
- Spaghetti and macaroni pasta
- Canned soups
- Mac & Cheese boxes
- Oatmeal and whole grain cereals
- White and brown rice
- Disposable utensils (fork, spoon, knife)
- Disposable plates
- Disposable bowls
- Ziploc bags, any size
- Napkins
- Paper Towels
- Sugar
- Salt ■

Plastic Recycling

Thank you to the many people who are recycling plastic film and bags to the box located in the Parish House lobby across from the reception desk. We will continue our practice of recycling here at Calvary. You are helping to keep thousands of pounds of waste out of landfills. (And, yes, bubble wrap is recyclable!) ■

Altar Flowers

Help us keep the church in full bloom by donating flowers in memory of, or in honor of, someone special. If you would like to place a memorial listing, please contact Kim Pieratt in the church office at 412.661.0120, ext. 111. ■

Stay in Touch with the Diocese

Visit the diocesan website at
www.episcopalpgh.org

Submissions for publication on the diocesan web site, calendar, and the *Grace Happens* weekly e-newsletter should be sent electronically to
info@episcopalpgh.org.

Please be sure to include your complete contact information with any submission. ■

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh mailing address:

325 Oliver Avenue, Suite 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
412.721.0853 | info@episcopalpgh.org

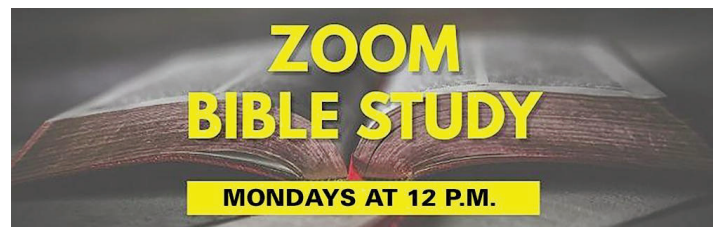
Andy Muhl, Executive Assistant

412.721.0853 ext. 251 | amuhl@episcopalpgh.org ■

Have you returned your
2023 Pledge Card?



The Beloved Community Initiative is hosting concurrent sessions at Calvary and St. Thomas, Oakmont, beginning in November and January. If you are interested in participating at St. Thomas, please contact Shahnaz Alam Denlinger at s.alamdenlinger@episcopalpgh.org or call her 412.828.9680. If you are interested in participating at Calvary from November to January, please email Adam Bailey at atfbailey@gmail.com. Sessions at Calvary will meet on Monday evenings, through January 23, from 7 to 8:30. ■



Led by The Rev. Geoffrey Royce, Deacon

Sign-up for receiving the Zoom link
by writing to groyce@calvarypgh.org

This will be a discussion study lasting about one hour.

We are reading The Letter of James. ■

Pittsburgh Episcopal Creation Care Network

This is a place for parish members from throughout the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh to share information about energy saving and clean-up projects; share resources and ideas; ask questions and state concerns; and post information about environmental events. All Calvary members are welcome to join and contribute whenever they wish. Visit www.facebook.com/groups/1252049508868224 ■

Please remember Calvary Church
in your will.



December 8, 2022

The Reverend Jonathon W. Jensen
Rector
Calvary Episcopal Church
315 Shady Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Dear Rev. Jensen:

Thank you so much for Calvary Episcopal's generous gift of \$1,000 to Literacy Pittsburgh through your used-book sale.

Your support enables us to provide nearly 5,000 individuals each year with enhanced reading, writing, math, English language, and computer skills. *Literacy Pittsburgh provides a path out of poverty through free, high-quality education.*

We are excited to welcome students back to in-person services, where they will experience upgraded learning spaces and enhanced programming aimed at preparing them for the workforce demands of the future. All classrooms have been equipped with new computers and smartboards to enable blended learning and increased use of technology. Programming enhancements include the addition of focused digital-skills classes as well as expanded career services. **There has never been a better time to upskill and become part of our region's post-COVID recovery.**

2022 is Literacy Pittsburgh's 40th birthday! Thanks to you, this year we can celebrate 40 years of providing our students with the tools they need to achieve their goals and to participate productively in their community.

On behalf of everyone at Literacy Pittsburgh, thank you again. I hope that you and all those close to you have a bright and joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,

Timothy Richart
Director of Development

No goods or services were provided in exchange for this contribution.

BETTER LIVES THROUGH LEARNING

411 Seventh Avenue
Suite 525
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

412.393.7600 phone
412.393.7627 fax
literacypittsburgh.org

A copy of the official registration and financial information for Literacy Pittsburgh may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free, within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



The 157th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh met online and in person at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary on November 18 and 19, 2022. Clergy and lay deputies from each of the 33 congregations gathered to pray and learn together and to engage in some business of the church.

On Friday, elections took place for various diocesan bodies. Full election results are available on the diocesan website: www.episcopalpgh.org.

Several Calvary members were elected to serve as Deputies to the next General Convention which is a gathering of all bishops (meeting in a House of Bishops) and four clergy and four lay deputies from each diocese (meeting in a House of Deputies).

Alternates are also needed in case one is not able to attend. At the most recent Convention, all the alternates were needed due to COVID issues. Everyone who offered themselves as a Convention Deputy was elected as either a Deputy or Alternate for the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting in Louisville. The clergy elected as Deputies, in order of total votes, are:

The Rev. Bonnie-Marie Yagger-Wiggan of the Cathedral and former McNulty Intern at Calvary
The Rev. Eric McIntosh of St. James in Penn Hills
The Rev. Neil Raman of Calvary in East Liberty
The Rev. Jeff Murph of St. Thomas in Oakmont

Clergy Alternates are:

The Rev. Brandon Cooper of Christ Church in North Hills
The Rev. Noah Evans of St. Paul's in Mt. Lebanon
The Rev. Kris Opat of St. David's in Peters Township
The Rev. Charles Fischer of St. Paul's in Mt. Lebanon

Lay members elected as Deputies, in order of total votes:

Jon Delano of St. Paul's in Mt. Lebanon
Florence Atwood of Calvary in East Liberty
Steve Stagnitta of St. Andrew's in Highland Park
Jamie McMahon of Calvary in East Liberty

Lay Alternates are:

Lisa Brown of St. Paul's in Mt. Lebanon
Michael Braxton of Calvary in East Liberty
Joan Gunderson of Redeemer in Squirrel Hill

Other Calvary members continue to serve in a diocesan capacity:

The Standing Committee (Bishop's Council of Advice) of the Diocese from Calvary are its President, the Rev. Neil Raman, and Florence Atwood.

The Board of Trustees: Jim Cassaro and Ken Spruill

Committee on Constitution and Canons: Ian Everheart

Commission on Ministry: Jean Adams

Growth Fund Committee: Jim Cassaro

Disciplinary Board: Jean Adams

Social Justice and Outreach Committee: Anne Robb and Tom Slater

Thank you to all from Calvary who serve our larger Church. If you feel called to offer yourself serve in the Diocese next year, please speak to one of the clergy.

On Saturday, there was a full day of programming that was organized by Calvary's own Florence Atwood. Thank you, Florence. Events included a book fair from Calvary's own Book Store. Thank you to Sherry Bloom and the other volunteers. There was also a ministry fair including work of the college chaplain and the art project to end gun violence, sponsored by St. Brendan's in Franklin Park, that was also hosted by Calvary. Further events included the Bishop's address, a hymn sing, and a diocesan Eucharist and dinner.

A video of the Bishop's address may be found here:

<https://www.episcopalpgh.org/bishops-2022-convention-address/> ■

DNA



DEDICATED TO ALL OF YOUR HOMECARE NEEDS

Our services include, but are not limited to:

- Bathing & dressing
- Meal preparation & feeding
- Light housekeeping
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Dedicated Nursing Associates ensures each of our home care clients can remain in their homes as long as possible, and will receive the love and care they deserve.

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Cody Pudlish,
Homecare Advocate
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Direct Line:
(844)-280-3982
Ext. 1231

CPudlish@dedicatednurses.com

Deadline (Friday):

Publication Date (Sunday):

January 6	January 15
February 3	February 12 [Lenten Issue]
March 10	March 19 [Easter Issue]
April 7	April 16 [End of Program Year]
May 5	May 14
June 2	June 11 [Summer Issue]
August 11	August 20 [Beginning of Program Year]
September 8	September 17
October 6	October 15
November 3	November 12 [Advent Issue]
December 1	December 10

2023 CALENDAR

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