



# Calvary *Herald*

FEBRUARY 2025 ~ VOLUME 56 ~ ISSUE 2

## Make Mount Airy Our Valentine!

On Sunday, February 9, we're inviting you to bless our community by taking part in this year's "Make Mount Airy Our Valentine" project. On that day, our Mission Team will have 100 boxes of cookies packed, labeled, and just waiting to be delivered to local businesses. And we need you to swing by the fellowship hall after worship, pick up a box or two, and then drop it off at the designated location. But the goal, of course, involves so much more than merely dropping off cookies. We want to let the employees at these local businesses know that we're grateful for the way they bless our community, and we want to bless them by sharing the love of God in a simple (but tasty) way!

If you have any questions about this effort, please contact Pastor Alex or a member of our mission team (Lilnette Phillips, Jan Varney, Amber Horton, and Libby Marion). And thanks in advance for sharing with others the love that we've received.



*Dear friends, since God  
so loved us, we also ought  
to love one another.  
(1 John 4:11)*



## The "Soup-er" Bowl of Caring

No matter who you're pulling for in the big game on Super Bowl Sunday, you can help our church become a champion for those in need by participating in "Soup-er" Bowl Sunday! Between now and Sunday, February 9, we're asking you to help us collect at least 350 cans of soup. Everything that you donate will be delivered to the Food Pantry at Yokefellow Ministries to help feed local families in need. Just leave your soup donations in the collection bins that will be located by the church entrances.



## Glancing Back and Giving Thanks

Among the many reasons I'm thankful to be the pastor at Calvary is this: I almost never have to preach about "stewardship." Don't get me wrong. Stewardship is important, and Jesus had more to say about how we use our money than almost any other topic. However, the members of our church family have been so faithful in their giving, that I rarely feel the need to focus on it. And if that's been true "in general," it's been even more true of your stewardship in 2024.

The folks on our finance team recently completed their year-end summary of our income and expenses, and there's a lot to celebrate. For starters, your offerings to the general operating budget of the church totaled almost \$640,000, which—it's worth noting—was almost \$29,000 more than our budget! Of course, I hope you know that all those offerings do more than support our church. As a result of a long-standing commitment here at Calvary, 15% of our general offerings are used to support mission activities and mission partnerships that serve the Lord beyond our church. This means that more than \$95,000 of what you gave was used to share the gospel, meet needs, and bless others in our community and across the world.

But as deeply thankful as I am for all of that, I'm also grateful that you generously gave "above and beyond" your general offerings to support many other ministries that impact lives with the love of Christ: More than \$10,000 to feed children through the Franklin Backpack Program. More than \$2,000 to build ramps and prepare homes through the Handyman ministry of the Baptist Men. More than \$6,000 to support Andy and Cari Robertson's ministry in Central Africa. More than \$20,000 to support Hurricane Relief Efforts in Western North Carolina. The list goes on.

So, as we move deeper into 2025, let me express my heartfelt appreciation for your faithfulness. Faithfulness to our church? Absolutely! But even more, faithfulness to the God and Father who blesses us so that we can be a blessing! This year, I pray that we'll continue to be faithful to Him. Not only so that we can pay our staff, and keep the lights on, and purchase the supplies we need. (After all, I have no doubt that you'll continue to make that possible!) But also so that we can share the gospel, feed the hungry, encourage the hurting, and display the love of Jesus to a world that needs him so desperately.

Thank you for honoring him, with your hearts, with your lives...and with your wallets.

*Pastor Alex*

## Looking Ahead to Lent

Since very early in the history of the church, followers of Jesus have been setting aside the weeks before Easter, so they could prepare their hearts to remember the Lord's crucifixion and to celebrate his resurrection through prayer, repentance, and self-denial. This season of preparation is called "Lent" (from an Old English word for "spring"), and it begins with Ash Wednesday, when believers receive a mark made of ashes on their foreheads, since the scriptures associate ashes with repentance.

It turns out, however, that ashes in the Bible are connected to more than just repentance. Ashes figure prominently when people are confronting loss, weakness, their own mortality, their need for purity, and more. And by meditating on these other themes, we can open our hearts more fully to the preparation that Lent is meant to inspire.

That's why Calvary invites you to participate in a special time of worship on Ash Wednesday called "The Seven Symbols of Ash." Through a series of interactive prayer stations, worshipers will have the opportunity to meditate on some of the many lessons that ashes can teach. But to allow each person to consider these lessons at his or her own pace, this will be a "self-guided" service. Beginning at 4 o'clock on Wednesday evening, March 5, and running until 7 o'clock, the sanctuary will be open, and Pastor Alex will be present to get you started, so that you can pray for as little time—or as much time—as you need.

We hope that you'll be able to join us! And as an added incentive, those who participate will receive a daily devotional guide for Lent, so they can continue their preparation for Easter by meditating on the life and ministry of Jesus.



### Seven Symbols of Ash

A Self-Guided Opportunity  
for Interactive Prayer  
Wednesday, March 5  
4 pm to 7 pm

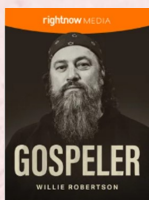
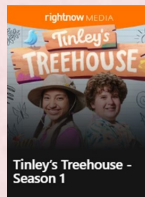
## Growing with RightNow Media

With all the streaming services out there, and so many options to choose from when we look for something to “binge watch,” why not consider the quality productions found on RightNow Media? You’ll find great videos, supplementary study guides, and more, to satisfy your entertainment needs *and* to help build your faith and bring you closer to Christ! To get your free RightNow Media account from Calvary, contact Pastor Alex.



**Essentials of Faith:** Popular Bible teachers like Francis Chan, Lisa Harper, J. D. Greear, and others dive deep into questions like “What is a Christian? Why Does Jesus Matter? Why Do We Need the Bible? and What is the Church?” This would be a great, long-term study that could help you get back to the basics of the Christian faith.

**Tinley’s Treehouse:** Join Tinley and her friend Max as they document their adventures in nature while learning important truths from God’s Word. Engaging enough for the whole family, Tinley’s Treehouse will have you laughing and learning right alongside this delightful duo. Come and explore God’s world with Tinley’s Treehouse!



**Gospeler** (Willie Robertson): Do you want to share your faith more easily and naturally? Author and Christian business owner Willie Robertson of Duck Dynasty helps us understand how we can do this. A free study guide is available, with an optional book for purchase.

## Ready to Grow?

Are you involved in a faith-building small group? Do you have a group of close friends who help you get closer to Christ? If not, we’d like to help you get connected! This is a passion of Calvary’s Christian Growth team—that every member and friend of Calvary gets “plugged in” to a group like this. So we’d like to know what that need looks like. Watch for an opportunity to share your current status with regard to small group participation.

And while we’re on the subject, has God given you a passion to help others grow in Christ? Maybe you’ve already answered His call and are leading a small group. Or maybe you’ve felt the “nudge” a few times but just can’t see yourself in that role. Either way, let us know! The Christian Growth team is praying about ways to support and equip discipleship leaders. There are lots of training resources available; we just need to know who would be interested. Contact Becky Critz ([bcritz1129@gmail.com](mailto:bcritz1129@gmail.com) or 336-341-8249) to get more information or to share your interest.



## Dear Calvary...

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas present. I love playing for our church and knowing the joy that our music brings to you and to the glory of God.

*Love, Beth Church*

I am most appreciative for the gift cards sent to me from the College Ministry Team. Your kindness and support are very meaningful to me. Thank you so much!

*Love, Leah Cain*

Teresa, Windham and I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, cards, meals, gift cards, and other expressions of love and support that you gave us in the wake of Teresa’s recent knee-replacement surgery. The procedure went well, and she has now begun the recovery process. We are so blessed to serve a church family that cares for us so well. We love you all, and we look forward to all the ways that we will continue to seek and serve the Lord together.

*Grace and peace, Pastor Alex*

We would like to thank everyone who gave special gifts in honor and in memory of others:

- **In memory of Phyllis McCraw:** Jamie Smith
- **In memory of Jeanette Bristol :** Dot Marion
- **In memory of Juanita Clifton:** JoAnn Surratt, Johnny and Paulette Surratt, Vernell Goins, Ruth Sunday School Class
- **In memory of Brenda Arnder:** Vernell Goins, Jim and Lilnette Phillips

