

Calvary **Residency**
2024-2025

Who We Are

Calvary Memorial Church is a thriving, multigenerational, diverse, Evangelical congregation with an average Sunday attendance of around 500. Calvary was founded in 1915, and is located in the historic village of Oak Park, IL, the first suburb directly west of the city of Chicago. At Calvary, *love is the vision*. Our desire is to be a place where people receive and share the love of Jesus Christ.

Here at Calvary, we want to be a church informed by Christian history and also relevant to our neighbors. We are constantly aiming to contextualize “the faith that was once for all given to the saints” in a way that is both faithful to Scripture and understandable to non-Christians, all with the goal of building the church up in love. In line with this, we offer a variety of opportunities for connection and discipleship in our faith family. We have home groups, a thriving children’s ministry on both Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, middle and high school student ministries, growing men’s and women’s ministries, adult Sunday classes, an institute for lay leader theological development, care groups, and more. We also have a heart for missions, supporting dozens of local and global missionaries, as well as regularly seeking opportunities to get involved in tangible acts of love to our neighbors.

Our core commitment at Calvary is to be a people who “hold together” for the sake of the Gospel. In a world where people are constantly being divided up along political, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines, we at Calvary are committed to unity in our diversity, bearing with one another in love in order that, as Paul writes in Ephesians, the “manifold wisdom of God might now be made known”. At Calvary you will find a community of various ages, political persuasions, ethnicities, and life experiences, all united by the call of Christ to be a community of love that can only be explained by Jesus and his Kingdom.

Vision, Need, and Opportunity

We believe that the best location for the spiritual and theological development of future ministry leaders is the local church. Only in the local church can future leaders see firsthand the challenges and joys of church ministry, wrestle with how theology must be contextualized and applied to real people, and learn from experienced leaders about what effective ministry looks like in a given context.

A key method Calvary uses to equip future leaders is our Residency Program, where young men and women commit for a year or more to serve and learn in our church setting. Our program is reserved for post-college men and women who are exploring a call to vocational ministry and who are eager to grow in their leadership and theological training at a local church.

Program Description

The Residency Program at Calvary is a paid two-year commitment focused on developing those called to vocational ministry and multiplying the efforts of the ministry staff at Calvary. We select from a candidate pool of college graduates who are discerning a call to vocational ministry, and who are willing to commit 20 hours a week to Calvary, and participate in either a full or part-time capacity in Emmaus Seminary pursuing a Masters program.

We aim to serve and to shape the next generation of church workers, allowing them to participate in ministry in a unique confluence of contexts and to grow in their gifting. Because of our unique and challenging location, we as a church have a great deal to offer future ministers. We also have many innovative approaches to ministry, a compelling theological and ecclesial expression, and its unity amongst diversity here at Calvary, all of which are essential to learning ministry in the 21st century.

Funding Structure

Calvary gives a \$5,000 stipend to each resident, and supports them in raising an additional \$10,000-\$15,000 to cover the cost of the year. We believe that support raising is an important part of the process of discerning a call to ministry, and so we coach our residents over the summer preceding their residency in raising the remaining cost of their program.

Program Aims

1. Spiritual Formation: Nurturing and deepening a personal connection with the Lord.
2. Theological Development: The intellectual exploration and understanding of God and Scripture in relationship to life and worldview.
3. Ministry Apprenticeship: The focused hands-on learning and skill development within a ministry specialization.

4. Ministry Contribution: The contribution to areas of determined need within the Calvary community.
5. Church Exposure: The opportunity to integrate into and participate meaningfully in a robust and diverse church community.
6. Teamwork: Learning how to work well with a gifted and diverse staff.

Program Time Breakdown

Residents commit 20 hours a week to the ministry program, but we encourage residents to use the remaining hours to pursue one of Emmaus Theological Seminary's Masters programs which can be received from Calvary Memorial Church.

Emmaus Theological Seminary Masters Program (FREE-full or part-time degree)

Emmaus holds that optimal theological education thrives in collaboration with and in service of the mission of the Local Church. All faculty members are required to have ministry experience, ensuring firsthand understanding of how theology operates within the church and its significance in practice. While information may be readily available from various sources, true formation is best achieved through lived experience, fostering a sense of community and communion. Therefore through both in-person classes and remote hubs, as part of this residency program, you will have access to a variety of academic Masters degrees for no cost and each one of these programs are hosted for you and others in the congregation and on the premises of Calvary Memorial.

You can find more information about this program here:

<https://www.emmausseminary.org>

People Facing Ministry Experience (10 hours weekly)

During their one-year residency, individuals can expect to pull back the curtain and see the day-in and day-out of vocational ministry. Residents will step into the intersection of theory and practice, as they participate in various aspects of their chosen field such as Worship, Students, Women, Care, Missions, etc.

As apprentices to seasoned staff, they'll watch the behind-the-scenes work that goes into various aspects of ministry program planning and engagement from its beginning to end. Then, they will have opportunities themselves to step into the work, opportunities such as: crafting sermons or devotions for students, cultivating spaces of belonging and hospitality for Sunday morning, ministering through care calls to our missionaries, ushering our community into worship through song, or facilitating the training of congregant leaders in key areas of development.

This residency transcends the confines of the traditional learning environment, encouraging residents to not only understand the nuances of ministry but to embody them. We want our residents to understand the rhythms of congregational life and vocational ministry. Our hope is our program paves the way for a resilient and empathetic leader to emerge.

Administration and Cohort Reading (5 hours)

A regular part of a resident's week will include administrative tasks related to their area of specialized ministry and cohort focused theological reading. This dual focus fosters a well-rounded experience, ensuring the resident pursues not only in the practicalities of service to the church but also in the intellectual and spiritual dimensions of their role. It's a balanced rhythm that incorporates administrative efficiency and thoughtful exploration that will include an opportunity to learn from the theological writing and teaching of Calvary's senior pastor.

All Church Events/Projects (throughout the year)

The orchestration of key all-church events becomes a dynamic canvas for the pastoral resident to apply their learnings and immerse themselves in the Calvary community. Throughout their one-year residency, the residents will actively contribute to the planning and execution of these pivotal projects (e.g., Link Retreat and/or Block Party, the Lenten Devotional, etc.). Under the guidance of the residency directors and in collaboration with fellow staff members, they will learn the art of working together as a team, thinking creatively and logistically, and catering to the spiritual, social, and emotional needs of our community. This hands-on involvement in all church planning both creates an outlet for their personal leadership development, and invites them to step into and participate in our community in a meaningful way.

Mentorship/Supervision (1-2 hours weekly)

In the tapestry of the ministry resident's journey, mentorship/supervision is a key thread woven through every chapter. A seasoned staff supervisor will provide guidance on the terrain of the vocational ministry and also serve as a companion who journeys with them and walks before them. Through weekly one-on-ones, the resident will receive intentional care and encouragement, personalized advice, and a safe space for ministry reflection. Our hope is that this staff supervisor becomes an influence and model for loving and humble leadership.

Cohort meetings (2-3 hours weekly)

The heartbeat of camaraderie/shared experience is in the weekly cohort meeting. These gatherings are more than routine check-ins; they are sacred spaces where residents come together to find like-minded and like-hearted solidarity. Within these 4 weeks each month, there are differing purposes: an opportunity to sit in on a staff meeting, space for ministry training, a week devoted to their spiritual formation, and an opportunity for encouraging theological development. In addition, these meetings create space for residents to share encouragement, grapple with challenges, and collectively explore the landscape of ministry. As residents share their unique experiences, and engage in essential topics and training, they find strength in unity and wisdom for the ministry road ahead. The weekly cohort meetings are a cornerstone of the residency, fostering a sense of belonging and intentional development to navigate future ministry leadership.

Week 1: Participate in Staff Meeting

Staff meetings during the residency serve as both a staple for collaboration and a nexus of shared vision. Engaging in these monthly meetings, the resident becomes an integral part of the team, contributing insights and perspectives to the collective wisdom. The resident gains a firsthand understanding of the intricacies of church administration, decision-making processes, and the delicate balance between pastoral and operational considerations. It's a space where professional growth is cultivated, relationships with fellow staff members deepen, and the resident learns to navigate the collaborative dynamics essential for effective ministry.

Week 2 Cohort Meeting: Ministry Training

Ministry training is a comprehensive educational process that will equip the residents with the necessary practical skills and knowledge to effectively serve and lead within a ministry context. It seeks to prepare them for the multifaceted skills of pastoral ministry.

1: How to write a Devotional: Quickly into the year, we will teach and then model how to write/give a devotional. Then, each cohort week will provide residents the opportunity to lead a short devotional from Scripture. The hope is to allow the residents to “get reps in” as they build upon the skill of sharing from Scripture.

2: Pastoral Care Principles: We want to cultivate empathetic and compassionate leaders who can provide meaningful support and guidance to individuals facing various life challenges. This training aims to equip them with the theological and emotional tools to foster a sense of understanding, and healing

3: Budgeting & Event Planning: They don't often teach budgeting and Event planning in seminary. And yet, when you pull back the curtain of ministry, you realize that much of our efforts are spent doing the administrative work necessary to create places for worship, fellowship, and mission to take place. We will talk through the basics principles that help build healthy priorities in these areas.

4: Cross-Cultural Engagement: More than we realize there are ways our varying cultures form us. They form our values, shape our situational understanding, and teach us how to enter into certain settings. During this time we will unearth some of those cultural backdrops and dialogue about what it looks like to love people different from us.

5: Strengthsfinder: How can we put our talents to work in ministry settings? In this training we will identify some of our key talents and engage how these strengths can be grown and applied across a variety of settings for maximum effectiveness within ministry.

6: Volunteer Care & Development: One of the essential tasks of vocational Ministry is learning to care for and sustain relationships with volunteers, expending time and energy to serve the church community. During this time we will talk through key principles of robust volunteer support.

7: Conflict Resolution: Conflict is often the side door to intimacy. And, when working with people, it is inevitable. Learning how to enter into conflict tactfully when working on teams or with volunteers is an important skill to develop.

8: Vision Casting: A surprising amount of ministry is inviting people to do something, believe something, or engage something in ways they may or may not want to. This can be related to their spiritual growth through discipleship, accomplishing a ministry task, or recruiting to a retreat or class. This requires the skill of casting vision; helping crystallize a vision that is worth the cost, or risk, or challenge!

Week 3 Cohort Meeting: Spiritual Formation

Through Spiritual formation we are pursuing intentional growth and deepening one's connection with the Lord. It will involve personal and communal practices and reflective activities intentionally purposed to nurture a holistic and vibrant spiritual life.

1: Spiritual Timelining: We will take intentional time to reflect on the twists and turns of our own Christian pilgrimage, seeking to highlight the ways God has been the sustenance and support with us and before us on the journey.

2: The Best of Us: Where do I flourish? Through this time we will engage key questions that will help further our professional and personal relationships. These questions include: You get the best of me when..., You get the worst of me when..., You can count on me to..., This is what I need from you...

3: Spiritual Disciplines: Each resident will have the opportunity to study, practice and teach on the spiritual practice of their choice. We will dialogue

more deeply on the ways spiritual practices pave our spiritual transformation and bind us to Christ.

4: Leaders at Risk: We will read and dialogue around the icebergs that sink leaders in ministry, seeking to prepare them for the dangerous calling of vocational ministry. Who is “at risk”? Are there warning signs? What can we learn from those who have gone before us?

5: Enneagram: A prerequisite of loving your neighbor is loving yourself. Before we love ourselves, we must know ourselves. This self-awareness can help ministers understand their strengths and the shadow sides of how they relate and engage in the ministry of love.

6: Untwisting our Thinking: We will look at the relationship between psychology and faith, neuroscience and Christian formation. As we do, we will highlight key cognitive distortions that can impact and hinder our own growth and the growth of those around us, and dialogue about the path forward.

7: How People Grow: How do people grow? We will discuss the relationship between the human and the Spirit in transformation and highlight key ways we can cultivate greenhouses of growth.

8: Hermeneutic & Prayer Practices: Prayer and Scripture are the path on the journey to knowing and enjoying the love of God. We will take time to understand different modes and methods of engaging and approaching these key spiritual disciplines in ways that draw us deeper.

Week 4 Cohort Meeting Theological Development

The theological development component is an essential part of our Residency program. We assign a monthly reading packet organized around topics we think are essential for doing effective ministry in today’s landscape, and then we ask the residents to write a 4 page reflection paper over the course of the month that shows how they are wrestling with each topic. During our week 4 meeting, we discuss the topic in depth, and hope to leave the residents with a deeper understanding and appreciation for both the theological emphasis and how it applies to our current climate.

1: Supervisor Suggested Reading: We begin the Residency with an opportunity for the supervisor of each resident to assign a personally important book for the resident to read. This is a great way for the supervisor and resident to connect, and for the supervisor to begin the year with a formative moment with their resident.

2: Gospel and Culture Part 1: What does it mean to live in a “post enlightenment” culture? What is Secularism, and where did it come from? What assumptions does our culture work with, and what are they based on? And most importantly, what would it take for the Gospel to have a “missionary encounter”, as Leslie Newbigin puts it, with the Progressive culture around us? This month will explore these questions, which form a necessary substructure to understanding ministry in the 21st century in the Western world.

3: Gospel and Culture Part 2: We continue the work of de-tangling the religious and epistemological assumptions of what makes something “believable” in our cultural moment, and start seeing how “Christ crucified” is a truth worth proclaiming and embodying as we live out the Gospel. The residents will end these two months with a firmer understanding of the religious background of the postmodern worldview, and be able to identify Gospel inroads to those who are deconstructing from their faith as cultural Christianity recedes.

4: Vocation and Calling: During this month, residents will read and wrestle with a theology of vocation and calling to ministry. The readings will focus on both discerning a call to ministry, as well as the theological categories of work, vocation, “sacred vs. secular” and more. We will also discuss the pitfalls of ministry work, how it can be a dangerous calling, and ways to avoid the failures of so many around us.

5: Creation, Science, and the Goodness of God: How should Christians think about science? Is it an enemy, a friend, or perhaps focused on different questions? And why did science blossom most fully in the Christian West? These are a few of the questions that we will address, along with a more fundamental question; is creation good, or is it a distraction from the divine?

6: Center Church: Politics, Power, Race, and Unity: During this month, residents will wrestle with questions around our current political climate, and discuss if and how it is possible for a church to hold together across political divisions.

We will also develop a healthy and empathetic framework for understanding the racial and ethnic challenges facing our culture, along with discussing how the church can do better in how she approaches these issues.

7: God Saves and God Heals: Justification and the Gospel: This month focuses on giving the residents a robust understanding of what salvation entails, which shapes the way the Gospel is presented. The residents will take a deep dive with Pastor Gerald through his upcoming book, and garner insights on how the different Christian traditions can dialogue well and understand each other better.

8: Men and Women in the Church: A major issue in the contemporary Christian landscape is navigating how men and women are both imago dei, and how this should (or shouldn't) shape our ecclesiology. We will explore the contours of the contemporary debate, as well as suggest an alternate framework of how to best think of men and women's roles in the economy of God's church.

9: L.G.B.T.O., The Body, and Hospitality: How should we think about the ascendant worldview of gender and sexuality that dominates media and pop culture, and is the Bible's alternative richer than the stereotypes might suggest? This month will explore a better understanding of gender, sexuality, and the body, as well as the surprising connection the practice of hospitality has in the Christian response.

Closing Summary

We live in a rapidly changing world that deeply needs thoughtful and competent ministry leaders, and we believe that Calvary is well suited to create such leaders. We have been gifted with a strategic location, a compelling and challenging context, a thoughtful and talented staff, and a faithful and strong congregation, and we believe that investing in future ministry leaders is good stewardship of all that God has given us.

We hope to play our part in equipping the saints for the work of ministry, including those saints God is calling into full time ministerial work, and we think we have something to offer at Calvary that is hard to find anywhere else. The first year of the Residency program was a great beginning; a blessing to

both the residents and the church, and we want to continue to build a strong program for the glory of God and the strengthening of his church.

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