

2025 Northern Shenandoah Region Report

As a Region, we met once a quarter, with parishes taking turns hosting. Among those in the group, the following submitted updates to share.

Calvary Episcopal Church, Front Royal:

- This spring, the church accepted the Resignation of the Rev. Valerie Hayes and called the Rev. Tom Crittenden to be Interim Rector.
- There is also an ongoing search for an organist/choir director, but in the meantime, we enjoy an excellent handbell choir to enhance the service.
- Recently we enjoyed a wonderful fall Parish Picnic at the vineyard home of a parishioner in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and subsequently celebrated a Blessing of the Animals during Sunday morning celebration of St. Francis

Christ Episcopal Church/Cunningham Chapel, Millwood:

- This year we're delighted to welcome Edward "Ted" Culley as our deacon intern. He has already proven himself to be an asset to the parish, with his service at the food pantry, and an Adult Forum.
- We continue to serve about 65 families in Clarke County every week with our Christ Church Cares Food Pantry. We partner with local farmers, grocery stores, and the community to provide meats, fresh produce, shelf-stable foods, and personal products.
- Our Christ Church Concert Series is going strong, offering world-class performances every month, for the price of a freewill offering. In September we started off with Timur Mustakimov, gold medal winner at the International Brahms festival.

Christ Episcopal Church, Winchester:

- We received a grant from Diocese to support our ministry with Bright Futures to provide school age children with food for weekends. Once in each of the summer months we also provided home-cooked meals for the local Kids Clubs members and their families.
- Post-COVID, we are working to restart our All-Abilities Worship Service for families and all with special needs. Parishioners, including a Music Therapist, lead it.
- We continue to welcome new members as we benefit from the growth in our area. There is a good mix of retirees as well as families with young children.

Church of the Good Shepherd, Bluemont:

- Early in the year we embraced a new mission statement: Follow Christ. Welcome All. Serve Humbly. This is important as we plan for our growth in the next coming years.
- On Good Friday, we lost a long-time leader and friend, Lois Tapscott, the last of the congregation that grew up in Good Shepherd. In May, Bishop Gulick confirmed and reaffirmed two congregants and preached a healing sermon acknowledging the importance of Lois to our church. In June, Bishop Stevenson visited and celebrated a Healing Service with us. It was wonderful to have such support from the Diocese in our time of sadness and grief.
- We increased our commitment to FISH of Clarke County, with increased funding, food donations, and monthly lunch distributions. In May we participated in a World Vision 6K walk for water fundraising campaign. Our goal was to raise over \$1,000 and we raised over \$7,000 to support a global program to supply drinking water for villages in the third world.