

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades: A Season for Serving

By Nina Kidd | August 28, 2026



Calvary Campus escaped destruction from the Palisades Fire, with the exception of the church sanctuary. Church members are meeting in the gym, while the sanctuary undergoes repairs.

Religious Life has played an important part in the founding of Pacific Palisades and was integral to the community as it grew. The Palisades 2025 Fire destroyed several religious buildings, and CTN Religious Correspondent Nina Kidd continues her series of reporting on congregations, including where and when services are held and upcoming events.

CALVARY CHURCH

701 N. Palisades Drive

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Website: <https://www.calvarypalisades.org/>

On a sunny morning, January 5, 2025, Calvary's newly-hired Lead Pastor Justin Anderson preached his first sermon in the church's 700-seat sanctuary. Two days later the Palisades fire arrived.

Pastor Justin's was the last sermon in that 25-year-old building. The fire burned a huge hole in the roof; and rain that came after completed the destruction to the sanctuary. The town burned for days, scattering church members and their families.

From his family's home in Glendale, Pastor Justin rallied church elders and staff divvying the rosters and reaching out to all the members.

News from the congregation was bad: One hundred forty-two Calvary families, Palisades to Malibu, lost everything. That included 15 staff members.

And for eight months in 2025, the Calvary Palisades family worshiped in shared spaces. With the exception of the sanctuary, church facilities were spared. After remediation on the campus, in September of '25 worship resumed in the school's gym.

The church shared a fire video telling the story of five families "We're the victims!" One boy sounded incredulous mouthing those unexpected words.

The pastor told us that dealing with that shock was his first pastoral lesson. But he felt blessed.

Besides donations of all the necessities, he was able to distribute cash gifts from friends and churches worldwide. It was a bit odd, he said, but good, to call a member, introduce himself as the new pastor and offer them funds from their church.



The Calvary Church Sanctuary was destroyed by the fire and subsequent rains.

RETURNING TO SERVICE

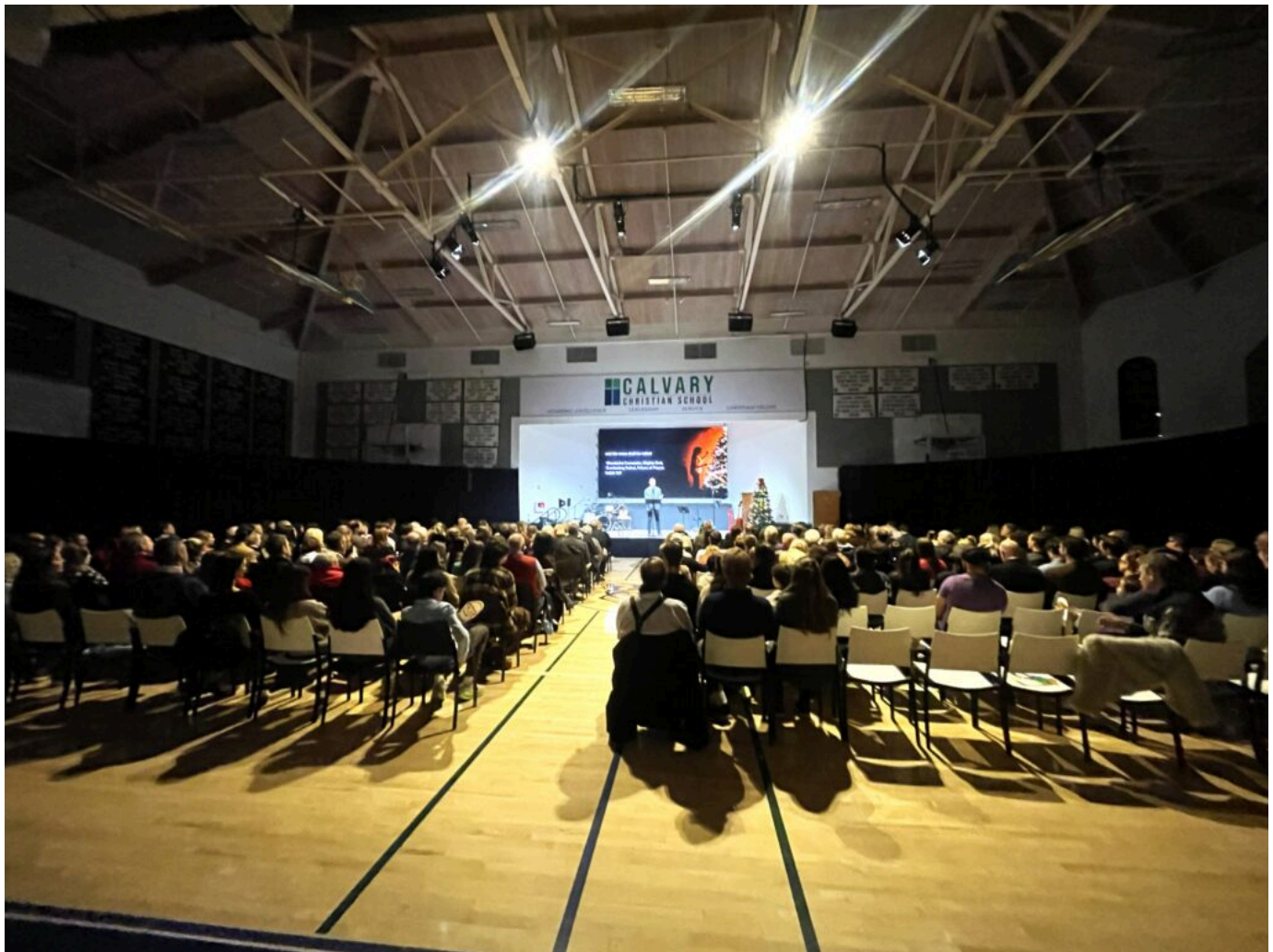
Longtime Calvary members say they always felt a very much a part of the Palisades. Established in 1948, their sanctuary was on Via de la Paz well into the '80's. Over the years they became known for the Calvary Christian School (founded 1963) and then for their large church sanctuary which opened in Santa Ynez Canyon in 1989.

After the fire, Palisades Calvary was the first church in the Palisades to reopen (and also the first school). There they returned to their mission as A Lighthouse for the Gospel. They are again able to serve the recovering community by providing meeting spaces for groups, including the Boy Scouts, AYSO leaders, and Habitat for Humanity. In the evenings volleyball and basketball teams use the school's gym.

The gym also still doubles as the church. According to CBN News the sanctuary was declared a total loss and rebuilding could take several years at a cost of \$15 million.

Pastor Justin told us that Sundays average 245 in the pews (folding chairs). Singers are accompanied by a five-piece worship band. Forty to fifty kids take part in the children's ministry. He expects them all to be back in the sanctuary in the Fall of 2028.

A striking feature of Calvary's Palisades offering is fellowship groups. For men there is an open basketball run and once monthly Men's Happy Hour. For women there is Mom Life, a source for support and learning together.



Members of the congregation have Sunday services in the gym.

UPCOMING

Palisades families are invited to a back-to-school "Fall Kickoff" on September 13.
Parents can pre-register for babysitting to allow them a Parents' Night Out on September 26.

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