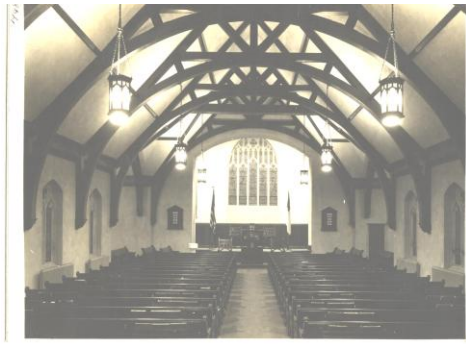


## Historic Preservation Plan

In 2007 members of Calvary earned a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust for money to repair, restore, and rehabilitate the historic structure. As part of this process, a detailed Preservation Plan was developed. This plan lists priorities and costs for the proposed work. Preservation of the stained glass and slate roof are high priority. The grant money, along with proceeds from a capital improvement campaign, assures that Calvary will continue to be a safe, welcoming meeting place for new generations as they worship, host community organizations, and engage in outreach efforts.

Members of the community are welcome to visit Calvary. Anyone involved with the restoration, conservation, and repair of other historic buildings are encouraged to come and find out what this congregation has learned. Visitors may view the problem areas, see what work has been started, and look at the detailed preservation plan.



Interior of the sanctuary in the 1950s.

## Calvary Presbyterian Church

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## Calvary Presbyterian Church Riverton, NJ

### Foundation in the past Focus on the future



Begun as a summer resort, Riverton, NJ quickly became home to year-round residents. Easy access to Philadelphia by way of both the riverboats and the railroad made this pleasant spot a desirable location for people with livelihoods and roots still in the city. Riverton's early citizens recognized and provided for their spiritual needs by founding churches which are still strong influences in the community today.

Now, residents are concerned about the effects of the ravages of time on their historic treasures. This is the story of one congregation's stewardship. By recognizing and saving what is important from the past, Calvary Presbyterian Church is making a place where future generations will always feel welcome.

## Focus on the Future; Foundation in the Past; Calvary's Journey Continues



The original church was designed by prominent Philadelphia architect John Fraser, one of Calvary's founders.

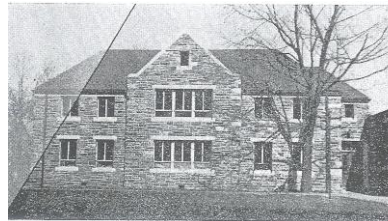
### History and Significance

Calvary was Riverton's third church, following Christ Episcopal Church, and a Roman Catholic mission. Upon their 1874 incorporation, the congregation of Calvary held worship services in the Riverton school. They purchased the current property for \$600 from Edward Lippincott, one of the church's founders, and began construction of clapboard, Carpenter Gothic style church, which was dedicated in 1879. A separate chapel soon followed on the northeast corner of the lot. An Arts and Crafts style manse, designed by J. Fletcher Street, was added to the property in 1913.

Within half a century, the congregation had grown, and they needed more space. Architect George E. Savage designed improvements and expansion of the building. The chapel was replaced with a 1 ½ story building for educational facilities. It was

connected to the sanctuary by an assembly space. The bell tower was removed, transepts were added to both sides of the sanctuary, and a chancel built at the front. The entire structure was clad in stone, a new stone tower was built with an entrance narthex, and 13 new stained glass windows were added. A stained glass window from the original church was placed in the narthex. The 1884 bell was hung in the tower, and continues in use today. These alterations gave the church a Gothic Revival appearance.

Sunday School rolls grew suddenly in the 1940s. George Savage, Jr., son of the architect of the 1926 alterations, designed an addition. The cornerstone for a new building was laid in 1951.



In 1959 an Austin Pipe Organ was installed in the chancel, with pipes hidden behind screen panels.

Many reminders of this past remain. Within the church basement, the 1879 foundation is still visible. Inside the church there are items that were part of the original sanctuary, such as: the original walnut pews; the pulpit and

chairs given in memory of William Dreer; and church archives containing documents from many prominent figures from Riverton's history and development, such as Joseph A. Campbell, founder of both Calvary and Campbell's Soup Company.

Throughout their history, Calvary's grounds, including a Memorial Garden, have been beautifully maintained. They are a regular stop on Riverton's semi-annual Garden Tour. The buildings have been cited as contributing buildings in the Riverton Historic District. As such, they were listed on the State Register of Historic Places, and in 1999 were placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

*The New Jersey Congress of Mothers, forerunner of today's Parent Teacher Association (PTA), was founded in one of the Calvary Sunday school rooms on October 20, 1900. It was the work of Riverton's Porch Club, a NJ Federated Women's Club, which held its meetings at Calvary. One of the Porch Club's charter members was elected as the Congress of Mothers' first president.*