

**CALVARY CHURCH OF THE VALLEY
6107 NORTH INVERGORDON ROAD
PARADISE VALLEY, AZ 85253
RECOMMENDATION TO TOWN COUNCIL
January 8, 2026**

On September 17, 2025, Mark Schneider and Pastor Keith DeLaet presented Calvary Church of the Valley located at 6107 North Invergordon Road to the Historical Advisory Committee for consideration to the Historical Property Recognition Program.

Calvary Church of the Valley was founded as an independent, non-denominational Christian church after approximately seventy parishioners—including Jack Stewart of the Camelback Inn—separated from St. Barnabas Church on Mockingbird Lane. The group initially met in a banquet room at the Camelback Inn under the leadership of Pastor Richard Zollner. In 1969, the congregation purchased the property located at 6107 North Invergordon Road from Mary Belle Schildman shortly after the passing of her husband, James A. Schildman. Between 1973 and 1989, the Church bought additional property giving them a total of 13 acres.

The original structures on the property are believed to date to the early to mid-1930s and built by the Schildmans using adobe bricks, hand honed beams, and included several handmade doors. In the early 1940s, the Schildmans established the property as the Desert Lodge.

For the next twenty years, the Desert Lodge operated both as a guest lodge and as a riding and boarding stable. The main house—originally the Schildman family residence—was expanded to include a dining room, a lounge with a bar, and two owner apartments. They also added a second kitchen, one of which served as a Kosher kitchen. At a time when some area inns and resorts did not accept Jewish guests, the Desert Lodge welcomed them. Other buildings on the property included casitas for guests, a garden house, barn facilities and a tack room. The Lodge also offered the guests an outdoor barbecue area, a swimming pool, and a shuffleboard court for recreation.

In the 1980s, the Church converted the main building into its Fellowship Hall and constructed a new sanctuary. All of the original buildings are still standing with the exception of an old storage structure which was falling apart. Various rooms and buildings are being used as classrooms and other purposes. The garden house provides housing for the facilities manager, and the parsonage is adjacent to the church.

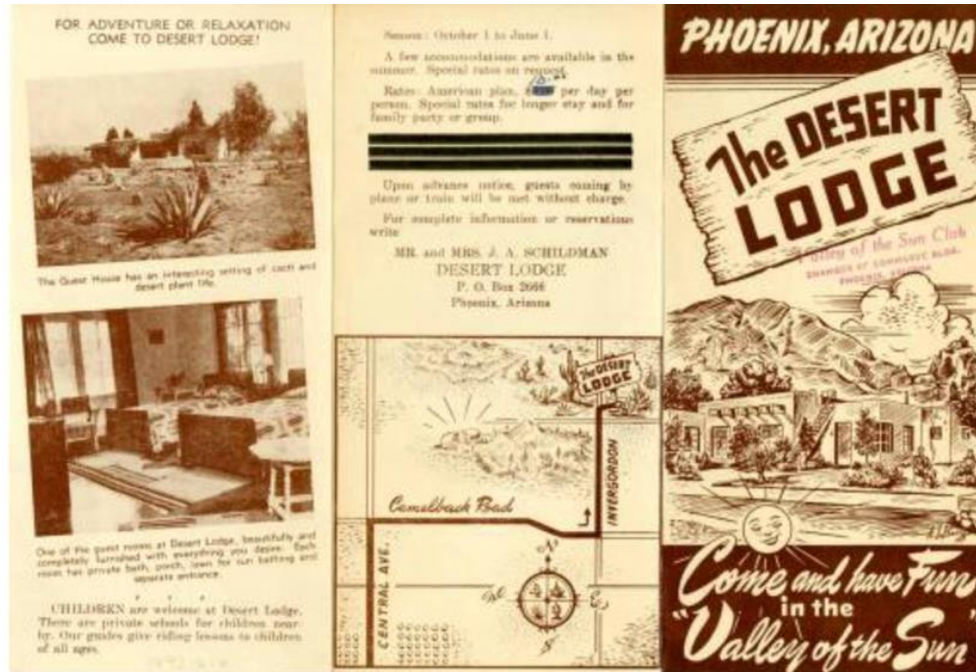
In addition to regular worship services, the Church hosts a homeschooling group, a weekly Bible study group and various nonprofit and community organizations. With its historical significance, Calvary Church wants to be known as a jewel in the desert serving the community.

As Chair of the Town's Historical Advisory Committee, I would like to recommend Calvary Church of the Valley, located at 6107 North Invergordon Road, to the Town Council for recognition within the Historic Property Program.

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