

# SERVE - We are church together

God's children are called to serve in a variety of ways. God gives us certain gifts and talents and then God chooses to call us ministers for the sake of the Gospel. We rejoice that as a church, we come together each week to get our gifts and talents renewed by the Lord and then are sent out to be a blessing to others. This year we were able to celebrate a milestone for Russ & Marlene Sletten who together served on staff of our church for over a half century! They left big shoes to fill but we are confident that the Holy Spirit will raise up new leaders to serve. Calvary's directory celebrated being the church for 500 years. The pages of this directory are filled with the many ministers who call Calvary their church home.



Russ and Marlene Sletten

The vision for our facility was to be able to serve the community of Bemidji. We are blessed to have relationships with organizations that can host training events, conferences and meetings at our church. Our gym is used by a number of organizations that help keep us fit and moving. This year alone, we made many property improvement projects that keep this place ready to welcome all people as Christ. The gym floor was resurfaced, a new water heater was installed for the kitchen, hand dryers were installed in the bathrooms, a new fridge was purchased for the kitchen and more energy efficient lights were installed in the gym. Yea, God!

## Reforming Someone's Day

Our church is intentional about finding ways to serve the neighbor. On Rally Sunday, our church donated personal care items that our youth assembled into care packages that we handed out to our church members on Reformation Sunday so that they could bless those they encounter who are in need helping us live out our vision statement.

**Jesus calls us to GROW as disciples, to GIVE generously and to SERVE others EVERY DAY!**

**GO TO CALVARYBEMIDJI.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION**

# Calvary Lutheran Church of Bemidji 2017 Annual Report January 2018

**Freed & RENEWED  
in Christ 500 YEARS OF GOD'S  
GRACE IN ACTION**  
We are church together ~ Grace in Action

We are the church together, 500 years after the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 theses in Wittenburg, which resulted in a change of Christian teaching and practice that has shaped the church into who we are today.

**JOIN US**  
**Annual congregational meeting  
to be held on Sunday,  
January 21, 2018 in the fellowship  
hall at 9:30 a.m.**

*"The true treasure of the church  
is the most holy gospel of the glory  
& grace of God."  
~ Martin Luther*

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Pastor Genelle showing her "super-powers" on Rally Sunday, 2017

"How Lutherans Read the Bible" (excerpt from *Living Lutheran* magazine)

"Reading and understanding the Bible isn't easy. Scripture assumes a living God. We ourselves are restless creatures with needs that change daily. What we need from God one day is a word that challenges us; another day we may need a word from God that consoles us. Because Christ lives and our lives aren't the same from one day to the next, Luther said we should pray for the illumination of the Spirit and read the Bible over and over again. When we pray for the Spirit and read Scripture, we will be blessed with an encounter with the Lord of life!"

# GROW - We are church together



*Grow  
Give  
Serve*

## 'Grace in Action' led us in our growth in 2017.

This year we experienced God's grace at work in a variety of different ways in worship. We spent one worship service immersed in prayer. We prayed silently, out loud, with movement; we prayed for ourselves, for our community, for the world; through prayer, we all experienced God's grace! We spent another Sunday hearing how God is at work in the lives of God's people. Members as young as 6 and as old as 70 shared their experiences with a living God. You can hear their stories at [www.calvarybemidji.org/sermons/2568/](http://www.calvarybemidji.org/sermons/2568/). We put God's grace into action another Sunday by being sent out to do a variety of service projects in the Bemidji community. We partnered with 8 other agencies, both inside and outside our church building, and exchanged God's grace with our neighbors. Finally, we gathered for a very uplifting 500 anniversary reformation worship where 25 youth received their first communion, choirs sang, a youth band shared & God's word was proclaimed.

In 2017, our praise team agreed to help lead the music at our 9:30 worship which has been a hit! Our 5<sup>th</sup> graders took their first communion to celebrate the Reformation and now this milestone will move to the fourth grade class during Holy Week. Our outdoor worship space for the summer wasn't used very often due to the rain that comes (yes, almost every Wednesday this summer!) so we will reevaluate how to best use that space on the east side of the building. Our preschool was blessed with some new outdoor equipment thanks to some generous donors. Mission Trip Sunday highlighted how lives were reformed through being the hands and feet of Christ. Calvary hosted what could be the 'first annual' community Christmas concert - a great hit bringing the larger Bemidji community together to celebrate Christ.



*"The prayer service in January was a huge blessing. I felt closer to God and I felt peace despite not knowing what the future held. Prayer gives me peace. I give my worries, wishes, and thanks to God and He gives me peace. What a blessing!" - Andrea Lewis*



# GIVE - We are church together

The Quarter Campaign was a fun way to get the kids involved in generosity!



Together, we do so much more than we could as individuals. Through God's grace, we find ways to share our time, talent and treasure. Here is our 2017 snapshot.

\$ 789,069 was received for our general fund.

\$ 66,065 was given to support our partners in ministry like the ELCA, Churches United, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Food Shelf, People's Church and many others.

\$ 834,115 has been pledged toward The Bridge capital appeal and \$ 763,025 has been received. Our current mortgage loan is \$1,369,326 at 3.725% interest. Monthly mortgage payments were \$9,811.

*For more information on how to give consistently through Simply Giving, go to [www.calvarybemidji.org](http://www.calvarybemidji.org) and click on Giving: Giving Online.*

## Did You Know: Congregational Surveys

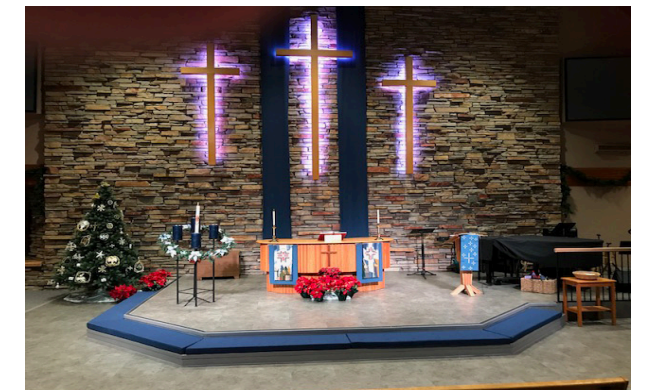
In 2017, our leadership team put together 7 surveys for the congregation to share their feedback and input on a variety of topics. Survey topics were: milestone ministries; Calvary Alive; membership; property; communications. The information gathered was very valuable in making decisions that helped us to be a better church. Thank you for sharing your voice!

4 Worship services per week  
31 Youth Confirmed  
29 Memorial or Funeral Services  
13 Households joined as members  
31 Baptized\*  
500 average weekly worship attendance  
23 Calvary staff members

\*A full listing of Baptized as well as other statistics can be found on our website.

BALANCES  
\$ 34,727 Calvary Foundation funds  
\$ 211,590 cash and investments  
\$ 1,369,326 amount remaining on mortgage

Thrivent Choice Dollars & Thrivent Action Grants are making a HUGE impact in our mission and ministry. From funding food for trainings to purchasing choir canatas, funding preschool events, to funding snacks for club, these Thrivent grants have blessed our ministries. Applying is a simple process - ask the office staff how you could participate in this lifegiving partnership with Thrivent!



Beautiful kneelers ~ a gift of generosity, donated to Calvary in 2017.