

## *Reflections on Fall and Beauty of a Dinner Table*

Good morning, God. I have found my heart drawn in a special way to you recently. The leaves in this part of Minnesota have been just stellar to observe. Rich colors weave in and through view reminding us of the beauty of your creation even during the changing of the seasons. The October weather has been pretty nice, and even lent itself well to some outdoor time, which is something we enjoy as a family. You do beautiful work, God! I am thankful to get to see it.

And so much has happened this fall. Calvary's ministry is in full swing and there is a great vibe in the air. We have seen just a ton of activity over the last month, including witnessing a number of students affirm their faith in you. The sanctuary was packed, hugs were shared, and you were there in a great big way. Now we look to this next month with eager anticipation, beginning this next weekend as we remember our loved ones who have moved to a nearer presence with you. It will be All Saints Sunday and we will thank you for the gift they have been, the light they shined in our lives, and the promise that we will indeed again see them full of your life and joy. It is going to be beautiful to gather in such a way. The truth is it is so good to be church together. I am really loving getting to know these folks here at Calvary, and I thank you so much for the call to share this journey with them.

In truth, it all has me thinking a lot about something deeply important in our lives. Something that calls us to gather in simple and yet meaningful ways. A place to slow down and connect in a deeper relationship with each other and you. What is this place? Well, simply put, the dinner table: a place to gather, share, and be fed. God, I have many memories of dinner tables moments in my life, but I don't think I ever truly came to appreciate them until I became a pastor. There is almost nothing like the buzz of love that fills a space when a meal is shared. The dinner table is such a beautiful and spiritual place to connect, and you give it to us to be that space with an invitation to slow down and share authentically life with those we know and love. Thank you for that, but I must admit, I find myself wondering if we as people are losing this practice to some degree. Life has gotten so busy. I hear from so many parents how difficult it is to gather as a whole family in one place even to eat. Which is profoundly sad to hear as this is one of those moments where such deep connection happens. Which is why we try to provide some of those spaces here at church. And, of course, your feast of love, Holy Communion is a central and defining practice of our faith. Every Sunday and Wednesday you gather us in this way. It is your dinner table; a table of belonging, where all are welcome just as we are, and all are fed with all that you are.

Father God, help us recover this space in our lives. Connect your table to our tables so that we may connect deeper with you and each other. Create moments for us to gather in your name, be that at church, or at home. Fill us with the stillness of your presence and help us know that like the colors of fall, your love colors our lives with wonder, beauty, and a stillness to know you on the journey. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Peace,  
Pastor Chris

### **NOVEMBER INVITATION TO PRACTICE SPIRIT LIVING AT HOME**

Choose another family in your life and invite them to share a dinner table with you. May this be a meaningful time to connect and grow together in Christ's love.



## *Sunday School*

We are underway! Thanks to everyone for participating in our new Connections Worship Sundays at 10:30am as the kick-off for weekly Sunday School. Our helpers are bringing the Bible stories to life and the students are finding joy in faith. What more could we want? See you Sunday!

## *Confirmation*

If you haven't yet signed up for confirmation, it's not too late for those in grades 6-8! We meet each Wednesday night following worship from 7-8:00pm. Register online at [calvarybemidji.org/confirmation](http://calvarybemidji.org/confirmation), or by filling out a paper registration form in the office. Reach out to Pr. Jeremiah for more information or with any questions at [revholst@calvarybemidji.org](mailto:revholst@calvarybemidji.org).

## *Thank You to All Confirmation Helpers*

As confirmation classes are up and running for the year, and having just celebrated confirmation services for this year's class, I felt the need to send out a huge THANK YOU to all those who have been, and continue to be, part of our confirmation program. From small group leaders to lent mentors, to service night teachers to gym supervisors, you ALL make such a positive difference in the lives of our confirmation students, and it would not be possible without you. I continue to be so grateful for all of you, and I feel so blessed to be able to walk alongside these students as they explore their faith together.

-Pr. Jeremiah

## *Middle School Summer Trip*

The first cold days of winter are a good reminder to sign up for the Middle School Summer trip to Lake Traverse Reservation in South Dakota June 9-14, 2024. Register now and start raising funds for what should be a faith-filled, fun, energizing trip. Space is limited, so be sure to make your \$100 deposit now to reserve your spot. Talk to Brett for more information.



## *Middle School Youth Gathering*

There's still time to register for the Middle School Youth Gathering at Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria on November 18-19. Register on the Calvary website or talk to Brett for more information. It will be a great overnight event in the newly remodeled cabins, with Pastor Chris leading the worship band. Cost is \$120 per person, discounted from \$150 thanks to a generous contribution from the Calvary Foundation! Thanks to the Calvary Foundation for your generosity. We're linking up with the youth from First Lutheran Church to make sure Bemidji is well-represented and bringing the fun!!

## *High School Summer Trip*

Senior High Youth are making a grand return to the ELCA National Youth Gathering next summer, July 14-21, 2024 in New Orleans. It's time to register and start fundraising for this great trip. Spending time with tens of thousands of other Lutheran kids is an amazing experience, especially when worshipping together all in one room. Details have been sent, but if you need more information, talk to Brett. We're working on creating a fun bus trip that will be part of some great stories. Come be part of this amazing faith-building event!

[Register now on the Calvary website!](#)

## *CLUB/High School Youth*

November 8 is Fun Night for Confirmation and Club. We'll share pizza for dinner at 6:00pm followed by worship. After worship, we will disperse throughout the building for several activities! Board games and music in the Fellowship Hall, Quilting fun in Room 3, Music and a ping pong tournament in the Youth Room, and games in the Gym, (calisthenics not likely.) Bring your favorite game and plan on a great night for all the Middle and High School youth of Calvary!!

CLUB meets most Wednesday nights at 7:00pm in the Youth Room. We share snacks and stories, play games, and talk about life and faith and God and stuff. All high school youth and their friends are invited to take part. Don't forget! There is a meal at 5:15pm and worship at 6:00pm to fill out your whole night. See you there!

## *National Youth Gathering*

We're going to New Orleans! Come to an orientation meeting for the ELCA National Youth Gathering next Summer for kids in high school. We'll meet at 7:00pm (after worship) on Wednesday, November 8 in the Fellowship Hall. Parents and kids should attend to hear the information about the trip, which will occur roughly July 14-21, 2024. Find out just how amazing it is to worship together in the Superdome with 35,000 other Lutheran kids from around the country. Talk to Brett for more information, and plan on attending!



## *See Calvary's November Birthdays Here!*

[View this newsletter on the web and follow this link to see who to wish a happy birthday this month!](#)

MONTHLY MINISTRY PARTNER ~ BSU/NWTC LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

One of Calvary's main ministry partners is Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) of Bemidji, housed in the Lutheran Campus Center at 1221 Birchmont Dr. NE, at the south end of BSU's campus. LCM is a vital outreach of our church, as it establishes supportive relationships with and offers genuine hospitality for young adults during their college years. Pastor Emily serves both the BSU and Northwest Technical College communities, providing worship opportunities and connecting students with local churches in fellowship.



LCM is our November monthly ministry partner - please help support this important ministry we share. You can donate using Rebel Give, or by writing a check to Calvary Lutheran with "monthly ministry partner" in the memo line. Thank you again for supporting the work of the larger church!

Calvary Happenings - October

This article featuring New Members, Deaths, and Baptisms will be updated monthly as another way we can stay informed of what is happening in our congregation.

- **New Members:**
- **Baptisms:** Dallin Isakson - October 16, 2023, Tate Oustad - October 29, 2023
- **Deaths:** JoAnn Strand - October 27, 2023

New Member Class - Save the Date

Pr. Jeremiah will be leading a new member class on Thursday, November 9 at 6:30pm. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member of Calvary, please contact Pr. Jeremiah to sign up for this orientation!

All Saints Worship

You are invited to join us for a time of remembering our loved ones who have gone to be in a nearer presence with God. At both services on Sunday, November 5 and the Calvary Alive service on November 8, we will gather for worship in this special way. We will offer prayers for all saints, toll the bells as we name loves ones lost in the last year, and celebrate their light by lighting candles in memory of them. All are welcome to share in this beautiful tradition. No need to bring anything special. Just your presence and your love. See you as we gather for All Saints Worship.

Baptisms at Calvary

If you are interested in having your child baptized at Calvary, just contact the church office to get schedule with us! For more information, [please visit the baptism page on our website.](#)

Advent Worship

If you can believe it, Advent is right around the corner. We will begin our journey through Advent on November 26 by lighting the Advent Wreath, singing a new liturgy written by Pr. Chris, and gathering in the wonder, anticipation, and mystery of Christ's Advent. We will follow the lights of hope, peace, love, and joy, all leading up to the celebration of Christmas on December 24 in worship. It will be a beautiful season to experience Christ's love.

The Refuge  
GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Calvary is hosting a grief support group for those who have experienced a death related loss. This is a continuous support group called The Refuge, with group meetings held on Tuesday evenings from 4:00-6:00pm. The Refuge meets in Room 1 at Calvary. No need to pre-register - Contact Erin Kossivi at 813-417-7678 with questions!

**Refuge Kids** This group is for any child that has lost a close family member (parents, sibling, or primary caregiver). The program is best suited for kids 7-13 years of age. For more information contact Erin Kossivi 813-417-7678.

Calvary Closed for Thanksgiving

Thursday and Friday, November 23 & 24, Calvary will be closed to allow our staff to spend the holiday with their families.



FINANCIAL REPORT  
12 MONTH FISCAL YEAR – AUGUST-JULY

General Fund – September

Income	Budgeted	YTD Income
\$71,485	\$97,821	\$144,567
Expenses	Budgeted	YTD Expenses
\$81,410	\$97,144	\$168,012

Cash, Receivables, & Savings: \$103,230

September Ministry Partner: Calvary Foundation - \$854

Calvary Foundation Balance: \$51,602

We want to thank everyone for their continued support as we grow in our ministry together!



## Getting to Know Calvary Council ~ Nicholle Bieberdorf



Greetings Siblings in Christ,

Welcome to November! November?! How did the fall season fly by so quickly? For Eric and me, it flew by as we shared joys with our children: Laura in Moorhead is newly engaged and plans a June wedding; Ryan in Moorhead is attending grad school and playing his final season of football for the Dragons; Aaron in Brainerd is attending Central Lakes College and enjoying more independence living away from home. The empty nesters haven't spent much time at the nest.

At Calvary, though, there is a LOT going on at this nest! We are seeing trends of weekly worship attendance around 400 per week. Yay God! There are three completely different worship experiences each week at Calvary. I encourage you to try them all at some point, and share an invitation to have others join you. We are also seeing a trend of increased giving. Yay God! Recall from the annual meeting that we do have a deficit that we are working out of, but we are trending in the right direction toward a balanced budget.

Pastor Chris and the Council talked about his return to his synod staff role. We agreed that it will be good to have Calvary's presence again in those synod-wide conversations and for us to hear of the mission and

ministry of the larger church. The excitement and presence of the Spirit is palpable here at Calvary. If you have any questions please contact me or one of the other Council members. We are happy to be living this ministry with you. Blessings for the upcoming holiday season.

Peace,  
Nicholle

# Volunteers needed

Do you want to share your gift of cooking with the congregation? Would you feel fulfilled by helping tidy the kitchen after our Wednesday night meals? Yes?! Consider joining our Calvary Alive crew! We are looking to add to our wonderful group of volunteer cooks and clean up teams. If Wednesday afternoon doesn't work for you to prep a meal, no problem! Meals can be prepared on Tuesday nights for serving on Wednesday.

**Come help us make Calvary the place to be on Wednesday nights!**

**Speak with Kathie Ochowicz or talk to Garrett in the office (218-751-1893) to be a part of this great ministry!**

## Opportunities to Connect

Quilters - Thursdays 9:00-11:00am

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study - Wednesdays 8:00am

Martha Circle - Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month 1:00-3:00pm

Hope Circle - Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month 9:30-11:00am

Marigold Circle - 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday every of month 10:00-12:00pm

Senior Group - 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month 12:00-1:30pm

**For more information about the different groups please contact the front office 218-751-1893.**

## Coffee Fellowship Volunteering

With our fall programming in full swing, we are in need of some helpful folks to sign up to host family fellowship time between our Sunday worship services. We are looking for people that are willing to make coffee, set out and serve snacks and treats, and tidy up following fellowship time. All volunteers, of course, are still encouraged to attend the worship service! You would be able to bring your favorite homemade treats or use packaged treats provided by Calvary.

Sign up as a family or join with another couple! We will gladly accept your help on any Sunday you are willing to sign up for. Contact Calvary's office to sign up to serve your fellow parishioners in this fun and meaningful way!

## Help Wanted:

**Head Usher/Host for Sunday services:** This role would be the connecting person between the worship staff and the worship hosts for the particular service. Visit with or email Pr. Jeremiah at revholst@calvarybemidji.org to find out more!