



2508 Washington Ave SW
Bemidji, MN 56601

A Prayer for Our Life Together

"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." – Colossians 3:12-14

Where did the summer go? My guess is, God, you have heard this silent prayer more times than you can count. Even as I offer my heart right now in prayer to you, I find this question stirring on my mind. Because it has gone so fast. It seems like just yesterday we celebrated our seniors in worship and blessed them on their journey. Now that journey has begun as many of them are off at college or working full days. We have had hot days, cool days, hard days moving trees, more rain than last summer (which was desperately welcomed) and even some fun along the way with a packed house for VBS, meaningful worships, laughter as we sang on Tuesday nights, and moments of caring, supporting, and walking with each other. Yeah, the summer has gone fast, but we give thanks for these days. And we thank you, God, for being the good, weaving in and through our hearts, our lives, our families, and our faith.

I always find summers to be a unique experience in ministry. Many folks are traveling, and it is fun to hear their stories and see their pictures. Of course, work continues but it often feels different. I love that Bible camps are in full swing and unique events happen all summer across our community. It is quite beautiful and provides a nice break from the normal routine of the year, and an opportunity to experience how you meet us in different ways. And you do, and I love that!

That is quite a gift you give us, God, and how it has a way of stirring our souls for joy as we gather again this Fall. Rally Sunday is just a few short weeks away and I can feel your Spirit energy building in me and in us as a family of faith. And just to think, we have some exciting things coming together this Fall for our church family. The hub of life on Sunday morning is sure to be full of joy for Sunday School kiddos and parents, those who love the deep tradition, those who love contemporary expressions, and of course, a good cup of coffee. And of course, Calvary Alive with all the excitement, energy, and learning that takes place on Wednesday nights. I am so excited for the praise band to lead us again this fall on both Sundays and Wednesdays. Yeah, they rock, and yeah, their music brings us closer to you! Between it all and through it all is you, and with you, there is a place for us all. A hub of life at Calvary to refuel our life together. You have been stirring in our hearts all summer and the journey with you continues to be one of joy, wonder, and love.

I guess what I really want to say today God is 'thank you'. Thank you for the busy. Thank you for the calm. Thank you for traveling with us, attending games with us, and for relaxing with us. Thank you for the music and the exciting get-togethers. Thank you for walking with us and thank you for tuning our hearts to the joy of life together this Fall. Guide us with your love and help us share it, be it, and shine it as if it were the clothes we wear. We are thankful for this life together and the blessing of having this church family. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Pr. Chris Leach

Did You Know?

Unless asked, hospitals don't alert pastors when their congregation members are admitted. If you would like Pastor Chris or Pastor Jeremiah to visit you while you're hospitalized, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at church! We would love to come and pray with you. For those who worship online at home, hymnals and bibles are available for use - please let us know if you'd like one of the Caring Friends Ministry Team Members to make a delivery and a visit!

Confirmation 2025-2026



Confirmation registration for this fall is now open! Confirmation classes at Calvary run for grades 6-8 on Wednesday nights as part of Calvary Alive. Confirmation orientation will be taking place following worship on September 17. Register now at www.calvarybemidji.org/confirmation or use the QR Code provided.

Please contact Pr. Jeremiah with any questions!

New Confirmation Tradition FOR 9TH GRADERS

Attention 9th grade confirmation students, we have added a new tradition as we approach Confirmation Sunday starting this fall. In October, Pastor Chris and Brett Carter, Director of Faith Formation, will lead 9th graders through two special Wednesdays of preparation for the Affirmation of Baptism Service happening on Reformation Sunday. We'll meet on October 1 and 8 at 7:00pm (after worship) in the youth room. We'll spend time imagining a life of faith following confirmation and creating a memorable stole (like the colorful one's pastors wear in worship). A stole represents the "yoke of Christ," signifying the person's role as a servant and leader in the church. We'll make red stoles to wear during the confirmation service. We'll also meet the CLUB group and share stories about living a life of faith in high school. All of this strengthens the milestone experience of confirmation leading to an ongoing life of faith and as we celebrate confirmation together on Sunday, October 26. Watch for a letter in the mail with more details. Any questions, talk to the pastors or Brett.

VBS Thanks

I want to say a huge thank you to all those who participated in our Vacation Bible School this year as we spent a week learning to trust Jesus in a wild world! If you didn't make it to the wrap up on Sunday, August 10, check out the recording on our web page. Thanks especially to the families who made sure the kids were here every day. And, for all that to happen, I'm so grateful for the nearly 50 helpers who planned, decorated, led stations, led crews, organized, and more, and more! It was a VBS for the whole congregation effort and it's so great to see so many people celebrating God's friendship together. Same time, same place next year. Mark your calendars so you don't miss out!

New Member Orientation

Interested in becoming a member of Calvary? New member orientation will be held on Thursday, September 25 at 6:00pm. Come and find out how to officially join the family! Contact Pr. Jeremiah for more information, or just stop in!

Club

Club begins on Wednesday, September 17 at 7:15 in the youth room. It's time for high school kids to gather again to consider some great faith questions, sing songs, play games, and wonder together about what God has in store for us. We meet every Wednesday and are excited to welcome the new class of 9th graders getting ready to be confirmed this fall. Bring your questions and your friends as we try not to laugh when we pray out loud. We're working toward a time change this year, starting in October, so come right away in September to be part of the planning.

Sunday School

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS ALL ABOUT FAMILY CONNECTIONS



Register now for Sunday School which starts on Sunday, September 21 when families connect in worship at 10:30am in the sanctuary.

Families (children and a responsible adult) learn the same Bible story together before kids head off to age-level classrooms. Kids in pre-school through 5th grade are invited to participate. Use the QR code to register. We're also adding a little wiggle time to the end of each Sunday school day with kids spending the last minutes in the gym while some parents finish up in fellowship or worship (see Pastor Chris's article about acoustic contemporary worship at 11:00 on Sundays.)



New Time for Sunday School

WEDNESDAYS: 7:00PM

Families seeking to connect during the week will have the opportunity to be part of Sunday School on Wednesdays starting September 17 following worship at 7:00pm. The format stays the same as families work together through the lesson options based on the age of the kids attending. We'll continue to find ways to share the faith as family groups each week. Use the QR code above to register online.

Church/Preschool Closed

Just a reminder that the building will be closed Monday, September 1 observance of Labor Day. The building will open back up on Tuesday, September 2.

See Calvary's September Birthdays Here

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



September's Ministry Partner: Calvary Preschool Scholarship Fund

Calvary's September ministry partner is our very own preschool! Proceeds will be directed toward tuition scholarships for families who may be struggling to pay for tuition. Through generous financial support, we have been able to offer scholarships to all in need who attend our preschool. This is a great way for us to help our families feel welcomed to our preschool program. We know that not all families seek out this kind of support, but we can help answer some prayers by making the support available. Donations can be made by check or online through RebelGive with "ministry partner" or "preschool scholarship" in the memo line.

Thrivent

ACTION GRANTS & CHOICE DOLLARS

If you are a Thrivent member, remember to bring generosity to life and take advantage of Thrivent Action Grants and Choice dollars! Thrivent Action Grants provide members (you) with two grants each year, up to \$250 each, to support community projects, fundraisers, or educational activities that could be used to benefit Calvary. You may also be eligible to direct choice dollars through Thrivent as well! Speak with your Thrivent representative or Garrett in Calvary's office to find out more about Thrivent Action Grants and directing Choice Dollars today!

Special Thank You

We wanted to send out a special thank you to all those that were able to help out with the deep cleaning of the kitchen and pantry. It's a huge job and with more hands it becomes a little easier to accomplish, so thank you for your help. It was much appreciated.

Kathie and Judy

Calvary Alive Meal Kick Off

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

This year Calvary Alive meals will start Wednesday, September 17 at 5:30-6:00pm. The menu for September will be:

September 17 - Lasagna

September 24 - Tacos

We hope to have another wonderful year, and we hope to see you all there! Also if anyone who is interested in helping Kathie in the kitchen with food prep, dishes, etc. Please reach out to Kathie Ochowicz at 320-492-7721. We need your help!

Preschool Orientation

Preschool Orientation Night for the 2025-2026 school year will be on August 27 at 6:00pm. We will be going through important information about the school year, and it will be a great opportunity to meet all the teachers and build connections with families and classmates! We hope to see you all there! If you are unable to make it to Orientation Night, please reach out to Ashley Holmgren Aholmgren@calvarybemidji.org or call Calvary at 218-751-1893 to finish registration. Thank you! Looking forward to a great year!

Opportunities TO CONNECT

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study - Wednesdays 8:00am at Perkins
Martha Circle - 3rd Tuesday of every month 1:00-3:00pm
Hope Circle - 3rd Tuesday of every month 9:30-11:00am
Marigold Circle - 1st or 2nd Monday of every month 10:00-12:00pm
Senior Group - 3rd Friday of every month 12:00-1:30pm at Giovannis
Crafters - 2nd and 4th Mondays of every month
Quilters - Every Thursday Starting September 11, 9:00-11:00am

Calvary Choir

Do you like to sing? Then join the Calvary Choir and help bring great music to our church through singing, and fellowship with other members of Calvary. We rehearse every Thursday evening from 5:30 to 6:30pm starting Thursday, September 11, minus Thanksgiving and a break between Christmas and New Year's. We will sing a couple Sundays a month and finish our year singing for the Baccalaureate Service in May. Come join with other voices in making beautiful and meaningful music for worship! If you have further questions, please contact Mary Thoreson at 218-556-6541.

FINANCIAL REPORT

12 MONTH FISCAL YEAR – JULY-JUNE

General Fund – June

<u>Income</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Income</u>
\$124,084	\$106,363	\$1,208,223
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Expenses</u>
\$105,816	\$91,464	\$1,208,223

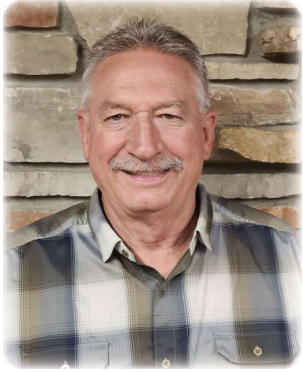
Cash, Receivables, & Savings: \$126,997

June Ministry Partner: Habitat for Humanity \$1,928

Calvary Foundation Balance: \$58,133

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

A Message from Calvary Council ~ John Selisker



Hello, My Calvary Family!

There is so much I'd like to say but I will start with a giant THANKS to all of you who stepped up your giving for the year end Stewardship Appeal. One of the toughest duties I've found, as a council member, is trying to balance the yearly budget. Those are some tough meetings! I find myself constantly praying that our giving during the year can be stepped up so it's not a "Hail Mary Pass" at year's end. Everywhere expenses are up and giving is down. Believe me, it's not fun to have to ask for money. As a Council member I am beginning to understand how difficult it is to operate a church the size of Calvary. We are fortunate that God has provided us with the right people to accomplish the task. Yay God!

Exciting things are happening in our church and I encourage you to step up and take part! I like what I see going forward with new members, a vibrant pre-school, a great Calvary staff, and wonderful congregation! We are growing! The feedback on the Tuesday Night Acoustic Contemporary Worship Service this summer has been amazing! I attend when I can and have to agree 100%!

Volunteering is GREAT! Our Preschool enrollment is up and our awesome staff is ready to go with the new school year! We just had a Wild Adventure VBS week with over 100 kids hearing about how they can "TRUST JESUS!" in every walk

of life. Kudos to Brett, Wendy and the team for a great job. Lot of talent here at Calvary! Next up is Rally Sunday on September 14th at 10am! Hope to see everyone there. It's a great worship service followed by a fun picnic. Come and meet your Calvary neighbors and kick off the year with a bang! Don't forget to bring a chair! Don't forget...Calvary Alive...coming this Fall on Wednesday evenings! I'd like to say thank you to the out-going council members and welcome to the new council members as we begin this new and exciting year! God's peace be with you all,

John Selisker - Member at Large, Church Council

The Joy of Worship Together: Beginning after Rally Sunday!

We have many opportunities to worship together throughout each week. While some styles are designed to meet specific worship needs of certain groups, all worship at Calvary is open to all people. Worship in a way that speaks to your heart and join the celebration of life together.

Traditions Worship: Sundays at 9:00am. If traditional worship speaks to your heart, then check out our Traditions service on Sundays. This service will focus on worship with traditional Lutheran elements as well as traditions that are important to Calvary. This service is followed by coffee fellowship in our fellowship hall.

Connections Worship: Sundays at 10:30am. If you are seeking an interactive worship experience with a lot of energy and fun, then this service is for you. Designed specifically for families with preschool and elementary age kiddos, at this service families connect in worship and kick off the time of Sunday school and learning together. We will sing contemporary songs with a praise band, participate in a Bible story that comes to life, and share communion each week as we connect. Student learning begins in the family, and we get to celebrate growing together. Following this service parents are invited to dive deeper into their faith with the Acoustic Contemporary Worship.

(All New) Acoustic Contemporary Worship: Sundays at 11:00am. We are so excited to announce the addition of a contemporary worship experience on Sunday mornings. Where Bible study meets worship, join us for a time of praise, conversation, and communion. This service takes place in the lounge and overlaps the small group Sunday school time for kids.

Contemporary Worship at Calvary Alive: Wednesdays at 6:15pm. Calvary Alive is a joyful time on Wednesday evenings. It includes learning opportunities for all ages, a church family meal, and of course our Contemporary Worship. All ages are invited to praise with our praise teams, hear messages from our pastors, and share holy communion as a family. If contemporary worship is what your heart longs for, then join us on Wednesday nights starting September 17.

Our hope is that worship can meet you in a way that speaks to your heart and faith, and give you space to offer prayer, thanksgiving, and praise to our great God. All are welcome to all services. You already belong here at Calvary. Come, Let us worship together!



Rally Sunday Details: Sunday September 14, 2025

- 10:00am – Celebration Worship outdoors at Calvary. Bring your own chair and join us as we worship and celebrate life together. Note that there will only be one service this morning at 10:00am for our whole congregation.
- 11:00am – Sunday School Orientation in the sanctuary. Whether you are planning on participating in Sunday School on Sunday or on Wednesday, we want you at this orientation to learn about and connect in this ministry. All families with preschool – 5th grade students are encouraged to register for Sunday School and connect in this beautiful way as a family. Invite your friends!
- Rally Party!!! – Immediately following there will be a great party in the parking lot. There will be games, bounce houses, food, and fellowship as we celebrate life together. We hope you can be there!