



2508 Washington Ave SW
Bemidji, MN 56601

Reflections on Fall and the Stewardship of Land Task Force

Greetings dear friends in Christ,

I love fall. It is a time of such beauty in God's creation, and while it does lead to winter and the many various feelings we all have about that season, it first brings fall campfires, pumpkin spice lattes, hot chocolate while wearing sweatshirts, carving pumpkins, and so much more. With the leaves changing, and God's beauty all around, I wanted to take some time to share about a journey that has begun at Calvary.

The process got started a little over a year ago when a curious question was brought before the church council wondering if Calvary would ever consider selling a part of the back property. We have received various questions like this over the years, and we realized that before we could seriously consider any question like that, we first needed to enter a process of discernment, exploring history, dreams, and imaginations for the land. We also needed to answer the questions of where God is leading us into the future and how the land supports and fits into that vision. With this in mind, the council formed a Stewardship of Land Task Force. This team has been empowered specifically to explore the question of how God is leading us through our stewardship of land to be a beacon of light for Bemidji and beyond. It is a great question embedded deep within our church values, God's mission for Calvary, and the creative imagination of where the Spirit is leading us next. As of the last Annual Meeting in August, this team has begun their work of discernment.

While there are a lot of ways we could explore this, the process I am guiding this team and our congregation through is one of **Learning, Listening, Discerning, and Sharing**. First, when we say "stewardship of land," what are we referring to? Calvary sits on about 40 acres of land. What you generally see on the top of the hill where the building and parking lot reside is about 10 acres, and as you look down the hill to the grove of trees to the east, we see about another 30 acres. The land we are exploring in this process is what resides down the hill from Calvary's building and parking lot.

Learning: Before we imagine the future of our land resources, it is important we reflect on the story that led us here. The team over the last two months has been meeting to connect with each other, has been visiting with groups of folks who are tied directly to the history of Calvary's land, and has been researching the church records, titles, and other pertinent information. The goal of this Learning Process is to discover the story that led us here and ultimately create a Land Narrative that will be shared with the congregation. We are still in this part of the process, and it has been very engaging and meaningful.

Listening: When the Land Narrative is complete, we will be inviting our congregation to a series of listening forums. (See the next page for details) Each of these forums will gather us in prayer, the sharing of the Land Narrative, and focused discussion around three guided questions.

1. When you think of Calvary Lutheran Church, what values do you think are important and guide our church's mission?
2. Where do you sense God leading Calvary into the future to be a beacon of light and love?
3. How do we see our resource of land supporting these values and living into God's mission for our church family and community?

In addition to these forums, we will be reaching out to ministry teams and groups to also explore these questions. Our goal during all these forums is to listen and learn about your dreams, imaginations, and where you see God guiding us into the future.

Discerning: We are hopeful that a lot of ideas are shared at the forums and are very excited to explore these questions with you. Following the forums, we will begin a time of discernment, hoping to focus on one idea, or a collection of ideas, that synergize and align with our values and mission. This is by far the longest part of this process with the goal of arriving at a presentation that we will bring before our congregation.

Sharing: When the presentation has been developed, we will first bring it to the council for feedback. They ultimately will approve sending the plan to the congregation for consideration or return the plan to the team for further development and discussion. Once the council has approved to send it to the congregation, we will schedule a congregational meeting to discuss the task force's findings. What an exciting day that will be!

We estimate that this process will take somewhere between 12 and 24 months, but with all processes, this one too is adaptable as we go. We welcome your prayer for this team as they engage in this process. We also hope you can gather in joy as we creatively imagine together where God is leading us. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me. Thank you all for your love and support of our church family. You are a blessing!

Pr. Chris – Lead Pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church

Stewardship of Land Forums

Join us as we explore questions around the stewardship of our land resources. Bring a joyful heart as we creatively reflect, imagine, and dream of God's call into the future. All are welcome at any of the forums. Come and share your voice and let's be church together!

LUNCH N LEARN FORUM

Tuesday, October 28 at 12:00pm. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a meal and conversation. Lunch is included at no cost.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CALVARY ALIVE FORUM

November 5 at 7:00pm. Following worship we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for conversation. This will include all confirmation participants, CLUB students, adult education folks, and everyone else who can attend.

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE FORUM

November 9 at 10:00am. Following the Traditions Worship Service we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a time of coffee and conversation. We have also restructured Sunday School for the morning so those who attend the Connections and Acoustic Contemporary services can join the conversation.

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!

All Saints Worship

9:00AM ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2025



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. We will offer prayers for all saints, toll the bells as we name loved ones lost in the 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. If you have anyone specific you would like us to remember in the prayers, please provide that name to the office or to one of the pastors. We look forward to seeing you as we gather for All Saints Worship on November 2.

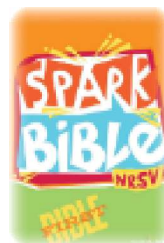
CLUB

The CLUB group is taking on a new opportunity to hang out with the incoming 9th graders before their Confirmation Service this year to create memorable stoles to wear during the service. Kids will get to know each other and work together to strengthen this milestone experience. Everyone's looking forward to sharing life stories and making plans for a new year of activities in CLUB.

Sunday School

We're gathering on Sunday mornings at 10:30am and Wednesday nights at 7:00pm for faith lessons with family and friends. It's an amazing opportunity for all involved to grow deeper in their faith. If you're interested in being part of the group teaching, helping in class, and gathering supplies, talk to Brett. As always, the more the merrier! We're looking for you to help when you can, whether that's once a week, once a month, or once in a while. Let's talk about your part in faith formation at Calvary.

First Bibles



We're celebrating a faith milestone with our Calvary kids on Sunday, October 5 at 10:30am. We want every child to have a First Bible that they can begin to read on their own. We celebrate this milestone in Grade 3, but any child who's older in need of a Bible is welcome to receive a Spark Bible at this service. It's part of the promises made in baptism and a great way to inspire faith talk around the house. Parent's, godparents, family, and friends are welcome to celebrate this important part of the faith formation of our kids. If you would like your child to receive a Bible, please contact Brett Carter, at 218-751-1893 or bcarter@calvarybemidji.org.

Youth Rolls



Kids will be serving rolls again this year between worship services starting October 12. It's a treat for everyone either after the first service or before the second. The delicious cinnamon rolls are baked fresh that day and served with a smile. A free will donation is collected with proceeds supporting youth on summer trips, camp, gatherings, and more as part of their faith formation at Calvary. Don't miss out on your chance to support youth while having a tasty treat.

Confirmation Sunday

You've heard them deliver their faith statements over the summer, now come and support Calvary's confirmands as they affirm their baptisms! Join us on Sunday, October 26 at a special confirmation service, held at 2:00pm in the sanctuary. All are welcome to celebrate this Confirmation Sunday!

See Calvary's October Birthdays Here

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



October's 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, providing community for students and connecting with local churches in fellowship.

LCM is our October ministry partner - Please help us support this important ministry. You can donate using RebelGive, or by writing a check to Calvary Lutheran with "Lutheran

Campus Ministry" in the memo line. Thank you again for supporting the work of the larger church through your generous donations!

Meals on Wheels

Calvary's next opportunity to deliver meals to those who utilize this service is October 27 through October 31. Volunteers are needed each day during the week from 10:15am to noon. We provide 2 people each day, 1 to drive and the other to deliver. Meals are picked up at the Senior Center kitchen. You can volunteer from 1 day to 5 days. We are responsible for 3 routes or 6 volunteers per day. We could use additional teams of 2 to help. It is a great way to see Bemidji and meet people you may not know in a short commitment of time. Contact Len or Kathie Ochowicz at 320-492-7721 if interested.

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. Group meetings are from 4:00-5:30pm every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month 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 primary caregiver to death (parents, sibling, or primary caregiver). The program is best suited for kids 7-13 years of age. The group meets weekly on Fridays in the Bemidji Covenant Church Family Life Center from 4:30-5:30pm. For more information contact Erin Kossivi 813-417-7678.



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 9:00-11:00am
Choir - Every Thursday 5:30-6:30pm in the Sanctuary

Food Shelf Update



Due to personal and health considerations, Michael Olson, Bemidji Community Food Shelf Executive Director, has announced his retirement. The board expressed their appreciation of the hard work of leadership and fundraising efforts made by Mike during his term of service. They echo approval of his leadership, which has served clients, staff, and

volunteers in our community. Thank you, Mike!

The board has hired an interim Executive Director until one is hired to fill the current position. Applications are currently being sought, and the board will soon be reviewing candidates.

Volunteers

Calvary continues to provide 10-12 volunteers on the 4th Wednesday of every month to assist clients with their food needs by assisting clients in shopping, weighing food, welcoming, and processing intake for clients. We are looking for more volunteers to fill these roles, with a time commitment of about 2 hours. We have a wonderful, faithful, and committed team that we would love to have you join! if you would like to be a part of this, please contact Len Ochowicz at 320-364-3117.

FINANCIAL REPORT 12 MONTH FISCAL YEAR – JULY-JUNE

General Fund – August

<u>Income</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Income</u>
\$89,928	\$105,869	\$179,149
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Expenses</u>
\$78,207	\$91,337	\$173,977

Cash, Receivables, & Savings: \$91,550

Aug. Ministry Partner: Lutheran Disaster Response \$1,388.50

Calvary Foundation Balance: \$58,563

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

A Message from Calvary Council ~ Sara Moran



Greetings Calvary,

I am honored and humbled to step into the role of Council President for our congregation. It is with a grateful heart that I thank you for your trust and support. I look forward to serving alongside each of you as we continue to grow in faith, fellowship, and purpose. We kicked off the church year with Rally Sunday, and what a beautiful day it was—even with the foggy, misting weather! The spirit of joy and togetherness shone brightly through the clouds. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who gathered and to all who worked behind the scenes to make the day so special.

We also encourage everyone to stay tuned for updates from the Stewardship of Land Taskforce. This dedicated group is working hard to bring forward meaningful initiatives that reflect our values of care, sustainability, and community. Their work will be shared throughout the year, and we invite you to be part of the conversation and the journey. As we begin this new chapter together, I invite you to consider how you might share your time and talents with our church community. There are so many ways to get involved from helping with Sunday services to joining a committee, assisting with youth programs, or lending a hand at upcoming events. Volunteering is not only a gift to others, it's also a way to deepen your own connection to our church family and to live out your faith in meaningful ways. If you feel called to serve, please reach

out to the church office or speak with a council member. We would love to help you find a place where your gifts can shine. Together, let's make this a year of joyful service, spiritual growth, and shared purpose.

Peace and Love,

Sara Moran – Council President

A Special Thanks for Rally Sunday

What an amazing morning it was to kick off the fall and life together as a church family. Rally Sunday is such a joyful morning to gather in worship, share a meal, and have some fun as we begin the new program year. A special thanks to the many hands and hearts that it takes to make it happen. Kathie and her team rocked the meal, the church staff, council, and other volunteers set and cleaned up a welcoming and loving space for all to gather, and the praise team led a meaningful worship despite the weather. It was a great morning to be church together and is just the beginning of what is shaping up to be an awesome year. Thanks to all who made it come alive!



Preschool Family Fun Night

Calvary Preschool is having Fall Family Fun Night on Thursday, October 9 from 5:30-7:00pm! We will be having fall festivities, cider and treats, and each family will get to take home a pumpkin!



Grab Your Ringers



It's that time of year when Calvary steps forward to assist Salvation Army with the Red Kettle bellringers. This familiar event began in 1891, raising money for Christmas dinners, and has been a part of Calvary's outreach ministry for many years. After years of dedication, Glen Anderson has decided to stop down from his

Coordination role in this important ministry. Thank you, Glen, for all you have done to help those in need! You are very much appreciated! Len Ochowicz will oversee the bellringing schedule this year. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Len at 320-364-3117. This ministry runs from Thanksgiving through December. Please look for more details to come.

Greetings from the Quilters

We would like to again thank all the people that have sewn together quilt tops. For the year 2024-2025, we donated 65 quilts to Lutheran World Relief, and 34 quilts were donated locally. If you know of anyone that has a need for a quilt, please contact the church office. The quilters have been serving coffee on a regular basis. We use that money to purchase batting and buy Mainstay Flat twin size sheets from Walmart to use as backing. We do appreciate cotton/quilting fabric donations. If there is anyone out there that would like to join us, we meet on Thursdays from 9:00-11:00am in Room 3. We usually go out for lunch afterwards! Please give us a try if that time works for you, all you need to do is tie a knot. If you have any questions, you can contact Deb Bartz at 218-556-3708.



School's Out!

There will be no school or childcare Thursday, October 16 or Friday, October 17 for MEA weekend.