



2508 Washington Ave SW
Bemidji, MN 56601

Hello Calvary Family!

This week as I walked through the church doors for the first time in three months, I felt my heart leap in my chest with excitement. This summer has of course gone quickly, but has been oh-so-full, and I'm eager to reunite with each of you in worship and our shared life together.

These past few months have been a deeply restful and rejuvenating experience for me. The gift of sabbatical offered me the time to take space to breathe, to garden, to read, to travel, to learn, and above all spend time connecting with my dearly beloved family.

My most treasured experience these past few months has been a new practice that Katherine and I have shared each day – beginning the morning with a 30-minute walk around our neighborhood together. It has been so life-giving to intentionally take time to be together in this way; conversing, sharing ideas and dreams, checking in about events both past and upcoming while getting some fresh air and exercise together. Though the time of sabbatical afforded us the opportunity to begin this practice, it has been so meaningful to both of us that we've planned to make it a priority that we'll continue to build into each day going forward.

Sabbatical also gave us the time and space for a longer family trip, the likes of which we have never taken before. We spent almost two weeks on the road, ultimately visiting the Grand Canyon (the first time for Katherine and Bjorn, and the first time back in 20 years for me). This was a wonderful time away together, and all three of us made memories (and took plenty of pictures!) that continue to bring us joy.

Sabbatical of course also included plenty of time for afternoons in the garden and books to read, as well as an intentional time of hermitage for me as I spent 3 days alone at Camp Amnicon, a Lutheran retreat center in Northern Wisconsin on the shores of Lake Superior. I had many visits to Amnicon as a child with my church, but this was my first time back on those grounds in 30 years, and my days there were filled with gratitude, solitude, and practice on the tin whistle.

After a decade and a half as a pastor, it has been meaningful to reflect this summer on what these past years have contained, as well as dream about what the next decade and a half will hold. As I look back on my experiences, I am so grateful for my continued walk with you all at Calvary. Truly, I cannot think of a place I would rather serve as pastor, and am so grateful for both our church family and the loving staff team of which I am proud to be a part of. Thank you all so much for this gift of sabbatical, and may we all look to the joy and love the Spirit leads us into as we reconnect!

-Pr. Jeremiah

Club

Club begins on Wednesday, September 23, at 7:15pm 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.

Sunday School on Wednesday: 7:00pm



26-27 Sunday School Registration

Families seeking to connect during the week, have the opportunity to be part of Sunday School on Wednesdays starting September 23 at 7:00-ish following Calvary Alive worship. 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 to register or you can find the link on our web page.

Sunday School is all about family Connections



26-27 Sunday School Registration

Register now for Sunday School which starts on Sunday, September 27 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 preschool through 5th grade are invited to participate. Use the QR code to register or find the link on our web page.

Calvary Senior Fall Leaf Trip

Join us as we experience a day traveling and admiring the leaves changing through the Beauty of God's Creation. We will load a comfortable travel bus at Calvary on Tuesday, October 6, 2026 from 8:00am-5:00pm traveling to Luther Crest Bible Camp, and Forestedge Winery. The cost will be \$85 per person which includes lunch, coffee, treats and wine tasting for Seniors and other friends. The Registration deadline will be Wednesday, September 30, 2026. You can register in person in the office or you can call and we can get you registered. If you have any questions, please contact Pr. Chris or the church office.

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 exploring the nature of God in the rainforest! If you didn't make it to the wrap up on Sunday, August 9, 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!

Confirmation Stoles for 9th Graders

Attention 9th grade confirmation students. We are continuing our new tradition as we approach Confirmation Sunday 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 7 and 21 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 ones 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 this strengthens the milestone experience of confirmation leading to an ongoing life of faith and as we celebrate confirmation together on Sunday, October 25. Any questions, talk to the pastors or Brett.

Confirmation 2026-2027



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 23. Register now at www.calvarybemidji.org/confirmation or use the QR Code provided. Please contact Pr. Jeremiah with any questions!

Sanctuary Light Project



We are worshiping in the light of the Lord in a whole new way! Our sanctuary lights have been revamped to brighten and better show the beauty of the space we worship each week. Thanks to a generous beneficiary gift, this project was completed at no cost to Calvary! If you haven't already, be sure to join us for worship and check them out.

Cemetery Care Team

We are looking to add to our group of cemetery caretakers. Calvary's cemetery care team cleans and mows the cemetery throughout spring, summer, and fall. They also occasionally help remove fallen trees after major June windstorms. If you would like to be a part of a group that helps our community's loved ones lay in rest in a clean and respectable cemetery, reach out to Garrett in the church office.

Church/Preschool Closed

Just a reminder that the building will be closed Monday, September 7 in observance of Labor Day. The building will open back up on Tuesday, September 8.

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.

Let's Welcome Our New Custodian



Hello Calvary Lutheran!!!

I'm John Dickenson Jr, I've been a proud member of this church for about three years now. Hobbies of mine are hanging out with my dog Trappy, she's a 6 year old French bull dog, and I also love golfing or playing basketball with friends and family. I'm beyond blessed and really look forward to working with the staff of Calvary Lutheran.

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!

Calvary Alive Meal Kick Off

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

This year Calvary Alive meals will start Wednesday, September 23 at 5:15-6:00pm. The menu for September will be:

September 23 - Lasagna

September 30 - Chicken Breast with Savory Rice

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!

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 our members of Calvary. We rehearse every Thursday evening from 5:30-6:30pm starting Thursday, September 10, 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.

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 Giovanni's
Quilters - Every Thursday Starting September 10 from 9:00-11:00am

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

The Refuge - 2nd & 4th Tuesday of every month, 4:00-5:30pm in Room 1 at Calvary (Erin Kossivi 813-417-7678)

Refuge Kids - Weekly, Fridays at Bemidji Covenant Church Family Life Center from 4:30-5:30pm (Erin Kossivi 813-417-7678)

Calvary Preschool is Growing

Calvary Lutheran Preschool continues to grow, and this year we will have 5 classrooms! We welcome Lilly Evavold and Lizzy Lofgren as our new lead teachers. We are so excited for this upcoming year! We welcome all returning families as well as new families to our program! Please help pray for these students and teachers that they may grow, learn and know God's love for them. It will be a fantastic year!

New Member Orientation

Interested in becoming a member of Calvary? New member orientation will be held on Thursday, September 24 at 6:00pm. Come and find out how to officially join the family! Contact Jeremiah for more information, or just stop in the office!

FINANCIAL REPORT

12 MONTH FISCAL YEAR – JULY-JUNE

General Fund – July

<u>Income</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Income</u>
\$73,380	\$113,270	\$73,380
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Expenses</u>
\$92,718	\$94,710	\$92,718

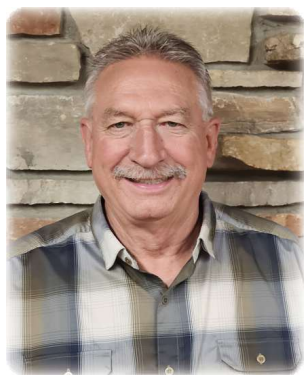
Cash, Receivables, & Savings: \$132,812

May Ministry Partner: Peoples Church \$1,583

Calvary Foundation Balance: \$64,616

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

A Message From Calvary Council ~ John Selisker



Hello Calvary Family,

What a year it has been! To quote the VBS kids...WOW GOD! There were over 200 people, from Littles to Grandparents, at VBS this year! What an exciting year it has been! With so many new and exciting challenges coming to our church it's going to be a fun ride! I am looking forward to my continued journey as a member of the Calvary Council.

Many thanks go out to our congregation for stepping up and giving during the Stewardship Appeal. It's beyond exciting that we are starting the year with a balanced budget. WOW GOD! The Stewardship of Land Committee put in a lot of time and hard work on the land sale taking place and our congregational vote in making it all possible. We have a lot to be thankful for with so many great ways to worship God and enjoy fellowship here at Calvary! We've come a long way toward our mission... Gather to worship, connect with Jesus, and serve our neighbors. We have so many service styles that meet the needs of our Calvary family...Traditional, Contemporary, Acoustical, all worshipping and praising Jesus! YAY GOD! Have you heard about our Preschool? An additional classroom, new playground equipment, and record enrollment! Growing above and beyond expectations! What a blessing! And what about those new lights in the sanctuary, isn't that awesome?!? We joked about

having to wear sunglasses during the services! More thanks go out to those who stepped up to move and replace the pews! I urge all of you to look for places you can volunteer at Calvary. Believe me, you receive blessings and grace, more than you give. Everyone has a gift they can share!

I seem to have a message of thanks in this message. I am truly thankful to God for His blessings and presence in my life.

Now we can look forward to Rally Sunday around the corner...September 20th! Let's celebrate all we have accomplished this past year and look forward to all we want to accomplish, with God's guidance, in the year to come. Hope to see you all there!

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.

Acoustic Contemporary Worship: Sundays at 11:00am. Where Bible study meets worship, join us for a time of Contemporary Worship where we praise, discuss faith topics, and share 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 23.

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 20, 2026

- 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!