

SPEAKER:  
NADIA BOLZ-WEBER

LUTHER CREST  
DAY CAMP

SKY RANCH  
YOUTH TRIP

# Better Connected

# CQ



CALVARY  
LUTHERAN  
Church

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

FALL 2017 | SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

# FROM PASTOR HANS

Dear Calvary,

We are excited to jump into an exciting new theme for the year: “Better Connected.” **We want to spend the year getting better connected because we believe God created us in such a way the life is simply better when we are connected!** Think about it: A peanut butter sandwich isn’t nearly as tasty without jelly. Laurel was half as funny without Hardie. R2D2 needed his sidekick C3PO. Tom was simply a boring cat without Jerry.

In the Bible, things were much the same. Sarah needed Abraham, Mary needed Joseph, and Adam needed Eve. The story of Cain would be nothing without Abel, Mary needed her opposite Martha, Noah loaded the boat two by two, and Jesus never traveled alone — he always brought along his pack of 12 disciples. We need each other. Life is simply better when we’re connected.

Likewise, somewhere along the way we have been led to believe that faith is a personal thing. It’s between you and God and its nobody else’s business. But that’s not what God intended. God wired us in such a way that faith grows deeper when we connect with friends with whom we get a little vulnerable, and through that vulnerability we recognize that none of us has God figured out. Instead, together we wonder about all God is up to in the Bible and our lives. We need people in our lives who take us for who we are with all our questions, our doubts, and our messiness — people with whom we can connect faith and life!

This year, again and again, you will be asked to form or join a “Connect Group.” What is a Connect Group? It’s a group of 8-12 people you want to spend time with who commit to meet together on an on-going basis in order to intentionally grow deeper in relationship with one another and with God. I bet you could name 8-12 people you’d love to get to know a little better. They might be Calvary members, non-members, neighbors, family or friends. It doesn’t matter — everyone is welcome! I invite you to call them up. Ask them to form a Connect Group with you. We’ll provide a little training and discussion guides. It’s easy and I know you won’t regret it.

Friends, let’s start getting better connected!



Pastor Hans

## FALL 2017

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## IN THIS ISSUE

From Pastor Hans  
This Fall at Calvary  
Connecting Faith & Life  
Connect Team News  
Tuesday Bible Study  
Faith & Finances  
Building Exploration Team  
Luther Crest Day Camp  
Nadia Bolz-Weber  
Connected In Baptism  
Connecting Amidst Loss  
Vacation Bible School  
Sky Ranch Youth Trip  
Thank You Shareholders!

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### September 9 - October 1, 2017: “Better Connected” Worship Series

Come, worship and hear how God created us in such a way that life is simply better when we are connected to one another and God. This is a great time to invite a friend or neighbor who could use getting better connected to others, or the faith we share!

## This Fall at Calvary

### Sunday, September 10: Fall Worship Schedule and Programs Begin!

Sunday School begins Sunday, September 10. Wednesday Worship, Faith Launchers and ConfirMission begin Wednesday, September 13. Register online!

### Sunday, October 1: All-Congregation Worship

At the Alexandria Area High School. All are invited to come together for one big worship service as we launch our fall Connect Groups and celebrate the connections we share!

### October 7-25: “Spent” Worship Series

No matter how much stuff we own, acquire or consume, we are far too often left feeling empty-handed and unsatisfied — Spent! Is there another way to live? We think so. So did Jesus.

### October 28-November 19: “Saints & Sinners” Worship Series

500 years ago Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany. Little did he know that he started a Reformation within the church that would change the church forever!

- **Calvary Reformation Worship:** Sunday, Oct. 29 @ 8:30am
- **ConfirMission Sunday:** Sunday, Oct. 29 @ 10:45am  
Support Calvary's students who publically affirm their faith and remember that they are and always will be children of God!
- **The Rose Ensemble Concert:** Thursday, Nov. 2 @ 7:00pm
- **Concert Honoring the Reformation:** Sunday, Nov. 12 @ 4:00pm  
at First Lutheran – w/David & Susan Cherwien and a mass choir

### November 4, 5 & 8: All Saints Remembrance Worship

We pause to light candles, ring bells and remember those saints in our lives who are no longer with us.

### November 22: Thanksgiving Eve Worship

Come and worship with our brothers and sisters of St. Mary's and First Lutheran Church.

### November 25-Jan. 3: “Light of the World” Worship Series

The Christmas season is the most wonderful time of the year — but not because of all the things associated with the season.

### December 24: Christmas Eve Worship

Celebrate the birth of the “Light of the World” — Jesus Christ! We will worship together at 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm and 7pm on Christmas Eve.

# Connecting Faith And Life

As you hear often around Calvary, our ability to be the church is not limited to the things that happen inside the church walls. Every day, Calvary members are living out their faith around the community and beyond. For many of them, these connections between faith and daily life are simply natural. We believe they are extraordinary!



## Marie Hacker

“I want to share with cancer patients and their caregivers the book, *50 Days of Hope*. I was a caregiver to my husband as we battled with cancer and often found it hard to find answers to the many questions everyone asked. When our journey with cancer placed us in Houston, TX, a local church gave us the book, *50 Days of Hope* by Lynn Eib. I chose to do something in loving memory of my husband's passing in hopes that it would help others going through their cancer journey.”



## Jim Pence

“Choosing a college is not an easy decision for students or their parents. What I most appreciated about the three sessions we held at Calvary is that we focused on questions of identity, purpose, and belonging — the three BIG questions that high-school students and their parents have about the college choice. That’s what I love about the way our church develops faith for life. We are not afraid to ask and explore big questions and encourage worthy dreams.”



## Jim Lien

“For about four weeks each summer I volunteer at Camp House — a part of Green Lake Lutheran Ministries. The work is hard, the days are long, and the benefits and blessings are beyond measure.” As Francis of Assisi wrote, “For it is in giving that we receive.”



## Spent Worship Series

No matter how much stuff we own, acquire or consume, we are far too often left feeling empty-handed and unsatisfied — Spent! Is there another way to live? We think so. So did Jesus. We dive into the Spent Worship Series in October!

## Connect Team News

After moving back from college, we were looking to meet new people from the area. Calvary seemed like the perfect place for this, except it was hard to get to know people through worship alone. After trying to start our own small group through church, we were approached with an opportunity to work alongside other members as a team to help build on the foundation for more small groups.



It has been such a joy to get together, plan, and look forward to expanding our small group culture as our church continues to grow. We were thrilled to know that there were others out there longing for the same small group environment, and are excited to see the connections that will be made.

JOANNA & BLAINE GREEN,  
*Connect Leadership Team*

*Sign up to join or lead a Connect Group today! Visit [www.calvaryalex.org](http://www.calvaryalex.org) for details.*

## Connecting at Tuesday Morning Bible Study

When Jim and I wandered into Calvary Lutheran, we immediately knew we had found our church home. From past experience, I knew I needed to jump right into smaller groups to get connected with the church family. What has connected me to my Calvary family is my participation in the pastor's Tuesday morning Bible study. The Bible study has allowed me to engage with interesting and caring women of Calvary - women with whom I have been able to express my thoughts and questions about my faith. In that group, we often break into smaller groups and share personal experiences with each other.



In the larger group, we question and discuss how our faith was formed and changes we have experienced in our faith over the years. We laugh with each other, support each other in crisis, and pray for each other in sorrow. Being in that Bible study has helped me to not only learn more about the Bible as we have asked questions over the summer, but it has helped me to learn more about my own faith. The reward of being connected is amazing!

PAMELA PHILLIPS



## Connecting Faith & Finances

Have you ever had that feeling as a parent that your kids are not appreciative for what they have? My wife and I experience those frustrations from time to time with our kids and wonder what we are doing wrong as parents when we don't hear "please" and "thank you" or our kids complain about doing something fun that is a privilege, like going out to eat. Is this typical child behavior at times? Probably so, our girls are Maddie 9, Kenley 7, and Ella 4. How do we as parents help our kids see the world as a place that is much larger than them?

I am fortunate to attend Calvary and have people in my faith circle in this community who have made me wonder and think about this topic. Do I care if our girls end up being doctors or are in the starting lineup for the Minnesota Lynx? Not

at all. I very much care that our girls grow into adulthood to be a lot like their mom in giving back to make this world a better place. How do we get our young girls from point A to point B? I don't have all the answers but Lacey, my wife, and I try to lead by example and connect it back to our faith. Our whole family volunteers and helps financially with events in the community. Why? Because we tell our girls repeatedly that this is what we are called to do as people of faith and people who go to Calvary — and it is fun. It takes a conscious effort at times when it might just be easier to say "I'm just too busy" or "let's get a babysitter for the girls instead of bringing them with." Selfishly, I want my girls to be a part of it as much as possible at a young age so they develop a "want to" spirit of giving back instead of a "have to" attitude or no desire at all.

I mentioned earlier Lacey and I get frustrated with our girls but we also have very proud moments. A few weeks back at daycare our girls were asked to write down one word to describe their family. Our middle child, Kenley, used the word "generous." We are far from having generosity mastered but hopefully the spirit of generosity is alive and active in our house.

JOHN SEVERSON

## Connecting Our Building To Our Mission

The Building Exploration Team discussions are focused around Calvary's vision of Worship, Connect and Serve. We've studied how our building was used when it was built and how our needs have changed. The excitement grows when we dream about how new spaces will improve the way we Worship, Connect and Serve today and into the future. The possibilities are exciting!

You'll be hearing more this fall as we ask questions, listen to your answers and share ideas. In January, the Building Exploratory Team will provide recommendations at the annual meeting and the Congregation will decide the next steps!

DAVE AHLQUIST

# Making New Connections At Luther Crest Day Camp

This summer, 30 Calvary kids had the opportunity to enjoy the Luther Crest Day Camp experience. Luther Crest’s Day Camp coordinator Tara Hopfensperger reflects, “It was a wonderful week of camp and it was a pleasure to be the director of this Day Camp! We had the opportunity to explore God’s word in a number of ways, such as Bible dive, arts and crafts, games and so much more.” Ashlyn Trautman (1st Grade) remarked, “It was the best week ever! I love Luther Crest,” and Jocelyn Trautman chimed in by asking, “When can we go back?”

Alicia Bertram, who’s children Jackson and Lucy attended Day Camp, reflects on how one particular male counselor made an impression on them: “All I can think of is how cool it is to have a young man as a role model for my kid’s fun faith-filled weekend. It makes me hope that it made enough of an impact on Jackson to show him that he can grow to share His message someday too.” Hopfensperger concludes, “Thank you for a wonderful week, and we look forward to seeing everyone back next summer!”





## Faith For Life Speaker Nadia Bolz-Weber: Connected As Saint & Sinner

Nobody really believes she's an ordained pastor in the ELCA. Maybe it's the sleeve tattoos or the fact that her language can be a little harsh ... whatever the case, she is the real deal and embraces the fact that she is a saint *and* a sinner!

Nadia Bolz-Weber is the founding pastor of House for All Sinners and Saints in Denver, Colorado, a community for all, especially maybe those who've been made to feel they aren't welcome at the table. She is the author of

the New York Times bestseller *Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong People* (*Convergent*, 2015) and the New York Times bestselling theological memoir, *Pastrix: the Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint* (*Jericho*, 2013). Nadia has been featured in BBC World Service, The Washington Post, NPR's Morning Edition, Fresh Air, More Magazine, The Daily Beast and on CNN.

**Nadia will be with us on November 1, at 6pm at the Alexandria Area High School to introduce our four-week sermon series "Saint and Sinner."** This is open to the community and free of charge! Doors open at 5:45pm and a full crowd is anticipated!



## Connected In Baptism

**Nora Mikkelsen, Parents Kelley and Scott**

"Having family and friends at the baptism made it so special! We are so in love with our church and it is so much fun being able to share that with our family and friends, and especially now that we get to raise Nora there! I grew up with Calvary, so it is special to me that she will too. It is so important to us that Nora has a sense of family with our church and an understanding that there is so much more than just going to church on Sundays — I feel that will help her truly develop her own faith."



**Sarah Mae Momson, Parents Nicole and Kyle**

"Baptism to us really means that Sarah has a family beyond our blood. To have others pray for her (and our whole family) as she starts her faith journey is very powerful. To have her brought into the Calvary family of faith is just the start, we are excited to see her as she develops her faith over the years to come by going to Faith Launchers, VBS, Sunday School and then hopefully continuing that faith by helping lead some of those activities."

# Connecting Amidst Loss

Over 20 years ago, our book club was formed as a result of conversations at a Calvary Women's retreat. I doubt any of us would have envisioned meeting on a regular basis all these years later. Reading the book is optional; it's okay to just come for the company (and dessert). And it's easy to take for granted how connected you become with a group of people over time.

We have experienced loss of loved ones, empty nests, divorces, marriages, new homes, job promotions, grandchildren, retirement and so much more. Often we learn about changes in each other's lives over a glass of wine and great conversation.

On April 27th of this year, life took a major detour for me and my husband, Dave. We lost our home and almost everything in it to a fire. There was a sense of helplessness surrounding the initial event, and it's overwhelming to even begin thinking about all you need to do. As I stood in my yard that day, mostly in shock, I received text messages from members of my book club. They had reserved and paid for a cottage at Arrowwood where we could stay for a few weeks. One woman from the group even showed up with bags full of essentials for us. The fire trucks hadn't even left the yard and we had a beautiful, comfortable place to stay and a few things to get us started. The ongoing support still hasn't stopped, and words can't express how incredibly grateful we are.

Being a part of a small group allows us to get to know each other on a deeper level. It gives us an opening into each other's lives that in turn allows us to help when life brings misfortune. These women were, and continue to be, a lifeline for me. I am blessed.

MICHELLE AHLQUIST





## Vacation Bible School: Connecting Generations

Calvary believes in a faith for life, and at this year's 2017 Vacation Bible School, people of all ages engaged the theme, "Can I Ask That?" Something that distinguishes Calvary is the intentional effort placed on connecting generations. This was strikingly apparent at this year's Vacation Bible School.

The kids had a chance to ask retired Pastors Marv Larson, Wayne Erickson, Keith Forrester, and John Martinson any questions on their minds at the "Stump the Pastor" station. Carpenters John Loken, Kirk Gunderson, Lowell Lenz, and Omar Gustafson taught the kids about their baptism chest ministry. The Monday quilters, the Tuesday morning Bible Study, the Wednesday men's Bible study, and the Thursday office volunteers all took their turns welcoming kids to Vacation Bible School, alongside Grace Peterson dressed in a silly gopher costume. Besides many parents volunteering, a number of caring adults also offered to help lead small groups and other various aspects of the week. While Roger Schultz was acting, Dee Peterson was making silhouettes of the kids, while Julie Anderson and Shirley Kluver were preparing snacks, Jan Pence and Carol Hruby were helping with numerous service projects, and while Sandy Buckner was running the slides, Donna Vollmers was assisting 7th grader Rylee Richards with the Bible lessons — just to name a few.

Overall, there were 188 kids who registered for Vacation Bible School this year. Not counting the staff or greeters, it took 93 volunteers to make it happen. Together we learned that we can ask questions in a life of faith, and that questions are a sign of a faith that is alive and well.



# Sky Ranch Youth Trip: Connecting in the Mountains

We travel to new places to see what God is up to beyond our backyard and our own community! God is everywhere and we are invited to join God in God's mission of love, community and grace wherever we go. We encountered God on the mountain, true, but we didn't leave God there. God goes before us, beneath us, above us, behind us and within us. We have an amazing God! Here's what our youth had to say about their experience in Sky Ranch...

*"The backpacking trip helped me explore my faith with my peers."*

KAIA ILLIES

*"I really felt God's presence at Sky Ranch. Everywhere! My faith is stronger!"*

AMELIA LUCKEN

*"I loved being able to experience Gods love with amazing people, while in His creation."*

AUBREY KOSTERS

*"I grew closer to my group while growing closer to God throughout the trip."*

TAYLOR PARTINGTON

## Thank you Shareholders!

It is the partnership and support of this congregation that makes trips possible. We can't thank our shareholders and prayer warriors enough! You carried us in ways that we alone could not do. This is the body of Christ working together to share God's light and love with the world. Thank you!





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# Better Connected

CALVARY'S FALL WORSHIP SERIES

## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

**Saturday:** 6pm Praise Worship

**Sunday:** 8:30am Traditional Worship  
10:45am Celebrate Worship

**Wednesday:** 6pm Worship on Wednesday

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