

VBS

YOUTH MINISTRY

NOW IS THE TIME



WE CAN
DO MORE
TOGETHER

CQ

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

FALL 2018 | SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

FROM PASTOR HANS

Once upon a time “one” won.

Way back when, Christianity began as this knock off Jewish cult that people called “The Way.” It began with one simple version of the faith that had one simple vision, a vision we read about in Acts 2: People gathered to *worship* together, get *connected* so they could share life together, and to pool their resources so they could serve those in need in their community. This is the one version and vision those first Christians shared.

And, guess what? That one vision won! We know it worked because Jews and Gentiles — people who hated one another — even slaves, all came together as the church. People with differing politics and values found their way to the church. Being “one” became more important than how a building looked, how they dressed, music they sang, how theologically correct they were, preaching style, denomination, when and how they baptized. Jesus even prayed “that all of them may be *one*, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.” (Luke 17)

Once upon a time one won. The church realized they could do more together. On July 8 an article appeared in the Star Tribune, “As Churches Close, A Way Of Life Fades.” It stated some sobering statistics: Since 2000 in Minnesota ELCA church attendance has declined by 23%. There are 11% fewer church. 200,000 people have left. 1/3 of the remaining churches have fewer than 50 members. Baptisms have decreased by 43%. Likely you can locate someone you care about in one of those statistics?

Here’s what’s remarkable: Since 2011, Calvary, your worship attendance has *increased* by 78%!

Why? I can only assume what was true about the early church is true for us. Like that Acts 2 church, we have one simple vision: We seek to ...*lead people to a lifelong faith in Jesus*. How? Like that Acts 2 church, we invite our friends, neighbors and colleagues to gather with us in *worship*, we strive to *connect* all who attend so they can share life and grow deeper in faith, and we pool our resources to *serve* the needs of our community. That’s it and we do this together! Inside the pages of this issue of the CQ, you will hear stories of this one vision in action. Stories of faith written by people of faith about how faith is alive in the lives of our Calvary community.

Friends, we can are doing more together!



Pastor Hans

FALL 2018

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THIS ISSUE

From Pastor Hans
Fall Schedule
Vacation Bible School
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Giving
Opening Our Hearts
Gifts of Music
A Safe Space
Now is the Time

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THIS FALL AT CALVARY

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY OPEN HOUSE / BACKPACK ATTACK PACKING

Sunday, September 9

We kick off another year of programming with a Children's ministry (birth-5th grade) open house and packing bags of food for students in need in our school district.

STUDENT MINISTRY OPEN HOUSE / WEDNESDAY WORSHIP BEGINS!

Wednesday, September 12

All students (6th-12th grade) are invited to join us for an evening of worship and introduction to another exciting year of programming.

BUILDING PLANNING TEAM (BPT) FORUM, 9:30AM, SVEA LOUNGE

Sunday, September 16

You are invited to the final of our first round of congregational forums. We will present the first draft of possible remodel/expansion plans and gather congregational input.

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CHALLENGE

October 6 - 24

To support Calvary's mission of leading all people to a lifelong faith in Jesus Christ, we boldly invite you to make a commitment to support Calvary general fund in 2019.

"THE ALMOST CHRISTIAN THINGS PEOPLE SAY" WORSHIP SERIES

October 28 - November 18

We regularly hear people say things like "It's all part of God's plan" or "Everything happens for a reason." They sound vaguely Christian but leave a sour taste in our mouths. During this series we'll explore the "almost" Christian things people say.

ALL SAINTS WORSHIP

November 3, 4 & 7

We light candles and remember those saints in our lives who are no longer with us.

BUILDING PLANNING TEAM FORUMS, 9:45AM, SVEA LOUNGE

November 4, 11 & 18

Calvary's BPT invites you to our second round of forums at which time they will present an updated draft of possible remodel/expansion plans and gather congregational input.

"GOD IS WITH US" WORSHIP SERIES

November 24 - December 16

The first name given to Jesus was "Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." Jesus came to remind us that God is with us in every moment. He's with us through the pain. He gives us courage when we feel anxious. He comforts us in the waiting.

"KIDS AND CAROLS," GATHERED OAKS

December 9

A fun-filled afternoon of Christmas activities, crafts, music, and the telling of the Christmas Story in a very unique way! Come, celebrate Christmas with your family.

"CAROLS AND COCKTAILS," GATHERED OAKS

December 14

Invite your friends and neighbors to this evening of Christmas carols by Calvary's band, cocktails and a whole lot of fun! Open to the entire community.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP, "DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?"

December 19, 23, & 24

We all ask the question at times: Where are you, God? The wise men, the shepherds—even Jesus' family—were everyday people with the same questions. Just like you. Christmas isn't just a holiday, it's God's way of addressing your deepest questions.

CAN'T BE IN CHURCH?

WATCH WORSHIP LIVE ON OUR FACEBOOK FEED!



/calvarylutheranchurchalex



WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER... THROUGH VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Family has the most potential to influence a child's relationship with God. This year at Vacation Bible School we had a unique dynamic of generations influencing children alongside the church. We had grandparents accompany their grandchildren in a weeklong experience to worship, connect, and serve. They walked alongside them as they learned that God is #FOR them and Jesus LOVES them! Their greatest influence paired with the teachings and lessons of Jesus proved to be powerful for both kids and grandparents alike.

"It was a thrill to see Brody love VBS, and hear again that Jesus loves kids!"

Janet Bolm



WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER...

WHEN KIDS ENGAGE FAITH OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

Upon hearing that I would be traveling with our high schoolers to Houston, to attend the National Youth Gathering, out of curiosity, many would ask me why I would do this. I never really had a good response, other than I knew chaperones were needed and I felt like I could help out. Hindsight always gives us clarity, right? In hindsight I can see clearly how I am the lucky one to have had this week together with our youth. Watching our "kiddos" interact, react, process, serve, sing and dance about their faith with 30,000 other youth absolutely infuses hope for our future. We witnessed their energy, their thoughtfulness with discussing and processing their days and faith, their ability to lift each other up when needed, and their openness to be who they are created to be. These kids are the upcoming leaders in our communities and we are in good hands!

Julie Dahlseid



Going to Guatemala was an experience I will never forget. Guatemala opened my eyes to more than small town Alexandria, Minnesota. It opened my eyes to more than the United States. Guatemala showed me, in more ways than one, what I have in my life to be thankful for. Having experienced multiple volcano eruptions, an earthquake, the same meal everyday, lack of everyday resources such as hot water for showers and cold water for drinking, helped me realize how "spoiled" I am and has created a sense of gratitude for my safety and security, my belongings and everyday resources, that I could not have found in the United States.

Experiencing this once in a lifetime opportunity with my father, made my experience and take-away that much more meaningful. I decided to go on this trip, originally because my dad had gone on a couple of similar trips when he was my age and his life was greatly impacted and changed from those experiences and I wanted to have those same kind of life changing experiences. Going on this trip with my dad has inspired me to go back by myself with a group of friends or as a mentor for a mission group, in hopes that they will have the same humbling and life changing experience I did.

Madison Winter



WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER...

THIS FALL WITH KID & STUDENT MINISTRIES

We love kids at Calvary! We offer different programming based on your child's age so they can get the most out of their experience in building their faith formations. On this page you'll find new programs that we offer at Calvary!



THE NEST

A space for parents and children under 2 years old who may need a break from worship. This is upstairs outside of the balcony in what has been called the Chapel. There will be comfortable sitting spaces for parents/guardian, toys and books as well as a secluded nursing/changing station for those that prefer. Parents/guardians will be able to see and hear the service going on in this space!



JAM (Jesus and Me)

Kids ages 2-4, offered during the Sunday morning 10:45 service upstairs in what has been the 'nursery' area in the past - newly renovated! This time is dedicated to teaching kids that they are safe, loved and to trust in God and others. We will spend time in large group singing, dancing and learning more about Bible stories, then split into small groups to reinforce the same things.



DIG (Delight in God)

Children Kindergarten - 3rd grade, offered between services on Sunday mornings. Previously called Sunday School, DIG will start in a large group worship with singing, dancing, and learning more about Jesus. We will then split into small groups to help build relationships with their small group leader(s) and each other as they grow deeper in their faith. DIG will meet in the fellowship hall (downstairs) this fall!



IMPACT

4th and 5th grade students, offered between services on Sunday mornings. Previously called Jr. Leapp Frogs, this group focuses on leadership and serving, but will also start with a large group experience, then splitting into small groups to work through activities, complete service projects, and reinforce lasting relationships with their leader(s) and peers. ImpACT will meet upstairs in the classroom space.



ELEVATE (ConfirMission)

Middle school students (6th grade - 9th grade) on Wednesday evenings after the 6:15 service. This experience also starts in a large group format and splits into smaller, connect groups for a time to learn more about dealing with the important things in their lives with a trusting adult and their peers.



FUSE (Form, Unite, Serve, Empower)

High school students participating in small groups, meeting at a place and time that works for them and their connect group leader(s). This is a time for them to continue to build relationships with their leader(s) and their peers as they go through the pressures and challenges of high school.

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER... WHEN WE SERVE



We joined Calvary a few months ago because it is an awesome community, there are friendly people, lots of kids, and excellent pastors.

This summer, we decided to volunteer because helping the church community and the people in it is easy! It gives us a sense of purpose and it's fun to get involved. Volunteers are needed to

help support the church staff with all of the services and programs offered at Calvary. We love that volunteers also help spread the word throughout the communities we live in about all of the great things going on at Calvary.

Cleone and Paul Schreier

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER... WHEN OUR KIDS GO TO BIBLE CAMP

When asking my daughter Lylah why she wanted to go to Luther Crest for overnight camp, she thought it would a lot of fun. She has attended day camp for a few years, so it was nice that she was already familiar with the grounds and staff. She was also super excited to go with her best friend—Sam Magnuson!

Micah and I just want to expose the girls to as much as possible in life. Growing and feeding their faith is very important to us. Calvary has been a great adventure for our whole family, and we love it! Calvary and Luther Crest make church-like experiences very fun for our kids. After camp I asked Lylah what she will remember, and she immediately said:

- If somebody is being mean you don't have to be mean back to them. You can always be nice.
- Stay positive

I love the simplicity of those two items. You can apply both to pretty much every situation in life!

Allyson Radach



WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER...

WHEN WE GIVE GENEROUSLY

There is a provision in the tax laws that allows people over the age of 70½ to transfer money directly from their IRA to a charity or charities of their choice up to a maximum of \$100,000 per year. By doing this, the money transferred is not reported as income to the individual and thereby it lowers taxable income.

Without this provision any money taken from one's IRA is taxable even though one could subsequently donate some or all of that money to charity and potentially take a deduction. With the tax law as it stands, and without going into too much detail, this is less of an advantage than it used to be.

What Becky and I have chosen to do is directly transfer money from our IRA to Calvary because, first of all, we want to support our church and secondly we benefit tax-wise. It's a win-win situation. I would suggest that if you can see the benefit of this approach, and are not currently using it, you talk to your tax preparer and/or your financial advisor.

Chris Worley

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER...

WHEN WE OPEN OUR HEARTS TO ALL PEOPLE

Five years ago, my family and I were introduced to the Haitian Initiative program through the local Alexandria Area Redbirds Summer Soccer Camp. Haitian Initiative (HI) was started by Tony Sanneh, a retired professional soccer player, who was determined to bring help to Haiti after the devastating 2010 earthquake. The purpose of HI is to support health and education, and inspire leadership, using soccer as a catalyst, for children in Haiti.



For the past 4 years, our family has been blessed to host students through an exchange program that brings 12-15 kids to Alexandria for one week each summer to participate in the local soccer camp. Becoming a host family has had a growing impact on our family. It teaches our children love and acceptance of all people, despite cultural differences. Friendships are made that will last a lifetime.

These children forever hold a special place in our hearts and our families. It has restored my faith in the world, that there IS more good than evil, and has helped me to grow in my faith. My faith to work as Jesus did—to help the poor and the broken, and to love and accept all people as ourselves. When we take a leap of faith and open our hearts to all people, we are blessed with amazing gifts of friendship and love in return.

Steph Huebner

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER...

WHEN WE USE OUR GIFTS OF MUSIC

*"I love piano!
I started cello this
summer and piano
helped me with a
lot of the notes.
Kim has taught
me a lot and she
makes it really fun."*

Nora Steidl

My passion is music, and I have been involved in music for as long as I can remember, whether it be teaching, performing, or leading congregations. I believe God gave this gift of music to me, and I get so much in return when I see not only children, but adults being touched by this gift. I always tell my students, if you make someone cry, then you have done your job as a musician. Music is such a powerful language. It's about connecting emotions to music. I love it!

Kim Byrne



Calvary students and Kim at their spring recital



I believe that God works through others. My journey of faith at Calvary began 5 years ago from a phone call. A friend called and asked if I would come to a service and fix the sound for the worship band. I haven't looked back since. As time passed, many services later, the praise band was without a drummer. I thought, "I should give that a try." The next day I purchased a drum kit, signed up for lessons, and one month later I was playing with the worship team. My connection to faith came with the lyrics to the songs and the words associated with the sermon. I found myself playing and singing to God more than about God. God wants all His children to use the gifts He's given. I'm glad He chose and directed mine to praise and honor Him with my family of faith at Calvary!

Pat Gwinn

Mental Health affects one in five people;

over 60% of those don't get the help they need!

WE CAN DO MORE TOGETHER... WHEN WE CREATE A SAFE SPACE

In my work in mental health, I know that people often hide their struggles to keep up appearances. At Calvary, we are encouraged to bring all our brokenness to a God who embraces us and loves us no matter what, and to connect with others to be supportive through the messiness of life.

The reality is that mental health affects one in five people, and over 60% of those people don't get the help they need! I wonder how much more comfortable others considering getting help would feel if that 60% got the help that they needed and openly talked about it? There are many silently suffering because they don't know how to bring up the topic or may have been told to keep it to themselves. For those that are suffering, please know there is support and resources waiting for you.

If you are a friend of someone who is struggling with mental health, it often times can be hard to know what to say, but truly you don't need to say anything other than being there for them. Validate their struggles, ask how you can help, don't gossip if they do confide in you, be understanding of their limits but keep including them, and offer other topics of conversation as distractions can be helpful. You, as their friend, are not responsible for them, so listen to your limits as well.

Reaching out takes effort and can be exhausting, but continuing to suffer is also exhausting, so why not take a chance and see where it can take you?

Ronna Severson, MSW, LICSW



WE CAN
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TOGETHER

FALL WORSHIP SERIES Sept 8–Oct 24

The first Christians gathered around one vision: invite people to worship, connect, and serve our neighbors together. This simple vision worked!

It overcame political and social differences people had. People set aside their personal preferences—Jews, Gentiles and slaves all gathered together—because they realized that in Christ we can do more together!



Now

IS THE TIME

Calvary's Building Planning Team (BPT) has been meeting since mid-May and the project is gathering momentum. We're eager to share the excitement with you!

Our work started where the Building Exploration Team left off in January. The congregation approved the BET's recommendations to create a Building Planning Team, contract with local JLG Architects, and conduct a financial feasibility study. The needs defined for our building center on maintenance and accessibility issues identified by Renew, and enhanced/expanded spaces to help us fulfill our mission to Worship, Connect and Serve at our present site.

In June, the BPT met with 11 specific "user groups"—congregation and staff members who regularly serve and participate in various ministries at Calvary. We learned about the spaces they use—what works, what doesn't work, and what they could envision to enhance their ministry.

Data from the user group meetings and input from the BPT are guiding JLG Architects' revisions to the building plan. If you haven't already joined us, there is one remaining date to see the first iteration of our plans and take the opportunity to weigh in!

- Sept 16 at 9:45am, Calvary

There will be additional milestones, but we ask for your early and on-going participation. Greater input in the early stages of this project will yield far better (and more cost-effective) results.

Throughout this process, you will have access to plenty of information!

Next time you attend worship in the Calvary sanctuary, view the video playing in the narthex after services. The video will be continually updated with important developments. Also watch for printed FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), fall congregation assemblies, and more.

We will come together again in November to review the more detailed drawings and plans for the building that have been developed based on the congregation's feedback. Please know that there will be many opportunities for you to see and hear about the plans and to share your thoughts.

Calvary...**NOW IS THE TIME!** Join the BPT as we listen, communicate, visualize, refine, imagine, dream, and pray.



Building Planning Team L to R: Alicia Bertram, Pr Hans Dahl, Miriam Svobodny, Lowell Einerson, Katie Rentschler, Cory Hodgson, Marlene Thompson, Jay Sieling, Elaine Larson, Matt Anderson, and Tom Jacobson (not pictured.)

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FALL WORSHIP SERIES

September 8 – October 24



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JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Saturday: 6pm Relaxed Worship

Sunday: 8:30am Traditional Worship

10:45am Modern Worship

Wednesday: 6:15pm Modern Worship

JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT CALVARY!



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