

May 2026

CALVARY CALLING

News that serves and ignites people for Christ



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, May 3

9:00 a.m. Traditional
9:00 a.m. Contemporary
10:30 a.m. Contemporary
9:15 & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School
*Last Day of Sunday School

Wednesday, May 6

5:30 p.m. in Sanctuary
5:45 p.m. Wednesday School
*Last Day of Wednesday School

Sunday, May 10, Mother's Day

9:00 a.m. Traditional
9:00 a.m. Contemporary
10:30 a.m. Contemporary

Wednesday, May 13

5:30 p.m. in Sanctuary
*Last Wed. Worship until fall

Sunday, May 17

9:00 a.m. Traditional
9:00 a.m. Contemporary
10:30 a.m. Contemporary

Sunday, May 24

10:00 a.m. Summer Worship
* Everyone is invited to wear red for Pentecost.

Sunday, May 31

10:00 a.m. Summer Worship

Sunday, May 3, and Wednesday, May 6, we will recognize and give thanks for the many volunteers who make the ministry of Calvary Lutheran possible. From confirmation leaders and church school teachers to funeral helpers, ushers, communion servers, and so many others, your gifts of time and care sustain our life together.

Please join us at any of the three worship services as we offer our gratitude, prayers, and thanksgiving.



Our summer worship schedule runs through Labor Day weekend. We gather for one service each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

This blended service brings together both traditional and contemporary elements in music, Word, Kids Time, Holy Communion, and fellowship, reflecting the fullness of our shared worship life. As part of our rotating summer practice at Calvary, worship returns to the Sanctuary this year after being held in the Fellowship Hall last summer.



A MESSAGE FROM LEAD PASTOR RACHAEL

There's something about May that always feels personal to me. Maybe it's because it holds my birthday, a quiet marker of time, of another year lived. Or maybe it's the familiar phrase: April showers bring May flowers. Storms give way to growth. What felt heavy slowly begins to bloom.

It's a simple saying, but it carries the shape of faith.

As Easter people, we live in an ongoing promise: whatever the number of candles on the cake, whatever storms or struggles we face, it is not the whole story. Sometimes new life looks like flowers pushing through the soil, or a shift in perspective, or a quiet resilience we didn't know we had. I've been thinking, too, about how we move through life.

When we're young, we can't wait to grow up. And somewhere along the way, we find ourselves longing for the simplicity of earlier days, running in the yard, not yet knowing what a mortgage is or that groceries need to be bought, a time when someone else decided what was for supper. And in all that waiting for what's next or wishing for what was, we forget to simply be where we are.

How often do we pause to notice that God is already present? In the storm. In the ordinary. In the life we are living right now.

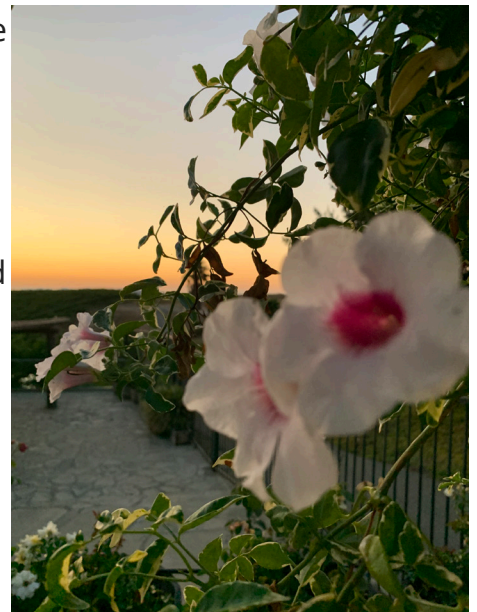
Looking back, I can name the disappointments and grief I wish had not been part of my story. And yet, those very places have shaped my faith, revealing something true about who I am and about God: a God who shows up, a God who stays.

Recently, someone told me I make them feel like a regular person, someone who makes mistakes. And honestly, that felt like a gift. Because that's what faith has come to mean to me. Not striving to be perfect, but learning to embrace our humanity in the messiness, the beauty, the limits of being human. We are invited to be the humans created in the image of God and are invited to trust God. To remember that we are loved not in spite of our humanity, but within it.

The Risen Christ, who conquered the grave, has the final word. And that word carries us through the storms, holding the promise that flowers will grow. Spring reminds us of this: the return of robins, the budding of flowers, the thawing of what once felt frozen.

It's why we continue to proclaim, Christ is risen. Not as a cliché, but as a lifeline. A promise that even in the hardest places, death does not have the final word. That we are not alone, and that God meets us in both the storms and the blooming. So maybe this May, the invitation is: to notice, to be present, to trust that God is at work, right here, right now.

And as Jesus reminds us: *"Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them... Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin... So do not worry about tomorrow"* (Matthew 6:26-34).



FAQ: I'm often asked, "What is happening with calling an Associate Pastor?"

We are close to forming the Associate Pastor Call Committee. There is shared excitement about calling another pastor, and several people have said yes to serving. We are in the final stages of completing the committee, while honoring that this process takes time and that those asked need space for prayerful discernment. Our hope is to bring the final Call Committee names forward for a vote at the May council meeting. Watch for updates in next month's newsletter.

MEN'S MINISTRY

This group meets on the first Tuesday of each month, **May 5 at 7:00 p.m.** here at Calvary in the library. This is an opportunity to get to know other men in the congregation. We hope to see you there!

MEMORY CAFE

The Memory Cafe in May will be held in conjunction with the Unforgettables Spring Concert on **Wednesday, May 6**, at 11:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Lunch will be served following the concert for a freewill donation to support the choir. All are welcome.

STITCH & CHAT GROUP

May 7 & 21 @ 1:30 p.m.

Meets the first and third Thursday of each month in the library. This is open to all women who want to bring their "handiwork" for an afternoon of fellowship and crafting.

READING RELIGIOUSLY

May 11 @ 6 p.m. | Blue Moose

Love to read? Looking for great conversation and new perspectives? Our Reading Religiously Book Club is the perfect place to dive into engaging stories, share ideas, and connect with fellow book lovers. Whether you're a lifelong reader or just getting started, all are welcome. **We will meet on the second Monday of every month at 6:00 p.m.** at the Blue Moose in East Grand Forks. Grab a copy of *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi and meet us at the Blue Moose.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE LEWIS & CLARK BOOK FAIR

We are seeking volunteers to help at our Float into Summer book fair on May 18. Whether you have an hour, a few hours, or the whole day, we would love your support! We will be at Lewis and Clark from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

You can help with setting up books, helping students select books, serving root beer floats, and sharing enthusiasm and cheer with the students, faculty, and staff. If you're interested in helping please contact Julie in the church office.

UNFORGETTABLES CHOIR CONCERT

The Unforgettables Choir will present their annual **Spring Concert** on **Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall at Calvary. Lunch will be served following the program for a freewill donation to support the choir. We are looking for people to help serve lunch that day. Please talk to Mary Ann Devig or Diane Stoley if you are willing to help! You may also call the church office at 701-772-4897.

CALVARY WOMEN BIBLE STUDY

Calvary Women are invited to gather for a meaningful time of connection, conversation and Bible study. Join us on **Wednesday, May 6, at 10:00 a.m.** in Classrooms 1 & 2 as we explore Scripture together in a welcoming and supportive environment.

*Please note the adjusted time so everyone can also attend the Unforgettables Choir Spring Concert.

ALL-AGES BOOK CLUB

May 17 @ 3 p.m. | Fellowship Hall

Our All-Ages Book Club is a welcoming space for readers of every generation to share stories, spark conversation, and build community. Each month we explore a new title that's fun, thought-provoking, and perfect for discussion followed by a hands-on activity inspired by the book's theme. All are welcome! Come connect through books. **This month we will be reading *When You Trap a Tiger* by Tae Keller.**

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF QUILT ASSEMBLING AND POTLUCK

May 26 in the Fellowship Hall

We would like to encourage you to join us on the last Tuesday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to help assemble the quilts. We also have a potluck lunch at noon. You can come for an hour or two or the whole day, that is up to you. We hope you can join us.

Highlights of Church Council

Faith Formation & Youth

Education and Youth Ministries continue through a meaningful program year, with milestones, intergenerational events, and preparation for summer opportunities. During Lent, youth actively participated in worship leadership and helped host a Lenten meal. Nichole continues to provide interim care and leadership in the absence of a full-time Youth Director, while the Youth Ministry Visioning Team reviews the confirmation program and future staffing needs. The Easter season was especially vibrant, with youth serving donuts and leading the “Easter-Egged” fundraiser, delivering over 1,300 eggs to families. Proceeds from both efforts support the summer youth road trip. Plans are underway for Vacation Bible School in June, with the council serving one of the evening meals. Volunteers are welcome to help with decorating and end-of-week cleanup.

Worship & Congregational Life

Holy Week and Easter worship was full of faithful worshipers and guests, reflecting a strong and engaged community. Special emphasis was given to Mental Health Sunday, with guest speaker David Myles joining in worship and the TEARS community event held. These opportunities created space for meaningful conversation, care, and connection within the life of the congregation.

Pastoral Care & Leadership

Council approved the creation of an interim Care & Concern Minister position to support pastoral care needs during this season without an Associate Pastor. Mary Ann Devig, has stepped into this role, offering presence, visitation, and connection, particularly for those navigating health concerns or life transitions. Work also continues toward forming a Call Committee for the Associate Pastor, with potential members currently being identified.

Stewardship & Financial Oversight

Financially, the year-to-date deficit is improved from last year, expenses in March contributed to a monthly loss with higher snow removal and insurance premiums paid for the year. Through faithful giving and deeply generous anonymous gifts of stock investments, and \$100,000, the remaining mortgage balance has been reduced to \$19,000, there is \$13,000 in the mortgage fund which leaves a remainder of \$6000 left on the church mortgage. Retiring the mortgage is within reach. In the coming weeks, pastors and staff will share ways to participate in this final step. Plans are also underway to mark this milestone in worship with prayers of thanksgiving, celebrating God’s faithfulness through this community. Council gives thanks for the generosity that has made this possible.

Facilities & Technology Planning

Council approved moving forward with updated sanctuary projection technology, replacing aging systems and enhancing the worship experience, with installation anticipated later this summer. Informational forums will be held Wednesday, May 13 and Sunday, May 17, following worship. Danny is working on ongoing lighting upgrades and planning for future property needs, including bids for snow removal and insurance coverage.

Mission & Community Engagement

Outreach efforts continue through backpack ministry and book collection for “Float into Summer.”

Organizational Leadership & Planning

New managed IT support through ABM will move forward to strengthen the church’s technology needs. Updates were shared regarding Synod Assembly delegates for June. A reminder was also given to remain vigilant about scam messages impersonating church staff and to verify any suspicious communication.

Next Council Meeting: May 12 @ 6:30 p.m.
(Full council minutes upon request.)

2026 Mission Plan

2026 Proposed Mission Plan	1,014,205.00
Offering through 4/20/26	269,112.56
Expenses through 4/20/26	279,802.10
Balance of Building Expansion Loan as of 4/30/26	18,989.86

Noisy Offering Update

Calvary has a long-standing worship tradition called the Noisy Offering. Following Kids Time at each service, children (and the young at heart) bring forward coins and dollars that, over the years, have added up to hundreds of dollars in support of ministries and organizations in our community and around the world.

In April, the Noisy Offering collected \$1,584.63, which was given to Feed My Starving Children GF Mobile Food Pack. Beyond the impact of these gifts, this time also teaches our children about God's call to care for others and creates a joyful, intergenerational moment in worship.

In May, the Noisy Offering will support a new-to-us organization, NCH Trails To Treatments. Their mission is to assist individuals facing cancer with the often overwhelming out-of-pocket costs of treatment, offering financial support and hope through ongoing donations and community fundraising.



Stewardship Corner



DID YOU KNOW...there is a **CALVARY FOUNDATION**, Established in 1993? The Foundation supports capital needs, mission and benevolence, and

education beyond the annual budget. Since 2021, the Foundation has distributed nearly \$340,000 in grants.

This April, grants supported Ethiopia Reads, building improvements at Christus Rex Lutheran Campus Center, Calvary Lutheran ministries, a summer art camp for youth and the community, and our beloved Donut Day outreach, sharing joy with students, teachers, and neighbors on the last day of school.

The Foundation includes three funds: a Trust Fund for larger or estate gifts, a Tax Credit Fund for designated gifts, and a Checking Account for smaller memorials and donations. Gifts to the Tax Credit Fund may offer North Dakota donors a state income tax credit. If you have questions or are interested in setting up a gift to the Foundation, please connect with Heather.

We also encourage holy imagination among our congregation and community when considering grant applications. Grants are accepted each April and November for new or expanded ministry efforts beyond the church budget.

SUMMER GIVING: Summer often brings travel, time at the lake, and a change in routine, yet the ministry and mission of Calvary continue each week. We invite you to consider ways to sustain our Mission Plan throughout the summer months.

One simple option is online giving. If you follow the giving link (<https://calvarygf.org/donate>) you'll see a one-time donation and to set up recurring giving, click "Sign In" and create an account. Once your account is set up, you can easily schedule automatic gifts, make changes at any time, or add additional donations as needed. You only need to set this up the first time you give online. After that, it's a flexible and convenient way to stay connected in your giving even when you're away. Thank you for your continued generosity and care for this community.

Welcome to Our New Care & Concern Minister

We are grateful to share that Mary Ann Devig is entering a new season of service as Calvary's Care & Concern Minister. This part-time lay staff position has been created to support our congregation's pastoral care needs during this time, when we do not have an Associate Pastor.

This interim role is rooted in presence, compassion, and connection, offering visits, prayer, and support to those who are homebound, in long-term care, or navigating medical circumstances. It reflects our shared commitment to ensuring that no one walks alone, especially in seasons when care and connection matter most.

As part of this role, Mary Ann will also help build and support a hospitality team, sharing in the coordination of the coffee-and-cookie fellowship on Sundays and Wednesdays, an important ministry of welcome and community in our life together.

Please join us in giving thanks and in welcoming Mary Ann for her willingness to step into this role, and in continuing to be a congregation that shows up for one another with love and compassion.

Mary Ann also continues to generously volunteer her time as Director of the Unforgettables and the Memory Café, an immeasurable gift to our community. Her compassion and steadfast care continue to shape spaces of connection, dignity, and belonging.



Feed My Starving Children MobilePack

The 2026 Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) MobilePack event was our most successful yet. Together, 1,436 volunteers packed 427,248 meals, enough to feed 1,170 children for an entire year. This exceeded our goal by more than 23,000 meals.

Thank you to all the wonderful Calvary volunteers for your support with fundraising, recruitment, and the event itself. You made the experience both successful and fun.



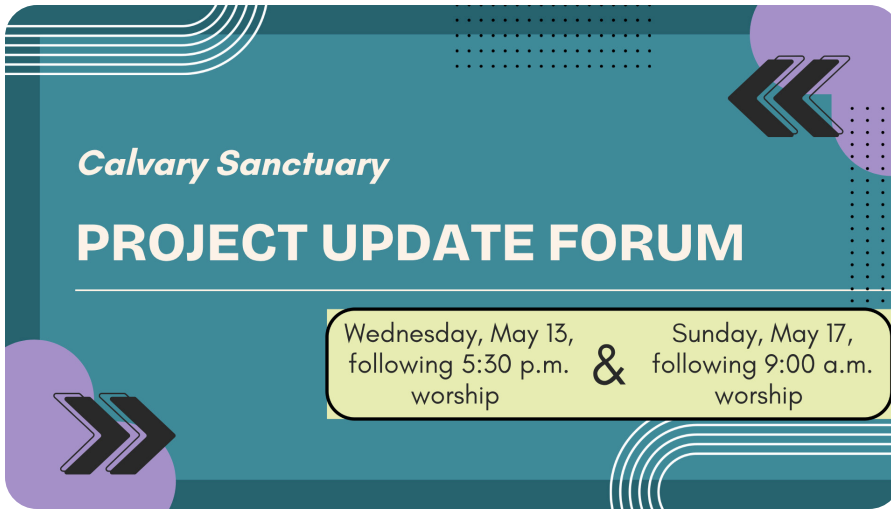
The All Inclusive Group invites us...

In May, to recognize the many observances across our country and around the world that are marked by cultural heritage, health awareness, and shared history.

As people of faith, we hold these not only with awareness, but in prayer. This month, we lift up AANHPI Heritage Month, honoring the history and contributions of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities, along with Mental Health Awareness Month, and Jewish American Heritage Month, giving thanks for the lives, stories, and contributions they reflect.

Join us in prayer for the people of God here at home and across the globe, giving thanks for the diversity of cultures and gifts that shape our shared life, praying for all who carry mental health challenges, and growing in compassion as we hold one another in Christ's care.

Sanctuary Worship Technolgy



Join us for a brief update on the technology improvements happening this summer in Calvary's Sanctuary. We'll share what's being planned, what to expect, and how these updates will enhance our worship experience.

Watch Out for SCAM/Phishing Attempts

Scam texts/emails are circulating, posing as Pastor Rachael and asking for help or gift cards. No pastor or staff member will ever make these requests through text or email.

What to do if you receive one.

Do not respond or click any links. Check the sender; these often come from unfamiliar numbers or emails. Other local churches have reported the same scam. When in doubt contact the church office to verify.

How to check the sender in an email.

----- Forwarded message -----
 From: **Rev. Rachael Puttbrese** <lindakatty542@gmail.com>
 Date: Mon, Apr 20, 2026 at 4:43 PM
 Subject: Directory
 To: <place4u@calvarygf.org>

Hi,
 Please send me a pdf copy of our church directory.
 God Bless,
 ___ Rev. Rachael Puttbrese

All Calvary staff will have an @calvarygf.org end tag for their email.

If you receive any text messages for gift cards or something unusual, do not reply to them and contact us.

Calvary Lutheran Church

Calvary Lutheran Church was established in 1953 after the announcement of the establishment was made by Reverend L.E. Tallakson of Fargo, president of the North Dakota District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Location

1405 South 9th Street
 Grand Forks, ND 58201

Contact

701-772-4897
 place4u@calvarygf.org

Our Summer Worship Sundays

May, 24 Through Labor Day
 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary

Wednesdays

Resumes on Wednesday, Sept. 16

Services are streamed online on Facebook and our website.

calvarygf.org

WAYS

TO

GIVE

QR Code



In worship

Drop a gift in the offering plate

Mail checks or money order

Calvary Lutheran Church
 1405 South 9th St
 Grand Forks, ND 58201

Looking to donate your time?

Call 701-772-4897 or
 Email place4u@calvarygf.org



A Lewis & Clark Partnership

The 2025-2026 school year of supplying weekend nourishment for food-insecure students at Lewis and Clark Elementary has come to a close. Our dedicated volunteers have packed over 4000 bags this year and due to the generosity of our supporters, Calvary was able to pack bags for the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year.

Many thanks to all who have helped by picking up pallets of food at Sam's, providing food on our donation tables at Calvary, sending food through our registries, sponsoring students for the year and/or packing bags for the kids of Lewis and Clark this year. Every contribution to this program was a gift to a food-insecure student at Lewis and Clark.

We are also blessed with our new partnership and ongoing relationship with United Way of Grand Forks. United Way oversees this program and transports our full and very heavy bins to Lewis and Clark every week. Thank you United Way for your help and support.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE LEWIS & CLARK BOOK FAIR

We're looking for volunteers to help with our Float into Summer Book Fair on May 18 at Lewis & Clark (8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.). Whether you can give an hour or the whole day, we'd love your support!

Help with setup, assist students in choosing books, serve root beer floats, and share some joy with students and staff.

Interested? Contact Julie in the church office.



Calvary's It Takes A Village Ministry is helping Lewis & Clark Elementary students **FLOAT INTO SUMMER!**
Can you help?

The Fourth Annual Float into Summer Book Fair will take place on May 18, 2026. We are excited to once again send students home with books they love to help keep reading alive throughout the summer.

To make this possible, we need your help! We are collecting book donations or monetary contributions to purchase books that students can choose from during their final days of school.

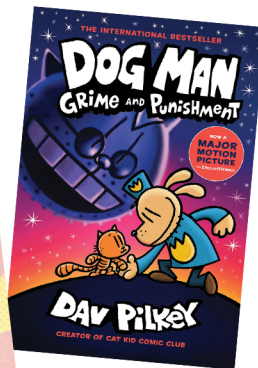
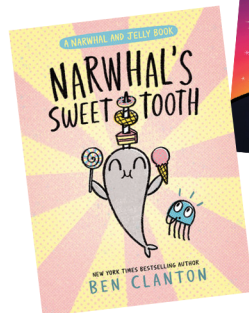
You may donate one or more books anytime between now and Sunday, May 10. All books should be new or in like-new condition and appropriate for children ages 5–12. Please avoid board books, books with sounds or moving parts, and any books that contain writing or marks inside.

You may also use the QR codes provided to purchase books online and have them shipped directly to Calvary. Donation baskets will be available at the worship entrances, or books can be dropped off at the church office.

Thank you for helping put great books into the hands of our young readers! If you have any questions, please contact Julie in the church office.

BOOK SERIES & IDEAS

Pizza & Taco
Elephant & Piggie
Animal Rescue
Pete the Cat
Investigators
Wings of Fire
Amulet
Cat Kid



Scan to see our registries!



Target



Amazon



Youth and CONFIRMATION



Senior Recognition Sunday is happening on **May 10 in the Sanctuary** and **May 17 in the Fellowship Hall**. Join us to celebrate and pray for our seniors as they prepare to graduate.

May Mentor Event

May 17
 Sip and Share
 5:00 PM
 Christus Rex Lutheran Center
3012 University Ave
Grand Forks, ND 58203

Join us for our final event of the year. We will have a time to share faith stories, learn about what's on tap for next year and enjoy a DIY soda bar and pizza!

Calvary Goes to Camp

We care deeply about offering camp experiences to kids and throughout the year to raise money to support our camperships and ensure that cost does not prevent any student from participating.

To inquire about camperships, please contact Nichole Bye through the church office.

Transportation to Camp

Looking for some transportation to camp Metigoshe this Summer? You can sign up to ride the bus to camp. The bus is free and will depart and drop off in the Calvary parking lot.

To sign up, please use the QR code found below. For some of our younger friends who don't stay the whole week, Calvary will help coordinate rides back and forth to help fill in the gaps of the bus schedule. Contact Nichole Bye at nichole.bye@calvargf.org to schedule.

Camp Sign-Up

Bible Camp is a wonderful opportunity for young people to deepen their faith, enjoy time outdoors in God's creation! Summer camps ask that you register yourself for camp. When registering, please make sure to list Calvary as your congregation. Here are some great summer camp locations to check out

Metigoshe Ministries
metigosheministries.com

Park River Bible Camp
<https://www.parkriverbiblecamp.org/>

Red Willow
<https://www.redwillowministries.com/about>

HOW TO SIGN-UP?

When registering your child for camp you will have an option to sign your child up for the camp bus. This year the camp bus is FREE and we will be picking up in the Calvary parking lot!

Sign Up for Camp Here

Kids & Family



Last Day of Sunday/Wednesday School

We invite everyone to join us for Scoops of Gratitude ice cream sundaes during fellowship on **May 3 & 6**. As we close out another year of faith formation for our Calvary Kids, we give thanks for all of our students, parents, and volunteers who say "yes" to growing in faith together. It is truly a joy to be part of this faith community with you all.



A special thank you to our teachers, Angie Black-Erickson and Allie Penny, for your faithful leadership throughout the year.



Donut Day!

Mark your calendars for May 28! Let us help you celebrate the last day of school with drive-thru donuts and coffee in our parking lot.

Calvary VBS

Save the dates of June 8-11 for Vacation Bible School fun! We will dive into "Snowball Mountain Challenge" where we will find our strength in God. Ollie the arctic seal will guide us through an exciting winter sports event full of new challenges, friends and ways to learn that with God's help we can do more than we ever thought possible.



We are excited to welcome kids of all ages and their families to a week of VBS fun! We will gear up for frosty games, snowy surprises, and hands-on lessons about resilience and faith.

Join us **June 8-11**

5:30 p.m. meal with suggested donation of \$5

6:00-7:30 p.m. VBS activities **\$50 per family**

Scan the QR code or check out our website to sign up today!



Sensory VBS

Our Sensory-Friendly VBS is designed especially for children and their trusted adult who may feel overwhelmed by the pace, noise, or structure of our evening programming. This morning experience offers a calmer, more flexible environment where kids can explore VBS at their own comfort level.

During this session, children will be invited to engage with the same core activities, crafts, storytelling, and play but in a more open-ended format. Instead of rotating on a set schedule, participants can move freely between stations, take breaks as needed, and spend more time on the activities they enjoy most.

With a smaller group size, reduced sensory input, and a gentler pace, our Sensory-Friendly VBS creates a supportive space where every child can participate, connect, and have fun in a way that works best for them.

Join us **June 8-11**

9:00-10:15 a.m.

\$20 per family

Check out our website to sign up today!

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH

1405 South 9th Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201

(701) 772-4897

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
US POSTAGE PAID
Grand Forks, ND
Permit NO 342

CALVARY STAFF

Pastor: Rachael Puttbrese
Finance: Heather Vandervort
Communications and Tech: Marcus Mandt
Education: Nichole Bye
Youth & Ed. Assistant: Allie Penny
Receptionist: Cathy Bubb
Director of Faith in Action: Julie Pedersen
Facilities Manager: Danny Navarro
Care & Concern Minister: Mary Ann Devig

get ready for a
FLURRY
of **FUN**

June 8-11

5:30 PM • Meal
suggested donation of \$5

6:00-7:30 PM • Family VBS
\$50 per family

Visit calvarygf.org or scan
the code to register.

CALVARY'S
SNOWBALL
MOUNTAIN
CHALLENGE

JUNE
8-11



f Calvary Lutheran Church - Grand Forks
t @calvarygf
ig @calvarygrandforks