News that serves and ignites people for Christ



ADVENT SCHEDULE

Sun. Nov. 30 - Advent Begins Regular Worship Schedule 2-4 p.m. Advent Festival for All

Sun. Dec. 7 - Advent Week 2 Regular Worship Schedule

Sun. Dec. 14 - Advent Week 3
Regular Worship Schedule
Christmas Program @
9 & 10:30 a.m. Contemporary
both of these services will be
livestreamed. No Traditional
service livestream will be available.

Sun. Dec. 21 - Advent Week 4
Traditional GIFT Worship Christmas Sweaters/Festive Wear
9 & 10:30 a.m. GIFT Contemporary
- Christmas PJs, Sweaters/Festive
Wear

Advent at Calvary: More Than Words

Advent is far more than the season leading up to Christmas; it is a sacred time of preparation and holy anticipation. Marked by the color blue and the lighting of candles for Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, Advent invites us to slow down and open our hearts to what God is doing among us.

This year, we begin Advent with a reminder of an ancient truth. Alexander John Shaia of Quadratos writes:

"Our ancestors knew something that our world today has largely forgotten. Darkness is the place from which all things are created... In ancient times... the Celts and then Celtic Christians marked this darkness as the first moment of a new cycle, a new year, literally an Advent!"

Advent begins in the deep dark, not as something to fear, but as the fertile place where God's new creation first takes shape. It is in the quiet, the waiting, and the longing that Christ meets us.

Our Theme: More Than Words

We will explore how Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are not simply words we speak, but transformational gifts God is forming within us. Each week will invite us to live these promises more fully, trusting that Christ is already drawing near.



May this season open us to God's creative work in and through us as we wait, watch, and welcome the coming of Christ.

A MESSAGE FROM LEAD PASTOR RACHAEL PUTTBRESE

Greetings, Siblings in Christ,
I greet you having just passed the one-month
milestone of my call as your Lead Pastor. In
some ways, I am excitedly settling into a
rhythm and routine; in other ways, I still feel a
bit like a fish out of water. Either way, I remain
rooted in the promises that hold us all. We are
God's beloved...held in love, mercy, and
forgiveness, and we are called to share those
same gifts with one another and the world.

Lately, I've been watching a funny little "debate" unfold online this time of year. It usually starts with a bold opinion about when Christmas décor should go up. Some find it bothersome that people enjoy decorating in November, insisting that Christmas lights have a proper and universally understood time and place.

I've even heard the argument that listening to Christmas music or decorating too early somehow takes away from Thanksgiving or "rushes" Christmas. Really? I think we can hold more than one thing in balance. A heart full of gratitude...and a lighted tree. A table set with turkey and potatoes...and Christmas music playing in the background. These things can coexist. For me, it raises a deeper question: How do we allow external happenings to shape (or not shape) our internal world?

Because when Christmas Eve comes, you'll likely hear me remind us all that Christ is born into our everyday, not because of décor or dates on a calendar, but because God desires to be with us! Jesus was born into our world in a manger long ago and is born into our lives now by the power of the Spirit, continually shaping the posture of our hearts and guiding the work of our hands.

Advent leading into Christmas is such an interesting season, because the church calendar and our cultural calendars don't always line up.

Advent, beginning this year on November 30, is actually the Church's New Year. It is a season that begins where it ends and invites us back to the beginning again. Christ has come, Christ is with us, and Christ will come again.

A professor at Luther Seminary once described Advent as the season of Christ in history, mystery, and majesty, reminding us that as God's people, we live in a holy "both-and."

Christ has come...and will come again. We remember and we anticipate. We look inward and we look outward. We long, we hope, and we trust.

During Advent, we pause to reflect and to hear again the good news of God's faithfulness—God's desire to send the light and love of Christ into a weary world. As we light the candles each week, their glow slows us down and invites us into

hope, peace, joy, and love. More than words on ornaments, these are the grounding promises for God's people. They draw us toward the manger, the cross, the grave, and the empty tomb, reminding us of who we are and whose we are.

As I continue to learn your names, hear your stories, and find my own rhythm among you, I invite you into this season, whether your decorations are up, half-up, or still in boxes. Let's walk through Advent with open hearts. Let's live into the fullness of Christmas not just on one night, but every day. And let's trust that the promises born to us in Bethlehem long ago are still being born in us, around us, and through us even now. Blessings, dear ones, as we journey this season together.

Because Advent marks the start of a new church year, we are inviting everyone to wear a name tag throughout the season. Name tags and markers will be available right outside the entrances of our worship spaces. Thank you for helping us begin the year by learning (or relearning) each other's names and help me to learn names too!



We Invite You to Worship on Christmas Eve

We are blessed by the number of you who will be gathering with us to celebrate the birth of Christ. Please remember that parking can be challenging with multiple services throughout the day. We encourage carpooling when possible and invite you to plan for parking in the neighborhood blocks around the church.

Christmas Season Schedule

Wednesday, December 17 Quiet Holden Christmas Service 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve, December 24

Traditional Worship

1:30 p.m.

4:30 p.m.

Contemporary

Worship

3:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.

Christmas Day No Worship We know Christmas Day worship holds deep meaning for many, and we feel that with you. Given that we currently have only one pastor, and after consultation between Pastor Rachael and the Council, we will not be able to offer a Christmas Day service this year.

Thank you for your understanding as we prioritize the well-being of our pastor and staff.

Sunday, December 28 @ 10:00 a.m.

One Traditional Worship Service

Wednesday, December 31 No Worship Service

Sunday, January 4

9:00 a.m. - One Worship Service in the Sanctuary

10:30 a.m. - Contemporary Worship

Sunday, January 11

Regular Worship Schedule Resumes

Highlights of Church Council

FINANCE - 2025 FINANCE REPORT

Calvary's giving this October was \$11K lower than last year. This is due to the timing of annual gifts, with the annual gifts being received in October 2024 and not this October.

Year-to-date expenses are still lower, but October expenses were higher due to pastors overlapping.

COMMITTE REPORTS

Building & Grounds

Danny is gone November 24 through February 15.

Tony reached out to Brad Thoreson and said he is willing to fill in for Danny.

Stewardship

Caring leader's social was on Sunday, November 9, and there was a good turn-out of individuals. Commitment cards have been sent to congregation members and commitment cards were handed out at church and collected during offering.

NEW BUSINESS

Server and Technology Cost

Calvary is continuing with support from Marco Technologies for one more year but looking at other options for technology support in the future, including cloud-based server options.

New Office Computers

No computers have been purchased with credit card points yet. Still planning on purchasing three computers when it is "deal season," but now plan to purchase computers for Chelsea, Julie and Nicole.

Budgeting for 2026

Heather presented the proposed 2026 budget line by line. Recommendations were made including moving Family and Social Life (Parish Fellowship) to Outreach.

Current budget for 2026 budgets for half year of pulpit supply and half year for an Associate Pastor.

Budget will continue to be updated and discussed again during December Council meeting.

Pastor Rachael's transition

Pastor Rachael's installation was held on Sunday, November 16, with Bishop Tessa as we had one combined 9:00 a.m. service and one 10:30 a.m. service.

Next Council Meeting: Dec. 9 @ 6:30 p.m.

All-Inclusive Committee Update

Thank you to all who participated in Calvary's recent welcome and inclusion survey. Your responses have been received, reviewed, and shared with the All-Inclusive Committee. We are grateful for the honesty, care, and deep investment in our congregation that came through in your feedback, including the places of enthusiasm, concern, and challenge.

The committee continues its work of reflecting on how our welcome at Calvary can be extended to all who may not realize they are welcome, especially those who have experienced harm or exclusion in faith communities. This includes, but is not limited to, people of color, Indigenous people, those living with disabilities, and people who identify as LGBTQIA+.

We remain committed to listening, learning, and discerning together as a committee. As this work continues, we will invite the congregation into ongoing opportunities for conversation and learning, always holding with care the hopes, concerns, and vast perspectives. Thank you again for engaging in this important, ongoing conversation.

2025 BUDGET

2025 Proposed BudgetOffering through 11/17/25
Expenses through 11/17/25

1,041,258.00 738,627.58 765,860.83

Balance of Building Expansion Loan

as of 11/30/25 375,060.16

STOCK DONATIONS

Did you know you can donate stock as a gift to Calvary? Have you wondered how to accomplish donating this gift? You may ask your broker to assist with the transfer to Calvary's Edward Jones account or you may contact Heather Vandervort at the church(701-772-4897) with any questions. Please designate to which church fund you would like to give your gift. If you are considering this type of gift, please complete your gift through your broker by Tuesday, December 9.

YEAR-END GIVING

Thank you for supporting Calvary through your financial gifts! Any gifts you would like included on your 2025 contribution statement should be in the church office by noon on Wednesday, December 31. When giving gifts by mail, please allow at least seven business days for your gift to arrive at Calvary.

BUILDING EXPANSION FUND

In memory of Gordon Sather by Melbourne and Kathleen Hertel, Mark and Gloria Sanford

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Marilyn Green by Dr. Rebecca Green

In memory of Marilyn Hagerty by Marjorie Radi

MEMORY CAFÉ

In memory of Vicki Kroetsch by Charles and Colleen Zick

In memory of Dennis Rindy by Mark and Betty Ellingson, Brad and Laurie Papenfuss, Mary Ann McKenna, Timothy and Renee Lunde

In memory of Gordon Sather by James and Sharon Holter, Sharon Gates

UNFORGETTABLES CHOIR FUND

In memory of Dennis Rindy by Karen Knudsvig, Michael and Rhonda-Lee Poellot

In memory of Gordon Sather by Marianne and Dale Rivard, Mary Ann McKenna, James and Marjean Woodrow, Richard and Barb Lunde, Karen Knudsvig, Michael and Rhonda-Lee Poellot, Kathy McCue, Terry and Charleen Farder, Larry and Susan Hanson, Einar and Elaine Einarson, Bob and Sharon St. Germain, Randy and Kim Kieffer, Richard Sorlie, Don and Ellen Anderson, Paula Danielson, Nancy Rindy, George and Diane Hoselton, Ken and Colleen Carlson, Steve and Deb Hill, Andrew Swanson, Susan Fagerholt, Charles and Colleen Zick, Roberta Zick, friends and family

In memory of Irene Wagner by Allan and Connie Rebsch

FUND BALANCES

Youth	E0 624 21
Honduras Mission	59,624.21
Foundation	21,849.67
	809,449.44
Good Samaritan	4,373.25
Refugee	6,918.52
Campership	4,857.37
Music	901.06
Library	1,027.46
Unrestricted Reserve	17,000.00
Landscaping	76.20
Contemporary Worship	2,624.39
Education	2,840.77
Fine Arts	934.31
Missions	34,792.33
Quilting	2,292.91
Memory Café	15,129.22
Unforgettables Choir	14,680.82
Prayer Chain	12,618.50
LaGrave on First	988.16
Lewis & Clark General	4,048.18
Lewis & Clark Backpack	17,065.27
Hymnal & Bible Fund	1,778.45
Coffee Shop	2,966.84
Columbarium	31,412.10
Stephen Ministry	1,033.75
Operation Technology	3,094.24
Organ/Piano	(797.33)
General Maintenance	4,149.60
Sanctuary Projector/Scre	een 1.61
Hearing Aid Loop	1,007.00
Roof Repairs	6,862.33
Building Expansion	228,011.08
Seminary	503.95
-	

Thanksgiving Together

Thank you to all our Calvary friends who helped make our Thanksgiving Together event for Global Friends a success. Extra thanks to those who donated many batches of mashed potatoes and those who came to help serve the meal. It was a great night with many of our area faith communities coming together to provide a traditional Thanksgiving meal. What a joy to celebrate this third annual celebration with our new American friends







Holy Grounds

Holy Grounds is open and we need your help! Be a part of this hospitality ministry at Calvary Lutheran Church to provide a welcoming place for fellowship before and after worship times at Calvary. Sign up for as few or many time slots as you would like. Have fun serving coffee and getting to know the people at Calvary. Our espresso machine, lovingly named Franke, is very user friendly and training is provided.

Two shifts are scheduled each Sunday for two people per shift. Families/ friends are also welcome to volunteer together. Shifts run from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m and 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.



Prayers & Sympathies

Connie Rebsch's friend, Irene Wagner, died 9-27-25.

Marian Hanson's sister, Sally Wilde, died 9-13-25.

Rebecca Green's mother, Marilyn Green, died 11-1-25.

Carol Schiller's son, Scott Schiller, died 11-7-25.

Janet Noblin died 11-14-25.

Nan Campbell's sister-in-law, Jan Hystad, died 11-15-25.

Bill Trader's father, William C. Trader, died 11-17-25.

We grieve with those who have lost loved ones.

We remember those who have left us to be with our creator.

We know that they are gone but never forgotten.

Calvary Classics





The Calvary Classics had a great time in November at Pizza Ranch for dinner. Lots of laughter and visiting occurred, and we even had door prizes provided by one of our leaders, Nancy Andrews. We are looking forward to our Christmas party on December 15 at 4:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Hope all of our Classic members can make it to the Christmas potluck.

Calvary Connects

GET INVOLVED

Connect with People at Church

MEN'S MINISTRY

This group meets on the first Tuesday of each month 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!

FREE LUNCH FRIDAY AT THE REX

Join us on November 5 at Christus Rex, the Lutheran campus church at UND, as we come together to prepare and serve lunch for our campus community! Whether you enjoy cooking, setting up, or simply helping serve, your time and hands are needed. It's a great opportunity to connect with others, make a difference, and share a meal with friends and students. We'd love to have you be a part of this fun and meaningful way to serve our community—if you are interested, contact Nichole Bye or Julie Pedersen.

THE UNFORGETTABLES

The Unforgettables Choir will present their Christmas Concert on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 11:00 am. in the Fellowship Hall at Calvary. Lunch will be served following the concert for a freewill donation to support the choir. All are welcome to attend and the event is free!

CALVARY CLASSICS POTLUCK

Join us on December 15 at 4:30 p.m. for the Calvary Classics Christmas Party! Bring your favorite dish to share as we gather for food, fellowship, and festive fun.

We'll also enjoy a gift exchange—please keep gifts to \$15 or less.

Entertainment will be provided by our very own Kevin Hagan and Jenna Chase.
Come celebrate the season with us!

MEMORY CAFE

Memory Cafe will NOT be held in December. Rather, everyone is invited to attend the Unforgettables Choir Concert the next day, December 10 at 11:00 a.m.

STITCH & CHAT GROUP December 4 & 18 @ 1:30 p.m.

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

THURSDAY MUSIC CLUB MUSICALE

Thursday Music Club Musicale will be at Calvary Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 7, at 3 p.m. Pastor Rachael will give the Christmas message.

The Thursday Music Club Choir will offer beautiful choral selections. Lane Lindseth will be entertaining us on his accordian, Evan Montgomery will be singing *O Holy Night*, a vocal trio by G. Paul Larson, Michael Marcotte, and Evan Montgomery, Elias David Schill, our UND scholarship recipient will be playing the trombone. Cale Stoltenow will be playing the prelude and postlude. Thirteen Harps will be playing under the direction of Callie Stadem Christmas hymns will be sung by all. A freewill offering will be taken. See you there!

READING RELIGIOUSLY December 18 @ 3 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. Grab a copy of *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans and meet us at the Blue Moose.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF QUILT ASSEMBLING AND POTLUCK December 30

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.



A Lewis & Clark Partnership

Calvary's "It Takes a Village" partnership with our neighbor school, Lewis and Clark, is thriving in it's fourth year of supporting the backpack meal program. This ministry allows us to live out our call to compassion by helping meet the nutritional needs of food-insecure children in our partner school. Each week, the program provides weekend meals for students who might otherwise go hungry.

It costs approximately **\$100 to support one child** for an entire school year. We invite you to consider sponsoring one or more students for the 2025–2026 school year—every contribution, large or small, makes a meaningful difference.

For those who prefer to donate food items directly, collection tables are located outside each worship space. Picking up an extra item or two while you shop is an easy way to support this ministry. An **Amazon Wish List** is also available for anyone who would like to have items shipped straight to Calvary.

Together, we truly can make a village of care around the children at Lewis and Clark.

Backpack Program





An enthusiastic and hardworking group gathered on November 18,to pack backpack meals for Lewis and Clark. Thanks to their efforts, an impressive 792 meals were prepared for students in need. Because the team was able to work ahead, there will be no December packing session. Regular meetings will resume on the third Tuesday in January.

Volunteer Opportunity

Volunteers are needed to assist in filling bags on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the church narthex. Please consider taking an hour on these days to help.

Sponsoring a Child

It costs roughly \$100 to sponsor one child for the entire school year. We ask that you consider sponsoring one or more so we can meet our goal of providing for all students. Your sponsorship provides food and support for a child in need. It's a simple way to make a lasting impact—one student, one life, one future changed.

Thanks to your generosity, 31 students are sponsored for the school year! Let's keep going and see how many more we can support.

Two ways to sponsor a child: Give \$100 or \$100 check designated to Sponsoring a Child to our Finance Director, Heather.

or

Donate online by scanning the qr code then click over to one-time gift, press the drop down and click Lewis & Clark, press second drop down and click Sponsor a Child.



Calvary Angel Tree

Create a merry Christmas for a community member in need this year with our 2025 Angel Tree. Calvary will again be partnering with several community agencies to enjoy the spirit of giving. We are partnering to provide gifts for Lewis and Clark and other families, elderly, and veterans who would go without Christmas gifts.

Trees are up so you will be able to shop til you drop! Pick a tag with gift ideas and instructions from the trees located outside each worship space or choose from our sign-up Genius, Target, or Amazon registries. Those links will go live and you can get to them either through our website, facebook page or use the qr codes below:

Target



Amazon



Gifts are due on December 9. Once gifts come back to Calvary, we will need volunteers to shop for gifts on remaining tags, sort gifts, wrap gifts or fill gift bags.

A Special Ask

The Angel Tree is a blessing to many families in our community who wouldn't have gifts without the kindness



and generosity of the people of Calvary. This year has been especially difficult in some cases, and we got a a special request from one of our partnering agencies who has a family that is struggling this year. This family needs a bunk bed for their kids. We are looking for a bunk bed with mattresses to assist this family. If you have beds that you are not using and would be willing to donate, please contact Julie in the church office or at Julie.pedersen@calvarygf.org.

Thank you for sharing God's love with the people around us. Please contact Julie in the church office with any questions or let her know you'd like to help.

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 Worship Services Sunday*

9 a.m. - Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall 10:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hall

Wednesday*

5:30 p.m. - Sanctuary *Holiday and summer services may have different times.

All services are streamed online.

calvarygf.org

WAYS TO GIVE

- **1. Text** 701-922-9020
- **2. Online** at calvarygf.org
- **3. In Worship**Drop a gift in the offering plate
- 4. 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



Youth and CONFIRMATION

High School Youth Group

High school youth group will continue meeting on Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Confirmation & SPARK

Confirmation will be held on December 10, from 7-8 p.m. for Christmas cheer prep. With Saturday December 13, as our delivery date. Please make sure to Sign up for these dates in Church Center. There will be no classes from December 17-31, enjoy your Christmas break! Be sure to look at January elective options and sign up before we come back on January 7!

No SPARK for the remainder of 2025. Look in our January newsletter for starting dates.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you are looking for something to do on a Wednesday night during the school year, we are currently looking for Confirmation class teachers! We would love to have you join that team. Lesson plans and materials are provided. You just need to bring a happy attitude and willingness to teach.

Do not hesitate to reach out to Chelsea if you have any questions or concerns!

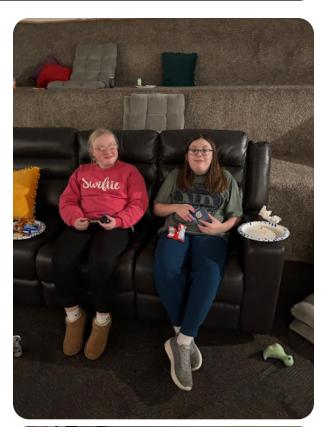
Chelsea can be reached by email:

chelsea@calvarygf.org

or phone at the church: (701)772-4897 ext. 207









Kids & Family



Christmas Program

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas here at Calvary! We are so excited to share the joy of the - Practice day for the Wednesday school season with you through our upcoming Calvary Kids Christmas Programs.

Sunday School program- December 14 at 9:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday School program- December 10 at 5:30 p.m.

We are so excited for your child to be part of this special event. Their hard work and enthusiasm are sure to shine as they participate in this meaningful celebration. We wanted to take a moment to remind you about a few important details:

- Students will be practicing songs during Sunday/Wednesday school music time.
- program will be Tuesday, December 9, at 5:30 p.m.
- Practice day for the Sunday school program will be Saturday, December 13, at 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. respectively.
- All program worship services will be live-streamed on our Facebook page.
- After kids time on program day, PreK-1st grade students will return to sit with their families for the remainder of worship.
- If you have any questions, please send me an email at nichole.bye@calvarygf.org





Important Dates

Dec. 17 to Jan. 6 Christmas break. No Calvary Kids classes.





Join us Sunday, December 7 @ 12 p.m. Let's Splash into Baptism together. Lunch + Learning + Activity. This event is designed for grownups & kids to participate together. Siblings welcome!



You are invited to a pj's + lessons and carols worship service on Sunday, December 21, at 9 & 10:30 AM in the Fellowship hall. There will be no Sunday school classes this day.

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH

1405 South 9th Street Grand Forks, ND 58201

(701) 772-4897 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CALVARY STAFF

Pastor: Rachael Puttbrese Finance: Heather Vandervort

Communications and Tech: Marcus Mandt

Education: Nichole Bye Receptionist: Cathy Bubb

Director of Faith in Action: Julie Pedersen

Facilities Manager: Danny Navarro

Youth: Chelsea Helland

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