

Calvary

LEADERS CONNECT

words of encouragement for those serving, teaching, and leading at Calvary

Motta's Minute: Dry Bulbs Can Live!

Have you ever seen a tulip bulb? One that looks dead and dry? At first sight you think, "can anything good come out of this? Is there any hope?" YES! Tulips never fail to sprout again each spring.

Maybe you feel a bit like that bulb: dried up spiritually, finances aren't great, marriage is hurting, relationships strained . . . Maybe your health is jeopardy, or you're struggling with your job or an addiction. Maybe you're a believer who is praying for a child to come to Christ. You've been thinking, "IS THERE ANY HOPE?"

On that first Good Friday, Jesus hung on the cross. The disciples were running, His mother Mary was crying her eyes out – everything seemed hopeless. But that was Friday. And SUNDAY was still coming! Jesus rose from the dead and made all the difference in the world:

"Praise be to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy he has given us new birth into a LIVING hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3).

Today you can have hope because Jesus is alive. It may be Friday for you, but SUNDAY is still coming! Come this Easter for a message of hope.

April Leadership Council Update

As you know, the worldwide Methodist conference recently voted to uphold Biblical-traditional marriage within our denomination. The Calvary Leadership Council devoted its April meeting to discussing next steps. Here are action items we've approved as we prayerfully pursue where the Lord is leading Calvary:

- ◇ After withholding conference apportionment giving for over a year (while waiting on "The Way Forward" vote), we are releasing sequestered funds from 2018 & planning to stay current on 2019 denominational apportionments.
- ◇ The council approved the formation of a "strategic leadership" subcommittee to address key staffing priorities and denominational decisions Calvary will face in the next 1-3 years. Non-council members are welcome to participate, please let Pastor Dave know if you're interested in serving.
- ◇ A town-hall style congregational meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, May 19 at 11:45**. This is a time to update our congregation and to receive feedback on how Calvary should proceed in the near future.

APRIL 2019

- Motta's Minute
- April Leadership Council
- Forward in Faith
- National Day of Prayer
- Passion Week Worship

• Dates to Watch

1 Peter 4:10, CEV

"Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in service to others. So use your gift well!"

Forward in Faith: A Conversation with Calvary Finance Chair Doug Burchill

Recently I sat down with Doug Burchill – a father, finance team leader, and follower of Jesus. Got finance questions? Doug has answers! Here are some of his thoughts on giving, serving, & the financial health of Calvary.

Hi Doug! Can you tell us how you got involved with the finance team at Calvary?

Honestly? (*Doug laughs*) Because I was asked! Really though, this is a big deal – asking people to get involved, and saying yes and investing with your gifts. I've been part of finance since January 2017 and serve on the church leadership council. It's a way for me to give in areas God has gifted and enabled me. I'm kind of a numbers geek, so it's a blessing to fill a need and use my gifts in this area.

Could you give us a glimpse at how Calvary has changed and what this has meant for us financially?

About 12 years ago, Calvary received a generous gift of land and built a new facility here in Osgood. This was a huge step of faith and a significant financial commitment (around \$6.5 million for the building). We have a fantastic facility that is used for all kinds of ministry, but it carries considerable costs that need to be covered.

How would you describe the state of our church's financial health? What challenges or blessings are we experiencing?

There are many positive things happening financially. We have a generous congregation and some strong ministry partnerships with BSF, Upward Sports, and the YMCA Childcare – I'm thankful we can glorify God and serve our community in this space! Right now Calvary has a pretty strong balance sheet with some cash reserves and liquidity that allows us to cover budget deficits. Currently about 60% of our budget goes toward the loan payments and related building expenses, so paying down this debt is very important to our long-term stability. Another challenge any church faces is attendance. Decreased attendance generally means decreased giving, and our financial health directly correlates to our spiritual health. Being faithful in our evangelism, outreach, and discipleship is a crucial part of our congregational health, and this is something Calvary must be very intentional about.

What steps is Calvary taking toward greater financial freedom?

On a stewardship side, we've tightened budget expenses a bit and taken a conservative approach toward building improvements. We've also found some new solutions (like a revolving/reducing loan structure) that has been a strategic way to save on interest costs. In 2019, our weekly offerings have been strong but we typically fall a bit short of our needed (budget) giving. A commitment from all of us to stay current on giving is something that will strengthen our ministries on every level.

What is our building debt to date? How/when are we projecting to pay this off?

Right now, the building debt is around \$2.3 million. We've made good progress in paying off a large loan: in the past two years we paid down over \$800,000. We are making monthly principal and interest payments and paying ahead as God provides. A conservative repayment plan would see us debt free in 10-11 years, but we are believing God for great provision in the next 5-10 years!

What are some of the ways people can give at Calvary? You can give during worship (in the offering plates), through online giving (see www.calvaryfargo.com/giving), by setting up auto drafts from your account, or by using our "text to give" number (701-353-0690). There is no right way to give, but I would say this . . . follow-through is more important than good intentions! Give in a way that is intentional, strategic, and consistent.

Doug, I know you hate the spotlight, but I want to ask a personal question. As you've grown in Jesus, what have you learned about generosity and trusting the Lord financially? Well, much of what we've received has been through God's grace and the example of others. Growing up, I saw my parents give regularly without totally knowing why, but this left a legacy in my own life. As we've walked with Christ, our family has learned the freedom of living by God's principles and found that you really can't "outgive" God – He just keeps providing. This has encouraged us to live in greater faith, not just giving from "excess" but giving more sacrificially. It has helped us involve our kids in giving too, because we want them to know the joy we've experienced! Also, through some of the Dave Ramsey training we've been reminded WHY we give – because God is generous. God so loved the world that HE GAVE US CHRIST – so when we are generous, we are living more in the image of Christ.

National Day of Prayer: Thursday, May 2

Thursday, May 2, is now the ever-important day before us. The day we join together to talk to God about our country, doing so from every corner of this nation. Yes, it is our goal to pray from every town, every city, every county and hopefully every church in America. Get engaged now! Lead, create, or participate in a gathering. In Fargo-Moorhead we are offering two strategic prayer times:

Thursday, May 2; 12-1 p.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Both gatherings at the Fargo Holiday Inn

Now is the time to pray for America! Hear these words from NDOP president Ronnie Floyd:

“This past month has become a clear reminder of how our nation is in dire need of a new, fresh touch of God. Sin is abounding in a glaring and chilling manner. We need to pray, and we need to pray now. Join us and share these priorities with people in your state, city, and town. Pastors and churches, share these priorities with your people! We must pray!”

Passion Week Worship

Jesus is Risen! Make plans to celebrate the Resurrection at Calvary.

Thursday, April 18 – Living Last Supper (Live Drama), 7 PM

Friday, April 19 – Good Friday worship with First African UMC
12-3 p.m., youth room (please come and go as needed)

Sunday, April 21 – Sunrise Service (youth room), 6:30 AM

All-church breakfast (free-will donation), 7:30-10:00 AM

Easter worship services (sanctuary), 9 & 10:30 AM (no nursery today)

“As we remember your passion, Jesus, give us a passion for you!”

Dates to Watch

Celebration Sunday: April 28. Join us for the culmination of our 40 Days of Community! Between services, we will gather as a full congregation in the gym for believer’s baptisms, a parish nurse dedication, and a few special surprises. Look forward to “Dunking & Donuts” on Celebration Sunday **from 9:50-10:25 in the Calvary gym.** Parents please **PROMPTLY** pick up your kids from Sunday School & the nursery before this gathering!

Badlands Men’s/Youth Retreat
May 3-5, Watford City area

Last Youth/Children’s Sunday School: May 5

All-Congregation Future Planning Meeting
Sunday, May 19, 11:45AM

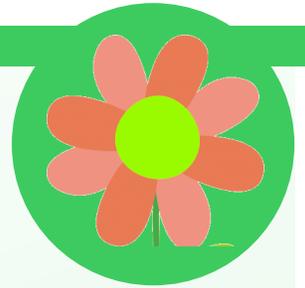
Let’s Taco ‘Bout Children’s Ministry
Children’s Ministry meeting & thank you lunch. Sunday, May 19, 12:30PM.

New Membership Class
Sunday, May 19, 1:00 p.m.
Light lunch provided!

Community Block Party
Wednesday, June 12, 5:30 p.m.
Picnic food, lawn games, inflatables, and more

Calvary Big Top Bible Camp (VBS)
June 23-27

Pop Up Ice Cream Socials (Calvary neighborhood outreaches). July 10 and 11, 6:30 p.m.



APRIL 2019

Calvary exists to

KNOW CHRIST *and*
MAKE HIM KNOWN
through

Evangelizing

the Lost of the Community

Experiencing

the Lord in Worship

Encouraging

the Fellowship of Believers

Educating

the Faithful in Christ, and

Equipping

our Leaders for Ministry.

“... walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

—Colossians 1:10, ESV