

“What’s on the horizon?”

Introduction

*John 10: 11-21 – “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. **16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So, there will be one flock, one shepherd.** 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”*

19 There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. 20 Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” 21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

*Acts 13:44-52 – “The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. 45 But when the Jews[a] saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. 46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, **“It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.** 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,*

*“I have made you a light for the Gentiles,
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”*

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. 50 But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. 51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”

What kind of world does the Church/do Christians face?

Describe the type of person that comes to Calvary.

VISION

**To serve Jesus in order to rescue others. (From where or whatever situation matters not)
To humbly and exhaustively serve and obey our living Lord and Savior, for the exclusive
purpose of rescuing others with the love and hope of Jesus, one soul at a time.**

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Luke 19:10

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Philippians 1:27

MISSION

“Connecting People to The Love of Jesus”

To live in a condition of “Confession and Absolution”.

Our mission is intimately connected to our experiencing the love of Jesus Christ in our own lives.

For is, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life. Romans 5:10

We all know that we sin and fall short of God’s glory. Romans 3:23

The wage of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:9

To die to ourselves daily;

“Do nothing out of selfishness or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.”

Philippians 2:3-4

To grow in Christ;

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Hebrews 12:1-2

To serve one more soul.

I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. Ezekiel 34:16

To Live in The Lord in a Word and Sacrament Relationship

Because of Christ's sacrifice, we gladly we strive to serve others by equipping each of His followers at every level with:

- The knowledge of and ability to apply (Study the Word) **God's Word**,
- A deep desire to **develop relationships** (fellowship) with anyone who is struggling in order to bring them into the hope of Christ,
- Training for each person to use their unique experiences and **God-given gifts** to serve the people they come in contact with.
- Worship the Lord on a regular basis/receive the Lord's Supper often.

The Fellowship of the Believers

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe[a] came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. Acts 2:42-44

STRATEGY

1. To use Calvary Lutheran Church and School as a foundational platform to teach the Word of God, facilitate worship opportunities, to serve one another, and to build relationships in order to make a difference in the lives of people around us in the name of Jesus.

*In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset at Jesus Christ...
Philippians 2:5*

2. Our number one priority is to make CLC and CELC a place that is accepting of all sinners, to love them the way Jesus loved us, and to **offer opportunities** to learn about our Savior, while always staying focused on the needs of others for the sole purpose of bringing them into a healthy saving relationship with Christ. (Rescue)
 - To provide continued support and growth opportunities that will lead to a deeper understanding of faith and greater service, prayer, and worship.
 - In this aspect of affording learning and relational opportunities to people of all ages, **the mission of congregation and school will be integral.**

- To actively pursue our created purpose as redeemed children of God, by going out into the world, speaking Truth, showing love, changing lives, and making disciples.
Matthew 28:16-20 "Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1-2

3. Our number two priority is to purposefully connect with others outside the church walls. We are to act as mature believers out in public. We must never forget that we are ambassadors of Christ and that eternity hangs in the balance for many who encounter us--intentionally or not. *2 Corinthians 5:20 "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." 1 Peter 3:15* but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"
 - Use every circumstance as an opportunity. As believers, we understand that our lives are not about us, but instead about how Christ works through us in different situations.

- Our goal is never church membership or more good Lutherans, but Kingdom citizenship. *1 Peter 2:9-10* “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” *Philippians 3:20-21* “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”

Expectations of and future options for people who call Calvary “home”:

Worship—We will worship using multiple services each weekend. *“I rejoiced with those who said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.” Psalm 122:1*

- This will be determined as our time, talents, and finances allow.
- Worship will be a priority for members. It is a time to rest from the world and be refreshed by God’s Word.
- Choosing those who serve during worship will be based on the excellence of their skills or talents, and their knowledge/ training/ devotion to the task. A rotation will be established so that everyone may also have the chance to worship freely without having a “job”.

Sunday School and Bible Teaching—80% of our worshipping community will be involved in some sort of Bible Study. *“Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105*

- These opportunities for worship and study will be available on weekends, during the week, through life group ministry, and special emphasis times.
- Ample learning environments will be available.
- Special programs events will occur throughout the year.
- Catechism training will be provided through group and individual settings.
- They may be offered for the general population, by personal invitation, for specific training, or for special interest groups.
- They will take place both inside and outside the church.
- Competent lay leaders will also be encouraged to teach and train.

“He is the One we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. Colossians 1:28

Pre-school and Kindergarten Schooling—Offered daily Monday through Friday August/September through May/June, according to the schedule of the local school district.

- The school will be at capacity (with a waiting list) with two of each of all preschool classes being offered as well as one Kindergarten.
- A before-and-after school program for elementary children (6 AM-6 PM) will be established along with our growing twos group.
- The Administrator and staff will be appropriately compensated. The school and its children's programs will have as much financial backing as possible and the visible, relational, and prayerful support of the congregation.

Relational—Multiple life groups will be in place. (Small Group Ministry)

- These life groups/small groups will be focused on spiritual growth through prayer and study, building of fellowship, care for one another, and service to the Lord in a nonjudgmental atmosphere.
- Small groups will be held out in the community or in someone's home or at church.
- Periodic "sign-up" opportunities will be available for a variety of life group experiences.

Community—Calvary Church and School will have top-notch communication and PR practices and will be seen as a strong community influence.

- This will include: An Internet presence, especially easily accessible on multiple social media platforms (i.e.: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, church website and blog).
- Involvement in the community: by attending activities, supporting common interests, joining with other organizations for charity/outreach opportunities, and connecting with other churches in the area.

Growth—expanding beyond the walls of Calvary Lutheran Church, Murrysville.

- At least one mission trip will be available each year.
- Connections with William Penn Care Center, Concordia-Monroeville, and Concordia-Ridgewood will be strengthened and encouraged through regular monthly contacts.
- A new mission plant (off site and possibly connected to Concordia Lutheran Ministries) will be established.

Stewardship—Calvary Lutheran Church and School will be spiritually and fiscally healthy.

- Finances will be maintained in keeping with good stewardship teachings but not used as a reason to automatically hinder ministry or mission.
- Finances and their uses will also be subject to the vision of Calvary. Aka: How do our spending choices make a difference in reaching souls for Christ? How does our budget reflect our priority to facilitate training, care for people or create environments for relationship building? How do we best balance funding that is used internally for maintenance of the church against what is used externally for the growth of God's Kingdom?
- As always, ongoing prayers by committees and individuals to seek guidance and direction in the use the Lord's funds will be a priority before any discussion.
- To create opportunities for people to utilize their spiritual gifts in serving the Lord.
- Offer spiritual gift assessment inventories to all new members,
- To create an atmosphere of understanding that stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God is using life and all life resources for the glory of the Lord and His purposes.

Mission

- **Our current mission partnerships will be strengthened.**
- **Intentional effort will be made to establish new opportunities.**
- **At least one mission trip each year will be offered.**

General—The Calvary Campus will be well maintained, handicapped accessible, as “green” as possible, and kept current in updates.

- A job description will be written for every position in the church, whether paid or volunteer. A hiring/firing policy will be in place for every position, whether paid or volunteer.
- We will remain compliant and current with legal policies and regulations regarding the functioning of our church and school and the use of our property.

Creativity in ministry, flexibility in implementation, and excellent lay participation on all levels will become the standard as our outward focus remains constant – to grow in Christ, in order to rescue one soul at a time.

Further Details—How to get there?

1. Create additional opportunities –

- Saturday evening Bible Study
- Midweek evening Bible Study
- 2 times/month Bible Study for confirmation class parents
- More life groups—opportunities in homes/outside of church venues, or around commonalities of life stages or interests, etc.
- 3 Sunday morning Bible Study groups (give people options)

- Fellowship Hall
 - Divide purple room
 - Continue conversation with Concordia Lutheran Ministry to explore a new worship site with them.
2. Promote 3-4 excellent worship options and do each well
- Audio/visual up-to-date
 - Greeters, ushers, readers, etc. trained and serving in each
 - Parking lot supervision
 - Create and sustain a welcoming and inviting environment
 - Up date lighting
 - Impeccable presentation and first impression
 - Equipped lay participation in each
3. Communication
- Consistent presentation of vision and purpose
 - Exploit Penn Franklin, Calvary Communicator, and our bulletin
 - Exploit outside signs/Move to digital outside signs
 - Explain ministries often
 - What do we do?
 - Who to contact?
 - When do we meet?
 - Where do we meet/go?
 - Why we are involved this way
 - How we will accomplish our goals
 - Marked by creativity and excellence!
4. Call/Hire a Youth Minister responsible for this focus of service.
- Dedicated Youth Worship opportunity
 - Monthly spiritual growth opportunities
 - Weekly Bible Study
 - Attend National Youth Conferences
 - Monthly fellowship/fun activity
 - Monthly service projects
 - Fund Raising activities
 - Youth Ministry will be a priority in spiritual growth, fellowship, and service projects. Parents will make every effort to connect their children and young adults to their church family. Church members will make every effort to integrate them into the operation of and activities of the congregation.
 - Council representation
 - Voting age of 16 years old

Respectfully Submitted, Pastor Dave

