

CALVARY COURIER

September 2026

August Council Highlights

From Our Devotions

The council opened with a study from **Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 5 — "Yet Not Two, But One."** We were reminded that our need for a Savior is urgent and deeply personal: we cannot pay our own debt before God, and no ordinary creature can bear His wrath. Only one who is both fully human and fully divine can save us. We were also challenged to hold together both the spiritual and social dimensions of the gospel — sharing good news for the soul while caring for the world around us.

Prayer Requests

Prayers were offered for the following

The Evangelism Team — hosted a neighborhood picnic at Kawas Park. Pray for new friendships and open door.

- **Cora Bierma** — returned from two months in Brazil and is entering a training phase. Pray for rest, strength, and God's clear direction.

- **Teachers, students, and families** — as the school year begins, pray for smooth transitions and growth in wisdom.

- **Larry and family** — grieving the loss of his son. Pray for God's peace and comfort to surround them.

- **The Pastoral Search Team** — as they continue the call process; pray for discernment and clarity.

- **Ryan Van Kooten** — settling into a new chapter in New Mexico; pray for community and provision.

Pastoral Search Update

We are glad to share some encouraging news: the search team has been working diligently, and they have a strong candidate they are genuinely excited about. **The council unanimously voted to invite this candidate to Calvary this fall to preach and meet with us.**

- He currently serves as a pastor at a CRC church in Wisconsin, has reviewed our church profile and vision, and is enthusiastic about what God is doing here.

- Because he has school-aged children, he and his family would not be able to relocate until after the school year ends. We appreciate your patience as we trust God's timing.

- We hope to have him visit and preach this fall, with an opportunity for the congregation to get to know him — and a potential congregational vote before the end of September

We know the wait has been long, and we are deeply grateful for your prayers and faithfulness. More details about his visit will be shared as soon as they are available.

Ministry Goals in Motion (One year goals)

One-on-One Mentorship (Discipleship): We are exploring a mentorship program — beginning with 6th graders — pairing young people with trusted adults from our congregation. The goal: every student has someone walking alongside them, knowing them, and pointing them to Jesus. Stay tuned — more details are coming, and we'd love for you to be involved!

Life Groups: We are working to launch neighborhood-based life groups — small gatherings for growing in faith and being a light in the community. Cosette will soon host a gathering in the fellowship hall to hear who's interested and who might want to lead. Watch the bulletin for details!

Worship Engagement: A pre-service prayer session is held each Sunday morning — we encourage everyone to join us before the service. We're also exploring ways to help you engage with Sunday's sermon throughout the week, including family dinner-table discussion questions in the bulletin.

Elder & Deacon Nominations We are beginning the process of nominating new elders and deacons. Nomination letters will be going out soon. If you receive one, please know it comes with great respect and a genuine invitation to serve. We encourage anyone who is contacted to sit down with a current elder or deacon to hear more about the meaningful work happening in this council. Please pray for the people who will be asked to step into these roles.

Next Council Meeting: Monday, September 21, 2026 at 7:00 PM | Questions or comments? Please reach out to any elder or deacon — we'd love to hear from you.

In This Issue:

- August Council Highlights
- Cadets
- GEMS
- Youth Group
- Merdith Van Wyk's Mission Trip
- Birthday Calendar

Cadets

The goal of Cadets is to help boys grow more Christlike in areas of life. Each meeting is started by reciting landmarks which help boys discover how the Lord is at work in their lives. Each year brings a new theme and verse. This year's theme is "Mountains of Blessings" based on Psalm 125:2. After reciting landmarks Cadets break out in age appropriate groups called Cadres where they have a bible study and work on various badges. Badges are broken into three categories, Exploring, Skills, and Discovering God's Word. Cadets must do badges in each category to earn ranks starting with Recruit, Pathfinder, then Builder. Some highlights of the Cadet year include Campouts, Canoe outings, Pinewood Derby Races and often attending sporting events like the Iowa Wild hockey game, Iowa Cubs or a Sprint Car Race.

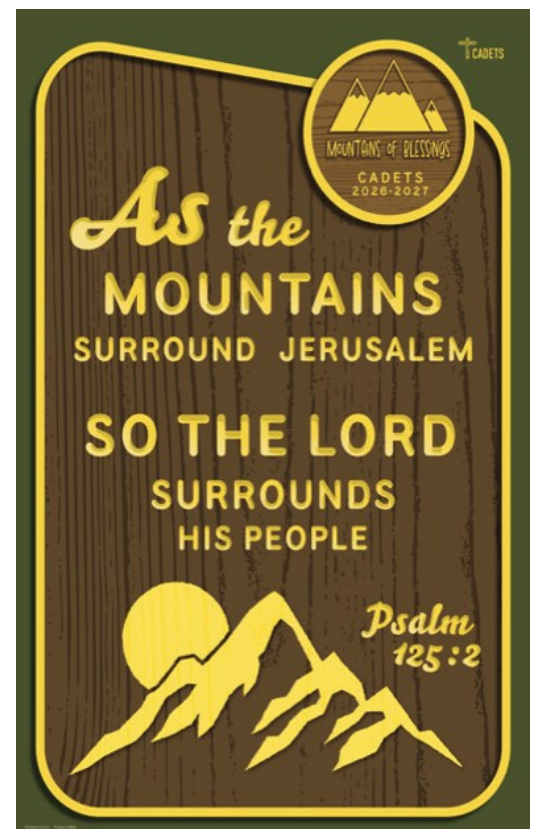
Calvary is part of the Hawkeye Cadet Council where boys have opportunities to go on Regional Cadet Campout, a Canoe trip near Decorah, or the Snow Derby with other Cadet Groups. Each year the Hawkeye Cadet Council hosts Cadet O Rama. Cadet O Rama has pinewood derby races but also has opportunities for boys to display projects they have been working on throughout the year.

There is also the opportunity to go on the International Camporee held every three years. Calvary had 2 boys and 2 Counselors attend Kamp Longview in Alberta Canada in July. The next Camporee will be held at Camp Wapello near Drakesville, Iowa in 2029.

Please continue to pray that Counselors as they mentor Cadets that each may grow socially, mentally, physically, and most of all spiritually.



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GEMS

GEMS is an acronym for Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior. At Calvary, GEMS is for girls in 3rd-8th grade, and we meet Wednesday nights from September through the end of March. We use curriculum provided by the GEMS organization, which includes eight main lessons. This year the theme is "Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life." We have a large group session corresponding with each of those eight lessons where we start with a time of praise and worship, the large group lesson is presented, and then the girls break off into small groups with their counselors. Each small group decides on their activities, but often there will be some workbook or discussion relating to the main lesson. It truly is an art form to keep youth engaged in meaningful discussion and participation, and we don't want our meetings to feel like a continuation of the school day, but a meaningful time to connect and build relationships with other girls and counselors. Many girls are from our church, but GEMS is a perfect opportunity for outreach and for other girls from our community to be included, feel like they belong, and hear of God's love for them and the gospel message. For many years, we have had unchurched girls as part of our club, so GEMS is a ministry to those who don't know Jesus, but also to our own covenant girls as we intentionally disciple them and build relationships and community in the church family.

On meeting nights where we don't have a lesson night, we will often do a craft, service project, or activity that is either for pure enjoyment or working on a badge. Girls have the opportunity to earn achievement badges in different areas such as Knowing God, Understanding God's Word, Caring for God's World and His People, and Exploring and Using God's Gifts and Talents. Some examples of activities we have done are working at the Pella Food Shelf, helping Legacy Thrift clean and prepare dolls for selling for the Christmas season, shopping and packing Operation Christmas Child boxes, mini golf, town scavenger hunt, live-action church campus game of CLUE, bowling, swimming, sleep over, caroling at the Cottages, Pinewood Derby, hiking, baking, sewing, candy making, and many other badge related activities.

We would like to thank the church for their continued support of our GEMS program by your financial support and excellent turnout for fundraiser dinners, volunteering and involvement as counselors, helping out with special events or craft nights, and your prayers for the counselors and girls. Please continue to pray that the Lord will work through this program and that it may be a meaningful and impactful program where the Gospel Truth of Christ and the truth of who we are in Christ is loudly proclaimed and received, and that the girls experience a sense of belonging and Christian community.



Youth Group

Youth Group at Calvary Church: Growing Together in Christ

At Calvary Church, our Youth Group ministry is about more than weekly meetings or fun activities. Our desire is to help high school students develop a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ by surrounding them with caring adults, meaningful friendships, and the truth of God's Word. Everything we do is centered around three simple goals: "Show, Nurture, and Prepare." First, we want to show young people the love of Christ. We believe the love of Jesus is best experienced through genuine Christian community. That's why we intentionally invest in students—attending their events, sharing meals, praying for them, listening to their struggles, and walking alongside them through every season of life. Most importantly, we seek to point every conversation to Jesus, helping students recognize that He is alive, active, and present in their lives.

Second, we strive to nurture students as they grow into mature followers of Christ. Every lesson night is grounded in the gospel and designed to help students understand who Jesus is and what He has done for them. We encourage honest questions, meaningful discussions, and practical application of Scripture to the challenges young people face today. As students grow in faith, they are also encouraged to serve others, living out what they believe, and becoming active participants in the life of the church. Finally, we want to prepare students for a life of faith beyond high school, beyond Pella, and beyond Calvary. Our hope is that students leave youth group equipped with healthy spiritual habits, a personal commitment to Christ, and the confidence to live out and share their faith wherever God leads them. We want them not only to follow Jesus themselves but also to become leaders who encourage others to do the same.

At Calvary Church, Youth Group is a place where students are known, loved, challenged, and encouraged. Whether through Bible study, worship, service trips, retreats, or simply spending time together, our prayer is that every student would experience the transforming love of Christ, grow deeper in His Word, and be prepared to follow Him faithfully for the rest of their lives. This is our mission, and we are grateful to partner with families and the church as we invest in the next generation of disciples.

Contact: Pastor Nate Klingenberg - pastor-nate@calvarypella.org
Start Date: Sep. 9 2026 - Apr. 28 2027
Frequency: Wednesdays 6:30PM-8:00PM
Summer Schedule: Intermittent Events and Service Trip Opportunities



Meredith Van Wyk's Mission Trip

Mission Trip to Compton

I would like to thank the Calvary Missions Committee for funding my mission trip to Compton, California with the Faith CRC youth group. 36 students and adults were divided into 6 work groups for one week in June where we aimed to refresh the City of Compton. We repainted homes and walls, built a fence and pergola, and spent meaningful time with those we were serving. My team repainted the small house of a retired woman. We built meaningful relationships within our team, but also enjoyed getting to know Miss Barbara, the home owner. She had kids and grandkids coming and going from her home each day we were working, and had a dream to see her house repainted before she passed away. By the end of the week we were instructed to choose a term to summarize our time in Compton. My phrase was "servant-hearted," and I chose this phrase because while painting Miss Barbara's home I needed to remind myself to serve joyfully because Christ lived an example of how I can live to serve others. The last mission trip I went on was disaster relief from a hurricane, this work was bringing restoration to an area of poverty. A servant hearted mindset was very important because it was much more difficult than I expected not to be judgmental. Why could they not clear the trash out of their yard years ago? If these people would have made better choices would we not need to help them like we are? So with these types of questions in mind I was reminded that it isn't my place to judge, but to serve. And service is most definitely not confined to acts like painting for a stranger across the country, but I can be servant hearted everyday and everywhere by putting others needs above my own and giving my time, care, and attention to people other than myself. Thank you again Missions Committee for making this trip and life lessons possible for me!



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September 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 6 Jim A. Van Zee		1 Andrew Sytma	2 Alaina Herdegen	3 Barb Van Gorp	4 Angela Vande Zande	5 Logan Gallaher Gerry Harms* Josh Pommer
7 13 Tim Roose Emma Sanders		 8 15 Mary Eisloo*	9 16 Eric Vande Zande Katherine Mick	10 17 Amy Bandstra Krista Van Gelder Noah Nunnkroven	11 18 Geneva Jansen*	12 Brooks De Vries
20 	21 28 Bernie Spoelstra* Lois Van Houwelingen	22 Eric Van Wijnarden Geneva Van Zanten*	23 30 Elise Clendenen	24 Teresa Ulferts Steve Theune	25 Jo-Ann Blom* Reagan Rus Bennett Klingenberg	26 Emily Dockter
27 Alex Sandbulte						
				