



50 Years of Calvary/CrossPoint History

CrossPoint Church has been ministering to families in the Chino/Ontario/Inland Empire since September 28, 1969, as more than 70 people gathered in the Ontario Christian High School gym for the first worship service as Calvary Christian Reformed Church.

Only six days prior, a meeting was held with a group representing three neighboring churches: Ontario Christian Reformed Church, Chino First Christian Reformed Church, and Calvary Chapel in Chino on Yorba Avenue. Calvary Chapel, led by Pastor Minor Tanis, was established as a mission outreach chapel of Chino First CRC. Calvary Chapel proved to be a church which effectively reached out into the local community with diverse membership. Calvary Chapel wanted to join with establishing a new church, despite their recent beginnings, so a larger church could grow. After much prayer, due to recognizing Ontario CRC and Chino First CRC were full to capacity, families from each of the three local churches committed to begin a new CRC church in the Chino Valley.

The first elders selected at the September 22, 1969 meeting included George Groen (Superintendent at Ontario Christian School), Hubert Slegers (dairyman on Eucalyptus Avenue), Minor Tanis (Pastor of Calvary Chapel), and Fred Wind (dairyman on Haven Avenue). The deacons selected included Peter Beckendam (dairyman on Pomona Rincon Road), Al DeVries (school teacher at Ontario Christian School), Charles Dirske (dairyman on Schleisman Road), and Bernard Teunissen (dairyman on Hellman Avenue).

The name, Calvary Christian Reformed Church, was agreed upon, with the first service being held in Ontario Christian High School's gym. The service began at 11:00 am so the two pastors, Rev. L. Dykstra of Chino First CRC and Rev. H. Sonnema of Ontario CRC, could lead the special first service following their own churches' Sunday morning services.

In the fall of 1969, baptisms were held under the gym's basketball hoop. The first infant baptisms were Carla Vande Steeg, Troy Agema, and Eric Groen. Due to the need to resurface the high school gym floor, the Sunday services were moved to the Ontario Christian elementary campus in the multi-purpose room. The change in venue was welcomed as the multi-purpose room had air conditioning and was a smaller, more intimate size. Nursery for children was located in the school's classroom along with weekly Sunday school classes. Weekly activities such as Calvinettes, Cadets, and Consistory meetings, were held at the small Calvary Chapel building on Yorba Avenue, which still stands today.

In 1971, land was purchased at the corner of Walnut and Ross Avenue. Rev. Art Schoonveld was called as the first pastor who arrived from Michigan on February 21, 1971. During his first year as pastor, a groundbreaking service for a worship facility occurred, the cornerstone was laid, and the new building was dedicated. Calvary CRC's building design consisted of a unique architectural model for a Christian

Reformed Church. The building was constructed with a half circle sanctuary of brick walls to the ceiling encompassing pews with soft seats, unlike other traditional CRC churches built in a long rectangle possessing wooden pews and stain glass windows. The seat fabric color was orange with brown carpet, a very modern look for that time, with a non-traditional CRC building appearance. Calvary CRC began a mission of providing programs of outreach into the community and the world, intentionally reaching beyond the community of first, second, and third generational Dutch immigrant families.

Rev. Art Schoonveld served the church for six years and maintains a reputation as a caring pastor who, through prayer, was a builder of relationships which led to the success of blending three churches into its own identity in serving Christ. Under Rev. Schoonveld's leadership, membership grew to over 130 families. For the 25th anniversary celebration in 1994, Rev. Art Schoonveld wrote, "This congregation stands today as a monument to God's power and to His willingness to use His people beyond our wildest dreams."

In 1977, Pastor Al Mulder arrived from Illinois to lead as God unceasingly blessed Calvary CRC. The decade of the 1980s continued as a time of growth. The Walnut facility was expanded due to the overcrowded Sunday services in the sanctuary and packed Sunday school classes. In addition, the choir loft was moved from the back of the sanctuary to the front stage which allowed for more seating in the sanctuary. Pastor Al's gift of leadership included a focus on evangelizing with a love for sharing faith. The congregation grew as a result of learning to share their faith with others. Pastor Al created a relationship based emphasis of leadership with the Calvary congregation by encouraging the church members to address him as Pastor Al rather than the traditional CRC's 'Reverend' title. In addition, Pastor Al implemented leadership role changes for the elders and deacons assigned to specific tasks for serving the congregation and community while creating more outreach programs into the local community.

In 1983, as the church continued to see growth to 200 families, a second pastor was called to manage the increasing responsibilities of a growing congregation. Pastor Bruce Ballast was called from Michigan. The two pastors' roles were identified as co-pastoring, with Pastor Al's responsibilities focused on evangelism, preaching, and pastoring and Pastor Bruce's role focused on education, preaching, and administration. Two Sunday services began to alleviate crowding, with Sunday school being held between the two services. During the time of both pastors, many programs of outreach began, such as Women's Coffee Break Bible Study, Global Missions, Home Missions, and House Fellowship. In 1985, Pastor Al left to serve a church in Arroyo Grande, CA. For Calvary's 25th anniversary celebration in 1994, he wrote, "Calvary Church is a visionary church in touch with her true energy...with the presence of the Holy Spirit giving people the new shape and story of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Pastor Don Klop was called to Calvary in 1985. Co-pastoring with Pastor Bruce enabled a unique and powerful ministry partnership which lasted for nearly 25 years. God continued to bless Calvary's growth in numbers to 278 families in 1989. A church statement of purpose was clarified as once again, a need to expand the building was planned. During 1989, three church services were implemented along

with two Sunday school times, and programs continued to expand with small discipleship teams and the Ministry Training Institute.

By the end of the 1980s, the congregation had increased to about 270 families. In the early 1990s, membership declined as a number of families moved away and relocated their dairies due to changes in the industry. However, by 1995 God continued to bless Calvary with additional families joining the church because of a renewed focus on outreach. In 1997, the CRC began counting church congregations by individuals rather than families, and at that time Calvary was reporting 290 families, which translated into 970 people. We were joined by Pastor Jon Hoekema as the Minister of Education from 1998-2002. He began a Saturday night service as an alternative to a traditional Sunday worship. Pastor Jon also grew the Abuse Prevention Training Program for church volunteers and staff.

As a result of continued growth, a plan to expand the Walnut location facility was created to accommodate a growing and diverse congregation and staff. In the process of gaining approval for the additional expansion in 1999, the City of Chino denied the master building plan due to inadequate parking space, thus challenging church leaders to explore further options to meet growth.

In 2000, a decision was made to relocate, and 13 possible properties were explored. The current Edison property was selected with a total of 24 acres included in the final sale. In 2002, the Walnut facility sold to another church body. While building began on the Edison location, Calvary Church relocated to a warehouse property on Eucalyptus Avenue in Chino. In 2004, while in the temporary facility, the name Calvary Christian Reformed Church was changed to CrossPoint Church, A Christian Reformed Ministry.

In January 2005, CrossPoint Children's Center opened for daycare. Three months later, in April of 2005, the first church service of CrossPoint Church was held in the current building. The congregational membership was 1190 members. Mothers Of Preschoolers and Men's Adventure Weekend ministries began, and there was a thriving Youth Group, with over 100 students attending each week.

As a body of believers, while enjoying the new facility, CrossPoint Church experienced a challenging time of change when Pastor Bruce Ballast left CrossPoint in 2006 and returned to Michigan. Pastor Bruce led Calvary/CrossPoint through much growth and change utilizing his gifts in leadership and preaching the Word. After much prayer and effort in the search process, in September 2007, Pastor Tim Spykstra was called by the congregation as Senior Pastor. Pastor Tim and Pastor Don Klop maintained a partnership in leading CrossPoint for a year, with Pastor Tim focusing on preaching with local and global outreach and Pastor Don continuing in his gifts for discipleship and outreach through small groups. During this time, God blessed CrossPoint with the beginnings of a strong prayer ministry that continues to this day and focuses on praying for the church, community and world.

CrossPoint grew to 1353 members, and in December of 2007, Pastor Don Klop moved to Michigan with the congregation saying goodbye to another 25 year relationship of pastoral leadership. Pastor Bryan Vander Tuig was called as Associate Pastor in July of 2008. Pastor Bryan ministered through his leadership gifts of compassion, connection, and serving others. During the height of the economic recession, CrossPoint Church numbers decreased and a potential building project for classrooms, ball fields, gym and

coffee shop was halted. However, many ministries were added and expanded including the first Israel Study Tour to the Holy Land, Loft House ministry teams going to Mexico, and partnering with the Beautiful Gate orphanage in Lesotho, Africa. The CrossPoint Bible Institute was also started, where hundreds of participants grew deeper in the Word. The congregation was challenged to reach outside existing social circles and invite others to Christ through various ministries such as an inmate ministry, children and youth ministries, food ministries and non-English speaking congregations.

In 2013, with church membership at 1240, Pastor Bob Johnson was hired to join the pastoral leadership team using his gifts of executive administration. Pastor Tim was called to leave CrossPoint in 2014 and moved to Colorado, developing an international mission of service in Africa. In 2016, Pastor Bob accepted a call to serve a church in Iowa and Pastor Bryan was called back into his work with prisoners. God graciously provided for the needs of the congregation by bringing Pastor Clay Libolt as interim pastor in 2016, who led with wisdom and grace during the search process for a new lead pastor.

2017 was an exciting year for CrossPoint. Pastor Don Porter was called from Michigan to serve as Lead Pastor, and his ministry focuses on preaching, church administration, outreach into our community, and fostering a partnership with the Chinese and Korean churches meeting at CrossPoint. The CrossPoint Korean Congregation was officially formed, led by Pastor Dae Hoon Kim. In 2018, CrossPoint enfolded the Chinese Congregation, led by Pastor Charlie Wang. Both congregations continue to grow and blossom reaching an increasing local population. In addition, Vacation Bible School and all Children's Ministry programs—GEMS, Cadets, King's Kids, and Student Ministries—began to experience rapid growth. Women's ministries and Bible studies also thrived with hundreds of women participating. In 2019, we welcomed Pastor Lon Wagner, called from Bellflower, CA, to focus on discipleship and small group mentoring.

Throughout the 50 years of Calvary/CrossPoint Church, God has blessed the body of believers. Through the establishment of various pastors who led and used their gifts at the right time, through the many outreach programs and ministries established to reach both locally and globally, through changes in traditional ways of church protocol and worship styles, through a diversity in congregational members, one focus remains strong. Calvary/CrossPoint is called to respond to the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations, to evangelize and edify—evangelize our community and the world and edify by building up believers. As a result, hundreds of people have come to the Lord, joined in fellowship, and have been called to go out from among us to do the Lord's work. We continue to be amazed at what God is doing in and through us.

As we celebrate 50 years of God's faithfulness, we look forward to what God has planned for us in the future and how we can be "loving forward" for the generations to come!

Contributors to this written account include excerpts from Sheri Mulder in 1994, Pastor Bruce Ballast in 1994, Ed Talen in 2005, and Deb Baker in 2019.