



# PASTORAL PROFILE

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ERIC WAKELING



# THE PAST YEAR

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Pastor Dave sensed God's leading and asked the Elder Board to plan for a time when his role at Calvary would change so that a new leader could shepherd Calvary beyond its 85<sup>th</sup> and toward its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Elders launched a yearlong journey of due diligence and discovery to seek God's will and assess the needs of Calvary—for a pastor with a heart for Calvary's heritage and a vision for its future.

After prayerfully connecting with wise counsel and conducting a rigorous interview process, the Elders unanimously agree that **God is calling Pastor Eric to lead Calvary Church.**

# THE ROAD AHEAD

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We will have a variety of meetings—including **Church Family Q&A events on September 6, September 27 and October 27, each at 7:00 pm in the Worship Center Lobby**—where you can interact with Pastor Eric and other Calvary leaders. This will all lead up to a special **One Service Sunday on November 12 at 10:00 am**, which is scheduled for you as the members of Calvary Church to vote for our next Senior Pastor.

Ultimately, this is not a process about Pastor Eric, or about Pastor Dave, or about the Elder Board—this is a process about seeking God. Our deepest desire is that through this, we as the body of Calvary Church of Santa Ana will follow God's leading and fall more in love with our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Learn more about Pastor Eric, the process up to this point and the journey ahead at [calvarylife.org/pastor](https://calvarylife.org/pastor)

# THOUGHTS FROM OUR CHURCH LEADERS



Two years ago, as I began my 20th year of ministry at Calvary Church, the Lord put on my heart the desire to plan for succession so we can have a healthy transition to a new Senior Pastor. I began a journey in seeking the Lord, in partnership with our Elders, for the direction on both the timing and the person needed for this next season of ministry. The one name that God placed on my heart was Pastor Eric Wakeling.

His experiences here at Calvary have uniquely equipped him to know the needs and opportunities before us. He has proven faithful in pastoring people in need, teaching the Word of God and guiding our staff in the strategic development of ministry plans. In light of all this, I believe Eric is the right man to help us move toward Calvary's 100th anniversary in 2031 with a more fruitful ministry for Jesus.

**DAVID MITCHELL**

Senior Pastor



Reflecting on the yearlong process I participated in as an Elder, I can see how God led the process. It was interesting to observe that the board members did not reach our conviction all at the same time and in the same way, but as we prayed and sought the Lord individually and corporately, each of us arrived at this united conclusion. Now, with all of them, I can say with confidence that Eric is God's choice for the next Senior Pastor of Calvary Church.

In the process, I have come to appreciate Eric's character, his leadership, and his heart for the heritage and people of Calvary Church. He has shown humility and patience. He expressed insight into the scriptures that illustrated both a scholarly understanding as well as a pastoral heart for people, and he articulated a vision for Calvary's future that builds on its heritage. I am excited to see what God has in store for all of us.

**NORM ALEXANDER**

Elder Board Chairman



# PASTOR ERIC WAKELING

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Originally from South Orange County, Eric and Bea have been married for 20 years and have two daughters: Grace (14) and Ella (10). Eric has served as the Executive Pastor of Ministry and part of the Teaching Team at Calvary Church for the past nine years. He has been a pastor at Calvary for a total of 16 years and before that was a youth pastor at Ocean Hills Community Church in San Juan Capistrano for seven years.

Eric has been immersed in ministry for Jesus since the day he was born. Troubled teenagers and young adults lived with his family for the first several years of his life. His parents founded a group home and foster family agency to help even more young people know Jesus and live a fruitful life. Eric grew up attending church weekly and going to a small Christian school in San Clemente. He became a Christian at a day camp at his school the summer before 4th grade. He prayed to receive Christ with his teacher who was actually one of those struggling young adults living in his home several years before.

Eric and Bea met in the library at Biola University like the two little bookworms they are. Bea is an English Teacher at Orange Lutheran High School. They love to travel, read, hike, go to the beach, eat delicious food and spend time with family and friends.



# MINISTRY VISION

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The heart of my vision is that our strength comes from the joy of the Lord (Nehemiah 8:10). Leaders who have a joy and passion for Christ, for the Word of God and for the work of ministry will inspire others towards transformation. The Holy Spirit is the one that actually transforms people. Our role is to inspire, point the way and then come alongside people in their journey of faith. My heart and philosophy of ministry centers around five words:

**ROOTED, PASSIONATE, CHALLENGING, UNITED AND SHEPHERDING.**



**ERIC WAKELING**

# ROOTED

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I love Calvary Church! I've been here for 16 years and I love how we are rooted in Christ, in the Word, in our core values and in our long-standing beliefs and doctrines. These foundational elements come before any method of ministry. We will continue to give high priority to **missions** and the expository **teaching of the Bible**. My teaching will be grounded in the Word of God, highly orthodox in its theology and also rich in historical context. I have grown to love the historical, geographical, archaeological and linguistic context that is found in the scriptures. I pray that as we stay true to our deep roots, going back to 1931, that we experience a new season of fruitfulness in the years to come.

*"Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."* **COLOSSIANS 2:6-8**



TEACHING  
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**WORD  
OF GOD**





*“Eric’s biblical teaching is consistently both challenging and encouraging. His recent message on the Fruit of the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit’s ways, was especially meaningful to both my wife Betty and me. So much so that we spent much of that Sunday afternoon talking and praying together about it. Eric’s teaching and preaching help keep us where we need to be, rooted and ground in Christ and His word.”*

**CRAIG BRYSON** Elder

# PASSIONATE

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I envision a church that passionately worships in our singing but even more in our actions. I see a church that teaches passionately and then lives out our passion for Christ in radical ways. I see a church that is enthusiastic, that boldly asks for the impossible and seeks to be more like Christ in all that we do. I believe that passion and authenticity will be what it takes to reach the next generations, not music, lights or a younger teaching pastor. We are a church who has been faithful to love God, grow in our knowledge of His Word and be obedient to His commands. However, I believe we can grow in our passion for God and for a life of worship, evangelism and service.

Passion requires **freedom** – freedom from the chains and yoke of sin but also freedom from duty, legalism, obligation and passivity. Passion includes an array of **emotion**. Worship can and should be reverent and even lament, but Calvary Church needs more joy. Worship is a great celebration of the goodness and majesty of God, the Creator and Ruler of Heaven and Earth. We rejoice with those who rejoice and we weep with those who weep. Passion moves us to **love**. As we love and care for others deeply with both word and deed, we will see blessing, vitality of life and the joy that comes from God alone. Love draws the lost to Jesus Christ.

*“Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.”* **GALATIANS 6:9**

*“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”* **JOHN 13:35**



# CHALLENGING

A ministry leader must challenge the status quo in a spirit of love and grace, but also without fear to talk about hard topics and do hard things. As a strategic leader, I have always been willing to challenge, but in recent years I have learned how to challenge with a firm heart and soft edges.

Calvary needs a leader who will challenge us to have more of a heart for evangelism, to care more about others than ourselves, to be better neighbors and to be more welcoming to visitors. We don't just need different services or structures. We need different thinking about the challenges of the world and how to meet them – less defensiveness of our behavioral values and more going on the offense with the message of the gospel. We need more love and truth for a hurting world that needs Jesus.

*“I’ve known Eric for over 20 years. He loves God, his family and Calvary Church. He is a strong visionary leader with a passion for seeing others find joy and purpose in pursuing and serving Jesus.”* **SCOTT VAN ESSEN** Elder



*“Eric has demonstrated a commitment to lead Calvary to know and practice the Great Commandment by being Better Together as a local church. His development of ministry staff and passion for teaching with a team of pastors has resulted in Calvary being motivated and equipped to live our love first to God, then to each other and to the ends of the earth.”*

**RICK BERGSTROM** Elder

# UNITED

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I believe in the Better Together vision. Our unity *in* Christ enables us to reach out *for* Christ, across cultures and generations. Sunday mornings at Calvary should reflect this, so that in all we do—in our songs, hymns, prayers and preaching—we are responding to the unifying truth of the gospel, growing as followers of Jesus Christ and celebrating how God is moving in and through our church family. In my view, preaching is intended to transform (not only inform) the lives of believers through the Word of God and the work of the Spirit. It should inspire us to go live out the Christian life in our contexts of work, school, family and community. Transformed people help transform their communities for Jesus through service, evangelism, friendship and love.

I'm also a firm believer in collaborative leadership. Vision should come from the Lord to the senior leader(s) in a church. Then that vision is shared with teams who help connect strategy to the vision. Together we can bring greater glory to God and make a greater impact for His Kingdom.



Calvary seeks to be a  
CHURCH FAMILY  
THAT IS **BETTER  
TOGETHER**  
BEING CHANGED  
BY THE GOSPEL  
TO  
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ACROSS ALL  
cultures & generations



# SHEPHERDING

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I feel called to pastor and shepherd this flock at Calvary Church of Santa Ana. I'm not just called to be a preacher, a manager or a leader. I want to be a pastor to this congregation. I want to sit with hurting people in hospital rooms, perform weddings and funerals, have coffee with young and old to give biblical wisdom for life, moderate conflict between members, pray for anyone in need and be a source for theological truth in a culture of deconstruction.

Recently, during benediction moments in services where I preached, I was stirred by the Holy Spirit with a strong desire and longing to lead this church and shepherd this flock. The Aaronic Blessing in Numbers 6 is a pastoral prayer over God's people that I'm already praying for each of you. I would love to have a time of praying this prayer to be an integral part of our church's practice:

*"Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them: The LORD bless you, and keep you; The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.' So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them."*

**NUMBERS 6:22-27**



*“Throughout the process of the Elders considering what God would have for the next season at Calvary, there have been a few milestones along the way. For me one of those milestones was hearing from Eric of his deep sense of God’s calling him here to Calvary Church. It is clear that Eric has a unique understanding and passion for Calvary, and a love and desire to shepherd its people.”*

**PAUL NIENOW** Elder

NUMBERS 6:24-26

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**“THE LORD BLESS YOU,  
AND KEEP YOU; THE LORD  
MAKE HIS FACE SHINE ON YOU,  
AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU;  
THE LORD LIFT UP HIS  
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CALVARY  CHURCH