

## Casting Vision for Building Use by Greater Works Int'l

**Thesis:** We are a people who partner with God in extending the kingdom of God in the earth. We are here for the King and his kingdom. So, we serve the Lord's purposes and partner with others for the sake of the kingdom of God.

**Text:** *1 Corinthians 4:2 (NIV84) Now it is required that those who have been given a trust [stewards, stewardship] must prove faithful.*

Today, I want to share with you about a new level of partnership for building use between Calvary and **Greater Works International** and Pastors Shawn and Sadjah Echols.

### **Context:**

As you know, the Lord has provided us with an incredible facility here on Cherry Park Drive in Houston, Texas. Through the years, the Lord has used this building to advance his kingdom in Greater Houston and beyond. Several churches have rented space here through the years. And, other ministries have used space here for special events, like the **Cy-Fair Helping Hands' Back to School Bash** and *Christmas Distribution*.

A few years ago, we were approached by Pastor Shawn Echols of Greater Works International (GWI) about the possibility of using space here at Calvary for prayer meetings twice a month. When Sadjah Echols visited Calvary to check out the space, she was met by the Lord. Since that time, Greater Works Int'l has rented our facilities for conferences, equipping, and other meetings.

It was interesting to learn from Pastor Shawn that they had been to many churches in our area, and no one would consider allowing them to use their church facilities on a regular basis. **Shawn and Sadjah have been grateful for the Calvary's vision and value of promoting the kingdom of God and helping other churches as the Lord gives us grace.**

1. **Share the process of our building use decision with Greater Works Int'l.**
  - a. Over the years, I became more convinced that the Lord valued Calvary sharing our building for kingdom purposes, as we have done for a long time.
  - b. In 2023, I learned of Greater Houston area churches that were using their facilities to extend kingdom impact.
    - i. One church I learned about has 7 different congregations meeting in their building, representing 7 different languages.

- c. In February 2025, I had a conversation with Josh Ellis, Executive Director of Union Baptist Association, about the need for churches to use their building for kingdom expansion.
  - i. Sharing church buildings and facilities is a model helps that helps grow the kingdom of God.
- d. Shawn and Sadjah Echols have been using our building on Thursday nights twice a month for prayer meetings. They pray for Calvary. They are great friends of Calvary.
  - i. They also use our building for some major events each year like New Years and a January Conference.
  - ii. They have discipleship training in the ABS wing sometimes.
  - iii. They are very responsible with our building, leaving it in better shape than when they came.
- e. When our staff team prayed about Calvary's fall conference for 2025, we felt led to invite Shawn and Sadjah to minister to us in September.
  - i. They are **infectious** in their love for God and in reaching others.
  - ii. Their church took off this last year from 30 to 120 average attendance in 2024.
  - iii. Last year, they led over 125 people to Jesus.
  - iv. They baptized more than 60 people in 2024.
  - v. They had over 400 people attend on Easter 2025.
  - vi. They have a heart for the region, not just the neighborhood.
  - vii. They want to impact the kingdom of God in the region together with others.
  - viii. They are passionate about equipping their people.
  - ix. They have a heart for intercession and prayer.
  - x. So, Calvary and Greater Works Int'l have much in common.
- f. Shawn and I met back in April 2025 about their long-term plans for space.
  - i. We had an amazing meeting. I was inspired and challenged listening to what God was doing in Pastor Shawn and GWI.
  - ii. That is when I felt released to ask Shawn and Sadjah to minister at our Fall 2025 Calvary Conference.
  - iii. At that lunch meeting, both of wondered if it would work for GWI to use Calvary's facilities.
- g. For several years, Greater Works Int'l has meet in a school in CFISD.
  - i. During the first part of May 2025, they were informed that CFISD was renovating the school that GWI rents.
  - ii. So, CFISD offered to help GWI find another school for the summer.
  - iii. **Since changing schools meant changing locations, Pastor Shawn decided to reach out to Calvary on Thursday, May 8, to**

**see if we were interested in a new level of partnership for building use with GWI for Summer 2025.**

- h. **The Calvary Staff processed this request on Wednesday, May 14.**
  - i. We had a follow up conversation with Shawn on Thursday, May 15, to talk about details and what the building use would look like.
  - ii. On Friday, May 16, our staff team decided to try on this building use request for the summer months.
- 2. **Decision: We have entered into a building use agreement for 3 months where GWI will reimburse us for facility usage that will cover building costs.**
  - a. **GWI will use the Life Center and a couple of ABS classrooms for children from 11:00am – 1:00pm on Sundays, with a total 4-hour window from 10:00am – 2:00pm.**
  - b. GWI announced their “new home” to their congregation on Sunday, May 25.
- 3. **Share the impact on Calvary.**
  - a. What they pay in facilities use will cover building-use costs; it is like a reimbursement.
  - b. During staff meeting on May 14, Cheryl shared that the Lord said, “They will bless this house by being here.”
    - i. They will take care of our building and leave it better than it was before.
  - c. This is a **learning opportunity** for us for the next 3 months.
    - i. **We will evaluate at the end of 3 months, discerning what we learned and whether this building use plan is working for them and us.**
  - d. **Please note: The Life Center is closed to us (Calvary) at 11:00am.**
    - i. We don’t want to walk through the Life Center to our vehicles while GWI’s worship service is going on.
    - ii. So, you need to plan to go out the Prayer Garden door in the Prayer Room, or the Green Awning door by the Rest Rooms to get back to your vehicle. Or, you can exit to the parking lot through the Church Office / Prayer Room entrance.
    - iii. Our children will not have the Life Center for play after church on Sundays. Parents, please remind your children.
  - e. **Sunday lunch meetings for Calvary will need to make adjustments.**
    - i. We will need to make adjustments for Sunday meetings after church since the Cove and the Kitchen/Cove are unavailable.
    - ii. Please contact Cheryl Moses for meeting room options and building reservations.
    - iii. Impacts Discover Calvary Luncheon.
      - 1. We haven’t solved this issue yet.

4. **Communication plan:**

- a. **Deacons:** I shared with the deacons on Tuesday night, May 20, because we already had a meeting scheduled.
  - i. I asked the deacons to pray for the communication process.
  - ii. The deacons gave some initial feedback and asked some good questions, like the impact on deacon lock up on Sunday mornings.
- b. **Pastor Steve:** I shared with Steve this past Wednesday, May 21, at our regular meeting about the decision and communication plan. Steve had valuable feedback.
- c. **Elders:** I sent an email to the elders on Saturday, inviting them into the process.
- d. **Church:** Today, I am making this presentation in our service, casting vision for what we are doing, sharing some of the impact on our congregation, and identifying some adjustments we will make.
- e. **Church:** We will communicate with the church by different means (by letter, email, and/or social media).
  - i. We will make this communication by no later than Tuesday evening, May 27.

5. **Video: Shawn and Sadjah have a video (3 to 5 minutes) to share with us today.**

6. **Other notes and comments:**

- a. **Several years ago, we intensified our prayers for diversity at Calvary.**
  - i. God is answering our prayers in our congregation.
  - ii. Now, we have 3 very distinct cultural expressions of the kingdom of God in our building with Calvary, IPUL, and GWI.
    - 1. **This is more than extending the kingdom; it is an expression of the kingdom.**
    - 2. And, these congregations are more than just tenants. These are friends and partners in the ministry. We have relationships.
- b. With this plan, there will be adjustments along the way.
  - i. And, this building use is a sacrifice on our part.
  - ii. And, God blesses willing sacrifice. God blesses humility that serves others and looks out for the interests of others.
  - iii. And, helping other congregations is worth the inconvenience.

7. **If you have any questions or comments, please send us an email.**

- a. Email: [email@calvaryhouston.com](mailto:email@calvaryhouston.com).