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# Community Covenant Church CHRONICLES

Publication of Community Covenant Church, Upsala, MN

May / June 2021

*Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

*As many of you are now aware, we as a Leadership team have decided to change the wording of our Covid guidelines at the entrances to church. This decision was made with much deliberation and prayer. We want to let each person make their own risk assessment, follow the dictates of that, and not give each other a hard time if that decision differs from our own. We recognize that there are many varying views and opinions surrounding Covid and guidelines. Every position and response has some validity and their solutions are mutually exclusive. We are beginning to see that the only way for us to find common ground is to agree on being kind and respectful, and not shaming anyone else for his or her view.*

*Our hope was that by changing the guidelines we would be more accommodating to those differences.*

***In John 17, Jesus prays that believers would "be one" in "unity" as Jesus was one with the Father so that "the world would know" that Jesus is from the Father and "loves them."*** We are to be united to one another in the midst of differences of opinion through the cross of Christ. Christ is our common ground. The world will bicker, complain, and fight over differences, but our hope and prayer as fellow brothers and sisters is to love one another, respect one another, and model that to our community so they may know that Jesus is Lord.

*In Christ,*

*Leadership Team*



## FORWARD!

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## Don't Be Late!

On Sunday, May 30 we start our summer schedule. For the summer months, there is no Sunday school and the worship service will start at 9:30 AM. See you then!



## GOOD FRIDAY AT THE ABORTION CLINIC

[This devotion was delivered at the Building for Women in downtown Duluth, MN on Good Friday 2011, where abortions are performed and where a prayer vigil for the unborn is held each year.]

After Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, He stood trial twice. He was tried the first time before Jewish authorities, who charged Him with blasphemy (lying about being God). It was incomprehensible to them that He might be God and a human being at the same time, although this was true.

He was tried a second time before Roman authorities, because under imperial law the Jews as a conquered people could not exercise the death penalty, and they needed the Romans to carry out the sentence. Pilate, the Roman governor, realized during the interrogation that there was no basis for a charge deserving death, and tried to release Jesus. But the crowds were agitated and threatened to riot. They cleverly shifted their charge to that of treason (that Jesus, the "King" of the Jews, was somehow a threat to Caesar, which was not true). Under pressure, Pilate folded, and Jesus was condemned to death by crucifixion. He was crucified on the day we call Good Friday. But two different times during the Roman trial Pilate said to the crowd, "I find no basis for a charge against Him (John 18:38 and John 19:6).

When a baby is conceived there is often great joy in a home. But sometimes there is not. There is great agitation instead. Sometimes there are unhappy discussions and yelling and anger and sorrow and hard questions.

Man: "How did this happen?"

Woman: "Well, a few weeks ago you were feeling amorous..."

Man: "I know how it happened! What I mean is why did it happen? Didn't you use protection?"

Woman: "Didn't you?"

And we wonder, along with Mother Teresa, what is so scary about an infant that we would have to protect ourselves from such a tiny person?

Emotions escalate and events move toward a trial. Not a formal one, but a trial just the same. The man, though partly responsible, does not go on trial. And the woman, though partly responsible (except in cases of incest or rape), does not go on trial either. But the woman is usually put on the witness stand several times. No, it is the child, growing inside the woman, who is put on trial.

An impartial observer would be right to say about the child, "I find no basis for a charge..." And yet, under pressure from the man, from family members, from professional counselors, from friends, maybe from the woman too, efforts to set the child free are often abandoned, and the child is handed over to "executioners." And Good Friday, the day on which an innocent person was put to death, comes again and again to our world. In Duluth it happens, on average, fifteen times each week.

And yet there is hope. Addressing the universal need in His own day, and anticipating the need in ours, Jesus said from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). These words changed the world. These words are still changing the world every time someone seeks forgiveness for abortion, or anything else for that matter. **Even better is the hope we have because of Jesus' resurrection. His resurrection from the dead gives us the assurance that, though innocent lives are lost in our time, they are not lost forever. In the time He chooses, innocent souls will live again.** Meanwhile we struggle on bravely, seeking to end injustice against those who have no voice but ours.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 10:00 AM Mom & Kid Time  7:00 PM CW Team	3	4	5
6 9:30 AM Worship	7 8:00 PM Men's Bible Study	8 7:00 PM Youth Team	9 Summer Youth	10	11	12
13 9:30 AM Worship	14	15 7:00 PM Worship Team  July/August Newsletter deadline	16 10:00 AM Mom & Kid Time	17	18 2:00 check-in begins  Family Camp June 18-20 at Lake Beauty Bible Camp	19
20 10:30 AM Worship at LBBC & Baptism 12:00 Lunch @ Camp 2:00 Check out	21 8:00 PM Men's Bible Study	22	23 Summer Youth	24	25  135th Evangelical Covenant Church Virtual Annual Meeting in Garden	26
27 9:30 AM Worship with Communion	28	29 7:00 PM Adult Team	30 10:00 AM Mom & Kid Time	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>Save the date!</b> Church in the park. On Sunday, July 11, we will be having an outdoor service and picnic at the Upsala City Park.</p> </div>		

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 LBBC Workday 9:00 AM Men's Bible Study
2 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship 7:00 PM CLG	3 8:00 PM Men's Bible Study	4 7:00 PM Women's James Study	5 6:15 Check-In 6:30-7:30 PM J Team & Adventureland 6:30 PM Ignite	6 10:00 AM Upsala Ministerium @ Word of Life Church	7 9:30 AM Mom & Kid Time	8 7:30 AM Properties Cleanup 8:30 AM Spring Cleanup & Outreach Day 11:30 AM Lunch
9 <b>Mother's Day</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship 3:00 PM - YFLG 7:00 PM - CLG	10 7:30 PM Leadership Team	11 7:00 PM Properties Team 7:00 PM Women's James Study	12 6:15 Check-In 6:30-7:30 PM J Team & Adventureland <b>Finale</b> 6:30 PM Ignite	13	14	15 11:00 AM Joyce Krivanek Memorial Service
16 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship w/ Communion 8:00 PM Baccalaureate	17 8:00 PM Men's Bible Study	18 7:00 PM Women's James Study	19 6:30 PM Ignite @ Camp Lebanon	20	21 9:30 AM Mom & Kid Time	22
23  9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship 3:00 PM - YFLG 7:00 PM - CLG	24	25 7:00 PM Women's James Study	26 6:30 PM Ignite End of Year Party!!	27	28	29
30 <b>NOTE WORSHIP TIME CHANGE</b> 9:30 AM Worship	31 					

<p><b>Office Hours</b></p> <p>Monday 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM                  Tuesday 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM                  Wednesday 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM                  Thursday 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM                  Friday 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM</p> <p>122 S. Main Street                  PO Box 278                  Upsala, MN 56384                  320-573-2672                  covenant@upsalacov.org                  www.upsalacov.org</p> <p>Evangelical Covenant Church                  www.covchurch.org</p>	<p><b>May Worship Servers</b></p> <p><b>Ushers:</b> Paul &amp; Susie Ripplinger</p> <p><b>Scripture Readers</b>                  2 Michelle Aleckson                  9 Jim Warga                  16 Tanya Olson                  23 Lucy Aleckson                  30 Bruce Warga</p> <p><b>Nursery Workers</b>                  2 Michelle Aleckson, Evie Aleckson                  9 Cheryl Warga, Trygg Aleckson                  16 Lisa Abeler, Joseph Guthrie                  23 Karen Hoffmann, Lucy Aleckson                  30 Richard Blonigen, Anders Aleckson</p>	<p><b>June Worship Servers</b></p> <p><b>Ushers:</b> Ken &amp; Betty Olson</p> <p><b>Scripture Readers</b>                  6 Ken Olson                  13 Aliah Warga                  20 Nancy King                  27 Betty Olson</p> <p><b>Nursery Workers</b>                  6 Jesse Aleckson, Karlee Warga                  13 Laura Blonigen, Audrey Thomas                  20 Lake Beauty Bible Camp Weekend                  (no nursery)                  27 Tim Peterson, Aliah Warga</p>
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**Staying Connected**

We send out a Weekly email Update, offer a bi-monthly newsletter, and print a Sunday bulletin each week. If you aren't receiving them and would like to, call or send us an email with your contact information.

**Publication Deadlines:**

Weekly Update: 8 am Wednesday  
 Sunday Bulletin: 8 am Friday  
 Monthly Newsletter:  
 15th of February, April, June, October, December

**May Birthdays & Anniversaries**

- 1 - Randy Pepin, Roger & Sue Aleckson
- 2- Gabe Hollenbeck
- 4 - Zac Piasecki, Cyd Woller
- 5 - Gustave & Delores Hoffman
- 8 - Brandon Rohde
- 9 - Bruce Warga
- 10 - Audrey Thomas
- 11 - Nancy King
- 12 - Trygg Aleckson, Gabriel Hoffman
- 13 - Brad Halloran
- 14 - Matthew Vandergon, Emil Pundsack
- 20 - Josie Hollermann
- 23 - Sheri Johnson, Shelly Cluka
- 29 - Andrew Ripplinger, Declan Knudtson *Bob & Pam Lemonds*
- 31 - Yasmine Crowe, Jolene Pundsack

**June Birthdays & Anniversaries**

- 4 - Craig & Wanda Erickson
- 5 - Quade Evoniuk
- 6 - Bill Koopmeiners
- 7 - Gustave Hoffman, Ken Olson, Shane & Melinda Hollenbeck, Pastor Steve & Anne Weihsmann
- 9 - Molly Abrahamson, Dylan Warga
- 10 - Nick & Amy Klug
- 13 - Adeline Hollermann
- 15 - Monica Halloran
- 16 - Sophie Blonigen
- 18 - Dwayne & Jolene Pundsack
- 21 - Sarah Thomas
- 23 - Sharon Rohde
- 24 - Phil Johnson
- 25 - Delores Hoffman
- 26 - Dan Voronyak
- 28 - Phil & Mona Johnson
- 29 - Samuel Blonigen



## **IGNITE Student Ministry**

Wednesday from 6:30—9pm

## **Confirmation & DLT**

Sundays from 9:00-10:00am

Youth Room & Classroom #5



As I begin this update, I would love to introduce myself to those who may not know me. My name is Arlene Warga and I have accepted the youth director interim position here at church. I grew up in this church and youth group and I am so happy that I have been able to work with both past and present students here in Upsala. Though we miss Josh and his family here, the other leaders and I are excited to keep the Ignite going as we begin the search for another Youth Pastor for our church. I want to say a huge thank you to the Jr. and Sr. High leaders who have been helping with youth group, Sunday School, and Confirmation! We would not have the programs that we do without you, so thank you and keep up the great work! Our Sunday School also called Disciples Learning Together (DLT) is continuing to walk through "Habitudes" and that is being led by Michael and Rachel Pangrac. Confirmation has also been learning more stories of the Old Testament and that is being led by Susie Ripplinger and Tim Peterson. Confirmation Sunday was great as we were able to see the students' growth and hear their stories! We have started going through the Bible on Wednesday nights, which includes learning the books of the Bible and who the authors/writers are for each book, learning how to use study Bibles to find and answer questions about people in the Bible, and we will be looking at different stories from the Bible as well. We look forward to honoring our graduates next month (even though we are really sad to see them go!) I want to give a huge shout out to Olivia Peterson and Audrey Thomas who have been such a key part of our ministry as they have been great examples to the rest of the youth group! We are gearing up for summer now and we have some pretty fun events on the calendar! I am excited to announce that we will also be starting another youth Bible study, and there is interest from some students to have a Student Leadership Team. Thank you Church family for your prayers and keep them coming—this is such a pivotal time for students, especially with everything going on in the world, and we are so happy to see the excitement from the students that are coming every week! Thank you for the support and keep encouraging the students as you see them!

Arlene Warga

### **Parents of incoming 7th grade students:**

Starting Wednesday, May 12th, your child in 6th grade is invited to join us at Ignite until the end of the school year! They are also invited to join the youth events happening this summer, so keep an eye out for the Summer Youth Schedule coming out soon!

Dear Community Covenant,

My most sincere thanks for being faithful ministry partners.

I have been able to serve in Africa only because of your faithful partnership in ministry. I want to thank you for your investment in sharing God's word through the years. One of the greatest joys of my ten years at Seed Company has been to participate when a local community dedicated THEIR scripture. Whether it was a set of Bible stories, a single book, the New Testament or a full Bible, the celebrations marked a pinnacle moment. Please receive this Mayogo New Testament as a token of our thanks and as a testimony of the dedication, labor and joy of the Mayogo people. (A maroon colored copy may be found at the back of the sanctuary for you to look at)

Just before retirement a colleague with the Jesus Film Project suggested I join their team. As a volunteer member of their Script Translation Strategies team... we will work together with mother tongue speakers who will orally adapt the Jesus Film script and record the audio in their language to produce a Jesus Film usable by the community (in Africa).

I will still need the support of your prayers in my role in this ministry. May you experience the strength and love of God every day.

Galen Johnson



Please pray for Galen as he travels to and around the DR Congo and works with his Jesus Film colleagues. Please pray for the people of this region as they face Ebola outbreaks, jihadist attacks and persecution yet they still pursue translation efforts and practice their Christian faith.

## **JAMAICA UPDATE**

Do you by chance have a boy from Jamaica you still pray for? If so please let Linda Pi know and she will try to update you on their status.

They have:

- exams at school to finish right now
- jobs that don't pay enough to live on
- health issues
- restrictions/curfews that require them to stay indoors Friday through Sunday
- loneliness without family

And they have communicated HOPE, knowing that they are prayed for.

Even if you don't know a specific boy by name, the boys/ young men from Jamaica Christian Boys Home appreciate your prayers.



# Missionary Updates

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**1. OUR DENOMINATION:** The Evangelical Covenant Church is committed to the whole mission of God—extending the whole Gospel to the whole world. In Ethiopia and South Sudan they are caring for communities through 413 churches and other ministries to care for orphan children, teach agricultural skills and lead peace building workshops with leaders from warring tribes.

**2. A LITTLE HISTORY ABOUT JAMES TANG:** James was one of the 400 Sudanese refugees in the 1990s who were relocated to Minnesota & South Dakota. This group formed a Sudanese Covenant Church for themselves at Prairie Hills in Sioux Falls, SD and then established a Covenant Church in Fridley, MN. As time passed they moved to other regions and started new churches. Jerry Rice and Jim Sundholm from the NW Conference office helped to get these churches established with the Sudanese refugees. James Tang has become established with Fridley Covenant in the cities.

**3. HOW JAMES IS GIVING BACK:** In 2006 James Tang began serving as a missionary, through ECC, to Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda working directly with the refugees who are moving due to tribal political issues, famine and drought within their home countries. As a Sudanese man, James is familiar with the culture, experiences and needs of his own people group, deepening his ability to serve.

**4. 2020 AND JAMES TANG:** James Tang was diagnosed with and treated for cancer in the states. His son died suddenly in Africa. He had Covid. His home in Africa was broken into and his belongings were stolen. He has been in Kenya since September in locations where internet service is rarely available.

Through these trials he has continued to serve:

\*Recently he worked with Pastor Matt, President of the South Sudan Church holding a conference with 10,000 youth from South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, sharing a message of forgiveness and reconciliation.

\*He has worked with the leaders within these African countries to work on peace building between tribes.

\* He helps with establishing new churches in Africa.

## 5. HOW CAN WE HELP?

Please be in prayer for James Tang as he serves in Africa.

Pray for more than 2 million South Sudanese refugees who have been displaced from their homes for years and for peace to come so that they may return home.

Pray for the youth who attended the conference at the Tharpaam Refugee Camp to learn about forgiveness and reconciliation, pray that lives will be changed.



# Mom & Kid Time

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## SUMMER MOM & KID TIME SCHEDULE

June 2- Taylor Twitchell Playground  
(Prairie Drive Near Living Hope Church)

June 16 - North Park (Albany)

June 30 - Holdingford School Playground

July 7 - Sauk Centre Splash Pad

July 21 - Lake Charlotte (Long Prairie)

August 4 - Cedar Lake (there will be an entrance fee)

August 18 - Ice Cream at Oak Station

& North Park Playground in Freeport

September 1 - Tour of Somewhere Cool (TBD)

In case of rain, we will meet at the church.

You are welcome to bring a picnic lunch.

All are invited to join us at 10:00 am  
for some summer fun!

## Church Food Shelf

If you are ever in need of food items or toiletries, please check the church Food Shelf that is in the classroom between the Youth Room and Pastor's office. As you can see there are several items in there that can be taken. There are also items in the freezer in the classroom across from the offices. Please stop and take a look as to what there is. Perhaps a neighbor could use some help? Please bring them what they need or ask them to come in and take for themselves. There are plastic bags available at the end of one of the shelves to use for the items.



## Camp Fund

As you register your kids for summer camp, please keep in mind that church has a Camp Fund. Thanks to Covenant Women who gave to the Camp Fund generously this year, the Fund should be able to help 27 youth with \$100 each. It will be first come, first serve but hopefully we can help provide a week of camp to many children. The yellow Camp Fund forms are in the pockets next to the Camp Bulletin Board on the main floor of church. The form goes in church mailbox #141 when finished.



## Bring your church, your friends, your family!

- Help camp prepare for the summer season!
- Check out the new Pole Course!
- Churches can compete for the coveted Hammer Awards!
- Lunch included
- Call the office for more details 320-732-3218

## Family Camp

Family Camp weekends are full of friends, family, wonderful guest speakers, a great trained staff to serve you and your children, and an incredible variety of fun activities for all ages. Family Camp at Lake Beauty has become a tradition for hundreds of people each year, many with 2 or 3 generations sharing the time together in the campground, cabin or retreat center. From inspiring Chapel worship to cozy evening campfires, here is a time and place to reconnect with the ones you love. You can click on the icon above to check out these camps and dates on the website.



## Community Covenant Church Family Camping Weekend

Join us at Lake Beauty Bible Camp June 18-20 for our church Family Camping Weekend. Watch for the brochures in your church box in May.

## Worship at Camp

On Sunday, June 20 at 10:30 AM, we will be having our worship service at Lake Beauty Bible Camp instead of at the church. Mark your calendars!

