

Community Covenant Church
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Community Covenant Church

CHRONICLES

Publication of Community Covenant Church, Upsala, MN

September/October 2022



Wednesday Night Activities

Our Wednesday Night Activities are starting up again on Wednesday, October 5. Wednesday nights are all about fun and games and learning about Jesus for kids age infant - 12th grade.

6:00 PM

Community Meal

6:20 PM

Adventureland (infant– age 5)

6:20 PM

J-Team (K-6th grade)

6:45 PM

Ignite (7th-12th grade)

The Community Meal is open to the public. Watch the Information Center for the opportunity to sign up to bring food. We are also looking for volunteers willing to serve as J-Team leaders and helpers, a registrar to check kids in, and other positions. Contact Bill Abeler if you can help. 320-232-0246. bobberbill@camplebanon.org.



J TEAM

KICK OFF

CARNIVAL!

Wednesday, October 5 6:00–7:35 PM

Grades K–6 at Community Covenant Church

Starts with SUPPER! Adventure Land Kids welcome!

GAMES! BIG INFLATABLE! FUN!

What's inside?	
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“Well, This Is a Surprise...”

It was my plan to write something clever and uplifting for this newsletter, a modern parable perhaps. But I just finished reading a book about suicide, and so that is what this column addresses. I trust the Holy Spirit has some reason for it just now.

The book is entitled, “Take the Dimness of My Soul Away”, by William A. Ritter, a United Methodist pastor who served in a suburb of Detroit and lost a son, Bill, to suicide in May of 1994. Bill was 27, brilliant in some ways, but saddled with attention-deficit disorder. He found it difficult to concentrate and write legal briefs in his chosen legal profession. Depression set in, and on a cross-country drive, he stopped, bought a handgun, walked into a forest and “closed out his future.” The book is a series of five sermons, addressing different aspects of suicide and of healing from it.

In one of the sermons, Ritter suggests that it is not healthy to get stuck in grief. “To whatever degree the dead may be aware of what they have left behind them, I doubt they feel honored by our inability to get beyond them. For if our lives stop when their life stops, death has killed twice.”

Ritter also notes that survivors tend to think of themselves as victims. “Bill’s death happened in my life, but it did not happen to my life. It was not done to me by Bill, by God, or by anybody else. Bill did not die to make me miserable. He did not die to make his mother or sister miserable. He did not die to make his friends miserable. He died because, at that point in his life, he was miserable—in ways we couldn’t fully fathom or successfully penetrate.”

Ritter says people contemplating suicide often think they will be doing others a favor, making life better for others in some way when they “want to leave.” Ritter responds, “I do not tell them I know what ‘wanting to leave’ feels like. But I do tell them that I know what it feels like to be left. That my life hasn’t been better since Bill left. That it’s been worse. For a long time...worse. Years of worse.” He urges those contemplating an irreversible act to “live for others” if not for themselves.

Ritter and his wife, Kris, have “made it through” and have helped others to do the same. Life has never been the same, but it has become good again. There have been opportunities to “share the hope that is within” them because of their faith in Christ. Life has been hard, but Christ has been faithful. His wounds have healed. If you or someone you know is contemplating suicide, please speak up. Seek help in our church or with a professional counselor or from a hotline. I have training in this area. Life is precious.

PS



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship 7:00 PM Prayer & Praise Night	3 7:00 PM Women’s Bible Study <div>NWC Ministerial Association Fall Retreat @ Sugar Lake Lodge in Brainerd</div>	4 3:15 PM Youth Center	5 6:00 PM - Meal 6:20 PM J Team/ Adventureland <div>CARNIVAL</div>	6 3:15 PM Youth Center	7	8
9 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship Jamaica Potato Bake	10 7:00 PM Women’s Bible Study 8:00 PM Men’s Bible Study	11 3:15 PM Youth Center 7:00 PM Properties Team & Worship Team	12 6:00 PM - Meal 6:20 PM J Team Adventureland 6:30 PM Ignite	13 3:15 PM Youth Center 7:00 PM CW Team Meeting	14	15
16 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	17 7:00 PM Women’s Bible Study	18 3:15 PM Youth Center 6:30 PM Congregational	19 6:00 PM - Meal 6:20 PM J Team Adventureland 6:30 PM Ignite	20 3:15 PM Youth Center	21	22
23 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	24 7:00 PM Women’s Bible Study 8:00 PM Men’s Bible Study	25 3:15 PM Youth Center	26 6:00 PM - Meal 6:20 PM J Team Adventureland 6:30 PM Ignite	27 3:15 PM Youth Center	28	29 LBBC Annual Meeting
30 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Harvest Fest Youth Meal to follow service	31					

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Time Change Starting Sunday, September 11 Sunday School for all ages at 9:00 AM Worship Service starts at 10:15 AM				1	2	3
4 9:30 AM Worship	5 LABOR DAY	6	7 6:00 PM Ignite	8 7:00 PM Council Meeting	9 9am-5pm Blood Drive	10
11 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	12 10:00am Craft Day with Peg Peter 8:00 PM Men's Bible Study	13 3:15 PM Youth Center 7:00 PM Properties Team	14 6:00 PM Ignite	15 3:15 PM Youth Center 7:00 PM Leadership Team	16	17
18 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	19	20 3:15 PM Youth Center 6:30 PM Congregational Care Team	21 6:00 PM Ignite	22 3:15 PM Youth Center 5:30 PM Ladies Night Out @ BOHO	23	24 6:30 PM CW Auction
25 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	26 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study 8:00 PM Men's Bible Study	27 3:15 PM Youth Center	28 6:00 PM Ignite	29 3:15 PM Youth Center	30	

Office Hours

Monday 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
 Tuesday 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
 Wednesday 8:00 AM -12:00 PM
 Thursday 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
 Friday 8:00 AM -12:00 PM

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Evangelical Covenant Church
 www.covchurch.org

September Worship Servers

Ushers: Jim & Sam Warga

Nursery Workers

4. Richard Blonigen & Trygg Aleckson
 11. Elizabeth V & Lucy Aleckson
 18. Jesse Aleckson & Aliah Warga
 25. Laura Blonigen & Isabella Warga

Prayer

4. Steve Weihsmann
 11. Roger Johnson
 18. Sandi Soderberg
 25. Randy Pepin

Scripture

- Robin Block
 Wanda Erickson
 Trygg Aleckson
 Linda Pepin

October Worship Servers

Ushers: Leif & Suzi Johnson

Nursery Workers

2. Tim Peterson & Evie Aleckson
 9. Cheryl Warga & Nora Hollermann
 16. Michelle Aleckson & Isabella Warga
 23. Karen Hoffman & Lucy Aleckson
 30. Harvest Fest (No Nursery)

Prayer

2. Steve Weihsmann
 9. Karen Hoffman
 16. Joan Olson
 23. Steve Woller
 30. Anne Weihsmann

Scripture

- Lucy Aleckson
 Evan Yorek
 Benjamin Vandergon
 Cyd Woller
 Matthew Vandergon

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, August, October, December

September Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 - Kirt Olson
 4 - Paul & Susie Ripplinger
 5 - John Woldstad
 6 - Mark Koopmeiners
 8 - James Warga, Patty Peterson
 10 - Karlee Warga
 10 - Matthew & Karen Hoffman
 14 - Dave Piasecki
 17 - Sam & Tina Yorek
 26 - Joan Olson
 28 - Todd Prout
 29 - Erica Koopmeiners
 29 - Bruce & Cheryl Warga
 30 - Calvin Wolbeck

October Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 - Roger & Sharon Johnson
 2 - Lisa Abeler, Susie Olson,
 3 - Evan Yorek
 5 - Steve Sundquist
 6 - Debbie Sundquist,
 Dennis Olson
 8 - Steve Woller
 10 - Shelly Schumer
 12 - Steve & Debbie Sundquist
 Dustin & Angela Hollermann
 14 - Ken Abrahamson
 17 - Annette Guthrie
 18 - Olivia Peterson
 21 - Steve & Sheri Johnson
 22 - Nina Prout
 23 - Mark & Ginny Koopmeiners

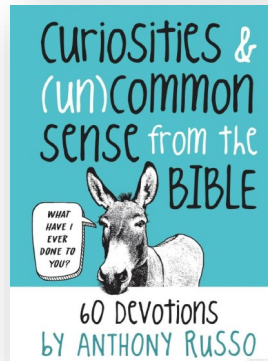
- 24 - Nicholas Guthrie
 25 - Luanne Cluka,
 Pastor Steve Weihsmann
 25 - Jim & Sam Warga
 26 - Craig Erickson
 31 - Matthew Hoffman





SUMMER IS GONE! :(Ignite's summer was BUSY to say the least, but it was a good one. We met almost every Wednesday throughout the summer and had a good time hanging out and doing things like swimming, fishing, boating, volleyball, etc. But also hearing devotionals from our book "Curiosities & (un)common sense from the Bible" by Anthony Russo.

We also had many students go to camp either as campers or as junior staff/D3, which is a great opportunity for them to learn about God and leadership.



- MUUUUCE was AWESOME!

We sent 10 students and 4 leaders to MUUUUCE and it was so great to see the students have fun, but also really take away good things from the chapel services. Oh and Zach also got pied in the face A LOT.

-MISSION TRIP Pastor Zach and 6 students volunteered at Castaway Club Camp in Detroit Lakes during a week set aside for disabled people and sponsored by Joni & Friends.



COMING UP THIS FALL

Wow! It seems like we were just planning summer events and now we are looking at fall events. Here are some dates to know about.

- **IGNITE will start back up Sept. 7th, 6-9pm**
- **Sunday School will start back up Sept. 11th, 9am**

As always I highly encourage anyone with a student in IGNITE to join our Remind text chain ———>

Want to stay updated on IGNITE announcements?

For Texts

Enter this number
81010 ?

Text this message
@igniteccc ?

For Emails

Send an email to
zach@upsalacov.org



Fall Camp Events

WOMEN'S RETREAT: September 16-18

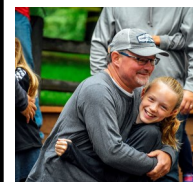
Lake Beauty's annual women's retreat happens at the most beautiful time of year. Open to adults and teens (grade 9 and up). Enjoy opportunities for fellowship, fun, creativity and inspiring worship. Check out the details at lbbc.com, then register online or give Camp a call at 320-732-3218.



SENIOR ADULT DAY: Tuesday, September 13

Spend a relaxing day at Lake Beauty taking in the fall colors and enjoying the company of others. Reconnect with friends, tour the grounds and catch up on all that is going on at Lake Beauty Bible Camp. Look forward to a wonderful meal and entertainment by Allen & Kyrsten Carlson. Arrive at 9:30 and depart at 2:00. Free of charge! Please make advanced reservations for yourself or for a group by contacting Camp by September 6th. 320-732-3218 or lbbc@lbbc.com

Dads 'N' Daughters September 9-11, 2022



ened and encouraged!

Join us at Camp Lebanon for a great father-daughter weekend and invest in one of the most important relationships in your family's life! The bond between father and daughter is so important in our world today, and this retreat provides opportunity for that relationship to be strengthened and encouraged!

Fall Young At Heart Retreat September 12-15, 2022



Our Fall Young At Heart Retreat comes right on the end of our exciting Summer Camp season. Head up for your own taste of summer at Camp Lebanon – ride the zipline, take a nature walk, or sit by the fire and roast some s'mores! And, as always, enjoy daily hymn singing, solid teaching from God's Word, and dear fellowship with your old and new friends. We can't wait to welcome you to Camp Lebanon this Fall!



Men's Retreat September 16-18, 2022



Schedule a weekend away to unplug, retreat with other guys, and experience God away from the busyness of life. Join with a room full of men singing loudly in worship, enjoy fellowship with other men, and dive deep into God's Word together.

Women's Retreat September 23-25 & 30-2, 2022



Our Fall Women's Retreats at Camp Lebanon are refreshing and inspiring, offering incredible opportunities for fellowship, instruction, and worship. Treat yourself to this delightful experience on the north shores of Cedar Lake, during one of the most beautiful times of the year.

Missionary Updates

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Gary & Pauline Carlson have been missionaries that we have supported in Japan for decades. They are transitioning back to the U.S. as they continue to work with the Japanese ministries. Gary & Pauline will be with us on Nov. 6.

Here's a little about the work there:

When Covenant missionaries began their work in Japan in 1949, the focus was on evangelism and planting new churches. As that work continued, there was an understanding that seminary training was needed for those in the churches whom God was calling to become pastors. Property was purchased in Meguro Ward in Tokyo, and Covenant Seminary began in 1952.

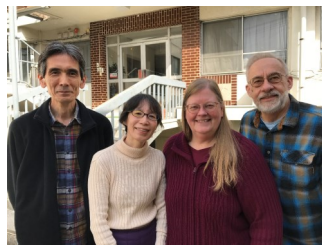
The current student enrollment is about 70, making it the largest evangelical seminary in Japan. Students come from many denominations and independent churches, including the Japan Covenant. All students begin with Basic Level courses. While some finish their studies with this level, most go on to the Specialized Level and study in preparation to become pastors. Others go on from the Basic Level to the Christian Education/Youth Ministry track. Students are able to study at their own pace. It is not unusual for graduates to have taken 8-10 years to complete their course work. While Covenant Seminary is an institution owned and operated by the Japan Covenant Church, the teaching faculty come from the Covenant and also from other denominations and independent churches. One of the requirements for teachers is that they be involved, at least part-time, in the pastoral ministry of a local church.

Gary was privileged to teach missiology (the study of God's mission to redeem his creation) at Covenant Seminary for twelve years. He taught 94 students during that time! These are men and women who are now serving God in a variety of churches and other Christian ministries. His connection to Covenant Seminary did not end when he finished teaching in March of this year. During July he will be teaching a four-part online seminar on intentional transitional ministry. It's all in Japanese.

Our prayer requests

We always thank God for those of you who pray for our work. Here are our requests:

- * for the ongoing work of church life at Shonan Community Church and Shin Akitsu Christ Church
- * for Pauline as she finishes her work on the board of directors of Christian Academy in Japan. The school is in the process of welcoming a new head of school this summer.
- * for Gary in continuing to write a book on intentional transitional ministry for the Japan Covenant Church - for Grace Shim, recently elected at the Covenant's Annual Meeting, to become our new Executive Minister of Serve Globally!
- * finally, a more personal word. We are thankful for the arrival of our sixth grandchild, a second daughter born to our son Andy and his wife Cami. They live just outside of Tokyo



Gary & Pauline with seminary dean Yuji Sekino and his wife Kiyomi

Youth Center News

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- The Upsala Youth Center got underway last April and ran through the rest of the school year. It was a good time where we had between 5 and 10 students on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school.

- Once the summer rolled around we took a break with the intention of reopening in the fall, which is exactly what we will be doing.

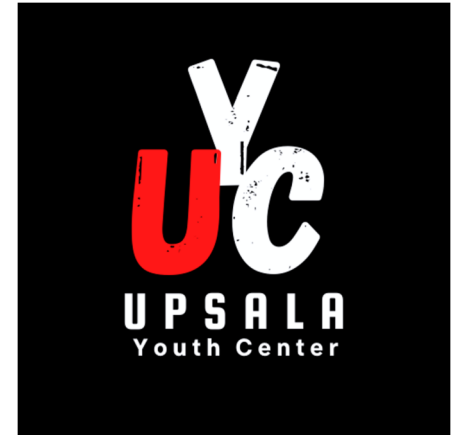
- On **September 13**, the Upsala Youth Center will **REOPEN** for all Students in 7-12 grade. Hang out time will be **3:15-7pm**. Every Tuesday and Thursdays throughout the school year.

- We will also be looking into having 5th quarter events after USA Home football games and holding them at the Youth Center hoping to create a safe and fun place for students to hang out after the games.

- If you would like to be put on the list of Volunteers to help at the Youth Center or if you would like to volunteer to bring/make treats for the students, please let Zach know so he can make a list of those helping out.

To get Remind update texts on the Youth Center please text @upsalayc to 81010

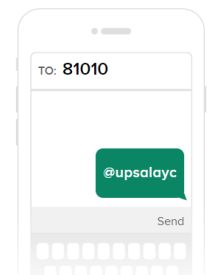
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Tell people to text @upsalayc to the number 81010

They'll receive a welcome text from Remind.

If anyone has trouble with 81010, they can try texting @upsalayc to (757) 337-4602.



Greetings Women of Community Covenant

Starting September 1, for three months (September, October, and November), join Secret Pals— Fall Edition! Any woman in the church, post high school, can participate. Pick up your participation card from Wanda Erickson or the church office. Return on or before Aug. 28. We will assign the Secret Pals and let you know whom to bless in these 3 months of 2022. Watch for a big reveal gathering sometime in January. I know that is a long time to wait, but Christmas eats into our meeting times. There is no requirement for gifts, of course. But we know some of you may want to do this. For that, we will fill a box with potential gifts from which you may choose to give to your Pal. Of course, you may choose to get your own gifts - homemade is perfect for this project. There will also be Secret Pal greeting cards that are for use by any Pal. Questions? See Wanda Erickson

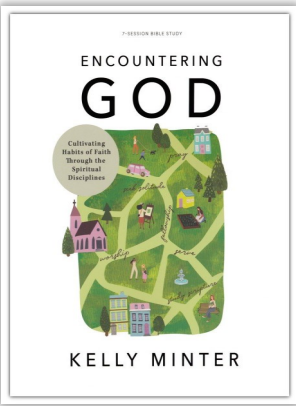
CW Auction September 24



The annual Covenant Women Auction is coming up soon! The auction will be held on Saturday, September 24 at 6:30 PM. Mark your calendar now you so don't miss it. If you have special items that you want listed on the Auction Bill, please contact Wanda Erickson by September 4 at bookreader777@gmail.com. The CW auction raises funds for activities our church women support. In the past, funds have gone to missionaries, Wednesday night meals, camp fund and youth initiatives. Items donated should be new, like new or handmade such as woodworking or embroidered or baked. We LOVE those baked goods! Each family will be asked to bring a snack to share that night. Come join the fun!

Women's Bible Study

Join us as we study the Word of God together. Our Fall study will be "Encountering God" by Kelly Minter. Here's more information: Practice His Presence - Spiritual disciplines are essential to a more vibrant spiritual life and knowing God more intimately. Join Kelly Minter in this 7-session Bible study as she unpacks the biblical foundation for these sacred habits along with approachable ways to practice disciplines like prayer, study, worship, rest, simplicity, generosity, celebration, and many more. Instead of being just one more thing on your to-do list, you'll find that these habits of faith can actually create more margin in your life - providing peace and rest as you walk closer with Jesus. Whether you have been a follower of Jesus for a long time, or are a new believer, this study has something for you! We will meet Monday evenings from 7:00-9:00 pm, beginning September 26. If you aren't able to make all the sessions, there are audio or DVD options available. There will be books available before the first study for \$10.00 (normally \$17.00). Sign-up on the sign-up sheet (available soon) so we know how many books to order. Contact Cyd Woller if you have any questions - 763-350-0292. I look forward to studying the Word with you!



Ladies Night Out

September 22 at BOHO Café in Holdingford. Car Pool will leave church at 5 PM or meet at BOHO Café at 5:30 PM. Sign up at the information center.



Save The Date



The CW Christmas banquet will be on Thursday, December 1 and will feature "Triple Grace".

The Christmas Cookie Sale will be Saturday, December 10.



Harvest Fest Sunday
October 30, 2022
10:15 AM

Theater For The Thirsty

Mark your calendars as you won't want to miss this Celebration Sunday with Jeremiah & Vanessa Gamble. The youth will be providing a meal after the service. We ask that you bring a pie to share for the dessert.



Theater for the Thirsty is husband and wife duo Jeremiah and Vanessa Gamble who have a passion for creating and performing original works. They will be presenting **This is My Story, This is My Song** which is a new musical re-discovering the great hymns of the faith and the stories behind them. A dozen beloved hymns are brought to vibrant life— featuring gorgeous acappella singing, stunning historical costumes, and richly realized characters. Spanning three-hundred years and five countries, this timeless musical is an inspiring reminder that there are some things worth singing about forever.