

# Covenant Care & Connect

Mid-April 2020

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## From the Desk of Pastor Dan ...

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 1:2-4

In my younger years, I loved to play basketball (still do). In order to be a better basketball player, I did some things that I didn't like as much so that I could be a better basketball player. One of those things was weightlifting. Weightlifting is a great way to build up muscle mass and increase strength. This is accomplished by exercising against resistance. For example, when I would do curls for my biceps, I would raise the bar to my chest by lifting it up against the resistance of gravity. Weightlifting required hard work and discipline, but it was well worth it. I was able to build up physical strength and endurance and improve as an athlete.

My friends, that is exactly what can happen to us spiritually when we face the trials that come into our lives through faith in Jesus. Trials can make us stronger. For example, rather than being discouraged and defeated by COVID-19, we face it with the faith we have in Jesus. In Jesus' name we choose faith over fear. In the power of the Risen Lord, we join him in looking for ways to turn a disaster into a miracle of his grace and love. When we do that, we develop perseverance, spiritual staying power. We become stronger not weaker. We become more positive, not negative. We mature in our faith and become more and more like Jesus, who we live to glorify.

Right now, we are in the midst of a universal trial. Absolutely everyone is being tested and tried: old, young, rich, poor, Christ-follower, agnostic, everyone. COVID-19 impacts us all. We are all facing trials of many kinds. The question is, what is the response of the Christ-follower? The world around us is watching. How does the believer in Jesus deal with uncertainty, isolation, illness and fear of the unknown? Do we respond in anxiety and fear? Or do we persevere in unwavering faith in Jesus as we strengthen our faith muscles? Friends, I encourage you to use this time as an opportunity to build your faith spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. Then as we become stronger in faith, we will be more useful for our master Jesus as he reaches out to a broken and hurting world.

In His grip,

Pastor Dan

## WAYS TO GIVE

- Give Online

[ifallscovenant.org/give](http://ifallscovenant.org/give)  
(Checking/Credit/Debit)

- Give by Mail

1631 1st Ave E

- Give by Text Message

Text 'give' to 763.762.9845  
(Credit/Debit)

## Living our Finest Hour

As we collectively live through this defining moment it is impressive to see how this congregation is responding. As you'll see in this newsletter update, our pastors, care providers, and leaders are working in new ways to keep us relationally connected and spiritually alive. When this emergency is behind us, we will still remember our thoughtful on-line worship including communion, and how Easter's message of resurrection transcends pageantry. More than just getting through this, we are re-discovering the depth and power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please allow me a few helpful suggestions we are learning in this unprecedented time:

1. We need to connect with God like we are eating a meal. Everything we do - a prayer, a Bible reading, an on-line message, a song - is nourishment for our daily spiritual health.
2. We need to stay connected with others, by chatting from a distance, connecting through computer gatherings, and reaching out through phone calls. We need each other.
3. We need to care for body and mind through regular exercise, along with excursions into nature at least two hours each week. God's creation is a balm in these stressful times.
4. We need to keep a regular schedule by setting daily goals and staying productive. This includes keeping the lid on how much news and media we consume. Do positive things.

We are caring well, our church's finances are strong, and God's kingdom remains unshaken.

Alan Johnson, Chair



To find out information about what section, verse, and Bible story is assigned for the week, please go to the church's website, [ifallscovenant.org](http://ifallscovenant.org), and click on the Awana -at-Home link. It will bring you to a page with directions for the current week.



In the last newsletter I mentioned that Teens is going virtual on Zoom chats. I can tell you that it has gone wonderfully!

We have started to do Middle School students at 7-8pm Wednesdays and Sr High students at 8-9pm.

If your student has not gotten involved in this make sure they contact me so I can get them on our group texts. My number is 218-209-6293.

One sad update is that due to COVID-19, our beloved Sarah from Estonia had to go home last week. We will miss her and pray for her. Thank you to Wes and Lynn Peterson for being such a Christ-like host family for her and Natalie.

Pastor Seth

*thankful*

## Youth Sunday School



**Preschool**— for 2-4 year olds

**Primary**— for 5-6 year olds

**Elementary** — 7-10 year olds

**Middle School** — 11-13 year olds

These lessons, found at [www.ifallscovenant.org/kids-konnect](http://www.ifallscovenant.org/kids-konnect) will help provide a way for your kids to 'konnect' with God at home on Sundays or sometime during the week. Be sure to participate as a family.

Those who are in our **Confirmation** class (grades 7 & 8) are asked to continue reading 1 chapter each week in their textbook and to answer the questions that relate in their binders.

## Ways to Participate in the Worship Services

Have you been tuning into our worship services? On Sundays our service is available on ...

**Website** — [www.ifallscovenant.org](http://www.ifallscovenant.org). You can watch the service anytime after 8am.

**Facebook**— on the church's Facebook page, IFalls Covenant Church, after 8am.

**TV** — Midco channel 7. The service will be shown throughout the day along with other local services..

**Radio** — on 'The Bridge' radio at 10:30am on 91.9FM.

\*\*You can also listen to past messages on the radio weekdays at 6:30pm on 91.9FM.

If you are in contact with isolated folks, please ask if they know how to find the worship services so that no one misses out.

While nothing replaces worshiping with you all in our building again, this is a great time for the church as the good news is being preached all over the internet, TV and radio. Pray that many will come to Jesus!

