



Church Without Walls

"I watched your message from last Sunday (here in my home state of Indiana). I enjoyed it. Faithful work. Loving deeds. Enduring hope."

Those were the words from an email I got recently. I wanted to encourage you with that because it is hard to see what God is doing when we are confined to our houses. Despite what is going on in the world, lots of people are tuning into our services and hearing the message of Christ who have never stepped foot in our building. We may never even know who is watching or listening but I'm reminded of Isaiah 55.11 that says "My Word never returns to me empty, it always accomplishes what I sent it out to do."

During this time of COVID-19 we have done seven services outside of our church building. We have been calling it Church Without Walls. Our services are online on our website at ifallscovenant.org and Facebook, on TV throughout the day on Sunday on KCC-TV channel 7 (on Midcontinent cable TV), and on the radio at 10:30am Sundays on 91.9FM. 91.9FM also offers previously recorded sermons weekdays at 6:30pm called Church Without Walls. I've talked to many of you and found out people are tuning into services through all those options.

I want to recognize people who are behind the scenes with our Church Without Walls services. I want to thank Elly Nelson who has been editing all of our videos, Tim Nelson who has gotten our services on TV and the radio and Stacy Hall who has gotten them on the church website. I want to thank people who have helped with the recordings like Stacy Hall, Will Davies and Mike Carney. I want to thank the musicians and singers like Tom and Jen Vollom, Cathy Blankman, Dave Austin, Kathy Tompkins, and all the singers who helped with the Easter Zoom Choir! Thank you to people who have helped with other service parts like Anne Homkes, Al and Elaine Johnson, Pastor Ed, Beth Nelson, Rachel Anderson and the Wulff family. Thank you to Pastor Dan for making the effort to record your messages and encouraging us at this time. I also want to thank the people who have been sharing the service on your Facebook pages and reaching people that way.

Nothing replaces joining together under one roof to worship God and I am eager for when we are able to do that again. Just imagine how precious that will be to us. In the meantime thank you for continuing to be faithful in taking part in the worship and ministry of the church. The real Church Without Walls is every single one of you being the hands and feet of Christ on a day-to-day basis. So thank you!

Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

Pastor Seth



May Birthdays & Anniversaries

- May 1: Milo Larson
Sixta Davies
Benson Sather
Abbie Sather
- May 2: Kathleen Ruelle
Anna Levene
Joel Pengergast
- May 3: Brady Hjelle
- May 4: Brooklyne Dowty
Larry & Starr Oustad
- May 5: Nieuw Hultstrand
Kathy Schultz
- May 8: Remi Veert
Jenna Averill
David Hebig
Stephen Jones
- May 9: Allen & Valerie Peterson
- May 10: Braden Skifstad
- May 11: Dave & Barb Cassibo
- May 12: Terri Anderson
- May 14: Gordon Dobbs
Jeannine Hegg
Wally & Carol Clement
- May 16: Dave & Barb Herrly
- May 17: Jeff Staudahar
- May 18: Polly Hebig
Heather Hall
Mary Hummel
Phyllis Klein
Jerry Nyborg
Penny Zoupas
- May 19: Joe Griffith
Tom & Melissa Holt
- May 20: Laurel Marschalk
Samantha Holm
- May 21: Brock & Jenna Averill
- May 22: Faith Johnson
Rita Forsythe
Allison Zika
- May 23: Kathy Galusha
Kim Morrison
Lucy Zika
- May 24: Trevor Galusha
- May 25: Bryce Hjelle
Wendy St. Peter
- May 27: Walter & Joyce Kelly
Austin & Anne Homkes
- May 29: Charis Boyer
Chloe Hufnagle
Roger Williams
- May 30: Lindsy Christenson
Rod & Beth Enns

Update from the Church Leadership Team

While we have been sheltering in place nature has been bursting with life; wildlife has no idea these are dangerous times. So, I hope that part of your routine includes time outdoors where you will be warmly greeted! The Creator is very evident through his creation, and being with him in nature will lift your spirit.

In working with our leadership team via multiple Zoom meetings, we first want to share that we are so pleased by the creative on-going adaptations of our pastors and lay leaders. We hope you are being nurtured by the on-line worship services, youth meetings, and other gatherings you may be part of. Despite the many hardships of this time, we can be sure some positive take-aways will also emerge from this collective experience.

Secondly, we reaffirm our early decision to abide by all the recommendations and mandates established by federal, state, and local governances. Our leadership team believes our willing participation is both a biblical standard and a way of caring for our community and loved ones.

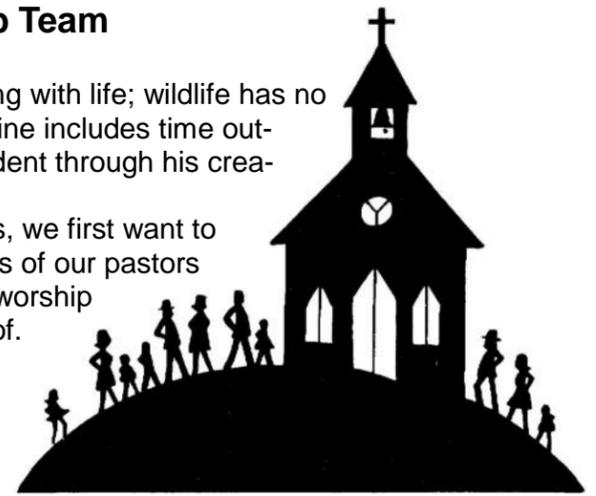
We are also glad to share that church finances are strong, so thank you for your faithful giving. In addition to meeting our operating expenses we have also completed 93% of our \$70,000 mission goal. Our strong financial picture has allowed us to bypass the Covid-19 federal loan program for non-profits, though Bluewater Covenant Bible Camp did apply and received 100% of their request as a back-up plan. If you hope to attend camp, register anyway, and if camp is cancelled you will receive a full refund. We still await the camp board's final decision on the summer, and appreciate Justin Carney's representation of this congregation on that board.

Relational closeness is crucial despite social distancing, so we rejoice in the six care teams that have been formed under Pastor Ed Natysin's leadership, who are phone calling certain vulnerable individuals within the congregation. Not every person in the church is receiving a call since many are able to get out, but if you would like to be added to the list, or assist in making calls, please contact Pastor Ed (417.0653) or call the church office. Our district ministers (I Falls, Baudette, Big Falls, Northome, Bemidji, Bluewater) are also staying connected with special assistance from our Northwest Conference staff. And in case you haven't heard, the annual meetings of both our conference and national church have been cancelled.

Some have wondered about weddings, and the three that are currently scheduled are moving forward within the guidelines. This may mean that small ceremonies will be followed by larger celebrations once the restrictions are lifted. Our church building, by the way, is being regularly cared for, but is not being used for larger gatherings until we receive the green light from government officials.

Without question, these are hard times, and regrettably, we are in this for a long haul. It is too soon to assess all the implications for relationships, economy, mental and spiritual health, and there are undoubtedly many other impacts that will be discovered. Be assured that once the pandemic has ended, the work of recovery will only be beginning. As the leadership team for this congregation, we are in a time of preparation for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. May our Lord be praised in all circumstances, including this one.

Alan Johnson, Chairman



Baby Bottle Campaign

Start collecting your pocket change!

Northern Options for Women will soon be holding their annual Baby Bottle Campaign. When? Mothers Day to Fathers Day.

Questions? You can contact the NOFW at 285.7673, text 218.283.8599 or visit them at 923 5th Street.



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.ifallcovenant.org/kids-konnect will help provide a way for your kids to 'konnnect' with God at home on Sundays or sometime during the week. Be sure to participate as a family.

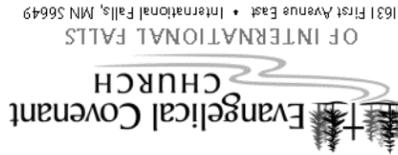
Those who are in our **Confirmation** class (grades 7 & 8) are asked to continue reading 1 chapter each week in their textbook and to answer the questions that relate in their binders.



May Reading Schedule

New Testament		Old Testament	
▶ MARK	▶ 2 COR.	▶ PSALMS	▶ 1 SAMUEL
1. <input type="checkbox"/> 9:33-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 95	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2
2. <input type="checkbox"/> 10:1-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:12-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 96	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5
3. <input type="checkbox"/> 10:17-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 97	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-8
4. <input type="checkbox"/> 10:35-52	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 98	<input type="checkbox"/> 9-10
5. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-13
6. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:12-26	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 100	<input type="checkbox"/> 14
7. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:27-33	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 101	<input type="checkbox"/> 15-16
8. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 102	<input type="checkbox"/> 17-18
9. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:13-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 103	<input type="checkbox"/> 19-20
10. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:28-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 104	<input type="checkbox"/> 21-23
11. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 105	<input type="checkbox"/> 24-25
12. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:1-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 11:1-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 106:1-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 26-28
13. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:14-31	<input type="checkbox"/> 11:16-33	<input type="checkbox"/> 106:24-48	<input type="checkbox"/> 29-31
14. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:32-37	<input type="checkbox"/> 12:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 107	▶ 2 SAMUEL
15. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 12:11-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 108	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2
16. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:12-31	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 109	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4
17. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:32-42	▶ GALATIANS	<input type="checkbox"/> 110	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-7
18. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:43-52	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 111	<input type="checkbox"/> 8-10
19. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:53-65	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 112	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-12
20. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:66-72	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 113	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
21. <input type="checkbox"/> 15:1-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:15-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 114	<input type="checkbox"/> 14-15
22. <input type="checkbox"/> 15:16-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 4:1-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 115	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-17
23. <input type="checkbox"/> 15:33-41	<input type="checkbox"/> 4:21-31	<input type="checkbox"/> 116	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-19
24. <input type="checkbox"/> 15:42-47	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 117	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-21
25. <input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:13-26	<input type="checkbox"/> 118	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
	<input type="checkbox"/> 6		<input type="checkbox"/> 23-24

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From the Desk of Pastor Dan ...

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.
Isaiah 40:28-31

I think that the above Scripture could describe a lot of us right now: weary and tired. We are weary of sheltering at home and not being able to go to work and having to wear face masks and not being able to be close to the people in our lives that we love and enjoy. And we are tired; sick and tired of hearing all of the COVID-19 bad news day after day. We are sick and tired of wondering and waiting for the permission to return to normal life safely. We are anxiously waiting to get on with our lives and our delayed plans, which were so rudely interrupted by this pandemic. I don't know about you, but I don't like to wait. I want to get on with my life.

So what do you do when changing any of the above is out of your control? What do you do if you have no choice but to wait? That is where God enters the picture. We choose to refocus our waiting. Instead of waiting on the timeline of a virus or the wisdom of leaders trying to deal with the virus, we wait on the Lord. While we may be weary or tired, God is not. He is the Everlasting God, the LORD of all and the Creator of the ends of the earth. And even though it may feel like the virus is in charge, nothing could be further from the truth. God has been in charge all along and He is in charge right now. We wait on Him and look to him for strength and power; strength to endure and power to overcome.

Today you need to hear the good news that God has promised to all who wait on him: We will gain new strength. We will soar like eagles. We will run. We will walk. We will get stronger, not weaker. And instead of focusing just on us, we will join God in loving and reaching out to the weary and lost people around us with God's love and grace.

In His grip,
Pastor Dan