



Youth Pastor Search Committee Update

Once again I come to you representing the Associate Pastor for Youth search committee. Since my last update we have met as a committee a few times. In those times we have looked over resumes and job descriptions from various applicants. We also sent along to all the applicants a questionnaire. So we have also reviewed the questionnaires as well. Coming up here on October 31 we will cease accepting resumes and applications. We will then prayerfully and methodically look through and consider the applicants. We are hopeful and thankful for those who have responded to us. We ask that you continue to pray for God's guidance as this process now becomes more personal not just for us but for the applicants. We hope to be in the interview phase in the coming weeks. So thank you Church. Keep trusting God with us in this process.

Valerie J Peterson,
Committee Communicator

Appreciation Amidst Leadership Opportunities



When I was privileged to present Pastor Seth with a two hundred dollar gift card from the congregation during October's "Pastor Appreciation Month," expressing appreciation for our new lead pastor was not a hard thing to do. The fact is, I have been thanking God for calling Pastor Seth into this role from the moment he gave us his "yes." This gift card was added to personal expressions from many others, and the only thing missing was our appreciation potluck.

If I might speak personally after four decades of pastoral ministry, during which I have known and observed hundreds of pastors, there are certain strengths and qualities Pastor Seth exhibits that make him something very special. For example, he not only began his ministry with a very significant sermon series on our "relational covenant," which without his emphasis might have been lost and forgotten, but he followed it up by challenging our Leadership Team to adopt its principles as our standard operating procedure, which we intend to do.

In his second sermon series entitled "I've Got Issues," he is courageously addressing mental health

issues like trauma, anxiety (which I deal with), depression, anger, and abandonment issues. These are the issues that hold us back from true discipleship unless we are able to receive God's help to overcome them. And the current pandemic has only brought to the surface many old issues and wounds we thought we had put to rest.

In a manner I am beginning to think of as "typical Seth," he asked our Leadership Team to approve a seed money investment of \$1,000 to assist people with mental health treatment. We gave our approval, realizing that we must also establish a protocol for how we disperse funds and offer additional support as people move toward health. Pastor Seth's leadership, with congregational financial support, envisions the development of a whole new level of ministry, and with the crisis of this pandemic, the timing could not be more crucial.

In other business, we are working with realtors toward the sale of an acre and a half piece of property on Lynx Island (Black Bay) which had been donated to the church. We approved the hiring of Skip Ohlquist as custodial replacement for Kathy Galusha, who also deserves a great deal of appreciation for her fifteen years of service from which she now retires. We are also working on the renewal of a Benevolence Committee which follows certain guidelines to disperse funds for tangible needs.

The early signs of winter may signal the challenges we will face as we develop new strategies for ministry during COVID-19. Let us not forget, however, that in the faithfulness of God, Spring always follows Winter. God has his loving eye upon us as we endeavor to do his will.

Alan Johnson,
Chair



Properties Update ...

Hello church family,
I wanted to take this time to give you a brief update on the church building. If you happen to go by the 17th street steps, you will notice a new hand railing.

The supports for the old railing were starting to rust and break away from the concrete, so it was time for it to be replaced. The second thing I would like to mention will be coming up later this fall/winter. We will be replacing the gym lights with more efficient LED lights. We will also be installing dimmer switches, which will be especially useful during weddings and other special events.

Thank you for all your support,
Justin Carney



Mental Health Resources

Do you need to talk to someone? Struggling with mental issues? Below are a few resources that may help:

- * Celebrate Recovery— Tuesdays, Nov 10 & 24, 7pm
- * Pastor Seth — call or email him to set up a time
- * AVA (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse) —
 - Stacy Hall; 218-324-2709
- * Christian Counselors —
 - Int'l Falls
 - Mary Einarson; (612-226-9301)
 - Mary@spectrumcounselingmn.com
 - Bemidji
 - Stellar Human Services (218-444-2845)
 - www.stellher.com
 - Robin Hewitt (218-751-0887)
 - Derrick Houle (218-751-8670)

If you are interested in counseling and need financial assistance, please contact Pastor Seth.

Mental Health Crisis Line: 800-422-0045
Text: Text MN to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor



Warm Welcome...

A warm welcome to our newest staff member, Skip Ohlquist! He will be serving as our custodian & keeping our facility ready for the many groups that use it on a weekly basis.

Monday Night Prayer Meeting

Join others each Monday night at 6:30pm in the lower lobby area for a time of prayer.



Financial Update

Your gifts this month helped purchase \$150 in gas cards (5 X \$30 each). They will be available for when individuals need fuel assistance.

The average weekly general fund receipts for September were \$6,092 (weekly budget of \$7,008). However, our spending against the budget is way down. We have been ahead of the game every month that has gone by.

The average weekly missions fund receipts for September were \$1,658 (weekly budget of \$1366).

Thanks for your continued generosity.

Blessings,
Nick Steines

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Int'l. Falls, MN
Permit No. 1

Return Service Requested

New Testament		Old Testament	
▶ JOHN	▶ PETER	▶ JOB	▶ EZEKIEL
1. <input type="checkbox"/> 7:37-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3
2. <input type="checkbox"/> 7:45-53	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:12-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-8
3. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 9-12
4. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:12-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:10-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 13-15
5. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:21-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:17-22	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 16
6. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:31-47	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 17-19
7. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:48-59	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:10-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-21
8. <input type="checkbox"/> 9:1-12	▶ 1 JOHN	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 22-23
9. <input type="checkbox"/> 9:13-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9:1-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 24-26
10. <input type="checkbox"/> 9:26-41	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:5-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 9:21-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 27-28
11. <input type="checkbox"/> 10:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 29-30
12. <input type="checkbox"/> 10:11-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-32
13. <input type="checkbox"/> 10:22-42	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:18-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 33-34
14. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:1-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:24-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-37
15. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:17-37	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	<input type="checkbox"/> 38-39
16. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:38-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:11-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 15:1-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 40-41
17. <input type="checkbox"/> 11:45-57	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:19-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 15:17-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 42-44
18. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 4:1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-47
19. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:12-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 4:7-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	<input type="checkbox"/> 48
20. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:20-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	▶ DANIEL
21. <input type="checkbox"/> 12:37-50	▶ 2 JOHN	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2
22. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4
23. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:12-17	▶ 3 JOHN	<input type="checkbox"/> 21:1-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-6
24. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:18-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 21:22-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 7-8
25. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:31-38	▶ JUDE	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-7		<input type="checkbox"/> 10-12
	<input type="checkbox"/> 8-16		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 17-25		

The



Messenger

November 2020

1631 1st Ave. E • Intl. Falls, MN • 56649 • 218 283 3365



A Cup of Coffee with Pastor Seth . . .

I was driving to my parents' house one Sunday afternoon when a yellow light appeared on my dashboard. It was the outline of a little oil can, an indicator that I needed to put some oil in the engine. Now I had a choice to make. I could either deal with it or I could try to ignore it. I could tape a piece of

paper over the indicator so I don't have to see it, or maybe I could tell myself that it's just a faulty computer and there really isn't a problem. I could turn the radio up when my engine starts making noises so I don't have to acknowledge the truth, which is this— I've got issues. . .

This pandemic has brought many issues to the surface, and one of those is peoples' mental health. During this time have you found yourself struggling to sleep or sleeping too much, a loss of appetite, lack of motivation, or not acting like yourself? Maybe these are yellow flashing indicators that you need to take a "look under the hood" to find out what's going on. You can choose to either ignore the warning signs or you can acknowledge the truth - you've got issues. As I had been praying and having conversations with people I sensed that this was something we needed to talk about. That's why I have started a new sermon series on mental health called "I've Got Issues." Although there are many different mental health issues, we are going to take a "look under the hood" at these: trauma, depression, anxiety, anger, and abandonment. As we are encouraged by God's Word, is this something that the Holy Spirit has been wanting to speak to you about? Do you have a friend, whether a Christian or not, who needs to hear this and you could invite them to the services or to watch them at home?

I am proud of our leadership and staff who have been thinking of how we can help people struggling with mental health. In this newsletter you will see the ways we are trying to be a safe and healing place for people. As you are reading this, it is my prayer that you would know that you are not alone, it's okay to admit that you are not okay, and it's okay to get help. Remember Jesus' words in Matthew 9.12 *"It is not the healthy people who need a doctor, but those who are sick." Jesus is here for those who need help. Jesus is here for you.*

Mercy, peace & love be yours in abundance,
Pastor Seth

In This Edition...

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- ❖ Covenant Kids
- ❖ People to Celebrate
- ❖ Celebrate Recovery
- ❖ Grief Share



Relational Covenant -a written document developed by the leadership, agreed to and owned by the congregation, and practiced on a daily basis as a spiritual discipline. It answers the question, "How will we behave (how will we live together?) when we don't understand each other and when we don't agree?"

Gratitude with Humility

1. We are grateful for the blessings of church and community with which God has blessed us.
2. As we seek to glorify God out of gratitude for what Christ has done in our lives, our goal is to respond to conflict in ways that are remarkably different from the ways the world does the same.
3. Out of gratitude, we seek to be, as a body, in prayer and submission to the Holy Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5.16-19, 20-22

Relationships that are God Honoring

1. We will honor and affirm each other as people created in God's image seeking to work and live in respectful relationship.
2. We honor and respect the leadership of the church, pastoral and lay. 1 Thessalonians 5.12
3. We believe the best of each other and give each other the benefit of the doubt. Philippians 4.8-10

Always Loving and Open Communication

1. We seek to communicate clearly, completely and directly. We will express criticism and negative feelings first to the person, not to others or through social media* and seek reconciliation as far as possible. Ephesians 4.14-16

*Social Media—email, texting, Twitter, Facebook...should only be used for information and encouragement, not for discussion, opinion sharing or criticism. Also, social media is not the appropriate avenue for commitments unless previously agreed upon.

2. We accept disagreement, conflict and evaluation as normal and natural. Philippians 2.1-2, 4.2-3
3. We will walk hand in hand, although we may not always see eye to eye. Colossians 3.14-15

Considerate and Respectful

1. We will offer our opinions with clarity and humility. Colossians 3.12-14
2. We will build each other up and not tear down. 1 Thessalonians 5.11

Everyone Seeking Unity Through Sacrifice

1. We will seek to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for us or for some small group in the church. Philippians 2.3-6

2. We recognize Jesus' high calling on our lives to seek and extend forgiveness for any offences in our midst. Therefore we will actively and graciously pursue genuine peace and authentic reconciliation, carefully using mediators when appropriate, as we seek just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences. Matthew 18.15-17; Ephesians 4.32

3. We commit to being inconvenienced for the sake of the Gospel. Philippians 2.5-11



Each Wednesday evening, we will help your family eat together, learn together and play together! At 5pm, drive through the church parking lot to pick up your take-home meals and at-home activity kits. Pre-registration is required.

At 6pm, join us for music, Bible stories, and more when our weekly program will be posted to our website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel. It will be prerecorded, so you and your kids can watch at any time that fits your schedule. Next, open your at-home activity kits for crafts, games, and more fun activities to do together with your kids. Preregister for our kids at-home program at www.ifallscovenant.org/covkids/



Connection & Communication

At the end of September, we did a Connection & Communication survey. Thank you to the 40 individuals who responded. The survey has 4 questions that were answered by selecting a number on the scale of one to ten. One being the least and 10 being the highest.

The first question asked, "Before COVID-19, how connected did you feel to the people in International Falls Covenant Church?" 85% of respondents selected 6 or higher. The rating of 8 received 32.5% of all responses.

The second question asked, "During COVID-19, how connected do you feel to the people in International Falls Covenant Church?" 57.5% of respondents select 4 or lower. The rating of 2 received 25% of all responses.

It is not a great surprise that COVID has us all feeling less connected with each other. As an effort to rebuild some of that connection we did a couple of things. We coordinated the small group campfires and the large group bonfire. We also kept our Worship services outdoors as long as the weather permitted.

The small group campfires were hosted by nine couples, with one being on the Canadian side of the river. In total, they called 114 households and invited individuals, couples and families to join them for an evening at their residence for an evening gathered around a campfire. Reports from our hosts were that while the weather put a damper on the campfires, old and new connections were kindled! Many of the hosts reported an opportunity to pray with someone while on the phone, and others reported connecting one-on-one with individuals at a later time.

Building Connections & Communication has been our theme this fall. Let's be intentional and carry it forward into this next season. Make that call, send a card, write that word of encouragement... it is needed now more than ever.



- Nov 2 -- Diane Adams
- Nov 7 -- Megan Galusha
- Nov 10 -- Jaxson Galusha
- Nov 11 -- Rosemary Reese
- Nov 12 -- Ann Holm
- Nov 15 -- Lynn Peterson
- Nov 17 -- Jim Olson
- Nov 18 -- Tom Clarity
- Nov 19 -- Milo & Kay Larson
- Nov 20 -- Jon Clarity
 - Joyce Vacura
 - Larry & Sonja Arch
- Nov 21 -- Wayne & LaVonne Hasbargen
- Nov 22 -- Renae Bahr
 - Von Morgan
- Nov 23 -- Diego Christianson
- Nov 24 -- Vickie Bernard
 - Christina Dowty
 - Arvid & Dorothy Hoppe
- Nov 25 -- Bailey Vollom
- Nov 28 -- Peter Griffith
 - Ken & Mary Shoberg
- Nov 29 -- Loretta Christianson

