



Leadership Team Update

Hi Church Family,

As I write this August newsletter article, I find myself thinking that the next article will be for the September newsletter. Amazing that we are starting to think of fall already. God definitely gives us seasons of the year, seasons of our lives and seasons as His church.

We are excited that for the third straight month we had people attend the LT meeting that have completed the new member class and requested to become members. Corin & Katie Wenger attended the July meeting and shared with us their story of becoming followers of Jesus.

Other items we discussed were:

- An update from the ECC Gather 2022. There was not a vote at the annual meeting to remove the credentials of a covenant pastor who has violated his vows in regards to human sexuality. There appears to have been a change at the ministerium level that requires a super majority (over 66%) vote for items such as this to make it to the annual meeting for a vote. Even though the ministerium vote was a majority in favor of removing the credentials, it wasn't the super majority needed to move it onto the annual meeting for a vote. The LT will be sending a letter to the ECC expressing our disappointment and concern that this did not make it to the floor for a vote.
- The finances of the church and strategies to consider with the 2023 budget.
- Unity and that God directs us to be unified even when we don't always agree.
- The agenda for the July 24 congregational meeting.

I hope you are as excited as I am to see what God has planned for us during this season for His church in I Falls. It is such a comfort to know that He and His word never change. That consistency, along with His grace and peace provide us with all we need to joyfully thrive in this world.

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Leadership Team Contact Information

If you have a question or concern, please reach out to one of the following Leadership Team contacts:

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Root Beer Float Outreach

We have served root beer floats to the people who attend the Concerts in the Park on Wednesday evenings at Smokey Bear Park. We serve 50-75 floats each night. It has been a fun way to meet new people. We need 2 people to serve August 3rd. Please sign up at church.



Kids Club at South Falls Apartments

We have met for two weeks and have had six kids attend. We play games, have a Bible story during a snack/break time and play more games. We will be talking about the Fruit of the Spirit during the month of August. Kids Club will meet until August 31, so if you know of families that live at South Falls, let them know about Kids Club on Wednesdays at 2:00pm. Please continue to pray that more kids will attend and that the Gospel will impact their lives.



Water game fun at Kids Club!



New Testament		Old Testament	
▶ LUKE	▶ 1 TIMOTHY	▶ PROVERBS	▶ EZRA
1. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2
2. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:10-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:12-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
3. <input type="checkbox"/> 13:22-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-5
4. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
5. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:15-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:11-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
6. <input type="checkbox"/> 14:25-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
7. <input type="checkbox"/> 15:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:1-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
8. <input type="checkbox"/> 15:11-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 5:16-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
9. <input type="checkbox"/> 16:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 6:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	▶ NEH.
10. <input type="checkbox"/> 16:10-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 6:11-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 10:1-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2
	▶ 2 TIMOTHY	<input type="checkbox"/> 10:17-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
11. <input type="checkbox"/> 16:19-31	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> 11:1-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-5
12. <input type="checkbox"/> 17:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:8-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 11:16-31	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
13. <input type="checkbox"/> 17:11-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:1-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 12:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
14. <input type="checkbox"/> 17:20-37	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:14-26	<input type="checkbox"/> 12:15-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
15. <input type="checkbox"/> 18:1-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 13:1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
16. <input type="checkbox"/> 18:9-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:10-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 13:13-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
17. <input type="checkbox"/> 18:18-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 14:1-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
18. <input type="checkbox"/> 18:31-43	▶ TITUS	<input type="checkbox"/> 14:19-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
19. <input type="checkbox"/> 19:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 15:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
20. <input type="checkbox"/> 19:11-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 1:10-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 15:18-33	▶ ESTHER
21. <input type="checkbox"/> 19:28-38	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:1-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 16:1-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
22. <input type="checkbox"/> 19:39-48	<input type="checkbox"/> 2:11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 16:17-33	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
23. <input type="checkbox"/> 20:1-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:1-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 17:1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4
	▶ PHILEMON	<input type="checkbox"/> 17:15-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-6
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-11		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 12-25		



August 2022



A Cup of Coffee with Pastor Seth . . .

We will probably never forget the year 2020 for obvious reasons. I will never forget it for another reason... two years ago on August 1 I became the lead pastor of the Evangelical Covenant Church of International Falls. I can't believe it's already been two years. To mark the occasion I would like to share a few things I've learned in the first two years.

- 1. God called me to this**
I'll be honest. Some days I feel inadequate. I have gifts in certain areas, and I have weaknesses in others. I've been exposed to my shortcomings more often as a lead pastor. I do know this though - God didn't call me to be the best pastor, He called me to be your pastor. God knew that what you needed was me, warts and all. God knew that I needed you to help make me into the pastor He is making me to be.
- 2. Ministry is hard, but God is good.**
Ministry has been hard, especially dealing with all of the challenges of the past two years. When I was the youth pastor and hard decisions needed to be made, I could look over to the lead pastor. The difference now is that when those hard decisions come and I look over, there is no one there. It's me! What that has caused me to do is look up to God and ask for help, because I can't do it on my own. I've found that the harder things get, the more of God's goodness I get to see come through.
- 3. God's Word is true.**
I know. This is the first thing you should know if you went to Bible school. The last two years I've grown in my trust in God's Word more than ever. There have been so many lies thrown around that it's been hard to know who to trust. It's caused me to go to God's Word as the one thing I know is true. I've especially seen that in the Gospel of Mark we have been studying. When the world is saying, "Go this way," "Go that way," I hear Jesus in His Word saying, "Come follow me."

So there are three things I've learned in my two years as pastor. I want to thank you for allowing me to serve you, and I want to encourage you to think about the things God has been teaching you. I'd love to get a cup of coffee with you and hear about it.

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

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Youth & Young Adults

Summer seems to be flying by this year with daily activities and almost every weekend having either a youth event, a family event, or a church event. One of those weekends we were very blessed to be able to bring a group of senior high youth to the Covenant Northwest Conference's giant youth event called Unite North. It was a great time of growing in our walks with God and partaking in a lot of fun activities. Rachel and I were also blessed with a week at Bluewater with me speaking for a week at the end of July. It was a joy to share the Gospel with campers while I told them the stories of the missionary lumberjacks who served right here in Northern MN during the late 1800's-early 1900's.

During our weekly Bonfire Bible Study we have continued working through the book of Ephesians and were able to tackle very possibly my favorite passage in the Bible: Ephesians 2.1-10. I love it because Paul captures the very nature of the Gospel so eloquently and clearly. From death to life, from slave to son, and from being under the law to being under grace. It is a beautiful passage of Scripture and I think everyone should memorize it!

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it

is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2.1-10

In the young adult's ministry, we just finished working through the book of Colossians. It certainly displays the majesty of our Savior and has been an incredible blessing to study.

For our personal update, Rachel and I are trying to soak up every minute of this incredibly fast paced summer and continuing to prepare for our baby boy coming this November!

Grace be with you,
Marco



Prayer Walk on August 22

We have had a prayer walk around the church and around the town. We prayed for the people in our church neighborhood and for the people who work for the city and county. On August 22 at 6:30pm, we will meet at the Falls High School flag pole and will pray for the schools. Please join us!

August Birthdays & Anniversaries

- August 2 -- Jayde Hall
- August 3 -- Will Davies
-- Tara Nelson
- August 5 -- Norman & Loretta Christianson
- August 6 -- Dick & Renee Frederick
- August 8 -- Jerad & Ashley Kostiuk
- August 9 -- Thor Einarson
-- Brian & Judy Keeney
-- Dan & Kathleen Ruelle
- August 10 -- Dan Griffith
- August 11 -- Thomas Holm
-- Lindsey Lucy
-- Larry & Rosemary Reese
- August 12 -- Larry Reese
- August 13 -- Tom & Jennifer Vollom
- August 14 -- Marco Griffith
- August 15 -- Renee Frederick
-- Dave & Kathy Howdahl
- August 16 -- Luke & Laura Zika
- August 17 -- Elaine Grill
- August 18 -- David & Tammi Cain
- August 19 -- Tim Klein
-- Lila Kuttles
-- Derek & Regan Bilben
- August 20 -- Alan Johnson
- August 21 -- Ashley Kostiuk
-- Jim & Debbie Peterson
- August 22 -- Tammi Cain
-- Jean Larson
- August 23 -- Chad & Tammy Shoberg
- August 24 -- Rodney Lofgren
-- Eric & Denise Kulig
- August 26 -- Kim Boyer
-- Colton Hollis
-- Philip Ruelle Sr.
- August 27 -- Luke Hufnagle
- August 28 -- Reynold Lofgren
-- Seth Peterson
- August 29 -- Allen Peterson
-- Doug & Kathy Galusha
- August 30 -- Ian Hall
-- Henry Morgan
- August 31 -- Lois Holm



Kid's Ministry

August brings the "Back to School" season. For the Kids & Family Ministry team, it is also when we start meeting and mapping out our kids programming for the coming school year. As we start planning together, we start getting excited! And we have lots to get excited about for this fall!

New Curriculum - We are going to be using a new curriculum for our Covenant Kids Club on Wednesday evenings. We have new songs, Bible stories, crafts and games being provided for us that will help kids explore God's character throughout the Bible. We are excited for our kids to be discovering what it means to reflect God's Heart in everyday life and to be growing a lifelong relationship with God.

New Volunteer Roles - This new club format means most of our adult volunteers will participate along with the kids, play a meaningful role in lessons, and make a difference by building friendships with kids. While we will have individuals leading the Bible time, Game time, and Craft time, the rest of our leaders serve by leading their small group through these activities. We are excited about these volunteers having a more relational role and connecting with our kids to make a big difference in their lives.

New Volunteer Training - Under our new Safe Place policy one of the first steps for individuals volunteering in the Nursery, Kids, or Teens programs is to attend the Abuse Awareness and Reporting training. Upcoming training dates are Wednesday, August 24 from 6-7:30pm or Sunday, August 28 after the Worship service. Please plan on attending one of these training sessions, if you are volunteering in the Nursery, Kids, or Teens programs.

If our excitement for this upcoming school year has caught your interest, let me know! Whether you just want more information about volunteering or are interested in joining our Kids ministry team, I would love to have a conversation with you.

Serve with Love,
Stacy