

February 2023

Messenger

FIRST COVENANT CHURCH | RED WING, MN

As the holidays fade into the recent past and the new year starts building momentum, we're seeing signs of another wave of new people joining us at First Covenant Church. Some of our new friends are moving in from out of town. Some of our new friends are coming from other churches in the area. (This is nothing new. In each of my 31 years of service in vocational ministry, I've seen people change churches for various reasons.) Some of our new friends aren't new at all—they're just returning to join us for worship on-site instead of online since the start of the pandemic. However, because so many of you are new to First Covenant since the pandemic started, these returning people may be new to you.

So, as this next wave of new people begins to build, please allow me to share with you the reminders below. And keep this thought in mind: **A friendly church is just a church of friends if the people of the church don't warmly welcome new people into friendship.**

1. Remember the "Circle of Ten." If you find yourself within 10 feet of someone you don't recognize or can't remember their name, take the initiative to introduce yourself and strike up a conversation with them.
2. Remember it's okay to ask people what their names are. The vast majority of us struggle to remember names. Everyone has permission to ask as many times as needed until you remember their names without help. It is much better to just ask their name than it is to avoid them because you're too afraid to ask.
3. Reintroduce yourself every time you interact with newer people until it seems like they can say your name without asking.
4. Ask them their name every time until you can say it without asking.
 - a. It might be helpful to write it down.
 - b. Note something memorable about them to associate with their name.
 - c. Repeat it to yourself and say it out loud a couple of times during your conversation with them.
 - d. Examples: "Hi there. I don't think we've met. [or "Have we met?"] My name is ____." "I'm sorry, I'm having a hard time remembering if we've met already. I'm _____. Could you remind me what your name is?" "Hi again. If you don't remember, my name is _____. I really enjoyed talking with you last time we met but could you remind me what your name is?" "Oh hi again. It takes me a few times for someone's name to really sink in. Could you remind me what your name is? By the way, I'm _____ and this is my husband/wife/son/daughter _____."
5. Ask questions to get to know where they're coming **F.R.O.M.**
 - a. **F**amily - Ask about who is with them, do they have family nearby, etc.
 - b. **R**eligion - Ask if they were part of a church before coming to FCC, what it was like for them to leave there, if they were involved with anything there, and so on.
 - c. **O**ccupation - Ask if they work and if so what they do. If they have kids, ask what grade they're in and what activities or sports they like to be in.
 - d. **M**ove - Ask if they live in Red Wing, how long they've been here, where they moved from, and so on.
6. Introduce them to other people in the church. Help them make other connections in the church.
7. Invite them to join you for lunch, to a study group or life group, or out for a fun outing.

May we all warmly welcome the new people God is bringing to us.

- Pastor Jim

Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge - Mission Focus of the Month

"Heal me, Lord, and I will be healed. Save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise. Jer. 17:14

Since 1983, MN Adult and Teen Challenge has assisted teens and adults to gain freedom from chemical addiction and other life-controlling problems by addressing their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. They offer a full range of treatment and recovery services: they work with teens and their communities through their prevention program *Know the Truth*, and lead Lakeside Academy, a Christian behavior and recovery center for teen boys; for men and women, they provide residential and outpatient treatment, long-term residential recovery programs with co-occurring mental health services, and comprehensive aftercare support. Adult and Teen Challenge Centers foster an environment of love, trust, and respect.



In our services on February 19th, we have the privilege of hearing individuals bring inspiring testimony of how their lives have been changed and their hope restored by their encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ through the ministry of MN Adult and Teen Challenge. We encourage you to be a part of this service, either in person or on-line, and to invite others to join you. You will be blessed! A special offering will be collected for this ministry, and you may participate in that offering either at the service, at the church office, by mail or on-line.

Congregational Care

Where did January go??? We are on the fresh side of February and can anticipate the movement toward more light, warmth and the delightful look of green around us as the sleep of winter gives way to the awakening of life from the soil.

2022 has ended and we have had a year of change. There has been change within our body of Christ here at First Covenant with people moving away, others moving to Red Wing. There has been new life and the end of life. There has been sickness and the movement back toward health...and in the midst of change scripture reminds us that the Lord of life and love walks before us, behind us and beside us. He guides, encourages and challenges us to learn of Him and know that He knows us thoroughly...and His love and faithfulness doesn't change.

The folks in Congregational have made home visits, hospital visits, nursing home visits, brought meals to families, transported others to medical appointments and made calls to see how people are doing.

This past year has been a time when Congregation Care has used the Benevolence Fund to assist people in our Church body and in the community with things like gasoline, food, clothing and rent. The Fund has been used well this year and is dependent on the Church family's "benevolence" to build it up to a place of financial health to assist folks in need for this year of 2023.

May we walk in real peace knowing that we are surrounded by the love of the Eternal into this slightly used year of 2023.

Char Hayes for Congregational Care

Women in the Covenant--Opportunities Abound....what catches your interest?

Women Ministries Spring Renewal - Rockford, MN

EMPOWERED & EQUIPPED

March 24-25, 2023...Save these Date!

Riverwood Covenant Church is hosting the Spring Renewal Weekend

Guest Speakers



Rev. Kara Stromberg
NWC
Superintendent



Dr. Donna Harris
President of
Minnehaha Academy

\$60 for both days includes lunch on Saturday!

\$35 for Friday only. \$50 for Saturday only

Register at www.WMNWC.org/spring-renewal

Reserve the Friday-Saturday weekend for a fun outing to Rockford!

Resources from Women Ministries-Northwest Conference/ECC:

Online Resources in the comfort of your home-No Cost

Leading Your Women's Ministry

This cohort is for women who lead or feel led to lead in women's ministry. We will be going through topics from "Re-Thinking Women's Ministry" by Cyndee Ownbey, such as "Shifting Target Audience," "Rethinking the Framework," and "Implementing Change." We also will use resources such as podcasts and videos from pastors like Craig Groeschel and Stephanie O'Brien about leadership training and techniques. The book is recommended, but not required to participate. Other resources will be sent via email.

Day & Time: Thursdays, 7 pm beginning Feb. 2 for 6 weeks

Hosts: Rachel Kleinschmidt and Sheryl Schanil

Free Course about Domestic Violence

There is a new free eleven session course from AVA about intimate partner violence, teen dating violence, and childhood sexual assault available at covchurch.org/abuse/

Mosaic Study

There is a new free five part small group Bible study, The Kingdom Mosaic – Life Together Series, focused on biblical justice, racial righteousness and the mosaic nature of the kingdom of God which can be found at covchurch.org/resource/the-kingdom-mosaic-life-together-series/.

Fearless Campaign

IJM (International Justice Mission) has a new film series that amplifies life experience, called "Fearless Campaign" on their website IJM.org/fearless.

Women Opportunities at First Covenant

In-Person Resources:

Bible Studies:

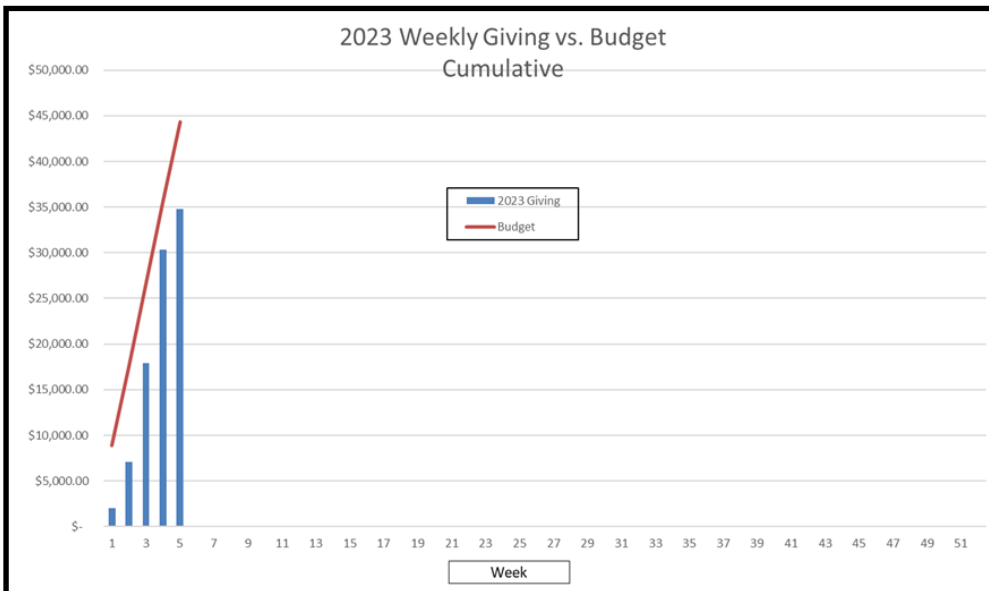
Tuesday Study 9:30 a.m. (Characters of the Bible)

Wednesday Study 9:30 a.m. (Book of Ruth)

Both held at our church in the Disciple classroom. Both welcome new members anytime!

MOPS & MOMSnext

Meets at our church second and fourth Wednesday mornings, 9:30 a.m. with brunch



2023 OFFERING UPDATE

Giving YTD Comparison

(Budget = \$8868/week):

2023- \$34,786

(21.5% under Budget)

2022- \$35,224

2021- \$43,747

"150 by 150" CAMPAIGN

Campaign Goal - \$250,000

80 pledges received - \$230,073

Goal reached - 92%

Pledges paid to date - \$204,840

The 2023 budget was approved in December 2022 at \$461,156, which works out to a weekly budget need of \$8868.

Benevolence Fund

The Benevolence Fund is set aside to give financial assistance to people from within the First Covenant Church family and our surrounding community. In the past few months, we have helped those needing assistance more frequently and find this fund needs replenishing.

If you like to help us replenish this fund there is an envelope provided in the pews by checking Benevolence Fund, or envelopes in your giving boxes, or you can give a donation in Breeze. Your gift will be used to help people in financial need. We thank you for your continued support.

Notes of Thanks

Thank you for your continued support of Hope & Harbor. What a mission of service we started together four years ago! Wow!

Thanks, Liz Magill

Thanks for your donations totaling \$355.00 made on Christmas Eve Compassion Offering. Your support sustains us, and we look forward to maintaining this partnership.

Bob Hawley, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity

FEBRUARY | 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study	2 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 5:00pm FRC Meeting 7:00pm FCC Book Club 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	3	4
5 Congregational Annual Meeting Holy Communion 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship 11:00am Annual Meeting	6 6:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm Men's Group 7:32pm Young Life	7 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Council Orientation 6:30pm Gym Reserved	8 9:30am MOPS 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study 6:00pm Confirmation	9 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	10	11 10:00am Bonhoeffer Society
12 Meet the Pastor 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship 11:00am Meet the Pastor	13 Special Election Setup 6:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm Men's Group 7:32pm Young Life	14 Special Election 9:30am Women's Bible Study	15 9:30am MOPS Leaders 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study	16 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	17	18
19 MN Adult & Teen Challenge 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship 11:00am MNATC Lunch 7:30pm YL Steering Meeting	20 President's Day 6:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm Men's Group 7:32pm Young Life	21 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Gym Reserved	22 Ash Wednesday 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study 9:30am MOPS	23 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	24	25 9:00am Men's Breakfast
26 LBBC visits Explore 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship 5:00pm Explore	27 6:30pm GriefShare 6:30pm Council Meeting 7:32pm Young Life	28 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Gym Reserved				

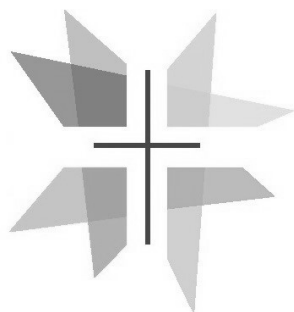
REMEMBERING OUR BIRTHDAY FRIENDS

1st	Martin Gardzinski, Warren Fox	14th	Beatrice Keehn
2nd	Bonnie Mercer	15th	Marie Bengtson
3rd	Darold Glander, Brian Johnson	16th	Josh Hanson
4th	Eleanor Melton	20th	Paul Kramp
8th	Spring Reisner, Gabe Quiboloy, Jim Murphy	21st	Mary Thomforde
9th	Keith Johnson	24th	Jeff Hanson, Lacy Quiboloy
13th	Cory Doden	27th	Lucy Hoffman

Prayer is a vital part of the life of our church. In order to help us focus on praying for one another, please use our list of birthday friends in each month's Messenger to pray for them and their families. There will be enough names to pray for someone throughout the month.

Let's make praying for one another a means of encouragement to us all!

BLENDED SERVICE 8:30AM | CONTEMPORARY SERVICE 10:00AM



First Covenant Church
2302 Twin Bluff Road
Red Wing, MN 55066
651-388-2385
www.redwingfirstcov.org