

MARCH 2021



FIRST COVENANT CHURCH + RED WING, MN

MESSENGER

Helping Kids Through CDEAP

I had the privilege to be invited to a meeting at the school with other local organizations to discuss needs in our community after it was announced that students would be starting the year off in hybrid learning, and very likely could go online at any moment. There were some great and honest conversations that happened that day, but coming out of that meeting was a major desire to help families who needed the extra supervision while parents work or whose kids would need a caring adult to help them with their online education. After several conversations with Mandy Arden, Director of Youth Outreach, we partnered together to start a program called Community Distance Education Assistance Program (CDEAP). We know the title isn't beautiful, but at least it's clear!!! We had plenty of space in our facility downstairs, and they had a team of volunteers from their mentoring program, so the partnership worked wonderfully!

The goal was to provide:

- at least one full school day of supervision each week
- a safe space for students to complete and receive assistance with homework
- an intentional program that follows the school's daily routine
- interactions with a caring adult (which we know improves social and emotional learning, as well as student's mental health)
- and direct access to lunch (provided to us by the school district.)

CDEAP started off with a few kids coming once a week on their distance education days, but eventually grew to almost 40 kids registered meeting 4 days a week when the school went online only. Thankfully First Lutheran Church joined us to help provide a second meeting space. The principals at the high school met with us to share how much this program mattered to our community, and so they have started referring kids who have been struggling to consider joining CDEAP.

For me, CDEAP was an avenue to use resources we have to care for those in our community. Just like through our Fusion After School Program, we have been in proximity and building initial relationships with families in unique ways. We have made partnerships with other local organizations and build healthy connections to our school district. But most of all, it was a simple way to let others know that we are here and care about them. As 1 John 4:19 says, "We love because he first loved us."

But we don't always need some big elaborate program to let others know that they are loved. We can do that through our everyday interactions with neighbors, coworkers, and random people we encounter at the store, coffee shop, etc. I invite you this month to be on the lookout and each day ask yourself: who can I help today and let them know they are loved?

Mike Bechtold

From Our Church Chair

At the February 22nd organizational meeting of the church council I shared with them the following prayer and here I share it with you. May it help you to enter into the season of Lent.

A Humbling Lenten Prayer

Jesus! Meek and humble of heart, *Hear me.*

From the desire of being esteemed, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being loved, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being extolled, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being honored, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being praised, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being preferred to others, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being consulted, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the desire of being approved, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being humiliated, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being despised, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of suffering rebukes, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being calumniated, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being forgotten, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being ridiculed, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being wronged, *Deliver me, Jesus.*
From the fear of being suspected, *Deliver me, Jesus.*

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be chosen and I set aside,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be praised and I unnoticed,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be preferred to me in everything,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it. Amen.

—Attributed to Rafael Cardinal Merry Del Val, by Charles Belmonten (Handbook of Prayers, *Studium Theologiae Foundation, Manila, 1986*).

Roger Johnson
Church Chairman

Mission Awareness of the Month - RW Food Shelf

Share your food with the hungry and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. Isa. 58:7

The Red Wing Food Shelf has as its mission to secure and distribute nutritional food to individuals and households in need. In 2020, 846 households were served, with 2,712 people served at least one time. Although Channel One Food Bank in Rochester is the main food supplier, the Food Shelf also depends on the support and donations received from individuals, businesses, churches, civic organizations, and food drives to fulfill its mission.

To that end, our church will be sponsoring a food drive during the month of March. Currently, the Food Shelf could use the following items: peanut butter, canned goods (e.g. fruits, soups, vegetables, beans, pasta sauce, beef stew, chili, tuna, chicken), dry pasta, boxed dinners, Mac and cheese, cereal, oatmeal or crackers. (No glass containers or outdated items, please.) If you would rather give a money donation (through BREEZE), please know that for every \$1.00 donated the Food Shelf can purchase \$3.00 of food from Channel One Food Bank.

Also, many volunteers are needed to maintain the Food Shelf. Please speak with Kathy Johnson, who is our church's representative for the Food Shelf, if you would be interested in volunteering or if you have any other questions.

First Covenant Church Offering Comparison

OFFERING UPDATE:

2021 Budget: (\$9,417/week needed)

8 weeks 2021 - \$69,986 (-7.1% under budget)

8 weeks 2020 - \$84,568

8 weeks 2019 - \$63,649

February Comparison:

3 weeks 2021 - \$26,239

3 weeks 2020 - \$27,750

3 weeks 2019 - \$28,217

NOTE: 2021 offerings to date include several large annual donations



Congregational Care

I have been down in Texas visiting my daughter and her family since the end of January (good news!) it was warm and the ocean is still there to offer a good vista and sooth the spirit. My son, who accompanied me, and I left early when we paid attention to weather reports about what was heading to Texas (bad news for them). The drive home was exciting for even my North Dakota and Minnesota driving skills but we made it and were grateful to be back. Three days after I arrived my daughter-in-law slipped on ice coming into her home and fractured her leg (bad news) but she called for help and I was free to come down and help her and my grand-daughter until she can have surgery to stabilize her leg (good news). We find out today when the surgery will be (very good news), but until then she has a knee stabilizing splint on to keep the bone ends from doing too much rubbing together (it has been four days since her fall, covid-19 has slowed medical procedures here greatly).

You might ask why I am telling you this "yarn", to borrow a Texas word, and it is because of a newscaster who reported that "hope is on the horizon" when referring to the Covid numbers going down and the immunizations numbers increasing. For us who are centered on the person of Christ, the hope is not "on the horizon" but very much in us. Thyme (my "other" daughter) and I are aware that the Lord Jesus is with us even in the hard situations we have to face in life. We are not alone, and we even practice servanthood and presence to one another as we face challenges. Our hope is not in a smooth life, but knowing that the spirit of Christ in us enables us to love and care for each other.

So, keep practicing presence to one another by the simple act of calling when someone is on your mind.

Blessings

Char Hayes

Worship & Music

Here is an opportunity for service that doesn't take much time yet is so important to our families with young children! We need a team of 4 people that can clean out and repack the Quiet Bags on a biweekly basis. It would be a once-a-month commitment for about a half hour. Can you help? Let Candace Bean know if you are willing or have questions. (952) 457-3596.

NWC Women Ministries Virtual Spring Renewal

Rather than the Friday and Saturday event at Alexandria Covenant on March 26/27, we have decided to go to Plan B for the 2021 Spring Renewal. Following the lead of the Northwest Conference and to comply with the strictest COVID safety protocols, the Women Ministries conference board has chosen to go online for the 2021 Renewal.

We will have a virtual session on Thursday night, March 25th using ZOOM. A link and agenda will be provided on the NWC Women Ministries Facebook page one week prior to the meeting. A reminder will be published on Facebook and by email. All women of the Northwest Conference are invited to tune in for an evening update of women in ministries.

The good news is that Alexandria Covenant Church has graciously agreed to host the **Spring Renewal in 2022. The dates will be March 25th & 26th.**

Mark your calendar!



March

2021

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2 9:30am Women's Bible Study	3	4 9:30am Men's Bible Study (Zoom) 6:00pm Worship Team Practice	5	6
7 Holy Communion 9:00am Discovery Hour Kids 10:00am Worship 6:30pm Jr & Sr High Life Group	8 9:00am CDEAP	9 9:00am CDEAP 9:30am Women's Bible Study	10 6:30pm Confirmation	11 9:30am Men's Bible Study (Zoom) 6:00pm Worship Team Practice	12	13
14 Daylight Saving Time Starts 9:00am Discovery Hour Kids 10:00am Worship 6:30pm Jr & Sr High Life Group	15 9:00am CDEAP	16 9:00am CDEAP 9:30am Women's Bible Study	17	18 9:30am Men's Bible Study (Zoom) 6:00pm Worship Team Practice	19	20
21 9:00am Discovery Hour Kids 10:00am Worship 6:30pm Jr & Sr High Life Group	22 9:00am CDEAP	23 9:00am CDEAP 9:30am Women's Bible Study	24	25 9:30am Men's Bible Study (Zoom) 6:00pm Worship Team Practice	26	27
Sarah on vacation March 19 - March 29						
28 Palm Sunday 9:00am Discovery Hour Kids 10:00am Worship 6:30pm Jr & Sr High Life Group	29 9:00am CDEAP	30 9:00am CDEAP 9:30am Women's Bible Study	31			

Remembering Our Birthday Friends with Prayer

3rd	Matthew Lu	20th	Millie Mehrkens
4th	Penny Droogsma, Paul Olson	24th	Jeff Hanson
5th	Joe Larson	25th	Anthony Mason
7th	Nikki Roschen	26th	Judy Nelson
8th	Lori Johnson, Ron Tesdall	27th	Pam Peterson
10th	Rose Larson	28th	Todd Mehrkens
11th	Lori Hart	29th	Lydia Mason
14th	Ryan Alpers	30th	Diane Goudy
16th	Hope Coffey	31st	Lara Ramthun, Brandon Evans

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!

