

THE COVENANT CONNECTION

Volume XV No. 3
November 4, 2009

Covenant United Methodist Church

Coffee/ Chocolate Sale

The Sister Church Ministry Team will have their monthly coffee and chocolate sale on **Sunday, November 15 after both services.**

Re-stock you supply of fair trade, organic coffee in ground or whole bean varieties.

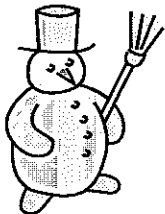


Proceeds from the purchase of these delicious products helps support student scholarships for children in our El Salvador sister church and provides a market for small Latin American farmers.

Snow Removal Sign Ups

Volunteers are needed to help with snow removal this winter. Help us keep the sidewalks and entrances clear!

Please check the sign up sheet in the narthex. There are lots of available spots to write in your name!



SMILE - It's Photo Time

The Member Ministry Team is asking you to have your photo taken in order to update our Covenant Directory. It will be easy and painless. We'll also want to know if you have a new phone number, e-mail, etc to list.

Gregg Longmeier and Paul Viren will have a photo area in the narthex on Sundays, Nov 8 and Nov 15. Contact Karen Dashiell, 466-1129 with questions.

November

Come Connect with God and Each Other

The Worship committee has some surprises in store for you as we move into the month of November. The worship space will reflect Pastor Gregg's themes from the book of Numbers, when the Israelites found themselves in the wilderness. We won't go so far as to have you sit on campstools, but you will notice some changes designed to help you experience the sense of movement and challenge, all the while keeping God at our center.



Sarah and the music team also have plans to enhance our experience musically, as we sing a collection of songs from the Taize community. Our music each Sunday will include one meditative Taize piece. As Sarah explains, "these songs can help us more fully experience God connecting with us. Taize music is like making your way through the labyrinth of worship from one element to another with its hypnotically harmonic sound. As we study challenging scriptures, I invite you to use the music to dig in and connect."

So come join us at worship each November Sunday where we'll connect with God and each other.

CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

To reach out to those around us, receive people with genuine warmth and hospitality, relate our lives to God and to one another, equip each other as Christian disciples through small group ministry, and to go out into the world to make it more loving and just in the name of Christ.

From your Administrative Board

Great News! Our new sound system is on order and what an awesome experience it will be to enhance our worship experience. Through the generous donations in memory of Cory Lux and using some church reserves, we are able to replace our aging sound system.

Over the coming weeks, we will be remodeling the "Sound Room" and installing the system. The dedication of this great project is not yet determined so stay tuned.

In addition to this great gift, the Administrative Board has allocated 10% (\$1,600) of the cost of the sound system to be given to the missions committee for their distribution to the various local organizations we support.

For the first time in many years, we have actually added to our reserve account and have made great headway in rebuilding our church's financial picture. Like the economy we are still fragile but the trend is positive and we have great optimism that this trend will continue into next year.

Here are some highlights to give you a picture of our finances: All bills, including conference required apportionments, are current. A current reserve before the above mentioned grants are made—\$32,000. We require that \$16,000 be maintained in permanent reserve for cash flow and short fall months.

Thank you for your faithfulness in giving and please know that we are being very careful and proactive stewards of these, God's resources.

-The Administrative Board

Covenant Nursery Open House

November 22, 2009

After Each Service-Snacks Provided

In preparation for our unveiling the completely refurbished Nursery we need our congregations help. Many of the toys and items in the Nursery are over 20 years old. In fact Shawna remembers playing with some of these now well worn items when she was in the nursery as a young child! We have registered the Nursery at Target for items to restock our shelves and provide a wonderful and inviting place for our youngest Covenant members. Many of these items are under \$20. If you pick out an item, simply drop it by the nursery between now and the open house and please attach your name to the item so we can acknowledge your gift.

We appreciate your consideration of adopting the Nursery for a special gift. We believe the Nursery is a key first impression for new members and visitors and we are excited to share with you our vision for this wonderful ministry in our Church.

Blessings, Paul, Beth and Shawna Viren

Advent Play—The Evening News Hour

We're broadcasting live this Christmas with *The Evening News Hour*.

All children and youth ages 6-14 are invited to participate in this year's Christmas Pageant. We'll be creating our own commercials, filming, and sending news correspondents all over the place to get the breaking news of Jesus' birth!

On Air Sunday, Dec. 13 at 6:00pm.

We also need help running lines with actors, making props and designing sets. Please contact Sarah Marken if you are your child would like to participate. 954-1107, or smarken@gmail.com

Hats for Little Heads / Eagle Scout Project

I am working with the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery on my Eagle Scout Project. I am making 500 fleece hats for the children that use their facility. I am going to have two workshops at the church to try to complete all 500 hats. The hats are simple to make and everyone can help. I need to have the hats delivered to the Nursery by December 4.



The dates for my workshops will be:

Sunday, November 8 from 2pm – 6pm at Covenant – pizza served at 5:30
Sunday, November 22 from 2pm – 6pm at Covenant – pizza served at 5:30

Helpers can come for all or part of these workshops. I need a couple of sewing machines to make a simple seam on each hat. Once you get the pattern for the hats, you can take pieces of fleece home to complete if that is more convenient for you.

Thanks for all of your support.

Brent Gilliam

United Methodist Women to Meet

We will have our monthly meeting on Mon, November 9 at 7pm. We will plan our program for the year and decide how we can help Brent Gilliam on his Eagle Scout Project. For more information, call Betty Newell, 487-1370.

From the Pastor's Pen



Hello Friends,

As I have settled into the role of your pastor, I have been thinking a lot about the concept of "comfort." My family and I moved here last summer, and we are now *really* comfortable here in Spokane. Don't worry, we've been duly warned about Spokane winters, which probably aren't too much worse than Kansas winters! But I have been thinking that there is a time and a place for comfort as well as discomfort in each of our lives, isn't there?

For instance, if toddlers only sought comfort, none of us would ever learn to walk! It is pretty "uncomfortable" to stand and fall repeatedly. Just as important, when we fell and got bumps and bruises someone hopefully comforted us so that we would then have the courage to get up and walk once again. There are times in each of our lives (and in our life as a community) that it is good to seek comfort; when we are already in a state of discomfort or distress is a prime example. But there are also times where we must move out of our comfort zones to do a new thing. A new tree being planted should have its' roots scored before being put into the ground. Water that lies stagnant collects organisms and disease, but water that moves cleanses itself over the rocks. Trees that are exposed to wind and repeatedly sway as they grow, grow very strong and stable roots and trunks that are able to withstand increasingly forceful winds. Trees that are sheltered from the wind for their whole existence, but are suddenly exposed to high winds (for instance when the rest of the forest that used to protect them has been cut down) can fall quite easily.

When I arrived here, I realized that you all needed some measure of comfort. You had faced many different kinds of "storms"... financial, ideological, theological, and storms of disappointment and discontent. I don't lament the storms, because without them we wouldn't be where we are today. That being said, stability is a good thing, and I think we have done well in our beginning steps to build a sense of trust with one another as pastor and parishioners. I also realized soon after I arrived that merely receiving comfort would not solve all of our problems.

We arrive at this key time in the history of the congregation asking ourselves, "What we are going to do? Where are we going?" There are some elements of a congregations life that can be planned through strategic planning, but a *calling* must be discerned. I intend to lead us through a process of discernment so that we have clarity about what it is that God is calling us to do here in North Spokane (and in the world). You can read elsewhere in the newsletter about the process we will use, and I assure you that this is a first step and I am excited and hopeful about where this journey will take us!

There is a rhythm, a back-and-forth nature to this comfort and discomfort. My prayer moving forward is that we never seek comfort that prevents our progress or growth, but I also pray that the discomfort is not so great that there is a disruption or an "injury." As we continue to walk with each other, may we provide each other comfort and discomfort as the Spirit leads.

In Covenant with Christ and each other,

Gregg

Pastor Gregg Sealey

Thank You

Charity says THANK YOU!!!!

Charity is a 30 year old mom of three who has just moved into a brand new apartment. Charity and her family are part of Interfaith Hospitality.

Donations from Covenant members of a kitchen table, a dresser, kitchen and bath towels, silverware and utensils, pots and pans, lamps and end tables and a box of food made the family's move complete and loving.

Thank YOU Covenant ..your second hand items have AGAIN helped to give a family a fresh start.

Please pray for Charity as she begins chemo and radiation treatment for Leukemia on November 11.

Where Are We Going?

If you read Pastor Gregg's letter to the left, you will see that we are beginning a process of discernment whereby a small group of persons assigned by the Administrative Board has been authorized to do some important work. This small group (a "learning and discerning" team) will lead the Ad Board to find clarity about our focus and direction as a congregation, and then all of these people will work with the wider circle of leaders and the rest of the congregation to engage in a dialogue to ensure that our discernment process is faithful and true. We envision having a mid-year "Family Meeting" to update the congregation, and a culminating "Family Meeting" in early June that will be a great springboard for us going into next fall.

We will be communicating more about the process in the next few weeks and months, and if you have any questions you can direct them to Pastor Gregg. The persons nominated by your Administrative Board to do this work with Pastor Gregg are: *Chuck Anderson, June Colman, Marty Keeling, Keith Petersen, Teresa Sherman, and Diane Thomas*. We strived for diversity among these folks and we are excited for the gifts they bring to this process! Please keep these persons, all of us on the Board and indeed our entire congregation in your prayers.

Sincerely,
Your Administrative Board and Pastor Gregg

**Doors to Learning
United Methodist Student Day
November 29, 2009**

United Methodist Student Day plays an important role in making educational dreams come true for promising United Methodist students. Each year, 10% of the funds raised goes back to annual conferences for merit scholarship awards. Annual conferences may award scholarships to UM students who reside in the conference and will attend a United Methodist-related university.

Last year more than 500 eligible students did not receive scholarships due to lack of funds. The Loans and Scholarship Program suffered a 20% loss in investments because of the economy.

For more information, visit www.umcgiving.org/UMSD

Support New Hope Resource Center

We will be taking orders for Christmas wreaths on Sunday Nov. 8th. The cost for a fresh, beautiful wreath is \$16. They will be delivered to the church for you to pick up on November 22nd, in time for the holidays.



A wreath makes a great present for a neighbor, friend, teacher, or hostess gift.

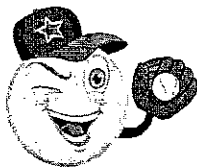
If you would like to donate toiletry items, New Hope is running low of men's & women's deodorants, dish soap, liquid hand soap, laundry softener, Kleenex, light bulbs, band aids, lotion, shaving cream, razors, shampoo, shower gel, and gallon storage bags.

Christmas gifts are also needed for the annual Christmas party for clients of New Hope. Especially needed are gifts that children can choose from for their Moms and Dads. These gifts can be around \$3.00 to \$5.00 and need not be wrapped.

Thank you for volunteering with us in Jesus' name in helping those suffering in our community

All in the Name of Fun~

On Oct. 28th Neighborhood groups #4 and #12 invited us to have dinner with them at the church and asked us to bring our baseball game. We enjoyed the dinner and the opportunity to visit with friends that we don't get to visit with very often.



Group #12 had challenged group #4 (the champions) and when dinner was over and the game began, the atmosphere became very different.

The teams elected captains: group 4-Jack Whorley, group 12-Dave Larsen. Cheer leaders: group 4 Pam Whorley, group 12-Sunny Stone. Bat boys: group 4-Kent Richardson, group 12 Gregg Longmeier.

A senior member of group 4, June Colman, stepped in front of the line and scored a home run, much to the dismay of the opposition who protested loudly. There were some other alleged irregularities which were also protested loudly.

End Result: group 4- 10 points, group 12- zero points. The losers were not happy campers in fact the next morning Betty received a call from Tom Lux who said he was at a sporting goods store and was purchasing a rule book and did she want large or small print?

A great time was had by all and other groups should challenge group #4.

George & Betty Newell,
Commissioners of Covenant Bean-Bag Baseball

Interfaith Homeless families will be at Covenant for Thanksgiving!

November 22 thru 29 is our next session to have three Interfaith families stay at Covenant.

We will need the usual food prepares, drivers, hosts and financial contributions. BUT we also need something special .. one or two Covenant families who would be willing to bring Thanksgiving to Covenant and share it with these three families.



Sign Up sheets will be set out on November 8th. Please check your calendars and come ready to sign up to offer your services. Questions? Call Karen Dashiell, 466-1129

THANKS to you who have donated your gently used items. Many families will benefit as they begin AGAIN. We do need shower curtain rings. We had a large number of shower curtains donated. The rings will complete the gift.

Sunday Worship Schedule

8:30 & 11:00am..... Worship Services
9:45am..... Sunday School for adults, youth & children

Covenant Staff

PastorRev. Gregg Sealey
Church Secretary.....Karen King
Worship Arts/Children's Ministry Coordinator .. Sarah Marken
Pianist..... Mac Merchant
Custodian..... Stan Gray
Assistant Custodian Kyle Smith
Youth Director..... Bethany Pyle
Nursery Supervisor.....Shawna Viren
Preschool Director.....Angie Canavan

Office Hours:

Mon.-Fri 9:30am-3:00pm

"The Covenant Connection" is printed twice a month by Covenant United Methodist Church. **Deadline to turn in articles for the next newsletter is Tuesday, Nov. 17th.**

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A "Sign" of Faith

God uses a number of ways to get our attention. We hope our church sign is attracting new people to God!

We are looking for a couple of people who would like to change the message on our church sign each week. Pastor Gregg or Karen will let you know what needs to go up and FREE training is provided!

It is a two person job, that is needed each week on either Sunday afternoons or Mondays. Please call the office if you feel led to make this your ministry to Covenant and for the community.

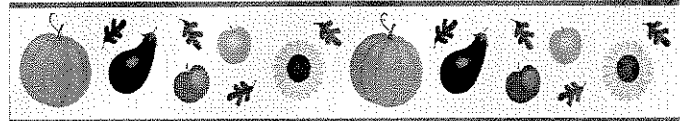
ATTENTION GAME PLAYERS....

We had such a good time playing games on our dance night, that many of us decided to make the game part a regular event. We will talk about how regular we want to have these fun events.

**GAMES AND FUN AT COVENANT
NOVEMBER 7, SATURDAY
2:00 - 4:00 PM**

Bring your favorite game, a friend and beverage

**IT WILL BE FUN - COME ONE,
COME ALL !!!**



"Since my youth, I think that I have never lost the intuition that community life could be a sign that God is love, and love alone."

~ Brother Roger

a Taizé Prayer Service
Thursday, November 12
at 7pm
Covenant Sanctuary

Come seek communion with God in prayer, singing, silence and reflection. Understand how God wants you to follow him. Give thanks for the simple things.