

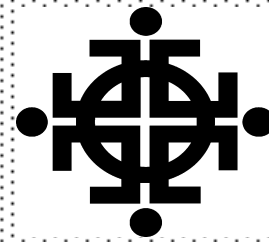
First Covenant Lamplighter

Volume XXXIX - Number 2

February 2015

Worshiping

Serving



Sharing

Equipping

FIRST COVENANT CHURCH
Virginia, Minnesota
741-7117

www.firstcovenantvirginia.org

"ONE NATION UNDER GOD"

As we prepare to observe Presidents' Day, we would do well to look at what some of our Presidents down through the years have said about the place of God in the life of our nation.

"No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency." --George Washington

"Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will. Bless our land with honorable ministry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance and from every evil way." --Thomas Jefferson

"We have staked the whole future of American civilization not on the power of government, far from it. We have staked the whole of our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government, upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves according to the commandments of God. The future and success of America is not in this Constitution, but in the laws of God upon which this Constitution is founded." --James Madison

"It is the duty of nations as well as men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the LORD."

--Abraham Lincoln

"Every thinking man, when he thinks, realizes that the teachings of the Bible are so interwoven and intertwined with our whole civic and social life that it would be literally. . . impossible for us to figure what the loss would be if these teachings were removed. We would lose all the standards by which we now judge both public and private morals; all the standards toward which we, with more or less resolution, strive to raise ourselves."

--Theodore Roosevelt

" 'Peace on earth, good will toward men' - democracy must cling to that message. For it is my deep conviction that democracy cannot live without that true religion which gives a nation a sense of justice and moral purpose." --Franklin Delano Roosevelt

"You can't divorce religious belief and public service. . . I've never detected any conflict between God's will and my political duty. If you violate one, you violate the other." --Jimmy Carter

"Without God, there is no virtue, because there's no prompting of the conscience. Without God, we're mired in the material, that flat world that tells us only what our senses perceive. Without God, there is a coarsening of the society. And without God, democracy will not and

cannot long endure. If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under."
--Ronald Reagan

"Heavenly Father, we bow our heads and thank You for Your love. Accept our thanks for the peace that yields this day and the shared faith that makes its continuance likely. Make us strong to do Your work, willing to heed and hear Your will, and write on our hearts these words: 'Use power to help people.'"
--George H. W. Bush

"My relationship with God through Christ has given me meaning and direction. My faith has made a big difference in my personal life, and my public life as well. I make personal decisions every day. Some are easy, and some aren't so easy. I have worries just like you do. And I pray. I pray for guidance. I pray for patience. I firmly believe in the power of intercessory prayer; and I know that I could not do my job without it."
--George W. Bush

The above quotes are taken from the book *Prayer Force One: Across America* by Ed Moore



FIRST COVENANT CHURCH PURPOSE STATEMENT

The mission of First Covenant Church is
to worship God,
equip people to live in faith,
share God's love,
and serve the community around us.

SERVING CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH

Ushers:

Feb. 1--Mike Hannay
Feb. 8--Brian & Julie Hill
Feb. 15--Ken & Linda Pogorelec
Feb. 22--Roger & Gail Johnston
Mar. 1--Shirley Koski & Darlene Reindahl

Nursery Attendants:

Feb. 1--Audrey Branstrom
Feb. 8--Darlene Reindahl
Feb. 15--Marjean Johmson
Feb. 22--Linda Pogorelec
Mar. 1--Shirley Koski

Sound Technicians

Feb. 1--Mike Hannay
Feb. 8--Roger Johnston
Feb. 15--Mike Hannay
Feb. 22--Roger Johnston
Mar. 1--Mike Hannay

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT 12/1/14 - 12/31/14

Checking account balance as of Dec..1st: **\$1470.58**

General fund income for current period: **\$5021.00**

Average monthly general fund income needed to meet annual budget: **\$7558.78**

Other income: **\$139.00**

Rental income: **\$450.00**

Transfer due to shortages: **\$2000.00**

Total expenditures for current period: **\$9518.23**

Checking account balance as of Dec. 31st: **\$373.35**

"No one has ever become poor by giving."
--Anne Frank

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

On Friday, March 6, at 1:00 p.m. it is First Covenant's turn to host World Day of Prayer, as we join with area churches to learn about the struggles and triumphs of Christian women in the Bahamas.

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement led by Christian women, who come together to observe a common day of prayer. Each year a different country serves to write the World Day of Prayer worship service, lifting up issues of mission, justice, and peace that are important to them.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend on Friday, March 6, at 1:00 p.m..

COVENANT WOMEN MINISTRIES

We have heard that the residents of Lakeview were very grateful for the blankets we sewed for them to use as gifts for their children. Our next project is making lap robes for seniors which will be given out by the Romigs mostly as Christmas gifts. This will enable us to use a lot of the Arrowhead fabric we still have in the closet. We will be needing some bigger pieces to use as backing. We need sewers but also people to tie quilts, press, and cut. Come and join us the first Tuesday of each month at 9:30.

Our church will be the host for World Day of Prayer on Friday, March 6. We will be asking for volunteers to bake bars and help in other ways. Please make every effort to be in attendance.

We will also be hosting a Saturday morning event with Christi Pease on February 21 beginning with breakfast and ending at noon. Ladies from Cook and Biwabik are invited to join us.

Registration forms are available for the 2015 Renewal Conference in St. Cloud on Friday March 27 and Saturday, March 28. The theme is "Essential Women--The Aroma of Christ." Meagan Gilan will be the main speaker. There are many choices for the two breakout sessions. Let's fill a couple cars.

COVENANT PARK BIBLE CAMP

The brochures are out for this summer's camping season. The 2015 theme is "Surf's Up," based on John 4:14. The early-bird discount is available until March 1.

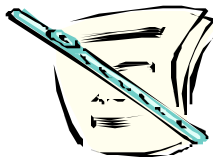
OAXACA MISSION TRIP



Our church will be participating in a mission trip to Oaxaca, Mexico, during the week of **August 10-14 of this year**. We will be assisting the Amparo y Fortaleza Covenant Church with a VBS and also refurbishing two rooms for their Sunday school. This is the church we helped construct their sanctuary on our last mission trip in 2011. Those who have participated in one or more of our church's four mission trips know what a blessing this experience is. We would encourage former mission team members and well as those who have not previously been part of a mission team to seriously consider joining us for this ministry. For more information, contact Wayne or Bernie.

WINTER MUSICAL EVENTS

The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists, a premiere ensemble under the direction of Dr. Matthew Culloton, will be performing at Virginia High School's Goodman Auditorium on Saturday February 7th, at 7:00 p.m.. The program consists of a wide variety of choral music from some of the most exciting composers and a beautiful set of seldom-heard Renaissance motets. The night is rounded out with a set of solo music by Virginia High School's A Cappella Choir and, to finish, both ensembles will join forces for two massed choir numbers. Tickets, available at the door, are \$10 for adults (18+) and \$7 for students.



The Mesabi Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of their Russian-American conductor Sergey Bogza, will present a concert entitled "Classical Elements: Earth, Water, Air, and Fire" at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, February 8th, in Goodman Auditorium at Virginia High School. The concert will feature works of Johann Strauss II, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Leonard Bernstein, and Igor Stravinsky. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$5 for students and will be available at the door.

PAUL CARLSON PARTNERSHIP



One out of every 5 people dies before the age of 5 in Congo – most of the them from preventable causes. The needless human toll is staggering, and access to medical care impedes treatment.

Obstacle: Medical care is inaccessible for the 1.6 million people in Congo's Équateur Province. Typically, the closest hospital is a ten-mile walk, and local village clinics lack basic necessities. The clinics operate without electricity or clean water. Medicines and supplies are available only intermittently. Curable illnesses take lives every day.

Objective: To increase access to medical care by developing the village clinics and to provide essential resources to raise the standard of care.

Outcome: Deaths from treatable diseases will be prevented with a dependable stream of medicines and supplies. Salaries will equip staff members to feed their families. Lives will be saved.

KERNEL OF SEED Update from the Kims

This Is Where I Am by Anna Kim

On January 2nd we arrived back to Schaumburg, Illinois after spending Christmas in California with my family. The following day it started to snow. The snow fell slowly and beautifully and started to blanket everything in white. There was a quietness and stillness about this snowfall. I found myself letting go a deep sigh. There was something special about this first snowfall of the New Year that triggered something deep inside of me.

It may sound dumb, but I was realizing that we have entered a new season and for me, a new season of life. As many of you know, we came back to the States in the heat of summer, coming back to a hectic schedule of traveling, appointments, resettling our children to American life. Recently, with all the holidays and the in-

ability to drive due to the weather, we find ourselves slowing down. For the first time, I feel calm and settled after coming back from China. I praise God because it has been a slow, healing process, and I feel I can start anew...letting go of the past and seeking God with the new. I have heard some missionaries say how long it took for them to feel resettled back in their country, but I didn't think it would take me 6 months!

Life is still busy being a missionary on furlough and mother raising three young children. When we get back to China (hopefully in August), there is the dreaded move that has to take place before we can feel resettled in our home again. (I dread the logistics of moving and not the environment or our new life there.) There's the unknown that causes me stress like, "Will there be a teacher for our kids when we get back to China? Or will I have to home school?" "Will the Yuci Family Project be fully funded and staffed for the future?" Those were a few of issues that I had no emotional reserves to face before. But, thanks be to our God who calms our hearts and says, "Peace! Be still!" to all the storms in our hearts and souls (Mark 4:39). He is the one who does care for our lives when we are filled with fear and tired from it all (Mark 4:38). Just like the falling snow, our Father blankets us with His grace at the appropriate time. Furthermore, His presence is enough. That is what the Holy Spirit keeps reminding me of... again and again.

Our Schedule for Jan, Feb & March

- Jan 24-30--Peter travels to Denver, CO for the ECC Midwinter Conference
- February 1--Speaking at North Park Covenant Church in Chicago, IL
- February 8--Speaking at Broadway Covenant Church in Rockford, IL
- Feb 8 evening-- Kims at Northbrook Covenant Church in Northbrook, IL
- Feb 26- March 1--Peter participating in The ECC's Sankofa Journey
- March 5-8--Anna speaking at a mission conference in International Falls, MN
- March 10-11--Anna speaking at New Life Church, Saginaw, MN
- March 14-15--Anna speaking at Roseville Covenant, Roseville, MN
- March 20-29--Spring Break for the Kim children

Praise & Prayer Needs

1. *Yuci Family Services in China*
 - a) For vision and direction as this ministry develops.
 - b) Please pray for more workers willing to serve.
 - c) Wisdom to discern how best to help Chinese families

and the elderly.

d) For unity of our Chinese and ex-pat staff to work as one.

e) For more local collaborators in the community.

2. Please pray for Li Xiao Wen as she further develops her work and leadership skills. Pray that she will stay strong in her young faith.

3. Pray that the Lord will provide two long-term teachers for the missionary children. Currently we have 3 short-term teachers, and we praise God for providing them this year. We hope they can stay longer or God will provide new ones.

4. Praise God that we are getting a few new supporters! We still need to raise 15% of our total budget. Please pray that God will provide all our needs this year and for the next four years while in China.

COVENANT TRUST COMPANY

Risk Tolerance

Investing would be a lot simpler if risk and return were inversely related. There definitely would be a lot less mystery to it all if there were plenty of low-risk, high-return options to choose from. However, we must usually assume more risk with our investments in order to have the potential for a greater return.

For example, high-quality bonds generally carry less market risk than stocks, but they usually offer a lower return. So while stocks tend to carry more market risk than bonds, that higher risk may create the potential for a higher return.

The potential for a great return can be alluring, but you can't simply ignore the risk involved. Just the opposite is true. Not only should you be aware of the risk involved with your investments; you should also know how much risk you are comfortable assuming. This is called your risk tolerance.

When determining your risk tolerance, consider these questions:

- How soon will you need to cash in your investments?
- How will a loss on your investment affect the rest of your finances?
- If your investment loses money, can you afford to stick with the investment and wait for it to recover?

If you determine that your risk tolerance is very low, it doesn't mean you should avoid risk or shun investing altogether; not investing can be risky, too! Whether your

tolerance is high, low, or somewhere in-between, you need an investment plan that properly reflects the level of risk you're willing to take on. Additionally, remember that your risk tolerance can change over time or as your financial situation changes. As such, it's a good idea to regularly assess your risk tolerance.

Whether you're new to investing or a longtime investor, Steve Allison, our local Field Service Representative, can help you determine your risk tolerance and discuss appropriate investment options for you. For more information, contact Steve at 877-768-1766 or e-mail him at srallison@covenanttrust.com.

Do these questions about risk and return raise even more questions for you? If so, we can help you get answers. Send your investment and personal finance questions to questions@covenanttrust.com. And for more investment and personal finance tips, visit and subscribe to our blog: www.covtrustblog.com.

THANK YOU NOTE

Dear 1st Covenant Church Family:

Thank you for demonstrating your strong support for law enforcement with your financial donation toward the Law Enforcement Appreciation Banquet, which will be held February 3rd in Mt. Iron. Your gift will help to make it happen. May you experience God's blessing as you bless others.

--Kenneth Norton, Executive Director
St. Louis County Law Enforcement Chaplaincy

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Karla Sturdy	13
Roger Johnston	16
Steve Skogman	16
Stephanie Carlson	25
Lois Johnson	25

BULETIN, CALENDAR, AND NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Calendar items for the next month need to be e-mailed or in the church office by the third Sunday of the previous month. Weekly bulletin items must be e-mailed or brought to the church office by 9:00 a. m. Wednesdays. E-mailed items need to have either "calendar" or "bulletin" in the subject line.

Items for the March issue of the **Lamplighter** should be turned in by **Sunday, February 22nd**. Items may be submitted by e-mail to wbchris@q.com. Remember that we are always looking for items of interest for the "Among Us" column.