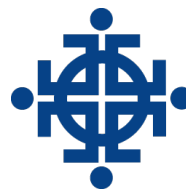


FIRST COVENANT LAMPLIGHTER

**Volume XLVII - Number 2
February 2023**



First Covenant Church
Virginia, Minnesota
741-7117
www.firstcovenantvirginia.org

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is an opportunity to show others our love. We give candy, flowers, and gifts to friends and loved ones. It's literally a sweet day, with sentiment and real sweets. It's good to show love to those we love and to love our enemies as well. Jesus says in Matthew 22:39, "Love your neighbor as yourself." But we know that it's preceded by another and greater commandment. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself."

So, we are commanded to love our neighbor, and ourselves, but the greatest commandment is to love God. On this day of love we might ask ourselves, "Do we want to give a token of our love to God? And if so, what would we give Him?"

Throughout the Old Testament, God asks His people to give Him their hearts. He likens Himself to a lover who has been rejected when the people forget Him and His commandments. God is our lover? The Word of God says, "We love because He first loved us." There are many messages of love, many valentines, which we might have missed in God's letter to us. It says, He loves His people with a "steadfast love", He loves us "freely", "He exults over us with singing", and "You are precious in My sight and honored and I love you." Take time today to give Almighty God, your heavenly Father, a precious valentine of love, your heart and your devotion.

— Mary Atwood

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. 5—Shirley Koski
Feb. 12—Roger & Judy Linden
Feb. 19—Brian & Julie Hill
Feb. 26—Roger & Gail Johnston
Mar.. 5—Bob & Mary Nelson

Church caretakers for the week of . . .

Feb. 5—Roger & Judy Linden
Feb. 12—Lucas & Cassie Hill
Feb. 19—Roger & Gail Johnston
Feb. 26—Wayne & Bernie Christiansen
& Audrey Branstrom
Mar. 5—Shirley Koski & Barb Knapper

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

12/1/22-12/31/22

Checking account balance as Dec.. 1st: **\$38,862.16**



General Fund income for current period: **\$6,016.00**

Other income: **\$648.00**

Offering for FREE: **\$462.00**

Total expenses for current period: **\$3,705.95**

Checking account balance as of Dec.31st:
\$41,834.21

(Please note: The amount of other income for November as noted in the January newsletter should have been \$1269.10 rather than \$81,269.10.)

FELLOWSHIP TIME



We could use volunteers to bring treats to go with coffee following our morning services. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the fellowship hall.

COVENANT WOMEN MINISTRIES



Sixty-six dresses and 33 shorts have been packed up and mailed to Florida for the work of the Pauls in Haiti. Missionary Aviation will transport them to Haiti.

Postage to Florida was \$103.45.

We sent a check for \$57.00 to cover the cost of transporting them the rest of the way. If you would like to be part of covering the transportation part of this project, we encourage you to give your donation to Judy Linden.

We continue to meet on the 3rd Tuesday and are currently working on lap robes.

COVENANT PARK BIBLE CAMP

Wayne and Bernie attended the annual meeting in January. There were not enough churches represented to meet the quorum. Please be praying for campers to register and for staff to be hired.

Camp registration is open now. The theme is "Encountering I AM". We offer half of the registration fee for those attending.

COVENANT KIDS CONGO

Because of the work of Covenant Kids Congo, **15,903 mothers/caregivers** with children newborn to 23 months have received nutrition counseling, learning proper food preparation and how to offer balanced meals to their families to prevent and treat malnutrition.

15,359 families have been educated on child protection and ways to report abuse, resulting in more cases reported to police and more perpetrators convicted.

UPDATE FROM ANNA ROSENGREN

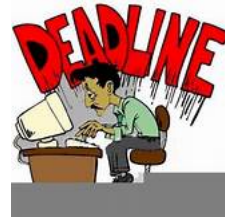
It has been a busy year, but full of fun and surprises. I've been able to be involved with community circles and hobby classes. I joined a painting class and a choir. It's been a great way to meet people in the community.

I've been privileged to meet with many different people for one-on-ones. I pray that I may have the opportunities to share about my relationship with Jesus.



ISAZA FAMILY

PRAYER AND PRAISE UPDATE



BULLETIN, CALENDAR, AND NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

We are grateful to serve alongside the Covenant Church here and ask you to pray as we prepare and plan for different ministry initiatives this new year. As we continue to serve in the area of theological education and leadership development, we look forward to teaching courses for the 50+ students who have signed up from around the country to take ministry classes through the Ministerial Institute of Medellin, working towards a Certificate in Bible and Ministry. These will be hybrid courses, with some hours online and some in person. Julio is helping to coordinate the logistics of this program and Katie will be busy in January prepping the Christian Formation class she will teach in February.

Julio was able to visit El Bagre in December and spend time with leaders from the Be Peace Make Peace project. We look forward to ways to be able to continue to serve and collaborate with this valuable project! Julio is preparing for more visits in 2023 as they are engaging in peacebuilding based in the biblical concept of shalom and will be partners in rBe Peace Make Peace, who in December worked in partnership with the major gold mining company in town to visit over **23 communities, providing recreation and gifts, and showing God's infinite love to over 2500 children**. Praise God for the way lives are being touched through the sacrifice and commitment of the leaders and volunteers of Be Peace Make Peace.

Items for the March calendar need to be e-mailed to Linda Pogorelec (pogy56@q.com) by Sunday, February 19th. Weekly bulletin items should be e-mailed to, wbchris@q.com by Wednesday of the week when they will appear.

Items for the March issue of the **Lamplighter** should be turned in by Sunday, February 19th. Items may be submitted by e-mail to wbchris@q.com. Remember that we are always looking for news of interest for the "Among Us" column



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Roger Johnston	16th
Steve Skogman	16th
Bill King	22nd
Stephanie Carlson	25th
Leo Hill	25th

