

FIRST COVENANT LAMPLIGHTER

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First Covenant Church

Virginia, Minnesota

741-7117

www.firstcovenantvirginia.org

Their Final Fourth

I sit here in Princeton, New Jersey, my hometown, a small city, rich in history dating back to the Revolution, history especially relevant to Independence Day. Perhaps that's what's prompted me to sit down and write this post.

The Fourth of July is a "feel good" holiday. Most of us are going to find ourselves beach-bound or at picnics with friends and loved ones, enjoying fireworks, while trying to avoid bug bites and sunburn. It's a holiday which few people can take issue with. On a deeper level, to me it carries powerful meaning because of the freedoms that were delivered through our liberation from a tyrannical England, some 247 years ago. A few of the freedoms that still remain somewhat intact allow inspired people with creative ideas to pursue them for the betterment of those who they serve, while also creating a more abundant life for themselves, and those immediately around them. This is something I absolutely cherish. It's truly American.

While I suspect that our Founding Fathers are rolling over in their graves seeing what we have done with these very liberties and principles in the years that have followed, I will reluctantly hold back from making this into a political commentary. There's something far more interesting to follow, so bear with me, please.

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams became fast friends during the First Continental Congress but the political elections, which made them both presidents, illuminated their very different political views, creating a rift that would last most of their lives.

A mutual friend engineered a reconciliation between the two, culminating in a rich and heartwarming relationship, documented in 12 years of letters between them, which historians say must be read to be fully appreciated. As two of the few surviving signers of the Declaration of Independence, they were finally able to see that they had far more in common than any differences they had once perceived.



Amazingly, on July 4th, 1826 — the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence — these two luminaries died... within hours of each other. This alone leaves me spinning. What's more, Adams' last words, as he drifted in and out of consciousness on his final day, were, "Jefferson...survives."

Jefferson had passed away hours earlier. In his last moments, Jefferson awakes to ask his aides in his final utterance, "Is it the Fourth?" Indeed it is, Mr. Jefferson. As we celebrate the Fourth of July, we owe you and Mr. Adams tremendous thanks.



Happy Independence Day!

—Jason Earle

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:

Jul. 2—Judy & Roger Linden
Jul. 9—Brian & Julie Hill
Jul. 16—Good Shepherd Picnic
Jul. 23—Wayne & Bernie Christiansen
Jul. 30—Bob & Mary Nelson
Aug. 6—Shirley Koski

Church Caretakers for the week of . . .

Jul. 2—Wayne & Bernie Christiansen
Jul. 9—Ken & Linda Pogorelec
Jul. 16—Shirley Koski & Barb Knapper
Jul. 23—Russ & Stephanie Carlson
Jul. 30—Brian & Julie Hill
Aug. 6—Jeffrey & Heather Jones

Lawn mowing for the week of . . .

Jul. 2—Mike Hannay
Jul. 9—Roger Linden
Jul. 16—Wayne Christiansen
Jul. 23—Russ Carlson / Magan Carlson
Jul. 30—Bob Nelson
Aug. 6—Brian Hill

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

5/1/23-5/31/23

Checking account balance as May 1st: **\$39,938.52**

General Fund income for current period: **\$5,499.00**

Other income: **\$210.13**

Total expenses for current period: **\$4,160.39**

Checking account balance as of May 31st:
\$41,577.13

CHURCH PICNICS



We have been invited by the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to attend their worship service and church picnic beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 16th in Olcott Park. The service will be held in the bandstand with the picnic following at the Lions Club building. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided, but please bring dish to share.

Our own church picnic will be held beginning with our worship service at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 23rd, at the Kline-Cuppoletti Building on Silver Lake. The folks at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church are invited to join us. Please bring a dish to share and your own table service.

Good Shepherd pastor Mike Tifft will be preaching both Sundays.

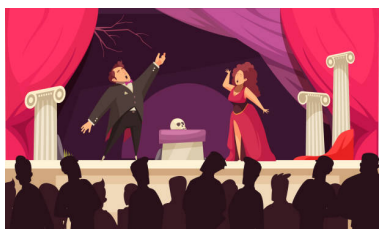
QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING

Our congregational business meeting for the second quarter of this year will be held at 11:00 on Sunday, July 30th. We encourage all members and friends of the church to be present as we look towards our future ministry as a church

NURSING HOME SERVICES

Our church will be in charge of the service on Sunday, July 30th at 2:00 at Waterview Pines in Virginia. It would be good to have some of our church family on hand to help with the singing and to visit with the residents.

MUSIC FESTIVAL



The 2023 Northern Lights Music Festival will be held July 1st-21st, featuring a variety of music events and concerts in a number of area venues.

Artistic director of the festival is Veda Zuponicic, Aurora native, now professor of music at Rowan University in Glensboro, New Jersey. Festival highlight is the performance of Puccini's opera *La Boheme* at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, July 14th, at Veda Zuponicic Auditorium of Mesabi East High School and at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 16th, at Chisholm High School auditorium. Wayne Christiansen is a member of the opera chorus. Tickets for the opera and other concerts are available at Schmitt Music in Virginia. A complete schedule of festival events and ticket information is available online at northernlightsmusic.org.

COVENANT KIDS CONGO

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

When Constantine (and her family recently moved to Gemena, they did not have a shower or toilet in their home. For a while a neighbor allowed them to use his toilet, but that became inconvenient.

They attended Community-Led Total Sanitation meetings, a program that engages the community in recognizing areas where open defecation occurs and taking action to become totally free of open defeca-

tion. This includes helping households to construct their own latrines. Constantine and her husband learned how to build a latrine and were trained to sprinkle ash inside the latrine after each use. They also learned to wash their hands regularly with soap after using the latrine, before and after eating, and before breastfeeding.

Programs like this are helping to keep families in Gemena and Karawa healthy, empowering them to maintain their dignity and pride.

THANK YOU NOTES

The Virginia Police Department would like to express our sincere thanks for financially supporting our child safety and drug education program. We feel it is our sworn duty to provide the public with the protection and safeguards expected of us. Our child safety and drug education program will help us do that. Thank you from our Department and all those who benefit from the program.

—Nicole Mattson, Chief of Police

Thank you for supporting the Mt. Iron-Buhl class of 2023 by contributing to our all-night chemical-free graduation party!

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Kathy Hannay
Julie Larson
Magan Carlson

3rd
16th
21st



BULLETIN, CALENDAR, AND NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Items for the August calendar need to be e-mailed to pogy56@gmail.com by Sunday, July 16th. Weekly bulletin items should be e-mailed to wbchris@q.com by the Wednesday before they are to appear.

Items for the August issue of the **Lamplighter** should be turned in by Sunday, July 23rd. 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.

AMONG US

Congratulations to Stephen Carlson on his graduation from Mt. Iron-Buhl High School.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

A lonesome woman parishioner demanded a home visit from her pastor. So, as promised, the pastor showed up and sat by the woman's bed listening to her litany of woe. Finally he asked to read some passages from her Bible.

In a much-too-sweet voice she called to her little daughter playing in the next room. "Darling, please bring Mother that dear old book that she reads every night." Promptly the little girl brought in a copy of a popular TV-movie magazine.



