

Community Covenant Church
122 S Main Street
PO Box 278
Upsala, MN 56384

Phone: 320-573-2672

Email: covenant@upsalacov.org
www.upsalacov.org



Pastor Steve Weihsmann
Senior Pastor
steve@upsalacov.org
(218) 428-8010

Zach Klein
Youth Ministries
zach@upsalacov.org
(763) 242-7237

ECC 140th Annual Meeting - Three Virtual Attenders/Delegates Needed

The Evangelical Covenant Church Annual Meeting will be held June 25-28, 2025 in Orlando, Florida. If you would like to be an **online** delegate, please contact Richard Blonigen @ 612-202-4726 by May 15.

Connect with sisters and brothers from every corner of the earth as we celebrate, discern, and dream together—following Christ into the next chapter of the Covenant story.





COMMUNITY COVENANT CHURCH

CHRONICLES

Publication of Community Covenant Church, Upsala, MN

May/June 2025



Set your minds on things that are above not on things that are on earth. *Colossians 3:2*

A note from Operation Christmas Child Central Minnesota Team



Thanks to Community Covenant of Upsala for partnering with Operation Christmas Child for the 2024 season. Because of your partnership 60 children have the opportunity to hear that Jesus loves them!

Our six-county total was 14,008 boxes collected as part of 11,927,439 boxes delivered globally.

With excitement we look forward to seeing what our great God will do in 2025!

What's Inside?	
2.....From Pastor Steve's Desk	6.....Peru Update
3.....Office Talk/Worship Server Schedule	7.....James Tang & Jamaica Missions
3.....Art Gallery/In Memory Of	8.....Children's Ministry
4.....Graduates	9.....Youth News
4.....World Vision Global 6K	10.....May Calendar
5.....National Day of Prayer	11.....June Calendar
5.....Covenant Women	12.....ECC & Gratitude

“WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT SPIRITUAL WARFARE”

The Sunday evening Community Life Group has been watching some videos of Pastor Allen Jackson from the World Outreach Church in Murphreesboro, TN. Pastor Jackson is biblically solid, engaging, entertaining, and explains the Bible in a way that is easy to understand and in a way that motivates people to become more devoted followers of Jesus. A recent teaching was titled “Angels, Demons, and You.” It was a message reminding us that there are two worlds, one we see and apprehend with our five senses, and one that is invisible and apprehended best by spiritual senses. The invisible world is populated both by God’s agents, doing His bidding and benefitting mankind, and by Satan’s agents who seek to get us off track with God and destroy faith and life.

There were three important take-aways for me:

- 1. When Jesus said in Luke 12:5, “Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division,” He meant that He came to open our eyes to the spiritual world, to the division that exists between good and evil, and to force a choice between the two. And, as Pastor Jackson pointed out, if we do not choose, we are in fact choosing evil.
- 2. When something irrational happens, we ought to suspect demonic influence. For example, when Jesus performed wonderful miracles of healing, the response of some was to irrationally accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath, of being possessed by demons, and of endangering the Jewish nation. Knowing the Scriptures, the rational thought would have been, “This must be the Messiah.”
- 3. Evil forces have as their mission to destroy evidence of God’s activity. After Jesus raised Lazarus, the chief priests and Pharisees began to plot to take not only Jesus’ life, but the life of Lazarus too, because he was evidence of God’s activity and ability to raise the dead.

Jesus saying He came to bring division was puzzling to me, as I had always thought of Him as the Prince of Peace. But now it makes sense that He also brings awareness of the struggle going on in the two worlds. We are better able to maintain faith if we can recognize the *Enemy*, which we can do when something irrational occurs (like celebrating the loss of life which comes through abortion) or when we see dark powers trying to erase evidence of God’s activity and intentions (as when gender lines are blurred.)



Will it be good or evil? We must choose a side.

~Pastor Steve



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 8 PM Men’s Bible Study	3 10 AM God’s Gils	4 6:00 PM Ignite	5	6	7
8 Blessing of the Bikes 9:30 AM Worship	9	10 10 AM God’s Gils	11 6:00 PM Ignite	12	13 July/August Newsletter Deadline	14
15 Father’s Day 9:30 AM Worship	16 8 PM Men’s Bible Study	17 10 AM God’s Gils	18 6:00 PM Ignite	19 7 PM Leadership Meeting	20 Youth Trip June 20-26	21
22 9:30 AM Worship with Communion	23	24 10 AM God’s Gils	25 6:00 PM Ignite	26 June 26-28 140th ECC Annual Meeting in Orlando Florida	27	28
29 9:30 AM Worship at the Upsala City Park	30 8 PM Men’s Bible Study					

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 National Day of Prayer Church Open 8am-8pm May 1-3 NWC Annual Meeting Roseville, MN	2	3
4 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	5 8 PM Men's Bible Study	6 7 PM Youth Meeting	7 6 PM meal 6:20-7:35 PM JTeam/ALand 6:30 PM Ignite	8	9	10
11 Mother's Day 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	12	13 7 PM Worship Team Meeting	14 6:30 PM Ignite	15	16	17 Global 6K at 7am - Meet at Upsala School
18 Graduation Sunday 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship w/ Communion	19 8 PM Men's Bible Study	20	21 6:30 PM Ignite	22 10 am Prayer Team Meeting	23	24
25 Begin 9:30 AM Worship	26 Memorial Day	27	28	29 7 pm Leadership Meeting	30	31

<u>Office Hours</u>	<u>May Worship Servers</u>	<u>June Worship Servers</u>																						
Tuesday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Wednesday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Thursday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Friday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM 122 S. Main Street PO Box 278 Upsala, MN 56384 320-573-2672 covenant@upsalacov.org www.upsalacov.org Evangelical Covenant Church www.covchurch.org Northwest Conference www.northwestconference.org	Ushers: Mike & Mary Jo Peterson <table><tr><th><u>Prayer</u></th><th><u>Scripture</u></th></tr><tr><td>4 Pastor Steve</td><td>Anne W.</td></tr><tr><td>11 Dan Voronyak</td><td>Wendy V.</td></tr><tr><td>18 Tina Yorek</td><td>Paulie Panek</td></tr><tr><td>25 Karen Hoffman</td><td>Annette G.</td></tr></table> 	<u>Prayer</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	4 Pastor Steve	Anne W.	11 Dan Voronyak	Wendy V.	18 Tina Yorek	Paulie Panek	25 Karen Hoffman	Annette G.	Ushers: Leif & Suzi Johnson <table><tr><th><u>Prayer</u></th><th><u>Scripture</u></th></tr><tr><td>1 Pastor Steve</td><td>Linda Piasecki</td></tr><tr><td>8 Anne Weihsmann</td><td>Sharen Gaebel</td></tr><tr><td>15 Wendy Voronyak</td><td>Joan Olson</td></tr><tr><td>22 Sandi Soderberg</td><td>Sheila Brezinka</td></tr><tr><td>29 Steve Woller</td><td>Cyd Woller</td></tr></table> 	<u>Prayer</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	1 Pastor Steve	Linda Piasecki	8 Anne Weihsmann	Sharen Gaebel	15 Wendy Voronyak	Joan Olson	22 Sandi Soderberg	Sheila Brezinka	29 Steve Woller	Cyd Woller
<u>Prayer</u>	<u>Scripture</u>																							
4 Pastor Steve	Anne W.																							
11 Dan Voronyak	Wendy V.																							
18 Tina Yorek	Paulie Panek																							
25 Karen Hoffman	Annette G.																							
<u>Prayer</u>	<u>Scripture</u>																							
1 Pastor Steve	Linda Piasecki																							
8 Anne Weihsmann	Sharen Gaebel																							
15 Wendy Voronyak	Joan Olson																							
22 Sandi Soderberg	Sheila Brezinka																							
29 Steve Woller	Cyd Woller																							

Staying Connected
We send out Sunday bulletins and bi-monthly newsletters via email. If you aren't receiving them, call the church office at 320-573-2672, or send us an email: covenant@upsalacov.org

Publication Deadlines:
Sunday bulletin: 10pm Wednesday
Monthly Newsletter: February 10, April 14, June 13, August 15, October 13, & December 10

Visit our Art Gallery



Friday 2-6 pm; Saturday 10 am-2 pm;
Sunday noon-2 pm

May - All Student Show
June - Weaving and metal art/metal artifacts
July -Collectibles of all kinds
August - Historical theme

* For more information contact:
Pastor Steve Weihsmann: steve@upsalacov.org or text to (218) 428-8010

IN LOVING MEMORY



Stacy Johnson

September 13, 1982-February 18, 2025

Gone but not forgotten.

2025 Graduates

As we approach our senior recognition Sunday on May 18, we have placed bibles, highlighters, and pens in the foyer. Please take time between now and May 18 to highlight your favorite verse and sign your name. Index cards will also be available to write a note.

Please be in prayer for the *Class of 2025*

Evie Aleckson, Nicholus Guthrie, Eli Johnson, Lydia Prout, Dakota Soltis, & Lois Wardlaw

The World Vision Global 6K - Saturday, May 17

There is still time to join the **CCCUpsala** Team by running or walking in the Global 6K for clean water. Leadership will cover \$25 of the registration fee for each church participant. Adults need to pay an additional \$25.

Time: **7am**

Place: **Upsala School**

To Do:

1. Sign up in the church office to get registered.
2. Ask people to sponsor you via a donation to World Vision.
3. Be ready to run/walk (and have fun) on Saturday, May 17.

We appreciate our coordinators - Dave and Linda Piasecki & Suzi Johnson

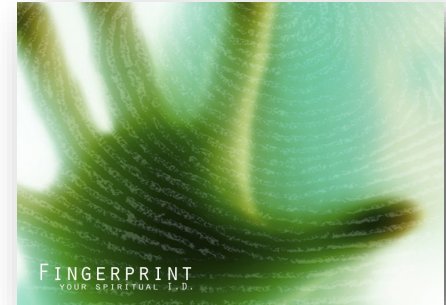


We have been doing a lot of very cool things in IGNITE, going through different series. The first was 1st Corinthians 12, learning that we are each created with certain gifts given to us by God; to use to work together as the church; and to do God's will for the church. This all culminated with the students taking spiritual gifts assessments. We followed this up by doing a series entitled "Fingerprint," where we learned more about how God has created each of us for a purpose. We are not a mistake and when Jesus fully comes into our lives, then our lives will change.

The Confirmation class had their annual retreat at Lake Beauty Bible Camp. This year we had three 2nd year girls who had a wonderful time at Lake Beauty, learning, spending time with their mentors, playing games, and even doing makeovers on a few victims...I mean willing participants (Jimmy Warga, Paul Ripplinger Jr., and Pastor Zach!) A big thank you to Susie Ripplinger who is doing a wonderful job teaching these girls confirmation.

We will continue our Ignite Wednesday night get togethers until May 21 and then move into our summer schedule. The beginning of the summer schedule is **June 4**. We will meet at church from 6-9pm (including a campfire.)

Keep up to date with IGNITE summer schedule by signing up for our free texting group. ———>



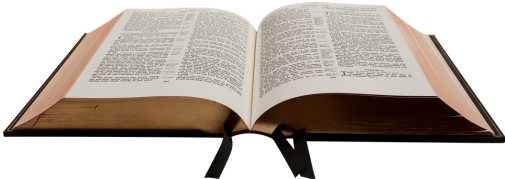
God’s Girls

God’s Girls is a group of girls that meets during the summer for a bible study. This summer, we will be focusing on prayer and praying aloud. The book of Matthew is what we will read. If the weather is nice, we will meet outside in front of church. Otherwise, we will meet indoors on the lower level of the church.

We meet Tuesday mornings at 10 AM. If you want to enroll your girl or have any questions please contact Karen Hoffman at 320-808-6678 or krhoffman1990@gmail.com.



Date	Topic
June 3, 2025	Introduction to the study and Matthew 1
June 10, 2025	Matthew 2, 3, and 4
June 17, 2025	Matthew 5, 6, and 7
June 24, 2025	Matthew 8, 9, and 10
July 1, 2025	Matthew 11, 12, and 13
July 8, 2025	Matthew 14, 15, and 16
July 15, 2025	Matthew 17, 18, and 19
July 22, 2025	Matthew 20, 21, and 22
July 29, 2025	Matthew 23, 24, and 25
August 5, 2025	We will not meet
August 12, 2025	Matthew 26, 27, and 28
August 19, 2025	Finale



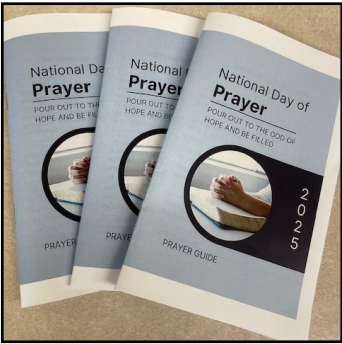
Family Summer Bash

The Children’s Ministry Team is hosting a Family Summer Bash instead of Vacation Bible School on Wednesday, August 6. If you are interested in helping with this event, please contact Karen Hoffman 320-808-6678.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER



The church will be open
8am-8pm Thursday, May 1.
7 PM All Church Prayer Gathering
A Prayer Guide is available
(pictured on the right.)
A special thank you to Tina Yorek for
creating the prayer guides.



Covenant Women

Save the Dates:
July 16, 2025 4th Annual All City Women’s Gathering

Women’s Retreats:
September 25-28, 2025 Camp Lebanon
September 26-28, 2025 Lake Beauty Bible Camp
October 2-5, 2025 Camp Lebanon



PERU UPDATE

Susie and Dennis Olson began missionary work in Peru in 1965, when they were accepted as members of Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT.) After a year and a half of training in linguistics and jungle survival they arrived in Peru. WBT's mission is to translate God's Word into languages that do not yet have the Scriptures in their heart language. Many of these languages were spoken by groups living in remote areas and the language had not been written yet. The first step was to listen to the language and then develop an alphabet so it could be written down, then translation could begin. If translation was going to be used, the people would need to be able to read it. An education program was developed training native teachers. Susie and Dennis were assigned to one of the larger jungle groups, the Aguaruna, now known as the Awajun. James 2:14-15 says, "What good is it my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?...Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him "Go, I wish you well: keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?" In addition to doing translation, their team became involved in other programs to help people meet their physical needs and to confront the cultural changes that were coming from increasing contact with the outside world.

Today, Awajun are no longer isolated; there is a paved road through their territory; and many Awajun have finished high school and have university degrees. The work Dennis and Susie initially did has been turned over to the Awajun. The bilingual education system has been integrated into the national educational system. Since the Awajun New Testament was printed in 1976, a Bible School has been established, the New Testament has been revised, and the Old Testament translation is being worked on by an Awajun translation committee. At this point, about 40 percent of the Old Testament is completed. This committee meets three times a year for two-week periods to review their work and discuss problems they have with their ministry as well as with the translation work. In addition to this, there may be training in areas such as health, carpentry, and mechanics. The jungle area in Peru still has a high rate of poverty and the local churches are not able to adequately support their pastors as they need a means to support their families.

Community Covenant Church participates in some of the Awajun churches needs by providing funds for travel and food during meetings, and to purchase equipment. Over the last 2-3 years, the Awajun church has been building a conference center, with offices, a conference room, dormitory, and a kitchen. Our church funded building materials, and the Awajun provided the labor. The center is now nearing completion. The Olson's thank you for your support!



James Tang is our missionary to South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya.

South Sudan is a place of turmoil right now with the last two years in civil war. There has been famine, and millions displaced. A staggering 83% of those fleeing South Sudan are women and children. They are often survivors of violent attacks, sexual assault, and other traumas. Sixty-five percent of South Sudanese refugees are children, often separated from their families and undertaking the perilous journey alone.

Most South Sudanese refugees have sought shelter in neighboring countries like Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Places like Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp have become temporary homes for over 148,000 South Sudanese refugees. However, these camps often suffer from food and water shortages despite offering relative safety.

The South Sudan crisis is a stark reminder of the human cost of conflict. The numbers are staggering: 5.5 million refugees, thousands in camps, with lasting impact on millions of Syrians.

- Pray for James since his accident last December.
- Pray for God's protection and leading for James and those he works with.
- Pray for peace and stability as almost all the countries around them are at war as well.



What went in our Eight - 50 lb. suitcases for the 2025 Jamaica Mission trip?

Bibles (KJV translation is commonly used in Jamaica) A recent recipient of an NIV stated, "I read that Bible you gave me last time and I really understood it better." Student NIV Bibles were given in hopes that the teen leaders will be able to grow in their faith as they lead the children's program.

School supplies that we use during the after school program and then pass on to the local school. Cutting activities are challenging due to lack of experience with scissors and so we create projects that require cutting and allow for creativity through painting, cutting, drawing, and following directions.

Sewing machine which provides an opportunity for housekeeping students to learn sewing skills and repairing abilities.

Tools for maintenance and building projects. The laundry room we built will allow adults who've not had washers and dryers to learn this skill, better preparing them to work in hotels. Sink repairs were made so that there are now working faucets for handwashing and drinking outside the center. A 12 ft picnic table was built for classes and dining.

First aid supplies (preferably unused) for the team, which are donated to the medical center when we leave; the Nurse Practitioner has limited supplies to use. Cold meds, pain relievers, bandages, Neosporin....

Bedding and towels which we use as needed and then leave for families in need.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS & FINANCIAL SUPPORT!

