



Evangelical Covenant
Church of Stromsburg, NE

May 2020
Volume 2, Issue 5

A Word From the Pastor

Once upon a time (1816) there was a volcano named Mt. Timbaron in Indonesia and it blew up one day and for three years the whole world dealt with the consequences.

What happened was that the effect of this volcanic explosion began a climate change that made it frost every month in an area that is considered tropical. You can imagine what it did to farming in Indonesia, but it apparently had effects in Europe too. And when you added the Spanish Flu epidemic that occurred around the same time, it was a mess. It's been called a mini Ice Age and futurists are predicting the Coronavirus situation will have the same kind of lasting effects as the volcano on Mt. Timbaron did.

It's like the difference between a blizzard and winter. When a blizzard comes, you ride it out, stay inside a few days, try not to ruin your children's joy at no school, and if you're lucky you've stocked up ahead with necessities. But then it's over and you go back to life. Winter can't be dealt with in this way. You need a plan. You might not see your neighbors for five months, so you create ways to check in. A lot of frills go out the window and it's a disciplined process that gets it done so your sanity stays intact.

You can see my point, can't you? Because as futurists are looking at church, they're doing so with these kinds of analogies in mind. On May 4th, our county and some others in Nebraska will get to begin reducing the Coronavirus-related social restrictions and it will seem to some like everything's gonna go back to normal. It'll be like that brief blizzard has ended and spring is here and we can meet in large crowds and pretend that none of this social distancing thing was ever needed. We can all go to church just like before and be the church we have always been. And the experts are saying, "Think again."

First off, many folks are telling us that this pandemic won't really be over for 12-18 months, since we don't have a vaccine. Economic demands might deem that some adjustments are needed to get the workforce slowly back to normal, but there is far too much uncertainty with this illness to be assured all will be well soon. C'mon, as badly as we want to see Adrian Martinez, Hunter Miller and the boys at Memorial Stadium, are you sure you're ready to join 85,000 others in the stands in September?

Our conversations about church had a bit of a different tone last Sunday. Leadership team chair Dennis Nuttelman, Sue Rosenbaum of the leadership team, and Pastor Mary and I discussed the viability of our congregation meeting for worship in our building on May 10th. Legally, it might be an option; the 40-45 people that usually attend on a Sunday could reasonably put six feet of social distancing between each other, we could serve communion in a way that allowed people to receive the bread and cup, and I think the benefits of being together would be a pick-me-up that more than a few people would celebrate.

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UPCOMING SERMON TEXTS

May 3

John 14:15-26

May 10: Mothers' Day

Acts 1:1-9

May 17

I Corinthians 2:1-16

May 24

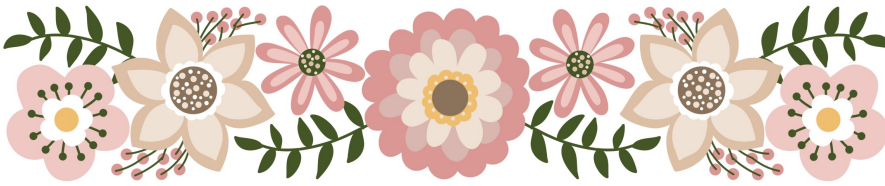
Romans 8:1-17

May 31—Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21



Strengthen Faith, Cultivate Community, Care for Neighbors



A WORD...(CONTINUED)

Truth be told, I really could use a worship service together; I've missed you. But then what?

Who do we want to be from this point on? Some of the church futurists out there are saying that who we were (*the traditional church who does the traditional stuff*) will no longer be the paradigm. In their analogy, it'll be like a 20-slide business plan where only the first two or three slides will be applicable – who you are, what your mission statement is, maybe a target audience – because we'll have to rethink everything else. I think our leadership team has already begun to process this reality, but we will value more feedback for the congregation as a whole and we'll likely need more investment as we do so.

I'm preaching about the Holy Spirit during the month of May. And as I looked upon my text for May 10th (Acts 1:1-9), the paradigm shift that the disciples of Jesus were going through was every bit as culture-altering as what we're going through now. Jesus was leaving them – after all this good ministry, after the spectacular death/resurrection of the Lord, he was leaving, though not without a gift-giving party mentioned in Acts 1:4.

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.”

And clearly the followers of Jesus were hoping for more from Jesus, because they said to him, *“Lord, are YOU at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”*

But Jesus had no intention of restoring something old – nor would it come through Him alone. So he replied (1:8), *“But YOU will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and YOU will be my witnesses in Jerusalem (the hometown), and in Judea (Polk County) and Samaria (even those not you're your favorite people), and to the ends of the earth (believers and non-believers alike).”*

WE will be those witnesses, but the world we witness to as the church will be different than before. I think we'll have to figure out how it'll differ but it is my hope that we will await God's direction with the fervent desire to be ready to integrate our witness into this changing climate together; for God's glory and people's good.

IN CHRIST,

Pastor Craig

Benevolence Ministry Team:

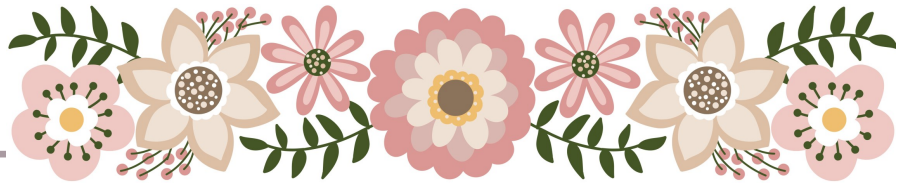
The Lead Team has voted to put together a Benevolence Ministry Team. This team will be in charge of all benevolence ministries for our church. They will handle all requests for monetary and other assistance with utmost discretion.

If you would like to donate money toward the benevolence fund you can either write a check out to ECC Stromsburg with “Benevolence Ministry” on the memo line or you can go to our website: www.stromsburgcov.org and click on “Online Giving.” You can designate what it's for online.

The Benevolence Team consists of three couples: Marv and Mary Wadell (764-7651), Kent and Cheryl Erickson (765-6721), and Dennis and Connie Nuttelman (764-5379). If you have need of assistance please contact one of them.



CHURCH FAMILY



Birthdays:

Marv Wadell	May 7
Harry Imm	May 11
Mary Pinley	May 13
Debi Pliefke	May 20
John Bowerman	May 22
Stella Jones	May 24
Neeli Noyd	May 27
Shayla Hier	May 31

Anniversaries:

Roy & Linda Richards	May 6
Charles & Neeli Noyd	May 10
Gaylen & Jeannie Ahlquist	May 31



MAY MINISTRY PARTNERS

Sunday, May 3

Greeters: N/A

Coffee Time: N/A

Scripture: Pastors

Worship Team: Sue Rosenbaum, Craig & Mary,

Audio/Visual: Dale & James Hennessy

Sunday, May 10—Mothers' Day

Greeters: TBD

Coffee Time: N/A

Scripture: Pat Everingham

Worship Team: Sue Rosenbaum, Craig & Mary, Dianne

Audio/Visual: Dale Hennessy, Kohen Hier

Sunday, May 17

Greeters: TBD

Coffee Time: TBD

Scripture: Eleanor Greenwall

Worship Team: Sue Rosenbaum, Craig & Mary

Audio/Visual: Dale & James Hennessy

Thursday, May 21—Rescue Mission Meal

Sunday, May 24

Greeters: TBD

Coffee Time: TBD

Scripture: Mary Pinley

Worship Team: Sue Rosenbaum, Craig & Mary

Audio/Visual: Dale Hennessy; Kohen Hier

Sunday, May 31

Greeters: TBD

Coffee Time: TBD

Scripture: Dennis Nuttelman

Worship Team: Sue Rosenbaum, Craig & Mary, Neeli

Audio/Visual: Dale & James Hennessy

MAY DATES TO REMEMBER:

Sunday, May 10: Mothers' Day



We may be going back to church together. We will keep you posted on what that will look like. Watch your emails and the Facebook page for updates as we get close. We will plan on having communion that Sunday, even if we are not able to be together.

Thursday, May 21, 2020: 5:30 pm Rescue Mission Meal



**SERVING MEALS
TO THE HOMELESS**

The rescue mission needs the following grocery items for families in need: 1 or 2 lb hamburger, hamburger helper, baked beans, canned chicken, tuna, mayo, coffee and creamer, powdered or boxed milk, sugar, canned fruit, Ramen noodles, and mac-n-cheese. Please call 402-362-0127 from your car when you arrive and they will come out to get your donations.



**Food
Collection**

Confirmation and Graduation Sunday: This was originally scheduled for May 3. We will keep you posted on its new date.



Prayer Concerns? Please contact Connie Nuttelman to have a request go out on the prayer chain or to be included in the bulletin. Connie's number is 402-366-9045 or you can send an email to prayerchain@stromsburgcov.org.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS:



Mission Trip Rummage Sale Fundraiser: The mission team will be raising funds for their mission trip to Louisville, KY August 1-8. One of the ways is with a rummage sale here at the church on June 26-27, 2020. Please start saving your unwanted items now if you'd like to donate them to the sale.

The team will also be holding bake sales on the square on the First Fridays in June and July, as long as we are allowed to still have them.

Summer Camp Registrations: Registration forms for Summer Camp are here. The early bird deadline to register is now May 1, 2020. The forms are on the bulletin board across from the coat racks in the hallway. The dates for camp are as follows:



Pathfinder (1st-2nd grade)	June 20-21, 2020
Trailblazer (3rd-4th grade)	June 28-July 1, 2020
Explorer (5th-6th grade)	June 21-26, 2020
Junior High (7th-8th grade)	July 5-July 10, 2020
Senior High (9th-12th grade)	July 12-July 17, 2020
Last chance (3rd-12th grade)	Aug 2-Aug 4, 2020



VBS: New dates! The week of July 20 or July 27! Registration forms will be on the website this month. Since we were unable to have the Sunrise Service this year, which is when we take an offering along with the Methodist and Lutheran churches to offset costs of our joint VBS, we are asking for people to consider donating toward VBS. If you would like to do this just put VBS in the memo line of your check to the church, or if you'd like to contribute online you can do so at www.stromsburgcov.org. Click on "Online Giving" and you can specify that you'd like your donation to go toward VBS.

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

2019 Budget Summary (1/1/2020 through 3/31/2020)

Income:	\$ 19,846.50
Budget:	\$ 32,193.00
Difference:	(\$ 12,346.50)
Budgeted Exp:	\$ 32,193.00
Actual Exp:	\$ 29,685.54
Difference:	(\$ 2,507.46)

FINANCIAL REPORT



ONLINE GIVING: To make a one time or scheduled reoccurring gift to our church, please visit: www.stromsburgcov.org and click on ONLINE GIVING.

Evangelical Covenant Church
103 East 6th Street
Stromsburg, NE 68666
402-764-5401
office@stromsburgcov.org
www.stromsburgcov.org
Pastor Craig
craigpin@yahoo.com
217-721-6049

Pastor Mary
singergirl33@yahoo.com
217-721-3846

Ministry Team Leaders:

Lead Team Chair:
Dennis Nuttelman
402-366-9803

Worship Team:
Sue Rosenbaum
402-560-6759

Fellowship & Hospitality:
Pat Everingham
402-764-0345

Christian Formation:

Judy Hanson
402-764-6681

Outreach:

Dave Schram 402-710-8858
Shayla Hier







Properties:

Kent Erickson
402-765-6721





2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>We may be going back to church sometime this month. Watch for updates in your email and on our Facebook page.</i></p>						
3 10:30 Worship Service	4	5 	6	7	8 	9
10 10:30 Worship Service with Communion	11 	12	13	14	15 National Chocolate Chip Day!!! 	16
17 10:30 Worship Service	19	20	21 5:30 Rescue Mission Meal 	22	23	24
24 10:30 Worship Service	25 	26	27	28	29	30
31 10:30 Worship Service	