



# Connections

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Our mission as Christ Community Covenant Church is to glorify God and seek His will for our personal lives and our lives together.

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Connections is a monthly publication of Christ Community Covenant Church, Owatonna, Minn. Articles for Connections must be submitted by the 15th of each month to Betty Wells.



## Monthly Musings from Pastor Brent

### 5 for Five in Prayer

There are over 300,000 and every year getting closer to 400,000 people who attend the Steele County Free Fair. Perhaps you are one of them. There are hundreds of people who come from all over the United States and other countries of the world to work the fair as exhibitors, food vendors and carnival workers. In return we appreciate their efforts in serving us with "fair food," interesting wares in the exhibition hall and fun safe rides on the midway. In addition, I have no idea how many people, including whole families, who participate in the 4-H activities at the fair. On top of all that there are countless county board members, staff workers and volunteers who tirelessly serve all of us during fair week.

I bring that to our attention because in my musings I realize that we have a wonderful opportunity to have a spiritual influence in the lives of all the people who are a part of the Steele County Free Fair. For many years the community worship service on Sunday morning has been a strong presence for the Gospel through music and preaching. More recently over the past several years we have been a part of providing food for the workers at the fair on Monday night as they are busy in their preparations for the week. During those years we have hosted the "Chapel at the Fair" and now "Prayer at the Fair." Now this year we are adding another opportunity for worship at the fair through "Worship in the Village" which will focus on celebrating our spiritual heritage.

In my experience with the fair since coming to Owatonna, I have seen the attendance at the fair grow just by the increase in the number of cars parking in front of the parsonage while the people go the fair. Then in our active participation in ministry among the workers at the fair, I know of at least one or two and perhaps more people who have become Christians. I have heard from several of the Christian vendors that they have been encouraged in their faith and are thankful for an opportunity to gather with other Christians for worship. Also, as I serve as an unofficial chaplain for the fair, I believe that there are many staff members that are encouraged by the spiritual presence at the fair.

*(continued on page 2)*

**Monthly Musings from Pastor Brent** (continued from page 1)

However, there is so much more that can be done to strengthen the spiritual impact on all the people at the fair. Of course, we cannot personally talk to all who wend their way through multitudinous displays, events and activities. That is impossible, but the Holy Spirit can, which reminds me of a Bible verse. *"The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results"* (James 5:16). Yes, it is inconceivable that we could talk with everyone at the fair, but we can pray leaving it up to the Holy Spirit to direct us to the ones He wants us to talk with about spiritual matters.

There are so many things that we can pray about when it comes to the fair - a good time for all, safety and good weather (I know that the fair board likes that). In addition, there are many Christian organizations and churches that are present at the fair with the goal of making a spiritual impact on the people that come to their displays. There are also Christian music groups and individuals who desire that their ministry have a positive influence for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then there are the things that we are involved with to encourage the workers at the fair.

Therefore we need to pray for the fair and see what God does

to spiritually impact all those people. They have no idea that God is at work in their lives, but then with great surprise and joy we all hope to see the "wonderful results" that the prayers of righteous people can affect through God's power.

Of course, there can be more, but I would be excited and very pleased if at least 5 people would join me in praying daily for the five events that are scheduled to happen in August and the first part of September. They are "Church on the Road" at KODA, bringing supper to the workers at the fair, "Prayer at the Fair," Worship in the Village" and Rally Sunday.


Then I would be really encouraged and thankful if at least 5 people would meet with me on Wednesday through Sunday mornings of the fair for "Prayer at the Fair." We generally meet in Fair Square at 9:00 a.m., but on Sunday we will meet in the Village.

I read many years ago that God can work when we pray. Therefore we need to pray and then be surprised by joy as God works. Please join with me in praying daily for these events and on these days. It will truly be exciting to see the results as God accomplishes His life-changing work in people's lives.



A big "thank you" goes to Tillie and DeWayne Erickson for opening their garage to us for our annual church picnic in June. Even though we could not enjoy their back-yard park for games and outdoor fun because of the rain, we enjoyed the good food and fellowship in the dry shelter of their awesome garage. From the grilled hot dogs to the variety of pot-luck foods and desserts, the cuisine was delicious and the conversation was most stimulating and fun as we gathered on that Sunday afternoon.

So again, **THANKS** to the Ericksons for their hospitality, and perhaps with another year of much needed rest we can go back to resume our annual sporting event of competitive bocce ball.



"Summer is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces up, snow is exhilarating; there is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather."

*John Ruskin*

## **Mission Focus for August - - Kent and Rhonda Egging**

Kent and Rhonda are our missionaries serving under the Covenant Church in Sweden and Russia. They have set up housekeeping and live in Sweden and take regular trips to Russia so they have opportunity for ministry in both countries. They are active and helping where they are able in a local church where they live in Sweden, and they serve several local church ministries in Russia through encouragement and church leadership training.

### **Here is an excerpt from their most recent newsletter:**

*On August 1st Rhonda and I will travel to Russia once again. We will be there for five weeks, our longest trip ever. We will be ministering in four different areas from Kaliningrad in the west to Ekaterinburg in the east. Some of you may be asking, "Five weeks in Russia... really...now?" We certainly understand the question.*

*We have observed first hand that things are changing in Russia. Just in the past year we have seen a marked increase in what might be called "patriotic fervor" on Russian television and on the streets. This includes nearly constant news reports about the provocative and aggressive nature of the 'West' and the need for Russia to stand tall and proud.*

*In the current climate of promoting Russian nationalism, the Evangelical Church there has not fared well. Protestant Christianity is often portrayed as a foreign invention and even a tool of the West to weaken Russia. The good people of these churches find themselves having to defend their own patriotism.*

### **And here are a few prayer requests:**

- for permission to live in Sweden for several years
- for the next month of life and ministry in Sweden
- for our plan to spend 5 weeks in Russia
- for the marriage retreat in Volgograd
- for the leadership class in Asbest



Please pray for Kent and Rhonda during this month of August and prepare to give a mission offering for them at the end of the month.



**September 13**

"Rally Day" is a time when congregations everywhere rally behind God's intention that all Christians--children, youth and adults--grow and learn; an important day at the end of each summer that is used to "rally" together as God's people and prepare for a new year of study, worship, serving, and growing together.

On September 13, we welcome every member of our faith family to come together and celebrate Rally Sunday as we start our second year of Sunday school and resume Connections.

We look forward to seeing everyone as we gather together for worship, enjoy coffee fellowship and dedicate a new year to learning God's Word.

## Prayer at the Fair

Each morning during the Steele County Free Fair there will be people gathering for Prayer at the Fair, and everyone is invited to participate. We are meeting at 9 a.m. in Fair Square around a picnic table or two for a time of sharing in God's Word and prayer. The focus of our prayer is primarily for the concerns of the fair for the day, and members and friends of our church are strongly encouraged to come to pray.

We pray for the workers, the staff and all the people who will attend the fair. We pray for the events of the day, for the safety and well-being of all who are involved. We especially pray for the Christian witness that is brought to the fair through vendors, exhibitors and the various shows during each day. Also, as special needs and requests are brought to our attention for the people and the events of the day, we pray for those as well.

Prayer at the Fair provides the opportunity to witness to the power of prayer in the lives involved at the fair. Also it often provides an opportunity for Christians from the community to meet with Christians who come to the fair to serve us as carnival workers, exhibitors and food vendors; and usually this meeting is encouraging to all of us.

## Worship in the Village

On Sunday morning, August 23, our church will be gathering for worship in the Village of Yesteryear at 9:30 a.m. As we take our church on the road again for this unique experience of celebrating our spiritual heritage, we are inviting people from the community and people from the fair to gather with us as we join together in worship.

As our choir for the morning, the Golden Tones will guide us in our music as we sing psalms and hymns in praise to our God. They will also add to the worship as they sing two special choral songs. Pastor Brent will be preaching and a special offering will be received and go to the Steele County Food Shelf and the Owatonna Ministerial emergency relief fund.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to come and bring friends to this worship gathering on Sunday morning, the last day of the fair. It will conclude at 10:30 a.m. so anyone who is interested may attend the Community Worship Service in Fair Square at 11:00 a.m.



Coffee hour continues to be an important gathering time to strengthen our church family friendships and get a little refreshment after service. This simple coffee break is an integral part of our ministry to each other. One way you can share your talents is provide treats or drop some change in the donation can to help defray the cost of purchased goodies.

When you are greeting visitors to our church, please be sure to extend an invitation to them to join us for coffee and fellowship.