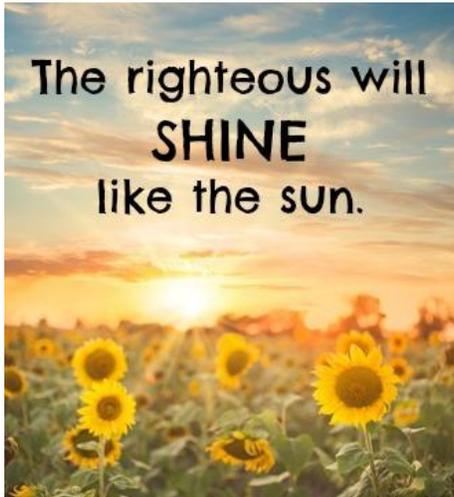


The Covenant Contact

September 2020

Navigating a Crisis



God is educating you; that's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. This trouble you are in isn't punishment; it's training (Hebrews 12:7 MSG).

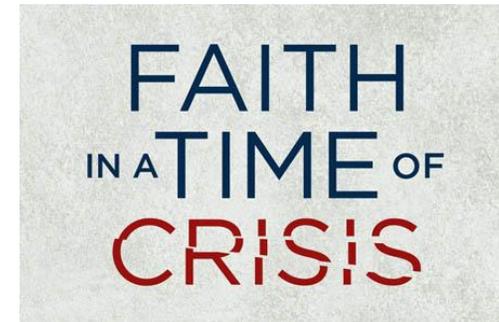
Crises affect everyone. Certainly this is true, considering the past 5 months. We are all in this one together! Dwight Carlson says, *I am convinced that how we respond to crises is more important than what the*

crisis is or what caused the crisis in the first place – even if it is due to our own sin (from: Overcoming 7 Obstacles to Spiritual Growth).

We may be confronted by a crisis of faith at any time in our relationship with God. As followers of Christ we need to see obstacles, tragedies, and suffering as normal; it is more a matter of how we face this reality and how we come through it. Sometimes it may feel like punishment; but could it be that God's desire is to help us grow, mature and be trained in righteousness? How are you navigating your way through the uncharted waters we have encountered since March? Are you closer to the Lord or do you feel abandoned by God?

Crises reveal the heart. When we face the biggest challenges to our faith, we can yield to God and grow or we can resist. *The Message* puts it this way, *Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors (James 1:2-4).*

Paul reminds the Philippians, *There's far more to this life than trusting in Christ. There's also suffering for him. And the suffering is as much a gift as the trusting (Philippians 1:26 MSG).* I believe that when I am brought to the end of myself, then I can grow and mature in Christ. I need to yield to God's will, and surrender my own will daily.



Billy Graham once said, *The key to experiencing supernatural, liberating strength is personal weakness.* That's right, personal weakness. God's power, *shows up best in weak people (II Corinthians 12:9 TLB).* The weaker you are, the more God's strength can

show up in you. I am thankful for this biblical truth because I find myself feeling weaker these days; but also more empowered by my God, than ever before.

Be blessed my brothers and sisters; this too shall pass, but let us take advantage of this great opportunity.

In Him, Pastor Tim



PS: We will share communion on September 6 during both 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. worship. Come join us at church if you can, or you will be able to listen to the audio or watch the video of the 10:00 a.m. service, and share in the Lord's Supper at that time.

Quarterly Business Meeting

Because of the pandemic, our June quarterly meeting got canceled. Now we will meet on Sunday, September 13 at 11:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Please plan to attend if you are able. We meet in the sanctuary and can spread out for social distancing.

Christian Education Update

Because of Covid-19, many of our usual procedures have to be changed this year. All volunteers working in our children and youth programs are required to sign an acknowledgment that they have reviewed our Safe Church Policy and understand the requirements.

Anyone joining as a new volunteer working with our children this fall also needs to complete a brief application form to accomplish a background check. The cost of the background check is \$17; if the cost presents a problem for you, speak up – money is available for this. Everyone needs to renew the background check after three years – we will let you know when it comes up.

Contact Liz Whitney (eamwhitney@yahoo.com or 860 921-3118) to review the Safe Church Policy and get qualified to volunteer.

Sunday School Re-Opening

Sunday School starts again at 9:00 a.m. on September 13, with new procedures in place. **All registration for Sunday School and youth programs is done online this year.** Contact Brenda Tousignant (soxj269@aol.com or 203 232-1525) or Liz Whitney (eamwhitney@yahoo.com or 860 921-3118) for more information.

Students in Grades 7-12 will meet upstairs in the Youth Room as usual (9:00 a.m.). **Attention – Adults who want a class: You are invited to join the youth for a study of Genesis.**

Students in the lower grades will meet in the Potter's House and the Fellowship Room. Parents are to bring their children in by the blue side door (the one near Pastor Tim's study) and to exit by the Potter's House door to the parking lot. Each student will have an assigned box of supplies and materials. Surfaces will be sanitized before and after class.

Second Worship Service

The church board established a second Sunday worship service, **one with masks required and one with masks optional.** The masks-required service at 8 a.m. started August 23. This is a trial period for four weeks (August 23-September 13). The service at 10 a.m. will be masks-optional. The church board will evaluate the results and we can make adjustments if needed. This will be temporary, but it is important for us as a church family. So, we strive ahead, maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Confirmation Service September 13 - 2:00 pm

We will hold a special service for our four Confirmands and their families on September 13, at 2 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This will be a meaningful time of worship, celebration, blessing and prayer. The Confirmands are on the same great pilgrimage of faith as we are; may the Lord touch every heart and mind of our youth.

CHYG Starting Up!

CHYG starts up officially again on September 27 (4:00-6:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoons), **but first** – we will have a welcome back party and welcome our newest members on September 13 (same time). No CHYG on September 20.

Keeping Up

- Barbara Krol still lives at 57 Walnut Street, but she has a new mailing address: P O Box 76, Thomaston, CT 06787.
- *Deb Vigeant has a new email address: debvig44@gmail.com.*
- To my church family, I want to thank you all for all the prayers and cards at this difficult time. It put my heart at ease, knowing that so many care and are thinking of us. God bless you all. The Montambault Family: Elizabeth, Dennis, and Lil Liz. (A graveside service is being held for Donna on Wednesday, September 2).

Women Ministries



Women Ministries events are for all women of the church and their friends.

Our Gardeners' Market: Since there still is no coffee time fellowship after worship, we have set up our produce on a table near Pastor Tim's office so you can browse on your way out the side door (remember to keep traffic one-way) Take what you want; pay what you can. All monies are used for Women Ministries activities and benevolences.

Continuing Activities

1. **Women's PM Study:** Currently on hiatus.
2. **Women's Bible Study:** Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Potter's House.
3. **Women's Book Club:** The next book to read is *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins for its September meeting. All women of the church who enjoy reading are invited to the book discussion on Monday, September 14, at 6:00 PM, at Morton's Pond on Northfield Road, Thomaston.

Sunday Worship Guidelines

Sunday worship services (10:00 a.m.) are being recorded and posted on the church website (covchurchthomaston.org) and on Facebook (Search for Covenant Church of Thomaston posts).

At 8:00 a.m., **wear a mask.** At 10: a.m., wear a mask if you need to. **Maintain social-distancing** in deciding where to sit or stand. **Pick up your worship bulletin** at the Sanctuary door or next to the offering plate at the front of the church. **Place your offering** in the plate up front right away or at the offering time during the service. **Feel free to move** during the service if you need to move to a place where you feel safer (one of the wings, the Gathering Room on the main level or the Fellowship Room downstairs). **Stay home** if you are feeling sick or have been exposed to the virus. **Contact us** if you need our help

Trailblazers Outside!

Trailblazers is starting up again on September 15! For the month September (and as far into October as we can), we will meet on **Tuesdays (5:30-7:30)** at the Ewers' home (71 Perrit Drive, Thomaston), where we can meet outside. (If weather interferes, we will meet in the Potters House at the church.) If you have questions, need to register your student or want to help out, contact Rachel Ewers (kyliejax@optonline.net or 203 907-7052).

Discipleship Confirmation (D/C)

We begin Sept 27, 4 pm. D/C is for 7th and 8th grade youth. It is a weekly youth group time of exploring our faith, having fun as a community, digging into God's Word, and discovering our role in following the mission of Jesus Christ. The leaders are Pastor Tim Olsen and Jessica Bedosky.

This Fall we first need to pick up where we left off in March and have a Confirmation Sunday service. On **September 13, at 2:00 pm**, we will confirm four youth: Sara Roaix, Aubrey Jackson, Dan Stancavage and Kara Sacco. Thanks be to God who awakens faith in us all!

Schedule:

9/13	9:00 am	Sunday School & Worship
	2:00 pm	Confirmation Sunday
9/ 20	9:00 am	Sunday School & Worship
		No D/C
9/27	9:00 am	Sunday School & Worship
	4:00 pm	D/C begins with a Blast!

Keeping Up

- *Thanks, one small word that says so much. Jesus sees your acts of love in everything you do. And as you carry out your work, the love of God shines through. No matter what the task is, you're there to help us out. We thank you for your willingness in all the ways you've helped.*
Blessings, Gary and Liz Butler.

Youth Groups

Pathfinders is for students in Grades 2-3. The group meets once a month. Leaders are Linda Hansen and Brenda Tousignant.



If your child wants to participate, contact Brenda (203 232-1525 or soxj269@aol.com) or Linda (lindaehansen@aol.com or 860 283-9359).

Trailblazers is for students in Grades 4-6. Trailblazers leaders are Rachel Ewers and Christie Grabherr. If you have questions, need to register your student or want to help out, contact Rachel Ewers (kyliejax@optonline.net or 203 907-7052). Sessions are 5:30-7:30 p.m.



9/15 5:30-7:30 Trailblazers Outside
9/22 5:30-7:30 Trailblazers Outside
9/29 5:30-7:30 Trailblazers Outside

D/C (Discipleship/Confirmation) is our youth ministry for grades 7-8, a two year journey of exploring who God is and what God means in our life. All junior high students are welcome to attend. The leaders are Jessica Bedosky and Pastor Tim Olsen. We meet 4-6:00 p.m.



9/13 2:00 Confirmation service
9/20 No D/C
9/27 4:00 D/C begins!

CHYG (Covenant High Youth Group) is for all students in grades 9-12. Leaders are Lisa Olsen and Nick Samela. Sessions are 4-6 p.m.



9/13 4:00 Welcome Back!
9/20 No CHYG
9/27 4:00 Regular CHYG

Torrington Soup Kitchen

Our next time to serve will be Saturday, September 26, 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. We prep the meal 10:00-11:30 and serve 11:30-12:30. Food is provided. Masks are required. **Contact Kim Duffany (860 601-1395) if you have any concerns about serving during the pandemic.**

Sunday School Class for Adults?

Attention – Adults who want a class: You are invited to join the students in Grades 7-12 for a study of Genesis. They meet upstairs in the Youth Room at 9:00 a.m.

Tithes and Offerings

Thank you to all who mail your offerings to the church or give through the online option. Your faithfulness and thoughtfulness really make a difference.

To set up regular online giving to the Covenant Church go to the website (covchurchthomaston.org) and click on the “About” tab

Benevolence Needs

Some in our church community are struggling financially. If you are able to, please consider supporting others in need by making an extra donation to the Pastor’s Benevolence Fund.

Meal Coordinator

Providing a meal to someone during a difficult time is one way to show how much we care. If you know someone who might benefit, contact Sandy Dunn (860 483-2015 or daytondunn@mac.com).

September 2020

(Rev 8/30/2020)

Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:24, 25

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
^Sunday School and Youth Groups start this month but start dates are staggered. See ^ entries below for first meeting dates.						
<p>* Sunday Worship September 6 and 13 Trial Period 8:00 am: Masks Required 10:00 am Masks Optional Schedule may be adjusted after trial period</p>		<p>1</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6:30 NA (Fellowship)</p>	<p>3 6:30 Men's Study (Potter's) 9:30 Women's Study (Zoom)</p> <p>6:00 pm NA Leadership (Fellowship Room) 6:30 Discipleship (Zoom)</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6* 8:00 & 10:00 Worship 11:30 Diaconate</p>	<p>7 LABOR DAY</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>9 10:30 Pastoral Staff</p> <p>6:30 NA (Fellowship)</p>	<p>10 6:30 Men's Study (Potter's)</p> <p>6:30 Discipleship (Zoom)</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13*</p> <p>8:00 Worship (Masked) ^9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 11:30 Congregational Quarterly Meeting 2:00 Confirmation Service ^ 4:00-6:00 CHYG Kickoff</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10:00 La Leche League (Nursery)</p> <p>6:00 WM Book Club (Morton's Pond) 6:30 Discipleship (Fellowship & Zoom)</p>	<p>15</p> <p>^5:30-7:30 Trailblazers (outside @Ewers' for Sept.) 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6:30 NA (Fellowship)</p>	<p>17 6:30 Men's Study (Potter's)</p> <p>6:30 Discipleship (Zoom)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Pastor Tim to Chicago <i>Noon: 10 Days of Prayer (9/18-9/28)</i></p>	<p>19</p> <p>Pastor Tim away <i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p>
<p>20**</p> <p>Worship schedule to be determined 9:00 Sunday School</p> <p>Pastor Tim away <i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p>Pastor Tim away <i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p> <p>6:30 Discipleship (Fellowship & Zoom)</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Pastor Tim away <i>10 Days of Prayer</i> 5:30-7:30 Trailblazers (Ewers') 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Pastor Tim returns <i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p> <p>6:30 NA (Fellowship)</p>	<p>24 6:30 Men's Study (Potter's) <i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p> <p>6:30 Discipleship (Zoom)</p>	<p>25</p> <p><i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:30 Soup Kitchen <i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p>
<p>27** Worship schedule to be determined 9:00 Sunday School <i>10 Days of Prayer</i> ^4:00-6:00 D/C ^4:00-6:00 CHYG</p>	<p>28</p> <p><i>10 Days of Prayer</i></p> <p>6:30 Discipleship (Fellowship & Zoom)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5:30-7:30 Trailblazers (Ewers') 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:30 NA (Fellowship)</p>	<p>* Sunday worship services (10:00 a.m.) are recorded and posted on the church website (covchurchthomaston.org) and on Facebook. Sunday worship also may be "attended" from elsewhere in the church, that is, by sitting in one of the wings or by listening in the Gathering Room or the Fellowship Room. Worship bulletins, including announcements, also are posted on the church website.</p>		

