

The Covenant Contact

July 2024

Bold Love

Do you remember the last time you did something scary? Something that you weren't sure what the outcome would be? Something you had to take a leap of faith on?

Like flying the first plane solo over the Atlantic. Or leading a campaign against slavery in 1933 Britain? Or hiding a group of Tutsi women in a 3' x 4' bathroom during the Rwandan genocide?

Or maybe even something harder – trying to really love someone you don't like. At all.



In Acts chapter 4, we are told the story of how Peter and John stood before the Sanhedrin in an act of bold LOVE. It's a story of two men doing powerful things so that Jesus could be proclaimed as Lord

and Savior, and how they faced grave danger as a result. But danger didn't stop them from sharing the truth about who Jesus is.

Peter had failed miserably just a few months before. Because of his denial of Christ, Peter's story stands out as one of powerful transformation. Jesus had claimed earlier that it would be on Peter that he would build his church.

Build he did – Peter preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, performing healings in Christ's name. Eventually he stood boldly before men who had the power to destroy him and John.

Acts 4 is both post-resurrection and post Christ's ascension. The Holy Spirit had descended on the people and they began to spread the good news of the Gospel.

Christianity, a new religion known as "The Way," was starting a wave across the Middle East. The people were devoting themselves to teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers. Wonders and signs were being done through the apostles and the Holy Spirit's power was making itself known.

As the apostles proclaimed the truth of Jesus Christ's resurrection, it . . . **annoyed people**. Imagine having the kind of power to arrest someone just because they annoyed you. There wouldn't be enough jails in the world. Later they were also arrested because they healed the beggar at the temple gate. This healing and these proclamations of a resurrected man were **true**. Even though at that time it was cause for persecution, arrest, and death, the apostles did it anyway. What could compel a person to risk their life in this way? Risk offending others? Risk the comforts of everyday life. What else could compel this but love?

To make their case even bolder – the crippled man Peter had healed in Jesus' name stood before the council so they couldn't deny this miracle. So they told Peter and John not to speak of the name of Jesus.

Did it work?

No, of course not, otherwise we wouldn't be here. They didn't stop preaching the Gospel to the world. No matter what forces of the world tried to halt the spread of the Gospel, the love that God has for His people was too strong to be stopped. *His love reigns against all forces of evil.*

And that includes the sin in the hearts of each person on this earth. Each person in the United States. Each person in Thomaston, CT.

When Peter and John stood before the council, they had a choice: to be bold and proclaim or to retreat and run. They believed the bold love of Christ was enough to sustain them no matter what circumstances would come from their

actions. They believed the bold love and truth of Jesus would prevail over evil, but they didn't know what that would look like. That could mean they would be killed. It could mean further imprisonment. It could mean unimaginable punishment.

Bold love proclaims the truth of Jesus Christ.

Bold love also pushes us beyond our comfort zone.

Bold love prevails against evil.

With this kind of love in our corner, how can we possibly fail?

In Christ, Pastor Stephanie

Summer Seminars

- **Heaven and Hell** are difficult topics to understand and talk about. What does the Bible really say about them? Join us for a conversation about these hot-button topics on Monday, July 1, at 6:30 pm downstairs in the Potter's House.
- **They say "To forgive is divine,"** but those people haven't experienced the kind of hurt and betrayal you have. Forgiveness feels like letting people off the hook. But is it? Let's have a conversation about it on Thursday, July 18, at 6:30 pm in the Potter's House.

Sanctuary Screens

- **Night of Worship:** Wednesday evening, July 24 at 6:30. We are scheduling a mid-week worship time to practice working with our new technology so we can be fully integrated in the fall. Please come!

Pew Bibles

- The Diaconate is purchasing 50 New International Version pew Bibles so that all of the pew Bibles are the same, and use the same version Pastor Stephanie reads from on Sunday mornings. We are delighted that so many of you are opening your Bibles to read along! You are invited to contribute toward the \$15 cost for each Bible. Place your donation in the offering plate marked for Pew Bibles. You will be able to complete, in your own handwriting, a bookplate for inside the front cover ("Given in honor of..."). Include your name with your donation so we know who wants to complete a bookplate. If you donate anonymously, there will be no bookplate.
- **Your Prayers Requested:** The Church Purpose Team is still working on discerning the Lord's voice in the work he is setting before us. Your prayers are an important contribution to this process. Contact Cathy Fredlund with any questions.

Missions and Evangelism

- **Summer Concert Outreach:** We will have an official presence at Thomaston's summer concert series this year, handing out water to anyone who wants it. Concerts are at Reeves Field this year (because the Seth Thomas Park rebuild is starting). We are on the schedule for concerts on July 15, 22, and 29, and August 5. Concerts start at 7:00 pm. Contact Glenn Hafele for details.

Summary of the Quarterly Meeting of June 9

Pastor Stephanie reported on the Purpose Team's process and some of the insights they are reaching: Our culture has changed; we must be intentional about doing the work God has for us; we should use what we are good at; and we should go to where the people are.

Offerings for the first 22 weeks are \$127,781.50. General Fund offerings are over budget due to a couple of large unusual donations early in the year. We have received a large bequest from the LaPlante family. The Quickbooks accounting program is no longer available by disc or download but has been migrated to the cloud. Summer giving can drop off as people are doing other things, so the congregation is encouraged to give online to lessen this effect.

Terry Breen and Emily Whaley were approved for membership. They will be officially welcomed by the congregation during a later worship service.

VBS will be on Sunday evenings August 11-13. The all-church summer picnic will be at Nystrom's pavilion after worship on Sunday, August 25.

The church will reach out to the NA group that meets weekly in the Fellowship Room to offer the group a meal once or twice a month. A community outreach picnic is planned for July. A family mental health/parenting workshop for parents of adolescents is scheduled for August 9. We will participate in Thomaston's annual car show in September

John Bedosky, Chair

Women Ministries



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

- **Kitchen Detail:** Tuesday, June 4, at 9:00 am.
- **Book Club** next meets on Wednesday, July 10, at 6:30 pm at Cathy Fredlund's. The book to read is *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon.

Christian Education

- **UNITE East:** Join us on Friday night, July 12, at 6:30 in the Potter's House for pizza and a send-off for the youth and counselors going to UNITE (7/15-19). We will have a time of worship and pray for them.
- **Vacation Bible School:** VBS for Pre-K through 6th grade will be August 11, 12, and 13 (Sunday, Monday and Tuesday) from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Our Theme is AWESOME GOD. Each night we will explore a different name/attribute of God. Contact Cathy Fredlund, Christy Barrett, or Mary Butkevich if you are interested in helping with VBS.
- **Sunday School:** While it's several months away, we need to plan ahead to be sure all our Sunday School classes are fully staffed. If this is something the Lord is nudging you to do, contact the CE board.

Youth Groups

Pathfinders is for students in Grades 1-3. Leaders are Brenda Tousignant and Lori Vigeant.



Trailblazers is for students in Grades 4-6.

We need a leader for this group

D/C (Discipleship/Confirmation) is for students in grades 7-8, a two-year journey, exploring who God is and what God means in our life. All junior high students are welcome to attend. Leaders are Pastor Stephanie and Jessica Bedosky.



CHYG (Covenant High Youth Group) is for all students in grades 9-12. The leaders are Beth Campbell, Sue Sundell, and Gina Whaley.

7/12 6:30 pm Potter's House
Join us for pizza and prayer as we bless
the group going to UNITE



CHYG UNITE: 7/15-19/2024 @ Bowling Green State University, OH. Sue Sundell and Cathy Fredlund will go with the youth attending from our group (2 or 3 planning to go).

Liturgical Dance is for girls in grades 1-8. The leader is Jessica Bedosky. Practice times vary and are in the Sanctuary.



Banquet of Blessing

- **Need:** snack/granola bars, pasta sides, potato sides, paper towels, toilet paper
- **No perishable foods. Check expiration dates.** We don't give away out of date food.
- **No canned green beans, mixed vegetables or vegetarian vegetable soup right now.**

Prayer Chain

Contact Prayer Coordinator Mary Butkevich for prayer concerns and rejoicings.

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.

Crafty Fridays

In the Potter's House, 6:00-8:00 pm. If you have a craft to do, bring it. If you don't have a craft but would like to visit and chat, that's okay! Contact: Ruth Johnson.

Giving Made Easy

- Give online in just two minutes. You can opt for one time, weekly or monthly donations. Just open the camera app on your phone and scan the QR Code. You will then be taken right to the Giving Page on our website.

[Covenant Church of Thomaston](#)
[Giving Page QR Code](#)



- Summer offerings can fall off because people are doing other things. Please consider giving online this summer.

July 2024

(Rev 6/30/2024)

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
	1 6:30 Seminar, Heaven & Hell (Potter's)	2 9:00 Kitchen Detail 6:30 Prayer (Church Office)	3 6:30 NA (Fellowship)	4 7:30 NA Subcommittee (Gathering Room)	5	6
7*	8	9 6:30 Prayer (Church Office)	10 6:30 WM Book Club (Cathy Fredlund's) 6:30 NA (Fellowship)	11	12 6:30 UNITE Sendoff: Pizza & Prayer (Potter's House)	13
14*	15 UNITE EAST 6:30 Summer Concert Outreach, (Reeves Field) 6:30 Tres Dias Secretariat (Fellowship)	16 UNITE EAST (Bowling Green State U, Ohio) 6:30 Prayer (Church Office)	17 UNITE EAST (Bowling Green State U, Ohio) 6:30 NA (Fellowship)	18 UNITE EAST (Bowling Green State U, Ohio) 6:30 Seminar, Forgiveness & Judging Others (Potter's)	19 UNITE EAST (Bowling Green State U, Ohio) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's House) 6:30 Tres Dias Secuela (Fellowship)	20
21* 11:30 Trustees (Conference Room)	22 6:30 Summer Concert Outreach, Reeves Field	23 6:30 Prayer (Church Office)	24 6:30 Night of Worship (Sanctuary) 6:30 NA (Fellowship)	25	26 6:00 Crafty Fridays(Potter's House)	27 9:30 "Chosen" Group (Esme's & Ruby's)
28*	29 6:30 Summer Concert Outreach, Reeves Field	30 6:30 Prayer (Church Office)	31 6:30 NA (Fellowship)	*Sundays: 10:00 am Worship; 11:15 Fellowship Sunday worship services are recorded and posted on the church website (covchurchthomaston.org). Worship bulletins, which include the weekly announcements, also are posted on the church website.		

Volunteers: . . . through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13b

Coffee Fellowship sponsored by: Christian Education Board **

****Only beverages are needed and are provided by the church. If you provide a snack, at least one that is gluten-free, please.**

NURSERY			ALTAR FLOWERS			LAY READERS:		
7/7	Sue Sundell	8/4	7/7	Communion, none	7/7	Ted Ryan	7/14	Liz Montambault
7/14	Christy Barrett Savannah Acevedo	8/11	7/14		7/21	Peggy Schwetz	7/28	Dawn Roaix
7/21	Lori Vigeant	8/18	7/28		8/4	Dave McClay	8/11	Jessica Bedosky
7/28	Courtney Ayer	8/25	8/4	Communion, none	8/11	Jessica Bedosky	8/18	Gina Whaley
			8/11		8/18	Gina Whaley	8/15	Ann Ryan
			8/18					
			8/15					

Sunday School Staff

K &-Pre-K	3-4	7-8 (D/C)
1-2	5-6	

Youth Staff

CHYG (Grades 7-12) Beth Campbell Sue Sundell, Gina Whaley		Trailblazers (Grades 4-6)	Pathfinders (Grades 1-3) Brenda Tousignant, Lori Vigeant
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Liturgical Dance (Girls, grades 1-8) Jessica Bedosky, Peggy Schwetz, Britta Saghafi

July Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays	17 Raelin Oporto	25 Kris Fredlund (81)	Anniversaries
3 Jean Morton	17 Aubrae Oporto	27 Lou Wynkoop (95)	5 Christy & Mike Barrett
3 Troy Muckle	18 Elin Ayer	28 Dave McClay	7 Sandy & Jeff Dunn (40)
10 LJ Rodriguez	19 Michelle Bothroyd	29 Peyton Gomes	12 Brooke & Dave Holway
12 Jake Morton	22 Dillon Gomes	29 Haley Morton	21 Sue & Tim Sundell
12 Jen Samela	22 Ted Ryan (85)		26 Holly & Jay Herbert
14 Melissa Fay	23 Rick O'Connell (80)		
14 Martha Tillow	24 Dennis Montambault		
16 Megan Campbell	24 Carolyn Strattman (92)		

Connections:

- Pastor: Stephanie Nelson: pastor@covchurchthomaston.org
or 860-283-9146 (study)
- Church Chair: John Bedosky
- Diaconate Chair: Cathy Fredlund
- Treasurer: Ken Hopkins
- Office "Churchmouse" Ruth Johnson: cmouse@covchurchthomaston.org
Office/Kitchen: 860-283-5071
- Meal Coordinator: Sandra Dunn
- Prayer Coordinator: Mary Butkevich