



Cedarbrook Church members mobilize for building rehab ... for another church

By Megan Herrold, Editorial Resident for Covenant Communications

When Awaken Covenant Community relocated to a new building earlier this year, they received some remodeling help from a church in Wisconsin.

"It's been cool to see people catch the vision for this place," said Awaken's Pastor Micah Witham.

Dave Johnson, Outreach Coordinator at Cedarbrook Church—a NWC church about 60 miles east of St. Paul in Menomonie, WI—has

been helping to coordinate the renovations. He runs a nonprofit called NEXT International, which helps coordinate groups to do service projects, such as remodeling construction work, both domestically and overseas. Johnson also has connections to Awaken: his niece is a ministry intern there.

Since the church was started five years ago, Awaken has been meeting in a comedy club. The

new location is a former Catholic church that stood empty for a few years after its congregation merged with another parish. Johnson was excited for the change in venue and what it could mean for the future of Awaken.

"Now you have a very alive and active and outward-looking congregation in this beautiful old structure," he said.

Together with a couple





“Of course it comes with challenges moving from a bar/comedy club to this, but I still giggle when we say ‘stay as long as you like, there’s nothing to tear down.’”



↳ of his assistants, Johnson has helped with several projects since renovations began in January. He also led a team of about 15 people from Cedarbrook to help over a weekend in February. The team stayed with Awaken members, and finished their work weekend by worshipping with them on Sunday.

“It’s a team-building effort for our staff, and a nice way to help Awaken, too,” said Remy Diederich, Lead Pastor of Cedarbrook.

The two pastors met several years ago when Diederich became Witham’s church planting coach.

Awaken raised about \$60,000 for the remodel, Witham said. Most of the work was done by volunteers and friends from the Awaken community, though they did contract with another company to set up a new sound system and hired professionals to do things like electrical work.

Johnson said renovations in the sanctuary included new carpet, a new welcome kiosk, and setting up an art gallery space. Awaken’s comedy club roots inspired some of the renovations, said Witham, such as removing the first 10 rows of pews and replacing them with tables and chairs.

The choir loft was converted into office space for staff, with the layout being designed around the pipe organ, which was left in its place. Additionally, the basement fellowship hall was converted into classrooms for a children’s ministry space.

Most of the major renovations were completed before Awaken’s first service in the new building in March.

Projects like this are not a new thing for Cedarbrook staff.

“We do something quarterly as a staff,” Diederich said, whether that’s a service project or a fun team-building activity. Cedarbrook has also partnered with other churches for special projects.

“There are a number of churches within an hour radius of us that we try to help out,” Diederich said. “We try to stay connected to some of the churches that are closer to us.”

“I would say that we love this space. Of course it comes with challenges moving from a bar/comedy club to this, but I still giggle when we say ‘stay as long as you like, there’s nothing to tear down,’” Witham said.

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Two new NWC church plants sign Covenant Agreements

By Mike Brown, Director of Church Planting

At the 2014 Annual Meeting we introduced an initiative called 50 by '25: Our Mission to Plant. The call is to see 50 new churches planted by 2025. We knew this would stretch us, but we believe it is possible as a partnership between the denomination, the Northwest Conference and our local churches.

After rolling out 50 by '25, we witnessed God's faithfulness as five new churches were planted in the following 12 months. We stand amazed at God's provision and faithfulness but realize we are far from done.

As we begin the next 12-month cycle of Church Planting, we are pleased to announce the birth of two new church plants. On Sept. 1, 2015, we signed a Covenant Agreement with Pastor Dale Durie who is planting Seeds Covenant Church in SE Minneapolis. The vision statement for the church is to become: "A community of missional communities joining with God to become more loving of God, self in community, and neighbor." The church has a passion to reach millennials and the de-churched population in that part of the city.

A 2012 Barna study found that in North America only 4% of all practicing Christians are under 30 years of age. In Minnesota it is only 2%, and in the Twin Cities it is only 1%. In SE Minneapolis the median age is 32, and the vast majority of the population either do not attend church or consider themselves non-religious. Seeds Covenant Church was started with partner-



ships from Maple Grove Covenant Church, Genesis Covenant Church (itself a 1-year-old church plant), Woodland Hills Church and Mill City Church.

We also signed a Covenant Agreement with Pastor Matt Anderson who is planting The Story Covenant Church in the Powderhorn neighborhood of Minneapolis where Matt and his family have lived for the last several years. Powderhorn is a very diverse community and has a fairly young age demographic. The vision statement for the church is: "A messy community embracing the call to wholeheartedly follow Jesus, love our neighbor, and cultivate beauty in our world."

The new church has a strategic partnership with Ace in the City, a nonprofit ministry pursuing Christian community development in Powderhorn. They have also partnered with the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association. The Story will worship at Walker Community United Methodist Church

with the first preview service on Oct. 11, and with house churches launching this fall. Church partnerships include Genesis Covenant Church (who, even though they are only a year old, are currently providing significant financial support to three of our church plants), Eagle Brook Church and Woodland Hills. Other potential partnerships are still forming.

Please remember to pray for these missionary pastors and their churches as they begin these new ministries. And continue to pray for our collective call to plant churches that plant even more churches. To date, seven new churches have been planted in the Northwest Conference since the launch of 50 by '25. Only 43 more to go Thanks for all you do to advance the Kingdom of God in our day. This is our opportunity to do something unprecedented in the history of our Conference. Find out how your church can get involved by contacting Mike Brown, Director of Church Planting.





What a summer for NWC Youth!

By Ginny Olson, Director of Youth Ministry

This summer, youth ministry in the Northwest Conference was about leading and shifting and amplifying. Three legacy events framed a summer full of opportunities designed to challenge NWC students to lead lives committed to Christ.

Adventures in Leadership

The first event was Adventures in Leadership (AIL). This annual high school leadership intensive takes place in June and is based out of Adventurous Christians on the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. The process begins in the spring when churches identify high school students who have strong leadership potential and nominate them to apply.

There is a screening process and those who are chosen spend the first part of the week at base-camp learning vital skills as well as how they are wired, how they get along with others on a team, and how Scripture both informs and forms their leadership. They then put insight into action by taking turns leading on the trail for several days. A guide from AC and a youth pastor from an NWC church are with them to coach them.

CHIC

July saw the second legacy event: over 1,350 students and leaders from the NWC traveled to Knoxville, TN, for CHIC. With the theme of “Shift,” high school students were challenged to change their perspectives about their approach to God, to other people and to the world around them.

Students were given the opportunity to practice shifting via the mission project for the week: Project Blue. Through educational and service experiences, CHIC raised awareness about the lack of access to clean water around the world—including North America.

Richard Martin, from The Sanctuary Covenant Church, was one of four high school students who traveled with Covenant World Relief to India last December and who shared about the experience from CHIC’s Mainstage. When the announcement was made that CHIC raised \$126,015, he responded, “When they said, ‘We’ll show you the amount we raised,’ I figured we raised more than the goal, but when the screen revealed how much we raised, I was the first one to yell and shout. I’m so happy our message got to people

and made them aware of real world struggles.”

MUUUCE

There was barely time to unpack from CHIC before August came with the third legacy event: MUUUCE. Six hundred and sixty-one middle schoolers and leaders converged on Crossroads Church in Woodbury, MN, for an amazing three-day retreat designed with them in mind.

The theme was “Amplify: Make His Voice Heard,” and the speaker, Cesar Castillejos drove it home with this perspective, “Our true identity is the cross and that’s what we amplify—His work in us.”

Whether it was playing on giant inflatable toys at the welcome party, or jumping to the high-energy worship or hanging out at PINZ or Valley Fair, students got the message that they are loved by God and by their leaders. Crossroads spends all year planning this epic event, and over 160 volunteers make sure everything is done with excellence.

With assistance from Cathy Peterson, Managing Editor of the *Covenant Companion*.

Bemidji youth group uses MOVE grant to raise funds for local recovery program

By Ginny Olson, Director of Youth Ministry

The theme at MOVE* this past spring was “Now What?” High school students were challenged to get creative about what they can do to meet a real need in their communities. At stake was a \$500 grant in a Shark Tank-type competition.

The Student Global Outreach Team at the Evangelical Covenant Church of Bemidji won the grant for their proposal of a color run to raise money for adolescents in recovery from addictions. On Aug. 22, the student team put their idea into action with the first Color Run for Recovery 5K.

Nancy Howard, the leader of the team, said in an interview with Lakeland Public Television, “Our goal is to bring awareness to the problem of chemical dependency. ... It’s very prevalent and we want to show love and support for people who are trying to recover.”

The group raised over \$1,000 for Rock Sober, a youth-focused recovery program sponsored by Ever-



green Youth and Family Services. The group is already planning another race for next year.

*MOVE is a 24-hour retreat for NWC high school students that uses teaching, worship, service and experiential education to learn about compassion, mercy and justice.

CHIC 2015 altered perspectives

By Eme Bonkoski, Volunteer Leader, Emmanuel Covenant Church

Fun, challenging, energetic, flexible, meaningful, exhausting ... of all the words used to describe CHIC 2015, “indispensable” would be my choice. For the first time in our church’s eight year history, Emmanuel Covenant Church in Shoreview, MN, sent 12 students (10 from Emmanuel, 2 from Rice Creek Covenant) and four leaders to the Evangelical Covenant Church’s triennial youth gathering this summer—an answer to prayer!

After numerous hours of team building, talking and prepping for CHIC, nothing compared to finally being on the University of Tennessee campus! We were drenched from pouring rain, our housing was

switched at the last minute, and we had a few extra moments of waiting for buses. Yet, instead of dampening our time, these opportunities created a completely unique experience for our group and it truly became “our CHIC 2015.” Topping the list of experiences for our students was finally experiencing the gravity and awe of worshipping Christ with over 5,500 students from across the country at Mainstage. As a leader, it was a gift to watch our students soak in each new speaker or session with pure eagerness and openness.

Personally, CHIC was also a place that I, even as a leader, was able to meet, walk with and physically feel God



in a whole new way. God’s timing is always perfect, and at CHIC students and leaders alike are afforded the chance to open our hands and our hearts to His leading, even revealing Himself in new and unexpected ways. God moves in brilliant ways.

Being at CHIC with our 12 students—completely focused and accessible to Him—was indispensable!

COVENANT CAMPS

in the northwest conference



Now that summer 2015 has come and gone, the five Covenant camps in the Northwest Conference are well into fall and winter retreat seasons and program offerings. Read on for updates on staffing changes, programs and upcoming news.



➤ **COVENANT PARK BIBLE CAMP** Mahtowa, MN • covenantpark.org

Covenant Park Bible Camp has been blessed this year to celebrate 75 years of ministry serving youth, adults and families. The ministry of Park continues to grow as Adventure Camps (across the lake) and a BWCA trip were successfully launched this summer. The close of the summer brought another change for the ministry. As of Sept. 1, Pastor Joel Osterlund has stepped down to pursue other ministry aspirations. The camp staff is thankful for four years of faithful service from the Osterlund family, and is excited for continued ministry in the days ahead as God leads us into a new chapter. Please keep this camp ministry in prayer as a plan is made to fill the leadership position. Stay updated by visiting our website and our Facebook page.

➤ **LAKE BEAUTY BIBLE CAMP** Long Prairie, MN • lbbc.com

Lake Beauty Bible Camp is located 1 hour north of St. Cloud in Long Prairie, MN. On nearly 600 acres we offer year-round Christian camping experiences for people of all ages, through programmed retreats and guest group rentals. Lake Beauty is also one of the Covenant Schools of Discipleship locations and offers a 9-month Discipleship Program where students live in community for the year. Working through a college level curriculum taught by Covenant pastors from the Northwest Conference, they also spend two weeks in Israel bringing the Scriptures to life by living and breathing the places from the Old and New Testament. It is a privilege for us to be serving the churches in the Alexandria/Wheaton, Braham, Crow River, Lake Pepin, South Dakota, Brainerd/St. Cloud, Trimont, Willmar and Zumbro Districts. Our new Dining Hall addition has doubled the size of our dining and meeting spaces at the camp. We are excited for this new space and for the ministry opportunities that are being opened to us as a result.





➤ **BLUEWATER COVENANT BIBLE CAMP** Grand Rapids, MN • bluewatercovcamp.org

2015 was another great summer of ministry at Bluewater. There were many new activities, such as crate stacking, disc golf, wake surfing and playing games on our new game field. We look forward to fall and winter retreats as we can now house them in our new retreat center.

This fall also brings changes as we will start construction on our new office/welcome center to be completed by next summer. Amidst these changes we see one constant—God uses camp to change lives. From youth to families to our staff, time at camp brings refreshment, a sense of belonging, and unhurried time to listen and respond to our Creator. We love seeing that response each and every week.

Covenant Pines Ministries

➤ **ADVENTUROUS CHRISTIANS** Grand Marais, MN • adventurouschristians.org

Adventurous Christians, a Covenant Pines Ministry, is a beautiful and rustic slice of creation. Located north of Grand Marais, MN, and right on the doorstep of the Boundary Waters, AC is a great destination for any group looking for refuge and adventure.

We just finished a great summer at AC. Students and families from all over Minnesota—and one family from Texas—ventured up here to experience the power of God through our challenging canoe trips. We also spent time with countless volunteers who helped us in the construction of our new retreat building. The plan is for the building to be open for guests at Christmas time. Join us for our Annual Dinner on Oct. 24 at Salem Covenant Church in New Brighton, MN.



➤ **COVENANT PINES BIBLE CAMP** McGregor, MN • covenantpines.org

Covenant Pines Bible Camp has been a place for kids and families to rest, play and experience the love of Christ for many years. We just wrapped up our 60th summer of ministry! Around 1,500 young people and families joined us throughout the season to learn what it means to be “Rooted” in the love of Christ.

We’re excited to move into this fall season. We have retreats coming up for women, men, youth, young adults and even Quilters! We’re also excited to welcome our new Executive Director, Dave Cairns! As the new ED, Cairns will oversee not only this Bible Camp, but also Adventurous Christians, Silver Beach Family Area and Covenant Pines Day Camp.



Human sexuality conversations with Dr. Gary Strauss

By Jeff Burton, Director of Pastoral Care & Development

Pastors have been gathering in small groups for conversation on this very important topic. They have been guided in these conversations by Dr. Gary Strauss. His life's primary ministry has been (and continues to be) serving others in the roles of instructor and counselor.

After 35 years as counselor and professor at Biola University, teaching the undergraduate human sexuality course, Strauss continues to teach that course online in retirement. Within the sexuality field, he pursued a special interest in the issues involving same-sex attraction and homosexuality. As a licensed therapist for many years, he worked with both men and women who were experiencing

some degree of same-sex attraction.

Our goal in these small group meetings with Dr. Strauss has been to facilitate a safe place where pastors and ministry staff can share thoughts and feelings about the challenges and opportunities regarding homosexuality and same-sex relationships that are currently being faced within the culture and within the ECC.

As of early September, the Northwest Conference had held six small group sessions in six different locations, with about 65 total participants representing 30 churches. There were three more sessions on the schedule for early fall, including two that took place at the Ministerial Asso-

ciation Retreat and one in late September. With the completion of all sessions, we will look at a composite of those conversations and isolate common themes and needs. Next steps will be discerned at that point.

In addition, two large group events are scheduled in our ongoing efforts to resource pastors in good ministry practice. A training event with Bill Henson called Posture Shift will be held on Nov. 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Maple Grove Covenant Church in Maple Grove, MN. On Feb. 27, 2016, another all-day event will be offered with Dr. Mark Yarhouse. More details on both events are coming soon.

2016 Annual Meeting

By Bryan Malley, Director of Communications

Plans are already under way for the 2016 Northwest Conference Annual Meeting, which will take place at Lakeview Covenant Church in Duluth, MN, on April 28-30, 2016. The theme for the upcoming meeting is "Serve Globally," and components of the event will focus on the many ways that NWC churches share the good news of Jesus Christ beyond their own communities.

We're very pleased to have Al Tizon, the new Executive Minister of Serve Globally for the Evangelical Covenant Church, joining us as our speaker and workshop presenter. He will be sharing at both the NWC Ministerial Association Annual Meeting and the general meeting for church delegates. It's not too early to mark your calendars and begin considering who from your church should attend next year's meeting. Look for more details in the coming months!

SERVE GLOBALLY

NORTHWEST CONFERENCE



APRIL 28-30, 2016

**LAKEVIEW
COVENANT CHURCH**

**ANNUAL
MEETING**

**DULUTH,
MINNESOTA**



History becomes real for Minnehaha students on Sankofa Journey

By Stan Friedman, News and Online Editor for the Covenant Companion

Participants in the first-ever Sankofa trip for high school students say the experience gave them fresh perspectives on the history of racial injustice as well as ongoing issues of disparity.

“Never had I been on a trip where I was able to stand on sites that made history,” said one student from Hope Academy, which paired with Minnehaha Academy on the journey. “It felt like I was taken back in time to the civil rights movement in 1963, from actually sitting inside of 16th Street Baptist Church to walking across Edmund Pettus Bridge. Being on this Sankofa trip was heartbreaking yet inspiring.”

Sankofa is a West African word meaning “looking backward to move forward.” During the four-day bus journey, participants are paired with someone of another race and travel through historic sites of importance to the civil rights movement, such as the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta, GA, and the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL, where four young girls were killed when Ku Klux Klan

members exploded dynamite there in 1963.

One MA student said that visiting the sites, “really enlightened me to see how far we’ve come, but also hurt me to realize that these horrific events were taking place not that long ago.”

Minnehaha Academy, a K-12 school operated by the Northwest Conference, paired with Hope Academy, a K-12 school that works closely with MA, for the bus trip March 25-29. Thirty students participated in the trip.

Kevin Farmer, a Covenant minister who heads admissions and family ministry at Hope Academy, participated in a Sankofa trip last year and thought it would be a great experience for high-school students. He contacted Paulita Todhunter, Director of Diversity Initiatives at Minnehaha. She’d been on three Sankofa trips and was eager for the students to participate.

Students from the two schools were introduced to each other at a group gathering last Dec. 1. After that, they were expected to connect with their partner at least

once before the trip as well as do some individual preparation. Minor modifications were made for the trip. Due to time constraints, the students didn’t visit as many sites as the adult trips. More discussion also was done in small groups.

Todhunter said one girl stood in front of the group and shared that her grandfather had been active in a white supremacist group and that she was ashamed.

“Other girls told her that while that may be part of her history, it doesn’t have to be part of her future,” Todhunter said.

Todhunter was thrilled that the students put racial reconciliation in the context of their faith.

“We were all able to talk despite whatever disagreements there were,” she explained.

Students indicated that they wanted to continue the discussions on racial reconciliation. She and Farmer are considering ways in which to do just that.

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David L. Swanson receives T.W. Anderson Award

By Hannah Hawkinson, Editorial Intern for the *Covenant Companion*

David L. Swanson helped build three Covenant camps, participated in multiple global mission trips, and played an instrumental role in the founding of one of the Covenant's most successful global mission initiatives. In June, he was presented with the T.W. Anderson Award at the 130th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

The award has been presented at each Annual Meeting since 1985 to laypersons in recognition of their outstanding service to their church, community, profession and the broader world. It is named in honor of the only layperson ever elected president of the ECC.

Swanson, who lives in Minneapolis with his wife, Ann, has been an active member of Bethlehem Covenant Church for more than 70 years. He has served the congregation in just about every

capacity possible, and members of the church call him their "go-to person."

Swanson has applied his skills to helping others outside the church walls as well. When Habitat for Humanity homes in Minneapolis began to crumble, Swanson organized teams of volunteers from several area churches to renovate and rehabilitate the buildings.

He also helped start Covenant Pines Bible Camp in McGregor, MN. He was a member of the founding board of directors and invested his own money and time in the construction of the first structure on the property—the dining hall. Between 1957 and 1991, Swanson served various terms on the board, many of them as chairperson.

Bruce Peterson, recently retired Executive Director of Covenant Pines Ministries, says that Swanson's heart for camping ministry



ultimately allowed more children to experience camp.

"With campers on a waiting list, Dave provided funds and workers to construct a 'temporary cabin' to house campers, enabling 50 more campers to attend camp for the summer," he said. "That temporary cabin is still in use today, serving campers that would otherwise have been turned away."

"The education and spiritual formation of young people is so important," Swanson says, "because young people are an important part of the church. That is why I support camp ministry."

Swanson has helped organize, led and participated in many short-term missions trips, including trips to Japan, Ecuador, Mexico, Alaska, DR Congo and Chile. He also played a major role in the formation of Covenant Mission Connection, which has since merged with Covenant World Mission.

To combine his passion for world missions and his love of camping ministry, Swanson led large groups of Covenant camp employees in the construction of two camps in Reynosa, Mexico, and Concepcion, Chile. This program is still in place today and camps are continuing to be constructed around the world.

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Penkhay called to world missions

By Mark R. Stromberg, Superintendent

The Rev. Soudinh Penkhay, Pastor of Laotian Covenant Church in Brooklyn Center, MN, was consecrated as a short-term missionary for a two-year assignment to Thailand at the Covenant Annual Meeting in Kansas City in June. As part of the consecration service, Penkhay was given the honor of carrying that nation's flag into the worship service.

The region is not new to Penkhay, as he grew up in neighboring Laos. His parents were strong Buddhists and he, himself, was a temple monk. When he was an adult, Penkhay served in the Lao military and endured 10 years in a communist concentration camp. After escaping, he spent time in a refugee camp in Thailand, and it was there that he trusted in Christ through the work of a Buddhist monk who had found Jesus and was subsequently leading other Buddhists to the Lord.

That was more than 30 years ago. Penkhay is now a US citizen, an ordained Covenant pastor and has been serving a Covenant Church that began in 2002. Every person in his church is a convert from Buddhism to Christianity. Penkhay explains that his congregation decided to become Covenant because many people at Brookdale Covenant Church and in the Northwest Conference expressed love to him and his people.

"They hug my people," he states.

In recent years, Penkhay has felt God's call to return to Thailand/Laos. Following his short-term work, it is his desire to be consecrated as a permanent

missionary sent out through the Evangelical Covenant Church. Having experience with the culture and customs in both the US and Southeast Asia, Penkhay says: "I am excited to connect and share my testimony and the hope that there is in Jesus Christ. My goal is to leave for Thailand this fall to become part of a team of Covenant missionaries providing leadership training to Thai and Lao Christians; working with youth through the soccer camp program, assisting in the agricultural and fish hatchery facility, and generally making myself as useful as possible to the team already in place."

Penkhay also humbly requests your support. Here are some specific things he needs at this time:

Prayer: A smooth transition for the church he currently serves as pastor. There is another Lao church in the Twin Cities he hopes will be merging with Laotian Covenant Church. This church has a pastor who is also interested in becoming a Covenant pastor.

Finances: He is trusting that God will provide the funds needed for the work. The ECC requires that a minimum of 80% of funds are either pledged or raised before a missionary can begin his or her assignment. These funds cover orientation, food, housing, salary, transportation and ministry



expenses. Fortunately, Penkhay won't need to budget for language training. The total budgeted amount is \$73,000 for the two years.

It should be noted that NWC leadership feels so strongly about both Penkhay's call and the fruit of his ministry that the Executive Board recently pledged some financial support for his work over the next two years. However, more funds are still needed.

NWC leadership, along with Pastor Penkhay, is requesting both individuals and churches to consider supporting him through prayer and finances. You can visit his giving page online to offer your support at: <http://www.covchurchgiving.com/p-1716-missionary-soudinh-penkhay.aspx>. If you have any other questions, you can also visit his missionary page at: <http://www.covchurch.org/mission/spenkhay/#more-8333> or contact Superintendent Mark Stromberg at the NWC office.

For those who work with kids

By Kara Stromberg, Director of Children & Family Ministry

I don't remember one single sermon preached from my childhood, but I remember that my fourth grade Sunday School teacher cared about me. Karen met with us every week on metal folding chairs in a corner of the fellowship hall and taught us about the Bible. She sent notes once in a while to encourage us and talked to me in the hallway.

I can say with certainty that we drove Karen nuts, and she struggled to keep us on task. She probably questioned whether she should have signed up to teach, but I remember she cared about me and am thankful for her.

Now I'm a parent, and my children have Sunday School teachers, midweek leaders, camp counselors. When my child's Sunday School teacher, Sharla, sent my son a letter at camp this summer, I was reminded of how much I need

others to invest in my children too, to build a foundation of faith in partnership between the church and the home.

In your churches, you're deep in the throes of fall ministry. You've had your fancy fall kick off, your programs are in place and maybe you are breathing a sigh of relief that you're in the fall routine. Maybe you've even volunteered to teach Sunday School or rock babies in the nursery.

Know that you are making a difference. When you show up to invest in the lives of children, you are a blessing to parents, you encourage children, and you play a role in passing on faith to the next generation.

So remember this: You don't have to be perfect, but you can be present. You don't need to be a Bible scholar, but you can bring a curiosity about God's word to



explore alongside young people. You don't have to like all the kids in your ministry, but you can love them. You don't have to be eloquent with prayer, but you can teach young people to pray and intercede as kids and families come to mind.

If you work with kids and families, you are not babysitting or simply keeping the kids out of the sanctuary so the adults can worship. You're doing important ministry. And that matters.

NWC Calendar

- 11.14 » Posture Shift training with Bill Henson** - Maple Grove Covenant Church, Maple Grove, MN
- 1.9 » Recharge** - St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie, MN
- 1.16 » Recharge** - Lakeview Covenant Church, Duluth, MN
- 1.23 » Recharge** - Bethel Evangelical Free Church, Fargo, ND
- 2.27 » Mark Yarhouse Event**
- 4.15-16 » MOVE 2016** - Minnehaha Academy South Campus, Minneapolis, MN
- 4.28-29 » Northwest Conference Ministerial Annual Meeting** - Lakeview Covenant Church, Duluth, MN
- 4.29-30 » Northwest Conference Annual Meeting** - Lakeview Covenant Church, Duluth, MN
- 5.7 » Go: Serve** - First Covenant Church, St. Paul

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