

Midwest Covenant Conference West "Hub 'Cap," Volume 6/No. 1, March, 2010:
A Regular Contact with Ministry Staff and other Key Church Leaders in the Western Hub

Hello Covenant Mission Friends –

It is good to be in contact with you again via this regular email. I am always happy to hear from any of you who would like to get some kind of notice into this communication regarding special events and happenings in your churches. I hear about some things, and peruse your newsletters for others (if you have thought to include me on your mailing list -- please do so!), but a word from you to include something is always welcome. Please feel free to shoot me an email, note, or phone call the last week of the even-numbered months, as my normal plan is to send this out during the first week of the odd-numbered ones.

Give us a Heads-Up...

This is the time of year when many lay leadership positions change in our churches. Often we do not get new contact information in our Omaha office very quickly. If your church has a new chair we would like to know it as soon as possible, and I would like them to receive this Hubcap communication as soon as their new position commences. Of course, if you are receiving this as an outgoing chair you are welcome to keep receiving it! But you are also welcome to be removed from the email list if you prefer. We are not savvy enough to have an unsubscribe button as a hyperlink, so please shoot us a return email and let us know your desires!

Revitalization Seminar EPIC to be Offered in Arvada by John Wenrich on March 6

On March 6 at Arvada Covenant, from 9:30-2:30, we will again offer the church health seminar EPIC with Dr. John Wenrich, the Covenant's national Director of Congregational Vitality. EPIC stands for "Empowering People Inspiring Change," and it is an important workshop of tools and approaches in the Veritas spirit. Many churches participated in the seminar a year ago but John has offered to do a refresher while he is in town for our Littleton church's 25th anniversary. Many of the principles contained in the workshop are better received at the time of their needing, thus our desire to offer it a second time: some churches may be more ready for it now or eager to look at these challenges again, whether they brought a team last winter or not. Contact me as soon as possible if you are planning on attending so we may take care of logistics.

Western Kansas Churches Host Veritas Event

The three western hub churches in northwest Kansas – ECC of Oberlin, Lund Covenant of Dresden and Herndon Covenant – came together on a snowy Saturday in late February to host a Veritas workshop, led by conference Director of Congregational Vitality Dave Benedict of Kansas City. Many conference churches have taken advantage of this workshop which leads us to speak frankly about issues of church health: Is our church healthy and missional? Are we pursuing Christ and His priorities? Good participation brought great energy to this event, enjoyed by these three vital smaller town ministries. Please know that we would be happy to bring this workshop to any church or group of churches who would like to have it for the first time or have a refresher.

Front Range Church Planting Committee Meets May 27 with Guest Lisa Orris' "5 Best Evangelism Practices"

Some of you may know that the original name of our longstanding Front Range Church Planting Committee is actually the Front Range Church Growth and Development Committee. In this regard, though the group has often focused on our shared church planting mission (one of the greatest methods of effective outreach we have seen), we have from time to time given our attention to church health issues or other important ministry concerns, such as evangelism. Development, growth and church planting all have evangelism at their heart! At our next meeting, we will have as our guest the Covenant's new national director of Evangelism, Lisa Orris. Lisa has just recently led the Covenant in the development of a new school of evangelism, but she has also done some critical research in the Covenant along the way, to discover what she terms "The Five Best Practices of Effective, Evangelistic, Covenant Churches." We will gather at 7pm on Thursday, May 20th, and interact with this presentation. As usual, we would like to have a pastoral staff member and lay leader from each of our area churches present, so pastors, get that word out to a ministry partner. We do not yet have a venue for this meeting and will need to determine this soon. Want to volunteer?

Centennial/Littleton Celebrates 25th Anniversary

It seems hard to believe that Centennial Covenant of Littleton is celebrating its 25th anniversary year in 2010. Our congratulations and prayers go out to them. Pastored early on by Covenant Vice President Donn Engebretson and for over

twenty years since by Steve Thulson, it still seems to retain a beautiful spirit of openness and newness. There are several ways in which the church will celebrate this year, but one of the highlights will be a banquet on Sunday evening, March 7, with the Covenant's Director of Congregational Vitality John Wenrich as guest. God bless you, Centennial!

Christ Community/Arvada Calls New Youth Pastor; Living Hope of Colorado Springs Candidates New Associate

Pray for Christ Community Covenant of Arvada and its new youth pastor, Randy McNeal, who comes to Colorado from the northwest state of Washington. Pray also for Living Hope Covenant of Colorado Springs, and the candidate whom they will entertain in March for their open associate pastor position. Both of these are key roles to fill in these church communities, and in the case of the latter it will be their first experience with full-time second staff.

Lenten Open House at Our Home in Castle Rock, Sunday, March 14, 3-6pm

Since our move here to the western hub of the conference, Gail and I have very much enjoyed sharing a Christmas Open House with our area ministry friends. However, our daughter's choice of a Christmas wedding in Seattle put us in a situation of needing to do something different this year! We decided that Lent was another appropriate time! So, all ministry staff and church 'chairs' and their spouses are invited to join us at our home on March 14 between 3 and 6pm. We are located at 4983 Shadow Ridge Road on the northwest side of Castle Rock; MapQuest it, or call or email us for directions (303-663-0560 or rgksmj@juno.com). Come as you are that afternoon and stay as long as you'd like. The fare will be appropriate to the season, simple but good. Please allow us to bless you in our home during this meaningful time of year.

Pray for Gratitude Covenant Church of Fort Collins

Gratitude Covenant is the newest worshipping community in our Western Hub. A pioneered church plant under the leadership of Pastor Brian and Pam Sky, the church has been establishing another mission outpost in this important Colorado city. Meeting since last summer, the church is coming to an important point of decision regarding its future viability. Easter will be a critical outreach moment, and we urge all Midwest Covenanters to pray diligently for God to show his will and plan. Thank you.

Western Hub Churches Urged to Send Delegates to Lindsborg KS

Though it is far away, I would again like to urge all western hub churches to take advantage of their privilege of sending delegates to our Midwest Conference Annual Meeting, which will be held this year in one of our most historic churches, ECC of Lindsborg, Kansas. In recognition of entering our 125th year of ministry we have chosen a location that reminds us of the faithfulness of our good God; it is also a lovely destination, a quaint and unique Swedish town. The days are April 23 and 24, and delegates as always will play an important role in directing and clarifying shared conference initiatives. We would love to have all our churches represented.

A Note Regarding my Preaching Availability

It used to be that superintendents and associate superintendents visited churches to speak for exceptional occasions and pulpit fills. This paradigm has changed here in our region, replaced by our desire to be with you to worship and hear your church's regular preaching ministry. In this way, we can be more cognizant of your church's life, needs, and spirit than if we occupied the pulpit. Still, I want you to know that I am available to join you for strategic preaching ministry, and some special events, if you should deem it helpful. Contact me any time, but as much advance notice as possible is usually best!

Ministry of Spiritual Direction Available in Western Hub

Several persons in the area are making themselves available to offer the ministry of spiritual direction to area Covenanters, both clergy and lay leaders. These include pastors David Dillon of Centennial Covenant in Littleton, Tom Glossi of ECC in Fort Collins, Katie Martinez of Crossroads/Loveland, Tim Musselwhite of Lifespring/Loveland, Monty Newton of Heritage/Arvada, myself, and lay leader Dana Mattson of Life House/Longmont. Contact any of us if you have interest. The ministry of spiritual direction is a classic Christian discipline whereby a 'listener' seeks to guide a person's intentions and heart toward God's deeper presence in his or her life.

Don't Forget 'First Thursday Prayer' – Next Upcoming at Castle Oaks Covenant in Castle Rock, March 4

All pastoral staff persons and their guests are invited each first Thursday of the month, 10:30-11:30am, for First Thursday Prayer (FTP). March 4 will find us hosted by Castle Oaks Covenant of Castle Rock and Pastor Paul Lessard. Castle Oaks is easily found at the northwest corner of the Outlets at Castle Rock, at I-25's exit #184. FTP has been a good prayer and connecting point, and all are welcome even if participation must be sporadic. Those who have time often grab a nearby

quick lunch together after the prayer meeting. Watch for subsequent locations, which change every couple months so we can make the rounds. Who would be able to host in May and June?

Additional Prayer Notes...

- Praise God for the call of new youth pastor Randy McNeal at Christ Community Covenant Church of Arvada.
- Pray for Living Hope Covenant of Colorado Springs as they host an associate pastor candidate in March.
- Continue to pray for Pastor John Martz of Arvada Covenant; John's mother passed at the end of 2009 and her memorial service was held in January.
- Pray for Pastor Paul Trimble who completed his ministry at Crossroads Covenant of Loveland in January, and who is considering other ministry in the area.

And Speaking of Prayer...

Might you be interested in being one of my prayer partners? Forgive me if asking this seems presumptuous in this context, but I am always seeking prayer warriors to pray for me and uphold this ministry before the Lord. For many, many years I have organized a personal prayer partner team by invitation, sending out a bimonthly prayer letter by postal mail or email. And in these years as an associate superintendent it is especially important to me, given the fact I have no local parish who sees me day in and day out, and who are naturally reminded to pray for me when they see me having a bad day!!! If prayer ministry is important to you, and if you could be faithful in lifting me up at least weekly, think about this and let me know, ok? Thank you.

Upcoming Covenant Dates to Remember...

- **March 4**, First Thursday Prayer, 10:30am, Castle Oaks Covenant in Castle Rock (see above)
- **March 6**, EPIC workshop with Dr. John Wenrich (see above)
- **March 14**, Lenten Open House at the Mylander home in Castle Rock (see above)
- **April 1**, First Thursday Prayer and Lenten Lunch, 10:30am, at Mylander home in Castle Rock
- **April 23-24**, Midwest Conference Annual Meeting, Lindsborg KS
- **May 6**, First Thursday Prayer, 10:30am, location to be announced
- **May 27**, Front Range Church Growth and Development Committee with national evangelism director Lisa Orris, 7pm, location to be announced (see above)

And as always, please feel free to be in touch with me at any time regarding how our Midwest Conference ministry may be of service to you. Until next time, God be over you continually.

Gratefully Serving with You,

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