

Evangelical Covenant
Church of Alaska

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The Evangelical Covenant Church of Alaska [ECCAK] is non-conference "field" of the Covenant Church of America. We are dependent on the gifts from churches and people to carry out our mission for Christ's sake in Alaska.

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CHILLING NEWS

that *Warms* the heart
from The Evangelical Covenant Church of Alaska!

January 2005

Reaching People for Christ's Sake from near the North Pole

Tea Time in White Mountain by Damaris Fryer

White Mountain Covenant Church, served by my husband James and I, (and home to our children- Sophia, Josh, and Jacob) hosted its first ladies' tea-party on November 16th as friends from Arctic Barnabas Ministries flew in. Ladies from the village of White Mountain were welcomed to gather at the church where Kris Harris from Arctic Barnabas, and a visiting friend along with myself welcomed the ladies to a casual tea-party atmosphere (complete with flown-in ornate tea sets). As the ladies met in the church on the cold night, we enjoyed getting to know one another, drank tea, gave out a few door prizes, listened to a Bible devotion, and sang a bit afterwards. The night drew a few younger girls, a few

teen girls, and 10-15 women.

We had such a nice time, and some ladies suggested that we should have another tea party. So, the week before Christmas, we had another ladies tea with just the ladies here in the village. Each lady brought her own special cup, and a snack to share. We opened with prayer, and played an ice breaker game, after which I led a short devotion about being a mother of prayer. We were able to also give out nice door prizes. We are looking forward to having our next tea party in January. I am encouraged by the relationships with various ladies that God has brought into my life through the tea parties.

"Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable." (Psalm 145:3)

Inside this issue:

Compassion and Justice Grants 2

A Salute to Heidi and Josh 3

Parental Communication: Where Many Parents Fail 4

Flight Assistance Needed 5

Why Plant a Church? 6

Newly Elected Covenant Bible Camp Board Members 7

Compassion and Justice Grants

ECC through the Department of Compassion Ministries [Max Lopez], Chicago, provides ECCAK with a wonderful opportunity to reach out in ways that show compassion and justice. Each year, we are given an opportunity to seek creative ways of reaching out to the people of Alaska. The ECCAK General Council approved the following, which are eligible to receive matching funds totaling \$30,000! How thankful we are for this open door:

1. Anchorage First Covenant in securing property adjacent to them for purposes of outreach in their neighborhood. Total project cost: \$24,000 – project coordinator Pastor Ron Mancini [907. 277.3322]
2. Hooper Bay Covenant Church for expanding indigenous leadership training of youth in the Summit Warrior Training with Ron Hutchcraft. Total project cost: \$16,000 – project coordinator Pastor Grant Funk [907.758.4206]
3. Fairbanks Covenant Church through Campus Christian Fellowship in Fairbanks for OJT leadership training on

sites in Rural Alaska. Total project cost: \$10,000 – project coordinator Pastor John Hege [907.488.6110] [This is not the TV John Hege!]

4. Nome Covenant Church for the Soup Kitchen to feed the homeless. Total project cost: \$10,000 – project coordinator Pastor Harvey Fiskeaux [907.443.2565]

Each church, in cooperation with other churches and individuals, is responsible to write the grant and raise half of the money for the total project cost. If you are interested in finding out more about any of the above, call the project coordinators.

We are beginning a new year and the field is wide open for 2005 projects. Churches, pastors, and/or leaders should be getting their requests into the ECCAK office ASAP.

Newly Elected Covenant Bible Camp Board Members



*Byron Bruckner
CYAK Director*



*Jeff Siemers
Dean of Students, ACC*

B Byron and Jeff are no strangers to Covenant Bible Camp in Unalakleet. Byron has been working with youth at Bible Camp from the beginning of his call to ministry in Alaska as the Director of the Covenant Youth of Alaska (CYAK). Jeff, in like manner, has worked with youth in numerous capacities, spanning from remote locations such as Hooper Bay to Alaska Christian College (ACC) in Soldotna.

Both men are dedicated servants to mold the future of our youth in Alaska. As members of the Camp Board, they will be responsible for staff recruitment, logistical planning, as well as leadership as counselors to the campers that attend the camp each summer. In addition, they will be responsible for developing and enforcing standards of conduct that ensure a safe camping environment.

Why Plant a New Church?

Some people do not understand why church planting is so much a part of what God is doing around the world and especially within the Covenant Denomination. When there is misunderstanding, there can be resistance. I will admit, there is some logic to not planting a church, but it is only logical if the reason for planting is not biblical. Here is an unbiblical reason for planting a church: "Because we need another Covenant Church!" If that were the reason, then we all should agree, it would be better to not plant a church.

However, what if the reason is very biblical and a part of what God is doing? The biblical reason for planting a church is that statistically, it is presently the most effective way to reach new people for Christ. Look at this statistic: 65% or higher of the new congregates in Covenant church plants are new believers or "professing" Christians who never attended a church!

If at the end of three years a new

church plant has 300 in attendance, then that would mean 195 of the people would be converts! Don't you like the sound of that?

A woman once approached D.L. Moody. She scolded him, "I hate the way you do evangelism!" Moody responded, "You know, I sometimes don't like the way I do it either. By the way, how is it you do evangelism?" The woman replied,

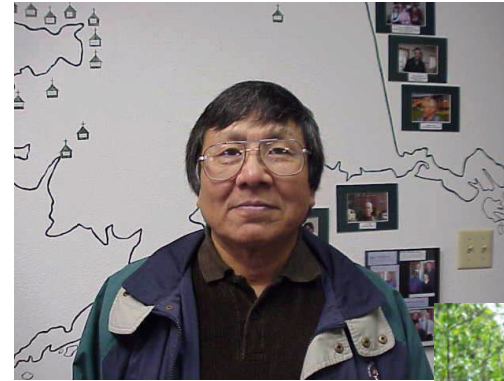
"Oh, I never do evangelism!" to which Moody replied, "I like my way better." With the same line of reasoning, we approach another

church plant.

The ECCAK General Council has been and will continue to wrestle with the following questions: When do we do another plant church? Where would God want it to be? And who will God raise up? We ask you to join us in prayer on this vital matter. People's eternal state hangs in the balance.



A Salute to Heidi and Josh



*Joshua Mathlaw,
Director of Camp
Gilead Ministries
helping alcoholics in
recovery*

Heidi Erickson and Josh Mathlaw's terms of service ended on the Covenant Bible Camp board. How thankful we all should be for this valuable service. Heidi continues to be a vital part of what God is doing as a Program Director for youth and children's camp this coming year. Josh will continue to work with others in providing for Camp Gilead, a camp for those who struggle with substance abuse.



*Heidi Erickson, Program Director
for Youth and Children's Bible
Camps in Unalakleet*



It's not too late to order your ECCAK 2005 calendars now!

Send request to:

ECCAK

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Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Parental Communication: Where Many Parents Fail

By Rodney J. Sawyer

We often hear how important communication is within the context of marriage, but what about in the parent-child relationship? How well do you do communicating with your child or teen? Are your kids drawn to you or withdrawn from you? Do they like to hang around you and “just talk?” Or do they spend hours on the phone with friends, hours playing their newest computer game, or hours listening to their favorite rock star? If they are drifting away, then there is a problem. And part of the problem could be you.

How can you determine if you are part of the problem? Try listening to yourself for a day. Do you spend most of your time correcting and scolding? “Pick up your room!” “Clean up your plate!” “Will you stop that?” “Sit up!” “Close the door!” “Did you hear me?” Unfortunately, this makes up about 90% or more of most parents communication to their children or teens!

You may justify this kind of communication with, “They need someone to tell them what to do!” But what if your spouse focused on your weaknesses all day long! (We all have weaknesses, you know.) It would wear you out! You would want to

hide, too! Isn’t it funny, when we correct others, it is “for their own good,” but when we are corrected, it is called “nagging” or “nitpicking.”

Correction is needed, but can I share with you what is needed even more? Kids need to hear about the things they do right. I am convinced that for every negative thing we say to others, we need to accompany it with at least seven positive things! Try it out. Your kids may faint [not to say anything about trying this out on your friends, neighbors and even your pastor!] Your children may come out of their locked bedrooms so they can be with a parent who sees value in many of the things they do right.

One more suggestion: if your kids do decide to come out to spend time with you, try listening more than talking. Maybe that is why God gave us two ears and only one mouth; we should listen twice as much as we talk.

Encouraging one another is one of the most dominant New Testament themes. It can change the dynamics of your family [and your church... and your community]. Try it out for a week or two! See what it does to your kids! If they don’t talk with you, they will be talking and listening to someone.

Our churches: Anchorage First, Bethel, Eagle River, Elim, Fairbanks, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kalskag, Korean Hope, Koyuk, Mat-Su, Mekoryuk, Mountain Village, New Song, Nome, Scammon Bay, Shaktoolik, Unalakleet, White Mountain

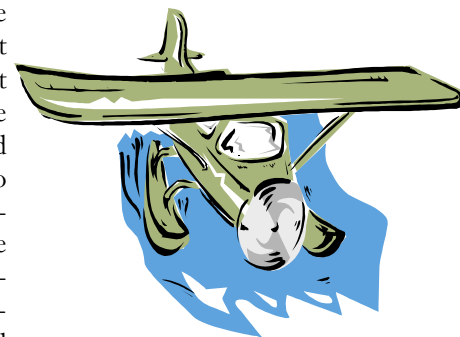
Flight Assistance Needed

By Lon Swanson

I’m Lon Swanson and for the last five months it’s been my privilege to be a volunteer at the Covenant radio station KICY in Nome, AK. On my way up to the station last summer I was able to spend some time with Rodney and Nancy Sawyer. Rodney and I talked about the possibility of my being available to pulpit fill for pastors in the villages while they are out. My hope was to raise enough support that I could fly out when needed. The reality is I’ve raised enough so far to keep me at the station. I’m available but my budget limits me. A congregation can be uplifted and encouraged when they have an opportunity to host a guest speaker, and I know from experience what a gift it is, to be given the opportunity to bring a good word to God’s church in the villages of western Alaska.

Availability and budget, these two items are the center of a lot of conversations in the church at

large. There are more pastors, other than myself, in the area that are ready and qualified to fill in for the village pastors when needed, and I feel this helps maintain a sense of continuity and connection with ECCAK and the denomination. Availability of personnel is not the problem. Churches that are struggling to support a minister usually don’t have the extra money to bring in a guest pastor. I’ll continue to raise my support and look for opportunities to get out to the villages. Rodney also hopes to have more resources available to help pastors travel to villages as the needs arise. To share the word of God in western Alaska is to participate in great challenges, and it brings even greater blessings, and God has blessed me to be a part of KICY and the ECCAK community.



Our Para-church: Campus Christian Fellowship in Fairbanks, KICY in Nome, CYAK statewide, Alaska Christian College in Soldotna, Chickaloon Retreat Center in Chickaloon, Covenant Bible Camp near Unalakleet, and Chaplains in armed forces.