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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 2006

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

Soldiers Baptized in Historic Iraqi Monastery

Reprinted with permission from Covenant News (www.covchurch.org)

MOSUL, IRAQ (November 16) - Thanks to U.S. Army Covenant Chaplain Captain John Grauer, two soldiers who accepted Christ in Iraq were able to be baptized in a 1,600-year-old monastery in this city that some believe to be the ancient city of Ninevah.

Grauer is a former church planter at New Song Covenant Church who now serves in the Army full-time. His wife, Tyra, is worship director at First Covenant Church in Anchorage, Alaska.

When the soldiers sought to be baptized, Grauer knew he wanted them to have an experience they would remember forever. "It would have been easy to do the baptism in a chapel, but with so much history all around, con-

ducting the baptism in a place where other Christians have gathered for centuries carried special significance," he says.

Conducting a baptism in Iraq isn't as easy as in the United States, however. Like the earliest church, the baptisms were conducted in a hostile environment. The soldiers and a Catholic priest who helped officiate the baptisms were brought to the St. Behnam Monastery in

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Chaplain John Grauer at far left

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Fall Blast 2005 – Koyuk

By Aune Carlson

The weekend of October 14-16 there were 85 students presented with



the Gospel at the Sr. High Fall Blast retreat in Koyuk. I cannot believe that it is already done, but I am so glad to say that we have much to praise God for! There were 9 from Elim, 6 from Golovin, 23 from Koyuk, 8 from Nome, 11 from Shaktoolik, 21 from Unalakleet, and 7 from White Mountain. All the food showed up so that everyone was able to eat at each meal, and no one was injured.

Students said...

What was the highlight of your weekend?

- ◆ “Every game we played and worshipping the Lord.”
- ◆ “Learning more about God.”
- ◆ “The best thing was the worship.”
- ◆ “Meeting new people.”

What is something you learned about

God this weekend?

- ◆ “How to worship him and learning the Word of God.”
- ◆ “I learned that God loves me and that he has a plan for me...”
- ◆ “Lord Jesus is always beside us and always loves us.”
- ◆ “God loves us too much to just leave us alone.”
- ◆ “That He created everything, but thinks of us.”

What is something you learned about yourself this weekend?

- ◆ “I learned how to ask Jesus for help if I need something to be done.”
- ◆ “That I am important to God.”
- ◆ “I can speak to God when I don’t feel good or if something bad happens.”
- ◆ “I have a mission to fulfill.”
- And my favorite responses include:

“Where is the next Fall Blast going to be?”

- ◆ “Should have Fall Blast here again next year.”
- ◆ “It was the funnest. Can’t wait till next year’s Fall Blast.”
- ◆ “I’d like it to be here (Koyuk) again.”
- ◆ “I wish this lasted longer.”

Thank you so much to everyone involved in the preparation and execution of Fall Blast!

Our Team: 19 churches, CYAK, CCF, CBC, KICY, CRC, & ACC

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Skin Trivia

1. Dead skin cells make up about 70 to 90% of your household dust, unless you live in windy dusty Bethel, then it is probably only 20%!
2. There are over a million dust mites [tiny critters invisible to the naked eye] on your mattress and pillow, munching on the dead skin cells that fell off you last night!
3. The skin sweats about 2 pints of water and salt each day.
4. When melanin cells get bunched up in a pile, they form a freckle! We are not really people of different "color" but of different shade, depending on the amount of melanin.
5. Skin is 35% to 90% water.
6. Each square inch [about the size of a postage stamp] of human skin consists of:
 - 19 million cells
 - 60 hairs
 - 90 oil glands
 - 19 feet of blood vessels
 - 625 sweat glands
 - And 19,000 sensory cells!

GIVING AS A WAY OF LIVING

ECCA K recently received a giving report from ECC. It was good news! Out of 38 denominations, the Covenant was in 3rd place for most "giving per capita." The average Covenanter gave \$2202 per year in 2002. The average of all 38 churches was a meager \$624 per year by comparison. This should not make us puff up and think that we are greater than others, but should speak to our hearts about being grateful that we can see that God is truly at work by His Spirit in our midst. To live for Christ is to give to Christ. Our tithe to the local church is just one of many reflections of our love and devotion to Christ. And so is giving above and beyond the tithe to other organizations who labor for His

ECCA K Happenings:

- ◆ The Community Covenant Church in Fairbanks moves to new home [see picture below]. They now enjoy a facility that allows for 24/7 ministry potential! What an exciting time for the folks at 3C to see God work in new ways in their midst.
- ◆ The Community Covenant Church in Eagle River receives direction from the Lord and begin their Rock Onward campaign. What is Rock Onward all about? To grow in mission through giving. The money they will give, though important, is only the means, not the end. Their objectives are: 1) For each member and family to grow spiritually. 2) to expand the church's missional infrastructure. 3) To reach their community in a way that goes beyond where they have been in the past ten years. To accomplish these objectives, there are three essentials: Faith, Mission, Sacrifice.
- ◆ The Covenant churches in Koyuk, Scammon Bay and Elim are all rejoicing over their new pastors. The word is getting around of how God is blessing all three churches as the new pastors, Wass Mute, Jon Cardwell and Terry Allen, settle in.
- ◆ The Bethel Covenant Church has launched an Awana program during the mid-week. This has been talked about for a number of years, but has finally come to pass, in God's way and in His time. The word on the street is that it is having a great impact.
- ◆ The New Song Covenant Church in Anchorage has also found a new home. They are now meeting in Anchorage First Covenant newly remodeled facility and seeing new families coming. They meet at 7 P.M. on Sunday evenings.
- ◆ CYAK welcomes Aune Carlson to Alaska. Aune comes from Grand Rapids, MI and hit the ground running! Her gifts in administration will be a great asset to Byron and the CYAK team. *They are already seeing a difference!*



Community Covenant – Fairbanks
New Home

KICY web page: www.kicy.org

Leadership Summit

A retreat was held at InterAct near Palmer. Those attending provided a good cross section of who makes up the Covenant. [Rodney Sawyer, Nathan Toots, Hugh Forbes and Byron Bruckner led the others in seeking God's will for the future as it relates to Discovering, Developing and Deploying leaders in Alaska. Others in attendance

were: Marta Thrasher, Sam Hill, Curtis Ivanoff, Richard & Jane Atak, Blassie Shoogukruk, Cheryl Davis, and Aune Carlson. Of course, Ava Manolas joined us and kept things in good order!

We will continue to seek God on this important issue of raising up leaders in Alaska.

How Can I Help?



Many people accumulate free air miles. Please consider "donating" some to ECCAK to help a bush pastor and family get away for R & R (Rest & Relaxation). Just call the ECCAK office and ask for Ava.

(Continued from page 1)

Strkyer vehicles, which are armored personnel carriers.

The monastery is a regular meeting place for Christians in the Muslim-dominated area. Grauer arranged the service with the help of the monastery's priest, Father Francis Djahola.

Djahola attended seminary in Mosul and had made his home there for more than 20 years. When asked about an evangelical Christian performing a baptism in a Catholic

church, Djahola said, "Evangelical or Catholic, we are Christians."

"In America it might be unusual to have an evangelical pastor conducting a service in a Catholic church," says Grauer, "but on this day, denomination played no part."

The baptism also was international in more than simply location. Grauer led the service in English and Djahola translated in Syriac.

And so, in the midst of a battle zone, the soldiers were baptized into the community of God.

Check out the Covenant Newswire service:
Visit www.covchurch.org and click on the Newswire button.

The Ministry of Planning

By Rodney Sawyer

Look up the words plan, plans, and planned in your Bible and you might be surprised to find that we serve a God who, not only loves and forgives, but a God who plans. We have been taught through out our Christian lives to "be like God." We are to love and to forgive. But when did someone encourage you to be a planner, just like God?



Randy Wirick, from ChangePoint Church in Anchorage, came and shared on the needs and necessity of having a ministry plan. Thirty some people showed up and were blessed and challenged.

The General Council (GC) will require that a Ministry Plan be submitted on all new initiatives in the future. This will cause

people to do their homework in discovering God's will. It will provide the GC with a detail analysis of each proposal. This will also allow for us to be like our God, who is a Planner, because He has plans for us as indi-

One great example of a planner is Nehemiah. A study of his life shows that he was a great leader, in part, because he planned.

Culture and Tradition Not Lost



Retired Covenant Pastor/Author and Elder from Bethel, Fred Savok travels to Covenant organizations on the Road System for book signings of "Jesus and the Eskimo." In this picture, Fred is teaching the students at Alaska Christian College (ACC) about his culture and traditions. Many of the ACC board members also attended this fascinating class time.

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

What is a pastor supposed to do?

By Nathan Toots

A group of us Covenant pastors just recently returned from a retreat held at Port Alsworth where we met together for fun games (kinds, where one laughs a lot), heard a report about the Greenland mission, took part in a sharing time, had communion together, worshipped, were updated on the Alaskan Family Matters Initiative, heard a report on emerging leaders, and envied Pastor Carl Elwood of Mountain Village for winning the Turkey Shootout contest.

In one of the sessions we were challenged to think of troubling things that happen within and outside the church. We made a list of what one might label tragedies or crisis intervention that pastors some times have to deal with. Because of time, we were not able to have pastoral discussion on all issues that were mentioned, but here is a list of what our pastors had or will have to deal within the life of a church and community:

- ⇒ Individuals who are depressed
- ⇒ Husband and wife not getting along
- ⇒ Children in transition due to divorce
- ⇒ Dealing with the victims of divorce

- ⇒ Parenting
- ⇒ Dealing with difficult people in the church
- ⇒ Teen pregnancy
- ⇒ Trauma in the home
- ⇒ Couples living together without a marriage certificate
- ⇒ Helping family members deal with suicide
- ⇒ Living with an alcoholic
- ⇒ Helping family members deal with death
- ⇒ Strong willed children
- ⇒ Dealing with an evil person
- ⇒ Counseling believers with an unbeliever mate
- ⇒ Dealing with individuals that question the authority of the church/pastor
- ⇒ Dealing with individuals that have lost their faith and are absent from church
- ⇒ Dealing with false teachings
- ⇒ Dealing with unbelievers that want their child baptized
- ⇒ Dealing with unwed couples that want their child baptized

This is by no means the exhaustive list of crisis intervention the pastor may be asked to be involved with, but hopefully it will give the reader an idea of the role a pastor has within the church and community. If you identify with any of the items listed above, please go see your pastor and seek his/her help.

Our Para-church: Campus Christian Fellowship in Fairbanks and Anchorage, 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.