

BELVIDERE COVENANT BRIEFINGS

Newsletter

January 2012

A Note From Pastor Scott

Shortly after my grandmother died, my mom and my sister had an appointment with the realtor who was in the process of selling my mom's house. In previous contacts with him, my sister had told him about my grandmother's illness and subsequent death, so they were quite surprised when he greeted my mom by saying, "*Hi Marilyn! How's your mom feeling?*" in a rather chipper voice.

At that point my mom could have responded in a number of ways — stunned silence, anger, perhaps a flood of tears — in light of the insensitivity shown to her so soon after her loss. But without skipping a beat, my mom said to him, with a smile on her face, "*She's never felt better!*" (Image how *he* felt when my sister reminded him that my grandmother had died!)

I love my mom and her response, because what she said was so true! My grandma loved Jesus. She had put her trust in Him when she was a little girl and had served Him so faithfully

for all of her life. And when she died, she went to be with Him for all eternity. During her lifetime she had experienced so many times of joy and so many times of heartache, but even the most joyful of times pales in comparison to what she's now experiencing in heaven. And the most painful of times — that heartache, those tears, have been swallowed up by victory. Truly she has never felt better!

WHAT MAKES THE NEW YEAR WORTHWHILE

This, my friends, is what Christmas is all about. Its about a Savior being born to bring us the gift of forgiveness and eternal life. It's a gift that gives us comfort when we experience loss and fills us with hope as we think about the future. Whatever joys and heartaches we may experience in this New Year, knowing Jesus as Lord and Savior and having this gift is what will make it all worthwhile. "*Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!*" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Evangelical
Covenant
Church
Belvidere, IL

WE BELIEVE God loves us and has revealed His love through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead so that He can give forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who receive Him as Savior and Lord.

WE BELIEVE the Bible is God's Word. Through the Bible we discover all that God has in store for us and how He wants us to live. The Bible is the authority for our life, faith and ministry.

WE BELIEVE the Church is an important part of God's plan for our lives. As we live for Jesus, we seek to help one another in our struggles, to encourage one another in our faith, to equip each other for Christian service, and to share the good news of Jesus in a lost and hurting world.

AWANA MINISTRY

Happy New Year to all! On Wednesday, January 4th, we will be back for the first session of AWANA in 2012. Once again everyone is reminded that due to the unpredictable weather conditions in winter, all AWANA participants should call the church office if the weather is uncertain on a Wednesday afternoon. A message on the answering machine will let you know if there will be a meeting or not. You can also receive updates from our church on facebook.

A big thank you to the kids, parents and leaders who braved the rain on Saturday, December 3rd, to march in the Belvidere Christmas Parade! Clubbers handed out packages of M&M's to people along the street with a note connecting them with the good news of Jesus' birth. Despite the poor weather and low turnout, the parade was a great way to serve our community and help people discover the real meaning of Christmas!

On Wednesday, December 14th, over 175 clubbers, parents, grandparents and leaders came out to our Awana Birthday Party and Open-House. We had cake and gifts for all the kids in celebration of the greatest of all birthdays and the greatest of all gifts: our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the eternal life that He came to bring to all who would trust in Him. Special thanks to the Activities and Kitchen Committees for all their work in planning and carrying out this event!

The Awana program appreciates the support and prayers the church family has given to this ministry throughout the past year. Continue to pray for AWANA, especially for the leaders and LITs as they share the Gospel message, and for the boys and girls and their parents — that they might come to know Jesus as Savior and follow Him as Lord.

This year we are collecting the pull tabs from pop cans to help support Ronald McDonald House Charities. You can put your tabs in the jar that is located in the parking lot entryway. Ronald McDonald House provides housing at little or no cost for families who have children receiving medical treatment at an out of town hospital. Home cooked meals are also served as part of the support and care offered.

THIS MONTH IN AWANA

January 4th - First session in 2012
January 11th - Beach Night
January 18th - Regular Meeting
January 25th - Movie Night with Popcorn and P.J.'s

AWANA MISSIONARY THANK YOU

Thank you for supporting us so faithfully. It is an encouragement to see your name on the donation list every month! Merry Christmas!

Bruce and Marti Brumfield

NURSERY NEWS

TODDLER NURSERY - WORSHIP SERVICE

Jan. 1 - Judy Frykholm & Isabel Limones
Jan. 8 - Joyce Hulstedt & Paige Vance
Jan. 15 - Sue Bentley & Cheyanne McGriff
Jan. 22 - Cari Schirmer & Allison Schirmer
Jan. 29 - Stephanie Ackman & Paige Vance

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Our next meeting is Tuesday, January 17th, at 6:30 pm. All ladies of the church family are invited to attend. We sure have good fun, fellowship and delicious treats. It's a blessed and relaxing evening.

JANUARY KITCHEN COMMITTEE

Leader: Marianne Carlson / Nancy Nellis

Lorraine Emery	Wayne Hulstedt
Marie Hansen	Beth Limones
Debbie Meister	Barb Carlson
Jaclyn Carlson	Melissa Nellis
Stephanie Winters	Sally Bennett
Donna West	Madeline Walberg
Katie Tate	Marjorie C. Carlson
Cindy Molosz	Wilma Carlson
Edie McGee	Lynne Hulstedt

SENIOR CITIZENS/FRIENDS GROUP

Twenty-two (22) Sr. Citizens/Friends and two guests gathered in Fellowship Hall for our annual Christmas potluck. We enjoyed a very delightful program featuring the 6th Grade Class from Immanuel Lutheran School, who led us in singing Christmas carols. Thank you to Merlin and Marianne Carlson for organizing our December gathering.

We will not be meeting in January, as we take a break during the winter because of the possibility of bad weather. Watch the February newsletter for our next social.

CONGRATULATIONS

As a church family we extend our congratulations to George Pitts, who celebrated his 92nd birthday on December 17th! May God continue to richly bless him!

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

We have received cards and greetings from the following members and friends:

Tom / Norma Gundersen	The Molosz Family
Ken / Eleanor Anderson	Ethel Sorensen
Stacy / Christyna Kleyn	Vi Voorhies
Cathy Campobello	Bob / Sally Bennett
George / Ruth Pitts	Deen / Karen Hulstedt
Frank / Donna Walberg	Joe / Jacqui Young
Larry / Martina Shipley	Gene / Donna West
David / Judy Frykholm	Paul / Sheryl Noren
The Regheta Family	
Fred, Peggy, Stephen and Bryan Reynolds	
Jim, Melenie, Lucas, Kylie and Ella Reynolds	
Paul, Jennifer, Kyle, Jake and Matt Woods	

Thank you to our Junior and Senior High Youth for sorting and distributing all the individual family cards.

ALL CHURCH FAMILY POTLUCK ANNUAL MEETING

On Sunday, January 15th, following our Morning Worship Service, we will be having a potluck lunch. Please bring a hot dish and salad or dessert to share.

The Annual Meeting of our congregation will be held immediately following the potluck. All members and friends are invited as we celebrate God's faithfulness to us during the past year and as we plan for ministry in the coming year.

Items on the agenda include:

- *Annual Reports from Church Ministries
- *Election of new Officers/Board Members
- *Approval of 2012 Ministry budget
- *Worship, thanksgiving and prayer

Treasurers' Reports, along with reports from the chair of each board / ministry of our church should be submitted to the church office by Wednesday, January 4th, so they can be included in our report booklet.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH NEWS

We have had eight to fifteen children coming to the Junior Chapel for worship on each Sunday morning. All of the children are assigned different jobs for each month.

The jobs vary from turning lights on and off, cleaning up, helping with snacks and participating in puppet skits. Each one enjoys their trustee, kitchen or worship leadership. I'm proud of how quietly they assemble in the chapel each morning. They are a great group and I look forward to each lesson and worshipping with them.

Karen Hulstedt
Children's Church Director

ALASKAN SALMON DINNER

The Bethesda Covenant Church Missions Team invites you to share in an Alaskan Salmon Dinner on Saturday, January 28th, at 5:30 pm. The dinner will feature wild salmon flown in from Alaska.

Lon Swanson, a volunteer at KICY Radio in Nome, will be sharing about his ministry in Alaska. A contribution of \$5.00 per person or \$12.00 per family is suggested to help raise support for Lon.

In order to know how much salmon to order, please call in your reservations to the Bethesda Covenant church office (815-397-4212) by January 10th. The church is located on 2101 East State Street in Rockford.

COVENANT WORLD RELIEF

KwaZulu-Natal, a community in South Africa, faces a frightening statistic: more than 78% of its population is victim to severe poverty. This number is even more staggering for women in the community. Yet there is hope: in partnership with Zimele, Covenant World Relief is working with more than 700 women in KwaZulu-Natal to bring about transformational community development in a three-step process.

The first (and biggest) component of this project is that these women are in self-help groups. The self-help groups consist of 10-20 women who meet weekly with the purpose of developing skills to start their own craft and agriculture businesses to generate income for their families.

In the second phase, self-help groups will work together to pool resources in to build larger-scale business like craft markets and community agriculture, and to address community needs, orphaned children and victims of HIV/AIDS.

In the third phase, women create a conglomerate to advocate for social, economic, and healthcare reforms in their communities.

This three-step process is a proven community development program model. Through this model, Zimele is creating long-term, sustainable solutions to poverty that can be replicated throughout South Africa.

Last year, we as a congregation gave over \$4000.00 to the ministry of Covenant World Relief. **This year we will receive our offering on Sunday, February 12.**

SYMPATHY

As a church family we extend our love, prayers and sympathy to:

- * Elaine Martin and her family in the loss of her husband, Ronald, on December 7.
- * Don / Carol Hildebrand and their family in the loss of Don's mother, Beatrice Hildebrand on December 15th.

May God bless these families with His comfort and peace.

COTTAGE PRAYER GATHERING

January 1st through January 8th has been designated as a week of prayer throughout the Covenant. As part of our emphasis on prayer, we will have a Cottage Prayer Gathering on Sunday, January 8th, at 6:30 pm, at the home of Wayne Hulstedt (505 East 6th Street, Belvidere). You are invited to come and share in prayer with us as we begin this New Year of life and ministry together.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- ◇ Melissa Nellis was named as an Illinois State Scholar, ranking in the top 10% of High School seniors in Illinois in Academic Achievement? What an honor!
- ◇ Wayne Hulstedt raked all the bean pods from the front yard and took them away to the farm? Thanks for your labors!
- ◇ Annie Jo Schirmer got her first 6 point deer this fall? Way to go!
- ◇ Barb Schultz made three little blankets and wrapped a Ty Bear in each one for the nursery. Thank You!
- ◇ Fourteen youth along with Jim, made and delivered cookies to Keith/Cynthia Johnson, Fran Rubert, and Carita Boyd who have been unable to attend church, as well as Helen Anderson? Good job!
- ◇ Marilyn Purdy has finished the training to tutor adults in reading? Bravo!
- ◇ Eric Lindahl's "angel" won first place in the potato decorating contest for the annual baked potato supper? Congratulations!
- ◇ Marjorie C. Carlson rang the bell weekly for the Salvation Army at various Rockford locations? Way to Go!
- ◇ Sue Bentley, Barb Lindahl, Eric Lindahl, Stephanie Ackman, and Cheyenne and Carisma Lo-Baugh created the beautiful Nativity scene with lights on the carpeted wall. Thanks so much!

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

Dear Friends at Evangelical Covenant Church,
May the joy and peace of Christmas be with you today and always. Thank you for your thoughtful cards and prayers. We appreciate each of you and your caring remembrances. Merry Christmas to all!
Sincerely,
Keith and Cynthia Johnson

Thank you - very much for the very enjoyable musical and drama presented by the choir and others.
Joyfully Yours,
Edie McGee

Dear Evangelical Covenant Church Friends,
You've touched our hearts and we cannot thank you enough. Thank you SO much for your prayers and sport! You have been such a blessing to us this year! We thank God that you have been there for us! Freddy passed the tests for his CDL, Phase 1, and Phase 2 of training. He received a truck that needs many repairs. Please pray for his safety. We love you all so much!!! Merry Christmas!
Fred, Peggy, Stephen and Bryan Reynolds

Thank You - A heartfelt "thank you" to those who blessed us this Christmas season with the ability to purchase gifts for our children and grandchildren and to provide a Christmas dinner for our family. Without your kindness and generosity we wouldn't have been able to do either of these. Thank you for making our Christmas Merry.
Don and Vicki Redner

Dear Church Family - Thank you for the cards, prayers, and expressions of sympathy after Dad's passing. We really appreciated the monetary gift we received from the church, as well. Thanks to those who attended the visitation. That meant so much to us, as well as our extended family.
Don and Vicki Redner

Dear Friends - We are so blessed to be part of such a wonderful church family. This was a busy week at church and I threw my back out. After the Sr. Citizens potluck at church I came to set up for the funeral luncheon and everything was set up and garbage taken out. Then after the funeral luncheon I came to take everything down for Awana and again everything was taken down and garbage taken out. Everyone that helped out, thank you from the bottom of my heart. You are all always so willing to help us and we appreciate your help so much. We love you!
Carla and Mark Shewmon

Thank You - to Bob and Sally Bennett for your visit and cookies from the Diaconate. Special thanks to Bob for the delicious apple pie. Much appreciated!
Rodger Hilden

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

Dear Friends, This Christmas season, may you find joy in all the good you are doing to help needy neighbors through your support of The Salvation Army. Your compassionate generosity continues to lift up needy souls, restore dignity, and give new hope to people like Bill, who shared...

"There never seemed to be enough money or food on our house. But just before the holidays, The Salvation Army would deliver a very much-appreciated box of food. I can remember my mother receiving the food with tears in her eyes...and thinking that our dinner was a grand feast (for not even Tiny Tim had anything on us). Each child also received a toy of our very own. I can't remember what the toys were, but I sure remember how good it made me feel."

Thanks to the kindness of good friends like you, The Salvation Army meets human need at its deepest. Whether we're feeding the hungry, providing a needy child with a Christmas toy, or sheltering the homeless - we're helping neighbors in crisis find real solutions to their problems. This Christmas, thousands of people across America will turn to The Salvation Army for help in their time of need. Some are hungry. We'll feed them. Others are forced to choose between paying the rent and providing Christmas gifts for their kids. We'll take care of the gifts.

Thank you and may you have a blessed Christmas, knowing you have shared the joy of the season with people in need. God bless you,

*Captain Dennis Marak
Corps Officer*

Dear Friends - There is no greater gift than that given by God in His Son. At this season of the year we give gifts of things - stuff of temporal value, but the gift God gave was Himself in Christ Jesus, the Lord - Immanuel, God with us! Eternal value!

Your financial gift to UIM this month enables us to declare God's gift of salvation found in His Son. Across Canada, the United States, and Mexico, UIM and its missionary force are declaring the Christ of Christmas. Many are receiving His gift of salvation - *not a thing*, but an eternal relationship.

Thank you for sharing your generous gift that we might declare God's ultimate gift. Rejoicing in our Savior.

*Dan Fredericks
Executive Director*

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

Thank You - Your sympathy and thoughtfulness will always be gratefully remembered and deeply appreciated. A special thank you to our church family for all of your cards, thoughts, monetary gifts, and prayers during this difficult time. We would also like to thank all those who helped to organize and brought in food for the luncheon. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

The family of Ronald A. Martin

Dear Members of Evangelical Covenant Church

- Thank you all for your faithful prayers and support as we reach the nations together with the love and message of Christ. We are able to do this and future leaders of closed countries are hearing and some are responding to Christ and becoming his followers. May you all experience the joy of our Savior this Christmas! Blessings,

Chuck and Joy Goertzen

Dear All - Merry Christmas to you friends. It is hard to write a personnel note to such a big group, but you are all good friends of mine. Thank you for that. Thank you for being such faithful ministry partners as well.

I just got back from a great vacation and ministry trip to Rwanda. It was a great time to visit family, but also a time of being available to the Lord to be used by him to encourage pastors, teachers, widows and orphans. It was a life changing time for me.

Thanks for all you guys do and also for the special Christmas gift you just sent. God bless!

Linda Woods

Dear Church Family - Thank You so much for all the cards, gifts, notes and family pictures you gave us this Christmas, and for the love and care that you extend to us and others all year 'round. We thank God for the gift that YOU are to us and look forward to another year of ministry with you in 2012. Love, *Pastor Scott, Nancy, Mel and Rick*

ADDRESS UPDATE

Carol Long
1103 Allen Street, Apt. 6
Belvidere, IL 61008

JANUARY 2012

EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 HAPPY & BLESSED NEW YEAR! <u>10:30</u> Worship	2	3	4 <u>6:00</u> Kid's Choir <u>6:30</u> Awana Ministry <u>6:30</u> Fuel - Jr. High	5	6	7
8 <u>9:30</u> Sunday School <u>10:30</u> Worship <u>5:15</u> Choir Rehearsal <u>5:15</u> Confirmation <u>6:30</u> Ignition -Sr. High <u>6:30</u> Cottage Prayer at Wayne Hulstedt's home	9	10	11 <u>6:00</u> Kid's Choir <u>6:30</u> Awana Ministry <u>6:30</u> Fuel - Jr. High	12 <u>6:30</u> All Boards	13	14
15 <u>9:30</u> Sunday School <u>10:30</u> Worship <u>Noon</u> Potluck Lunch <u>1:00</u> Annual Meeting <u>5:15</u> Choir Rehearsal <u>5:15</u> Confirmation <u>6:30</u> Ignition -Sr. High	16	17 <u>6:30</u> Women's Ministries	18 <u>6:00</u> Kid's Choir <u>6:30</u> Awana Ministry <u>6:30</u> Fuel - Jr. High	19 Newsletter Items Due	20	21
22 <u>9:30</u> Sunday School <u>10:30</u> Worship <u>5:15</u> Choir Rehearsal <u>5:15</u> Confirmation <u>6:30</u> Ignition -Sr High <u>6:30</u> Bible Study & Prayer	23	24	25 <u>6:00</u> Kid's Choir <u>6:30</u> Awana Ministry <u>6:30</u> Fuel - Jr. High	26	27	28
29 <u>9:30</u> Sunday School <u>10:30</u> Worship <u>5:15</u> Choir Rehearsal <u>5:15</u> Confirmation <u>6:30</u> Ignition -Sr High <u>6:30</u> Bible Study & Prayer	30	31				
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Pastor attending Covenant Mid-Winter Conference in Chicago </div>					

HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAY

- 2nd - Jenny McGriff
MISSIONARY - Joy Goertzen
- 3rd - Rev. Tom Gundersen
- 6th - Bob Bennett
- 7th - Cody Martin
MISSIONARY - Eli Peterson
- 9th - Mark King
- 11th - Dianne Connor
- 14th - Stacy Kleyn
Morgan Gleasman
Joe McKee
- 18th - Tammy King
Edie McGee
MISSIONARY - Sofia' Reed
- 19th - Hilda Meinheit
- 22nd - Shirley Ackman
Karen Hulstedt
- 23rd - Shirley Davis
MISSIONARY - Sheryl Noren
- 25th - MISSIONARY - Hydi Peterson
- 27th - Betty Flack
- 28th - Dean Hansen
- 29th - Rob Malon

HAPPY JANUARY ANNIVERSARY

- 29th - Bob/Madeline Walberg

UPDATE: OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOE BOXES SENT TO CONGO

In 2011 members and friends of our congregation along with children from our Awana program packed and donated 208 gift-filled shoeboxes that are being distributed around the world as Christmas presents for children in need. Each child also receives a booklet telling the good news about Jesus and His gift of salvation, along with an invitation to attend a Bible study class. Millions have been reached for Christ through this Samaritan's Purse ministry since its inception in 1993.

Boxes can now be tracked through online donations and givers can be informed as to which country their box was shipped. We have received word that some of our boxes have been distributed to children in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country where Covenant missionaries have been serving since 1937.



Forty-four percent of the Democratic Republic of Congo's 71.7 million people are 14-years-old or younger. In the 2011-2012 season, 136,800 shoe box gifts will be delivered to children in the DRC, which first received the gifts in 2002. Since then, 398,279 children in the DRC have received a shoe box gift. Here are some stories describing the impact that these boxes have had in Congo.

Overcoming Barriers

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Rev. Paul-Blaise Boubandé was excited to see how God used Operation Christmas Child distributions to overcome denominational barriers and foster unity among the local church. *"Fellowship between churches was reignited,"* Boubandé said. Relationships with other faith communities were also greatly enhanced. *"We believe that this coming year this ministry will be increased,"* Boubandé said, *"and that many hearts will be given to Christ."*

Growth in the Body

The Rev. Patrick Chilulu has seen a significant amount of church growth from working with Operation Christmas Child. One church in the area was given the tools and materials needed to launch an effective children's program. Through their work, a family from the Mimbulu village gave their hearts to Christ after each of their children received a gift box. They now attend the church.

Bag of Blessings

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, 12-year-old Bakatwamba lives with his parents. Because of financial hardship, Bakatwamba's parents were not able to purchase a school bag for him. Every day, Bakatwamba carried his school supplies and books in a paper bag. When he opened his shoe box gift, he was overjoyed to discover a brand new school bag. The gift encouraged him to continue with school. Through Operation Christmas Child, Bakatwamba also had the opportunity to enroll in a discipleship course with materials furnished by the Mailbox Club and later received Jesus Christ as his Savior. After graduating from the discipleship course and receiving his certificate, his entire family became interested in learning more about Jesus, and Bakatwamba was equipped to share the Gospel with them. The family now regularly attends a local church.

Prayer Requests

Pray for the eastern region where violence and displacement are taking place.

Pray for God's protection over families living in the midst of conflict in the region.



PRAYER PAGE

As we look to the **New Year**, let us look to the Lord in prayer, that we might begin the year with the assurance of His loving presence and our need to rely on Him in all things.

Praises

- That we were able to meet all of our 2011 ministry commitments because of **God's goodness and your generous giving!**
- The great turn out for the **Awana Birthday Party** and the opportunity to minister to children and families.

Petitions

- For God's guidance at the **Annual Meeting** of our church.
- Plans for **Awana Snow Camp** being held February 17-19.
- Planning, preparation and fundraising for **CHIC 2012** (July 10-15) and the 14 high school students and leaders interested in attending.

Those ill / recovering

- **Bob Hulstedt** - weakness due to Parkinson's.
- **Merlin Carlson** - continued weakness
- **Ruth Axmark** - infection following surgery.
- **Sandie Rayphole** - infection, heart irregularities following cancer treatments.
- **Rodger Hilden** - compression fracture of the spine, back pain.
- **Tom Gundersen** - healing of fractured ribs
- **Jill Ellingson** - awaiting heart surgery.
- **Brad Anderson** - severe leg pain following back surgery, medical consultations.
- **Cynthia Johnson** - flare up of Crone's Disease.
- **Keith Johnson** - experiencing difficulties with kidneys, back pain.
- **Ruth Axmark's sister-in-law**—diagnosed with lung cancer.
- **Larry Smith** (Sanda Hildebrand's dad) - infection.
- **Lisa Bennett** - continued recovering from knee surgery.
- **Marianne Carlson** - fractured foot.
- **Jessica Seidel** - bacterial infection, complications from bone cancer treatments.
- **Jenna Schreiber** (Pastor Scott's niece) — treatment for eating disorder.

Other Concerns

- **Shut-ins** - George/Ruth Pitts, Bob Hulstedt, Carita Boyd, Fran Rubert, Viva Mae Carlson, Rodger Hilden, Keith/Cynthia Johnson.
- Those who need to know Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- **Military personnel** serving in Afghanistan, coming home from Iraq.
- **Those looking for fulltime employment**, including Dan Weyhrauch, Wes Davis, Tim Frykholm, Gene Hartman, Chuck Volkey.
- **Our country** - as President Obama and other officials carry out their leadership during this time of economic, political and moral upheaval.
- **Families who have recently lost loved ones**, including Elaine Martin and family in the loss of her husband, Ron on December 7 and Don/Carol Hildebrand in the loss of Don's mother, Beatrice, on December 15.
- The search and interview process currently being conducted to find a new **Dean for North Park Theological Seminary**,

Please contact Marilyn Purdy (544-6892) or the church office (547-6471) to share any concerns for our church Prayer Chain as they arise.

COVENANT PRAYERLINE: 1 - 800 - FON - PRAY

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

Father, we surrender this past year and give it to You. We give You our failures, our regrets, and our disappointments, for we have no more use for them.

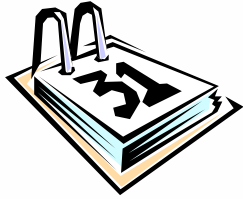
Make us now a new people, forgetting what lies behind and pressing on toward that which lies ahead of us.

We give You all our hopes and dreams for the future. Purify them by Your Spirit so that our wills shall truly reflect Your will for us.

As we stand on the threshold of another year, encourage us through Your faithfulness to us in the past, challenge us by the power of Your Word, and guide us by the presence of Your Holy Spirit.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, who makes all things new. Amen

(Adapted from "Our Daily Bread," January 1, 2005)



A New Year With The Lord

*Dear Master for this coming year
Just one request I bring:
I do not pray for happiness,
Or any earthly thing—*

*I do not ask to understand
The way Thou leadest me,
But this I ask: Teach me to do
The thing that pleaseth Thee.*

*I want to know Thy guiding voice,
To walk with Thee each day.
Dear Master make me swift to hear
And ready to obey.*

*And thus the year I now begin
A happy year will be—
If I am seeking just to do
The thing that pleaseth Thee.*

HAPPY NEW YEAR

-- Unknown Author

Evangelical Covenant Church
220 E. Harrison St.
Belvidere, IL 61008



NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2012