



Orchard Covenant Church

95 Berkshire Street  
Indian Orchard, MA 01151

# *The Messenger*

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413-543-4204



MESSENGER

John F. Howell, Editor

E-MAIL: [johnnlinda@comcast.net](mailto:johnnlinda@comcast.net)

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## THE PASTOR'S PAGE

### Halleluiah!

If you were at Orchard Covenant on Easter, you saw and heard - and were touched by - nine selections from the Easter portion of Handel's Messiah, prepared with perseverance, heart, and the Holy Spirit by our very own sanctuary choir, director June Foster, and accompanist, Virginia Ventulett. I am so grateful to June, who imagined this event months ahead of time. What did the choir do for Lent? They learned "Messiah" - and I hear, that some of them are still singing it in their sleep every night! I praise God. This was not performance - this was worship. We were changed. *Behold the Lamb...Who is the King of Glory?...He was despised and acquainted with grief...wounded for our transgressions...by his stripes we are healed...I know that my Redeemer lives!! Halleluiah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!*

As a child, I memorized Psalm 119:11 "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (King James back then) God tells us to know the Word, so we can let it live in us. Singing scripture songs is a way to hide God's word in our hearts - to let the Word live in us. What other scripture-songs do we sing? *Behold, what manner of love the Father has given unto us, that we may become the children of God... Blessed be your Name ...O Lord, our Lord, how excellent your name in all the earth! ... You are worthy... The Lord Bless You and Keep You... and many more!*

\* \* \* \* \*

I hope the children and adults of our church are filling their hearts and minds with scripture. And how do we raise kids to know and follow God's Word? Rev. Steve Burger, director for Children and Families from our Covenant Department of Christian Formation, will be visiting us on May 15, to meet us and hold informal sessions to hear about our experiences here in Springfield, to encourage us, and to talk about how parents and church can work together to support the healthy development of children. Here is Steve's statement on the Covenant website:

*We value children. It is our desire to partner with you in the Christian formation of children and families. We value and support the leadership roles of both women and men in the spiritual nurturing of children in the home, church, and community. The Evangelical Covenant Church offers a model of children's ministry that seeks to integrate God's people into a community of disciples through a holistic ministry approach involving a partnership with the home, the community, and the gathered church.*



Then Jesus took the children in his arms,  
placed his hands on each of them and  
blessed them.

*Mark 10:16*

See you in church! Pastor Nancy Ebner

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Valerie Campsie
- 3 Dick Warner
- 4 Chris Hokanson
- 4 Eric Hokanson
- 10 Jon Abrahamson
- 12 Diane Lawler
- 14 Sara Gleason
- 19 Jeanne Clow
- 22 Jane Nichols
- 25 Ron Hokanson
- 25 Sue Wages

## ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Charles and Rita Duquette

[If your date is wrong or your name has been omitted, please contact the editor.]

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 1 - Worship with Karen Hallberg
- May 8 - Mother's Day
- May 14 – Men's Breakfast
- May 15 – Worship with Steve Burger
- May 21 – The Meaning of Membership
- May 30 - Memorial Day

### **MEN'S BREAKFAST**

**Date: Saturday, May 14**

**Time: 8:30 to 9:30 am**

**at the**

**Orchard Covenant Church**

### **Mission Friends – The Meaning of Membership**

Is God calling you to join Orchard Covenant Church formally as a member? We operate with a "congregational" form of government, which means members are necessary for the church to carry out its ministry. On **Saturday, May 21, from 9:00 am to 1:00**, Pastor Nancy will conduct a membership class in her study. This class is one required step in the membership process. It covers four areas of discussion: the mission of God, the mission of our denomination, the mission of Orchard Covenant Church, and the mission of a member. Please let Pastor Nancy know if you intend to come. There is a class book, which costs \$10 if you are able.

## Covenant Leaders are coming!

It's great to be part of a larger church family! Our Family is the Evangelical Covenant Church which you can learn more about at [www.covchurch.org](http://www.covchurch.org)!

**On May 1**, Karen Hallberg from Covenant World Missions will be with us to bring greetings and news from our denomination about world mission, and to meet us and encourage us in our own mission involvements in Muhudu Village, Kenya. After church, she will meet with us in Pastor Ebner's study to talk about what we're doing. We look forward to her visit!

**Then on May 15**, our Covenant Christian Formation Director of Children and Families, Steve Burger, will be joining us. Steve is looking forward to this chance to meet our congregation and discuss how the Covenant can support and encourage us in the work we are doing here for our children and families.

He will be with us on Sunday morning in church and after coffee hour, around 12:45, he will meet with all our parents and children – then we hope to take the kids outside for awhile, while parents talk with Steve about their experience of Christian child raising in Springfield and how the church might help.

Then at 6:00 p.m., all Sunday School teachers and those who work with children in our church (nursery, etc) are invited to a light supper and discussion of our cross-cultural experiences of child care and teaching. Please contact Pastor Ebner or Dina Hokanson if you would like to attend.

## MOTHER'S DAY



Hey Guys. The Men's Choir will once again be singing for Mother's Day, May 8. We will be practicing after church on **May 1**. We would like all men to join us for this once a year special event.

## EXTRAVAGANZA

Joy Holsing, ACTS Site Director

Action Centered Tutoring Services (ACTS) has had another very successful year at the Orchard Covenant Church site. The program is truly a mission of the church, as John Howell is the Executive Director and Linda Howell is a Board member. Linda and Mary Ann Henriques also are ACTS tutors at other sites. Tutors returning to Indian Orchard this year include Mary Campbell, Jeanne Clow, Brenda Khatiera, David Wapner, Lastenia Thomas and John Howell; the computer tutor. This year we were joined by Brenda's cousins Shanice Madala and Austin Shitsukane. We are pleased to include these high school students in our ACTS Family at Indian Orchard. We are always looking for new tutors. Let John know if you might like to tutor next fall.

We are grateful to the church for lending us its wonderful resources, including the warm and cheerful Community Hall, the kitchen and most of all, its members! A special thanks to Pastor Ebner, who shows support in many ways, including stopping by weekly to speak with the children and tutors.

We will be having our end-of-the-year celebration on **Tuesday, May 24 at 4:30 p.m.** We could use people to serve and/or donate refreshments for this event. We also love to have members of the congregation come and celebrate this special ministry with the children, their tutors and families. It is a reflection of the dedication and caring of all that are involved!

## SPRING CLEANING

Dick Warner

Thanks for your help and thanks to the Lord for a good clean-up day on Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. The planting beds received new mulch, the potholes filled and a general clean-up outside was accomplished. Inside, the main emphasis was on cleaning the kitchen which included washing and waxing the floor. Downstairs, the nursery and its toys were cleaned. And then on Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, Mary Ann and her son washed the Community Hall floor! Thank you! Here are the folks that helped: Austin, Mwanue, Evans, Reverian, Sylvester, Art, Bob, Mike Jefferson, John and Linda Howell, John and Emily Hayden, Mike and Jean Foster, Dina Hokanson, Dave Wapner and Dick and Sue Warner.

By the time you read this, you will have noticed that the organ façade project has been completed and the floor to Community Hall refinished with three new coats of polyurethane. Thank the Lord that we have been able to get all these things done!

## Communication is the Key to Ministry!

Please call the church office or Pastor Nancy with information for the bulletin, Messenger or website, or if someone is sick or in the hospital, or for prayer needs. And if you would like Pastor Nancy to visit you in your home, please invite her; she would love to come.

Please ask Council members to tell you about their ministries, and ask how you can help! Dick Warner – properties; Diane Lawler – worship; Dina Hokanson – Christian Formation; Toni Wapner – Care and Nurture.

Did you know our website has a helpful calendar, which you can check for information on church events? Check it out! [www.orchardcovenantchurch.org](http://www.orchardcovenantchurch.org). Did you know our Covenant website has all sorts of news, information and resources about the ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church? Check it out! [www.covchurch.org](http://www.covchurch.org)

## Navigate Waypoint 105

Dick Warner

Almost six months have passed since the Vitality Conference was held in Kansas City and our Vitality Team was formed. Since that time, the Vitality Team has been encouraging each one of us to pray, to establish an atmosphere of “pervasive prayer” as Pastor Nancy called it. We have been encouraged to pray for a number of things. To refresh your memory, we have been encouraged to pray that our congregation, each one of us, would develop a stronger, deeper passion for the Lord. We have been encouraged to pray that the Lord would reveal His vision for the Orchard Covenant Church and that we would be receptive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Also, we have been encouraged to communicate clearly and with civility towards each other in all situations. To that end, our “Covenant of Holy Manners for Orchard Covenant Church” is just about ready for distribution and will be shared with everyone shortly.

So, the question of the month is: “How are we doing with our praying?” “Only you and the Lord know the answer to that question. However, your Vitality Team would like to further encourage you with the following passages from Philippians 4:6-7: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Amen!