

Thoughts From Keith

This Fall

BY KEITH JOHNSON



Let me start this month with some updates. First, we are preparing once again for AWANA, En Fuego, Voltage, and Confirmation this fall. Why do we emphasize children and youth ministry at Life Covenant? A statement from a leading Christian research firm called The Barna Group many years ago said this:

“... A person’s worldview is primarily shaped and is firmly in place by the time someone reaches the age of 13....”

Why do we emphasize children and youth ministry at Life Covenant? For this very reason. Anyone who wants to be strategic, seeking to be fruitful in ministry, thinking about the future, needs to prioritize ministry to young people. Let’s teach our young people well.

Second, I want to update you on our hiring process for the Director of Student Ministries. We have a team of six people who are diligently working behind the scenes to screen and interview candidates. We have said “no” to many, and a few have moved through the process and have taken themselves out of the process for various reasons. But the process continues. In the last week we again have had several conversations with people

from around the country. Please continue to pray for the hiring team.

Despite not having a new person in place, your amazing middle school En Fuego leaders and high school Voltage leaders have stepped up to the plate and are hitting it out of the park as we are ready to launch in the next week. Thank you to everyone for making youth ministry in our church a priority!

Finally, we are about to launch into a series of sermons about the Holy Spirit. Suppose someone comes to you at work tomorrow and says, “I was watching TV last night and I saw a man on a stage and he was preaching and touching people on the forehead and they would fall back. What’s that about? Is God in that?” What would you say?

Or, suppose you were to pick up a newspaper tonight and read about a church in Brazil where it is common place for people with deadly diseases to be healed. And, that people were coming from all around just to be part of such a movement. What would be your response to an article like that?

Or, suppose someone who sits with you in church grabs a cup of coffee with you after the service and

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**LIFE
IN THE
SPIRIT**

**SERMONS IN
SEPTEMBER**

Life in the Spirit

September 2 & 3

The Holy Spirit, an Introduction

September 9 & 10

A Short History of His Work

September 16 & 17

The Anointed God

September 23 & 24

Where the Wind Blows

FREE RANGE DEVOTIONS

WHAT DO YOU DO?

BY SEAN CONNOLLY



After explaining the beauty and majesty of Yellowstone National Park to my cousin, he just stared at me blankly. We were visiting some family and friends in the Boston area and having dinner with my cousin's family, when the discussion turned to vacations. They usually went to Disney World every year; I went on and on about how awe-inspiring Yellowstone is.

"It's like nowhere else on Earth," I gushed. "Geysers and mud pots you can get right next to and feel the steam and heat; elk and bear and bison wandering free and stopping traffic; canyons and waterfalls waiting to be explored; mountains and lakes and open spaces like nothing you've got here on the East Coast. It's wild and unique and wonderous experience, right in our backyard. I loved it as a kid, and your kids will love it because they're at the age they'll appreciate it and remember it," I said.

After a longer than expected pause, he looked back at me, and asked, "Yaaaaah ... but what do you do there?"

As Christians, we can gush on and on about how awesome it is to have Christ in our lives, but what we do can say more about our faith than our words. Until we tangibly demonstrate what the love of Christ looks like, people will tune us out because they won't experience it for themselves.

In Romans 12, Paul presents some practical guidelines for what we should do to show people Who we believe in, not just telling them, like:

- Serving other people well (12:7),
- Encouraging others, giving generously, and gladly showing kindness (12:8)
- Clinging to what is good (12:9)
- Honoring others above ourselves (12:10)
- Being joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer (12:12)
- Practicing hospitality (12:13)
- Doing all we can to live in peace with everyone (12:18)

What do you do? See what Sean is doing at www.seanconnwriter.com

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says to you, "Last night, God spoke to me in a dream." How do you respond? Does God do that kind of thing?

How clear are you on the person and work of the Holy Spirit? My guess is that many of us are confused and maybe not too clear on the subject, even those of us who have been around Life Covenant for quite a while. We may have a pretty good idea of what we're talking about when we discuss God the Father, or a pretty good idea of what we mean when we mention God the Son, but when it comes to the Holy Spirit, we're a little fuzzy.

For 2000 years the church has been wrestling with, and its greatest minds have been talking about, the Holy Spirit. Now it is our turn. I hope that the outcome of our series will be, first, that we will have a new reverence for the Holy Spirit's mystery. As much as we might try, the Holy Spirit will not fit into a box that our minds have created.

Secondly, I hope that we will align ourselves with the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. On the one hand, the winds of the Spirit move as they will. On the other hand, there are still things that we can do and understand.

Thirdly, I hope that each of us will earnestly ask the Holy Spirit to display his power in our lives and in our church.

THE TBR SHELF

KATHY BISCHOFF (TO BE READ)

The Anxiety Opportunity: How Worry is the Doorway to your Best Self, by Curtis Chang

Hello, Fellow Readers.

It's fall y'all! For many, including myself, it's their favorite time of year. I've often felt that September has become the de facto beginning of the year. If our days are defined by how we spend our time, then Sept. is often the re-set for many of us. Families have new classes, teachers and schedules. Church folks have new small groups as well as the start-up of many ministries.

All this newness and change can be invigorating, but it can also be stressful. Should we drop this class to pick up a new one? How would that affect our friends? Should we drop soccer and pick up violin instead? Can we even afford that financially or timewise? It's easy to begin feeling a bit... anxious.

A new book, *The Anxiety Opportunity* by Curtis Chang, addresses this very common problem. His first job is to reassure us that anxiety itself is NOT a sin, it's simply part of being human. He then reveals to us the many ways we attempt to handle our anxiety, even those of us who believe we're not the anxious types (wink, wink).

I like that Chang doesn't fall into the trap of defining anxiety as either needing medical attention or prayer but rather he embraces both, as needed. However, Chang does make the case that the only true remedy for anxiety must include a spiritual component, and for that reason we Christians are in a unique position to be a light in our very anxious world.

This book introduced some new and encouraging ideas to the wealth of literature out there about anxiety. I think it's worth a read.

As always, "Happy reading!"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

55 and Better Back to School Luncheon

The Lunch Ladies are back to start off the 2023-24 school year! Join us on September 8th at 12 noon in the LCC Cafeteria line. The Lunch Ladies will be slinging up some good, old-fashioned school hot lunches for you! Our special speaker will be Helena Public Schools' Trustee Terry Beaver who will share memories of growing up and going to school in the 1940s in Marysville! Lots of great stories there! Start working on your "perfect attendance" at 55 and Better during the 2023-24 school year. Let Mary in the church office know you'll be attending (406) 442-6813. Also, last month we took a trip to the Gates of the Mountains. Check out these awesome photos!





Music for Life



We are excited to announce that the African Children's Choir is coming to Helena. On Wednesday, October 4th at 7pm, the internationally acclaimed African Children's Choir will be performing at Helena Middle School, 1025 N. Rodney. The "Just As I Am" tour combines traditional hymns with African cultural sounds and a stunning visual story of God's faithfulness. The concert is free and open to all. A free-will offering is taken at the performance to support the African Children's Choir programs, such as education, care and relief, and development programs. These programs include education, relief and development, food assistance and outreach in the vulnerable urban areas of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and South Africa.

How to Get Involved

Be a part of this heartwarming experience as Life Covenant Church welcomes the African Children's Choir! We're seeking families to host children and their chaperones for a two-night stay. Hosting includes providing transportation, two breakfasts, two sack lunches, a dinner, and a light snack after the concert. There will be a mandatory meeting post-concert to go over other important details. Scan the QR code to learn more about hosting and other ways to be involved! Sign up in the church foyer or on our website. Contact the church office for more any questions at (406) 442-6813.



Family Promise Fundraiser – Comfort Food Challenge

As a steadfast and long-term supporter of Family Promise of Greater Helena, Life Covenant is again participating in the Comfort Food Challenge on Sunday September 10th from 4:30pm to 6:00pm at the Lewis and Clark Fairgrounds. Plan to attend the fundraiser, and enjoy a wide variety of food samples prepared by congregations, restaurants, and food trucks. Tickets are \$20 per person or \$40 per family. Online tickets are available at 406tix.com. In person tickets are available at the Myrna Loy, Birds & Beasleys, or at the event.



Paperless Newsletter

While we will continue to provide paper copies of this newsletter, we are seeking to streamline communication with our congregation. We kindly encourage you to opt for receiving our monthly newsletter electronically. It is available on our website or conveniently delivered to your inbox via email. Scan the QR code or contact Mary in the church office if you would like to make this change:

(406) 442-6813 or mary@lifecchelena.org.

Experience Life Together in Life Groups This Fall

This fall, we encourage you to participate in a Life Group where you can learn together, grow in grace, and experience the transforming presence of Christ. There will be groups on a variety of topics from sermon reflection, book discussions, studies of a specific book of the Bible, reflections on the Gospels, and more. Groups will meet in homes, at the church, during the week or on the weekend. We will publish the entire list of groups the weekend of September 9-10. However, you can view the list of groups and sign up for a group NOW on our website.



Discover Life

Join us on September 17th at 4pm for an introduction to what Life Covenant Church believes, how it's organized, and how we're seeking to live out the five purposes God has for our lives. A pizza dinner is provided and childcare is available if needed. Please sign-up online, in the church foyer, or by calling the Church Office (406-442-6813).

SAVE THE DATE: Annual Congregational Meeting

We invite you to come and be a part of our Annual Congregational Meeting on October 1st, at 6pm. We will hear the annual "state of the Church" address, vote on the budget, and select new leaders.

LCC Kitchen

Summertime is coming to an end and our LCC Kitchen is gearing up for a busy season ahead. Please be mindful when using the space to put things back so the next user can locate the items too. If you would like to donate to our kitchen or if something breaks, wears out or needs replaced contact our Kitchen Coordinator, Vicki Curtiss at (406) 431-7164 or createart26@gmail.com. Thank you so much for your continued support of our LCC Kitchen.

Condolences

We would like to extend our condolences to the families and friends of Carol Williams and Jim Scow.

Opportunities in Life Kids

Kids Matter. Kids need to see and learn from people who follow God. We invite YOU to invest more deeply into the lives of our kids here at Life Covenant. Kids Church teachers have flexible schedules. Lessons and materials are prepared for you each week.

Current openings:

Nursery, Kids Church Leader, Kids Church Helper

When:

One Service on Saturday or Sunday, Sept-Dec.

Commitment:

One time, once or twice a month, or every week.



We value keeping our kids safe. All adults serving our kids go through regular training as a part of our child protection plan. We have upcoming trainings on:

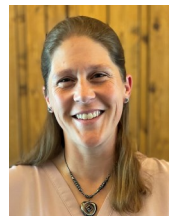
Wednesday, Sept. 6, 5:30-6:30pm OR Sunday, Sept. 10, 12:30-1:30pm

Talk to Deanna today. deanna@lifecchelena.org



LCC Preschool Happenings

Preschool is starting again soon! Our teacher, Harmony Letang met up with all the preschoolers and their families last week. Our first day back is September 5th for the 3-year-old class and September 6th for the 4-year-old class. We'll be starting the year talking all about Pets. The classes will also learn how to care for an animal and maybe be introduced to a new classroom pet. The second half of September will be all about Safety. There will be a focus on how to stay safe at home, school, and outside. They will even practice watching for safety signs when we have our first bike day. The end of the month will be our Open House on September 28th at 6pm.



Harmony Letang,
Preschool Teacher

How Can You Help?

We need help setting up for preschool special events—our Christmas program, Spring Art Show and Sing, and our end of the year celebration. Can you lend a hand? Email preschool@lifecchelena.org.

Thank You!

We are so thankful for all the volunteers who serve in the classroom, help with activities and projects, and work behind the scenes. Thank you for your support of Life Covenant Preschool.



SAVE THE DATE

The 2023-2024 AWANA year will start with our first club on **September 12** at 6:00pm! Online registration is open! See the Life Covenant website for more details. Please note that the end time for the program is now 7:15pm.

Date	Dinner	Theme	Bring
Sept. 12	Mac & Cheese	AWANA Kick Off	Wear AWANA colors (Yellow, Blue, Red, Green)
Sept. 19	TBA	Superhero Night	Dress as your favorite superhero
Sept. 26	Tacos	B.A.R.F. Night	Bring A Real Friend



9th - 12th Grade

Begins September 6th
Weekly | Wednesdays at 6:30pm
Doors open at 5:30pm

EN FUEGO

6th - 8th Grade

Begins September 11th
Weekly | Mondays at 6:30pm
Doors open at 5:45

CONFIRMATION

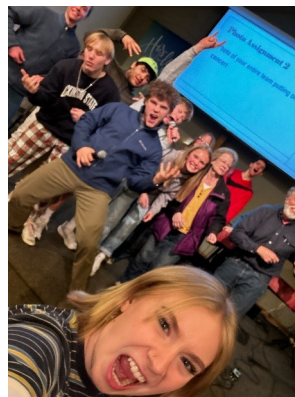
7th - 8th Grade Taught by Keith Johnson

Begins September 11th
Weekly | Mondays at 6:00pm

Contact: Mary Eder
mary@lifecchelena.org (406) 442-6813



En Fuego Bowling Night



Voltage Photo Challenge Night



September 9th & 10th kicks off our Fall Kids Church program!

All children will move up to their new levels this weekend. At each service, following the offering, we'll dismiss children to one of the pods listed below:

- Seedlings / Sprouts pod: ages three and four through 2nd grade (Rm 104)
- Roots pod: 3rd - 5th grade (Rm 202/204)

This Fall, kids will explore the book of Acts. Our kids will dig into stories of the Holy Spirit working in and through the disciples to spread the Good News. We will be using a new curriculum based on *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook*. The graphics are beautiful, and the stories focus on God's story of redemption and reconciliation from Genesis to Revelation.

Pastor of Children's Ministries: Deanna Carlson deanna@lifecchelena.org



Life Covenant Church
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Helena, MT 59601

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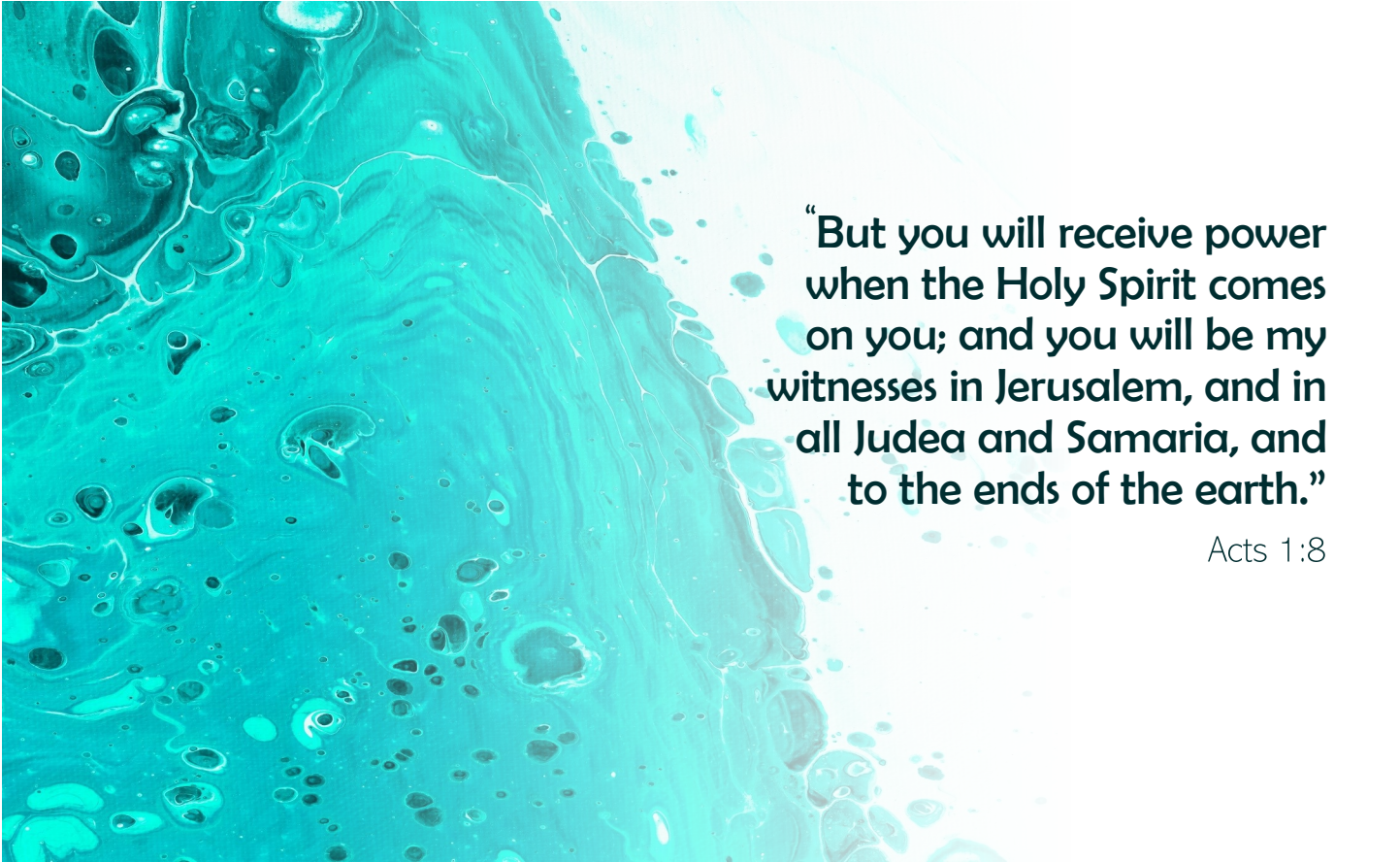
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Return Service Requested



**“But you will receive power
when the Holy Spirit comes
on you; and you will be my
witnesses in Jerusalem, and in
all Judea and Samaria, and
to the ends of the earth.”**

Acts 1:8