

At Countryside Covenant Church, we exist to

- Seek God's Heart
 - Share God's Word
 - Show God's Love

In Pursuit of Making First Things First

- by Pastor Jon Black

If you didn't see it, you have no doubt heard about it; American John Isner vs. Frenchman Nicolas Mahut in the unprecedented 11 hour 5 minute, 183-game Wimbledon tennis battle. The final set lasted an incredible 138 games - 70 - 68. I get exhausted just thinking about it. Professional athletes like these two guys have tremendous drive and talent. They've sacrificed much in their pursuit of making it to the top of their game. It's human nature to strive to be number one...to take first place, to go for the gold, to take home the blue ribbon or championship trophy regardless of one's area of focus - be it sports, music, art, forensics, politics, acting, academics, business or whatever. And it is not surprising to any of us that the goal of becoming number one requires an unbelievable amount of time, practice, skill, discipline, sacrifice and commitment, which are all admirable qualities to pursue in life.

But as admirable as these pursuits are, there is one pursuit that is to take precedence over all other pursuits, namely the pursuit of God. The first four of God's Ten Commandments make it very clear that God desires to be our highest priority in life.

But many may object; *"How is it possible to seek God first? I believe in Him and seek to live right. Isn't that good enough? Life is filled with so many other needs, demands and obligations. God can certainly understand that."*

Simply put, we were designed by our Creator to need Him; to find our life, purpose, peace, joy and wholeness in a dependent relationship with Him. Jesus taught us that when we make Him our highest priority, all of our other necessities will fall into place. He commanded us to *"Seek **first** His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matt 6:33)."*



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We cannot experience the life that God intends for us when we live independent from Him. Furthermore, we cannot experience it when He is not our first pursuit in life. It's no wonder we can become so restless and discontent with life. C.S Lewis wrote *"Put first things first and we get second things thrown in: put second things first and we lose both first and second things."*

This past year, our church staff and leadership team have met together regularly for times of prayer and discussion regarding God's vision and direction for our church. This has been our main question: What would it look like if every one of us were to make the pursuit of God our highest priority? What would it look like if we were to truly fulfilling our mission statement to *Seek God's Heart, Share God's Word and Show God's Love?*

After much soul searching, we have discerned together that if this were to become a reality in the life of our church, these core values would become more and more evident in our lives:

Together with the help of the Holy Spirit, we strive to:

1. Worship God regularly (Heb 10:25).
2. Build up others using our spiritual gifts (Heb 10:24-25).
3. Serve our community and world for Christ (Heb 6:10-13).
4. Grow in our relationship with Christ (Heb 10:22, Gal 4:19).


Beginning this fall, we will unpack these four core values and discern how we together can pursue the goal of making first things first, namely making Christ our highest priority.

Pursuing with You,
Pastor Jon



Happy 4th of July!





*Congratulations,
Pastor Joyce
upon the Completion
of the
Ordination Process
through the
Evangelical Covenant Church!*

*Please join us as we celebrate her
accomplishments with a
Community Gathering Meal
on Sunday, July 11, 12:15 p.m.*

*If you last name is A-L, please bring a salad.
If you last name is M-Z, please bring a dessert.*

*Sub sandwiches, drinks
and table service will be provided.*



EDGE MISSION TRIP: A group of ten 7-9th grade students and leaders will be heading to Kansas City on a mission trip with the organization YOUTH WORKS, August 1-6. There are additional spots available if your middle school student would like to come along! Please pray for the preparation time, time unity and the leadership development of the older students! I am very excited about this opportunity to teach our middle school students the value of using their gifts to serve the world around them and to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to a hurting and lost world!

CHURCH LEAGUE SOFTBALL SCHEDULE

July 5, 7:30 p.m.

Lehmburg Field,
St. Joseph

July 12, 6:30 p.m.

Lehmburg Field,
Free Methodist

July 19, 6:30 p.m. Lehmburg Field, First Baptist

July 26, 8:30 p.m. Lehmburg Field, Free Methodist



Church Life Update



Baby Dedication:

Olivia Evelyn Brunk, June 13

Weddings:

Jess Gantt & Terry Foster, June 12

Megan Peters & Dallas Pruitt,
June 19

Women Ministries

Nancy Leigh DeMoss' ministry, Revive Our Hearts (heard daily on Bott Radio Network at 11:30 a.m. and also on VCY America and American Family Radio at other times) has scheduled three regional True Woman '10 conferences. The third and largest will be held in Fort Worth, October 14-16. You may view the details on the True Woman website www.truewoman.com.


In addition to Nancy Leigh DeMoss, speakers scheduled are Mary Kassian, Janet Parshall, Joni Eareckson Tada, Crawford Loritts, Karen Loritts and Fern Nichols. Worship leaders will be Keith and Kristyn Getty. There is a special "Teen Track" for girls in grades 9-12 led by Dannah Gresh.

To assist women and high school girls who would like to attend this conference, a chartered bus trip with deluxe motor coach provided by Village Charters in Wichita is being organized. They will depart on the morning of October 14 (Thursday) and return by 9:00 p.m. on Saturday the 16th. For more information please contact Judy Pilewski, Lindsborg Covenant Church either by phone, 785-227-2235 or by email at trudyjude66@yahoo.com.



Covenant Women's Annual Fall Retreat is set for October 1-3, 2010. You won't want

to miss this weekend filled with fun times and fellowship with others and God. Registration brochures are available at our Information Center. Registration deadline is September 5. Contact Sue Johnson, 755-4280 or Linda Totman, 755-2060 with any questions.



SUMMER

SUNDAY SCHOOL

We want to invite each and everyone of you to participate in a life-changing opportunity this summer as we begin a new faith experience for all ages. Beginning July 11, from 9:30 a.m. - 10:20 a.m. children, teenagers, young adults/adults (single and married), parents and grandparents are encouraged to take part in **Intergenerational Ministry** where, intentionally, we will gather together to learn and grow from each other and in the same way be encouraged in our walks with the Lord. During these six weeks, we'll take a look at several topics including "compassion" - seeing a need and doing something about it, as well as "faith" - believing in God's truth and living it out.

"If you're a follower of Jesus Christ, the Bible tells us that people should be able to recognize you by the love you show for others. In fact, Christ himself summed up the Ten Commandments when He told us to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Showing Christ's love and compassion to others is a foundational commandment - that is best learned and first practiced in our homes (FX Compassion)."

In regards to faith, "It's likely you've heard someone talk about "living out your faith." It sounds good, but what exactly does it mean? How do we go about changing the way we live our day-to-day lives, based on what we believe inside? The book of James provides Christ's followers with some very specific instructions. Treat others kindly and fairly. Be careful about how you use your words. Pray and trust God to answer. As we go about our daily lives in a complicated world, what might that actually look like? (FX Faith)."

During these six weeks, we'll look at practical ways you can take your beliefs and translate them into action as well as discuss what it means to show compassion in our neighborhoods and in our world as a whole as we study Scripture, pray and worship together, participate in faith challenges, and complete many other hands-on activities.

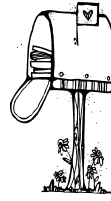
Don't forget to join us on July 11 in the Student Center as we experience ways to serve, learn, and grow together as the body of Christ! Can't wait to see you there!

Thank You

Dear Countryside Friends,

Thank you for the outpouring of love and concern shown me with your prayers, cards, phone calls and visits during the loss of my loving grandson, U.S. Marine Cpl. Jacob Leicht. God's love is providing me peace and comfort in the blessed assurance we have in Christ.

Dorothy Leicht



NOTES FROM SEW & SHARE:

Thank you, ladies, for all the work you so faithfully have done. On May 24, we sent 247 bandages, 22 layettes, 2 towels, 1 bed sheet, 1 pillowcase and 1 curtain set to Congo, Africa. The shipping for these four boxes was \$334.06. Sew & Share ladies also makes quilts that will be given to those in need.

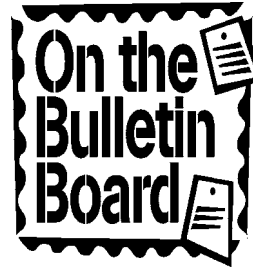
Here is some information about Sew & Share:

- 20 ladies meet the 4th Monday of each month at 9:00 a.m.
- 4 ladies sew on sewing machines while the others roll bandages or tie quilts.
- Much laughter and conversation takes place as well as a time of devotion and prayer. And that equals good friends!
- Two outings this past spring. One to Yoder to help the Mennonite Church tie quilts; the second to Abilene where we had lunch at Mr. K's Farm House.

Rolling bandages is a ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church. "This ministry enables medical work in the Congo to continue. For over 65 years women of the Covenant have rolled bandages and stitched layettes. There is still a dire need for those rolled bandages! It is imperative that the Congo Medical Ministry

continues." So we need you to help us. Our next meeting will be August 23. Hope to see you there!

Else Morris
Coordinator



Book Signing at The Well, 101 North Main, McPherson - Saturday, July 10 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. You will get to meet authors *Deb Raney*, *Kim Vogel Sawyer*

and *Deborah Vogts* and they will be available to sign any of their books!

MercyMe will be in concert at the Kansas State Fair, Saturday, September 18 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25.00 which includes free gate admission when purchased by 8/31/10. For more information, visit www.kansasstatefair.com.

VeggieTales Live! Coming to Wichita, Tuesday, Sept. 28, Central Christian Church. You can visit their website at bigidea.com/live to learn more. For information on ticket packages, please call Kim Matthews at 615-224-2207.

Attendance through June 30, 2010

Worship Services	499
Sunday School	159

Giving through 6/30/2010 Expenses through 6/30/2010

General Fund Giving	\$472,790.98
Expenditures	<u>509,932.51</u>
	\$ <37,141.53>

Add'l Mortgage Reduction Year to Date
\$32,695.00

If it is your desire to help reduce our mortgage, you may designate your gift by writing "mortgage reduction" on your check.



CHURCH PROJECTS

In an effort to “stay ahead” of maintenance and lawn care needs, the Properties Ministry Team has put together a list of projects that can be done whenever you might have time to work on them. Here’s the list:

- Trimming bushes
- Paint drain covers in sidewalk
- Spray for weeds
- Put in landscape fabric around sign
- Put rock around sign
- Trim trees
- Paint classrooms as needed
- Repaint hallways as needed
- Clean out outside ac units
- Put in soaker hoses at east end
- Put in split rail fence at east entrance
- Replace missing shingles above office area
- Clean out both vans
- Wash and wax both vans
- Re-paint parking lot stripes
- Fix yard light outside of Student Center.

Please contact Linda in the Church Office or Garry Skinner to coordinate these projects. We appreciate any help you can give us!

MINISTRY COORDINATION COUNCIL
 Sunday, July 18 ~ 12:15 p.m.

Ministry Team Leaders: Please let Tamara Gayer, 241-3706 or the Church Office know if you plan to attend!

NEW EMPLOYEE

On June 15 we said goodbye to Megan (Peters) Pruitt since she and Dallas moved to Wichita following their wedding on June 19. Thank you, Megan, for a job well done!

We are pleased to announce that Julie Strnad has been hired to fill the Office Assistant position. Julie comes to us from Grant, NE. Originally from Belleville, KS,



Julie attended Northwestern College in Saint Paul, MN, where she received her B.A. in English and Bible. Following graduation in 2007, she spent a year teaching English in East Asia. Upon returning to the States, she moved back to Minneapolis, MN, to job hunt.

In the summer of 2009, she accepted a teaching position in Grant, NE, for grades 1-9. During her year in Grant, she was reacquainted with childhood friend Dan Vallier, and they became engaged on May 1. Julie has always loved being involved with high school students, and she was active at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mounds View, MN, and the Grant Evangelical Free Church in Grant, NE. She is also very passionate about God’s heart for the nations, and she has participated in mission trips to places including Mexico, Jamaica, and Japan.


Julie is very excited for married life and wonders what it will be like to have an easier-to-pronounce last name. Their wedding will be August 7, 2010, at Countryside. Julie is very happy to be at CCC and is eager to get to know people here.

ALL CHURCH FAMILY PICNIC AND SWIM, Lakeside Park

Sunday, July 18

Picnic: 6-7 p.m. , swimming: 7-9 p.m.

Please bring one meat dish and another dish to share as well as your own table service and lawn chairs!



Countryside Covenant Church
940 E. Northview Road,
PO Box 765,
McPherson KS 67460

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Countryside Covenant Church is a body of believers with a heart for Jesus Christ.

This Month at Countryside

Worship Services at 8 and 10:35 a.m. on Sundays
Sunday School for all ages at 9:30 a.m.

JULY EVENTS

- July 5 Church Offices Closed
- July 5 - 9 Trailblazer & Explorer Camps
- July 11 Intergenerational Sunday School
Community Gathering Meal
- July 16-18 Kansas City Sweep (Middle School
students)
- July 18 All Church Picnic & Swim, Lakeside
Park
- July 20 Leadership Team
- July 22 Game Time for 3rd - 5th Graders
- July 24 Singles Potluck, Lakeside Park
- July 25 Ministry Coordination Council

Countryside Staff

Jon Black, Senior Pastor
Tim Holgerson, Pastor of Worship Arts
Joyce Norman, Pastor of Children & Family Ministries
Jim Eaton, Director of Student Ministries
Linda Totman, Church Administrator
Kim Goering, Office Assistant
Julie Strand, Office Assistant
Dena Holgerson, Worship Arts Assistant
Kim Thompson, Student Ministries Assistant
Emily Lind, Children's Ministry Assistant