

JANUARY

NCPC January 2026 Newsletter

January Events

Thursday, January 1, 2026—New Year's Day

Church Office Closed

Sunday, January 4—Sunday before Epiphany

Food Bank Collection Sunday

Tuesday, January 6—Epiphany

4:00 pm Worship Team Meeting, Library

Wednesday, January 7

5:30 pm Deacons Meeting

Thursday, January 8

7:00 pm, Session Meeting, Library

Sunday, January 11

11:45 am, Pizza Party, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, January 13

1:30 pm, Lydia Circle, Library

Wednesday, January 14

6:00 pm Missions Meeting, Library

Saturday, January 17

5:00 pm, Scripture Singles, @ Beth Oliver's Home

Monday, January 19—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Tuesday, January 27

6:30 pm, Christian Movie Night, Sanctuary

Wednesday, January 28

1:30 pm, Kneedles & Hooks, Promise Room

Happy
New
Year!



Reminder:

**Sunday, January 4, is
our Food Collection day
for the Reno County
Food Bank.**

Please remember to put
your donations in the bas-
ket by the
Church Office.



Your help is
very much
appreciated—
thank you for
your generosity!



A Word from the Pastor

"Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

Beloved,

Happy New Year! With the new year often comes the desire for a fresh start. And the way to that fresh start is by getting back to the basics; getting back to the core essentials of life. Our lives can get so filled up with the non-essentials that it's easy to lose sight of what is truly important. That's why I've always appreciated so the very first words of both the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

A Catechism is a tool for young people to teach them the basics of the Christian faith. But, sometimes, even those who have been believers for a long time need a reminder of what those basics are. Enter the Catechisms which present these basics in a question and answer format. And, as mentioned, with both of the Catechisms of the Westminster Confession of Faith the very first question asked is "What is the chief end of man?" That is, "Why are we here?" "What is our purpose?" Or, another way of looking at it is, "What is the most important thing for us to know and do in life?" And the answer, from the Shorter Catechism is "To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." It doesn't get more basic or to the point than that.

And, so it is, with the Word of God, and in particular, the book of Ecclesiastes. The book of Ecclesiastes, written by the son of King David, Solomon, is a book whose purpose is to instruct us on what is most important in life.

Ecclesiastes is a fascinating work that is often ignored in the Christian community today. Perhaps it is because the book has somewhat of a reputation for being depressing. After all, the very first words from Solomon are, *"Meaningless! Meaningless! Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."* (Eccl. 1:2)

However, Ecclesiastes is not teaching us that life is meaningless. Rather, it is emphasizing the transitory nature, the impermanence, of life in the present order. And God, through the words of Solomon, is calling us to live in light of that reality. We are, in fact, to enjoy the earthly gifts that the Lord has given us, including such things as loving spouses, worthwhile labor, and good food (9:7-11). However, we must do this with reference to God, recognizing that the best things of this life will pass away but that only He endures forever. We go astray when we make the good, but temporary, things of this life the ultimate things to which we aspire.

Consequently we must ask this question: Since the meaning of life is the glory of God and to enjoy Him forever, how do we accomplish that goal? That is the conclusion Solomon comes to in the closing words of Ecclesiastes. As seen at the top of this article, Solomon ends his book with his profound closing argument: *"Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God (love, adore and worship God) and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."* (12:13)

God made us in His image to reflect His glory and to enter His glorious presence, which He has made possible through Jesus Christ. In light of God's purpose for us in creation, redemption, and worship, then, we should have as our ultimate aim and core essential of life to live our lives to the glory of God. If we want to bring ourselves in line with our Creator's loving purpose for us, then seeking His glory is the way to do it.

And, I can think of no better way to get a fresh start on the new year than to get back to that which is truly important – and living our lives for the glory of God, that we may enjoy Him forever.

Have a most blessed, productive and glory-filled new year!

Pastor Craig

"So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

A Note From Janet

In many churches, the first Sunday of the year wouldn't be complete without singing Frances Havergal's hymn "Another Year Is Dawning." Frances considered every New Year's Day a never-to-be-missed opportunity of rededication to Christ. This song was originally written as a prayer for the beginning of 1874 that she included in her greeting cards sent to family and friends.

She needed that prayer herself, because later that month she suffered a huge disappointment. She was hoping to be launched as an author in America. A letter came, not bearing royalty checks, but the news that her publisher had gone bankrupt in the Stock Market crash of 1873.

Frances turned all her financial affairs over to the Lord, and kept her written promise to sign only with that publishing company, so she did not publish anything in America. She waited for God's will to be done, and she continued to write poems and hymns. Among the many hymns she wrote was another prayer, "Take My Life and Let It Be." She died of peritonitis at age 42 in Wales. Frances' sisters had much of her work published posthumously, and a private girls school in Toronto, Canada, *Havergal College*, is named after her.

Thank You...

Thank You! I would like to extend a Thank You to Linda McCowan, Annie Gajewski, Glenda Riley for putting together a lovely program for the ladies annual Christmas salad lunch. We enjoyed singing Christmas Carols and also hearing about the origin of each one. A special thank you as well to Jane Sell who played piano for us and Jordan Gajewski who opened and closed our time of singing with two beautiful Christmas hymns. It was also nice to welcome 11 guests from Sterling who joined us for the afternoon. Thank you again to all who helped.

Julie Waetke

Dear Church Family,

I have always known you were special, but now I know just how special. Al and I have been encouraged by your cards, visits, and kind words over the past six weeks. Your prayers have sustained us day to day, and kept our family believing that brain cells can make new connections with therapy after a stroke. Thank you for praying for us and encouraging us.

Blessings, Al & Jan Lindwall

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever." (Psalm 136:1)

Dear NCPC,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift, and for all your words of encouragement throughout the year. I enjoy seeing you when you stop by the office. And also, a big thanks to all those who help with getting the newsletter prepared each month for you to read. You are all appreciated!

Blessings, Julia Berdahl (your Admin Assistant)

Deacons Corner

Deacons—our next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 5:30 pm, in the Church Library.

January Greeters & Ushers

To Be Announced

"Serve the Lord with Gladness"
Psalm 100:2a

Kneedles & Hooks

Shirley, Jane L., Jean, and Beth delivered 60 scarves to three second grade classes at Lincoln-McCandless. Smiles and hugs were abundant, along with "Thank You's." The grateful youngsters will have a little warmer time in the playground. Extras were taken to the counselor's office for distribution as needed. But that's not all. Some were delivered to Cheryl Wardlaw who has contact with a homeless encampment and the remaining went to First Call. Thank you all for your time and talents, the extra yarn, and prayers for this project. The total was well over 150 scarves, including a few hats.

Kneedles and Hooks will resume in January, the fourth Wednesday of each month from 1:30 to 2:30 in the Promise Room. Please be sure to read the article reprinted from the Hutchinson Tribune about "grandma hobbies", elsewhere in this newsletter.



Christian Movie Night

Tuesday, January 27 at 6:30 pm

This month's movie night will be a surprise—sort of! The title will be announced later—watch your bulletin!

We'll see you there!



NEW COVENANT WOMEN'S NEWS

Lydia Circle

We will resume our study:
"The Stories of Women"

Tuesday, January 13, 2026
at 1:30 pm
in the Church Library

We will be in Lesson 4,
"Deborah & Jael." The Scriptures are:
Judges 2:11-23; 4:1-24; 5:1-9, 19-31

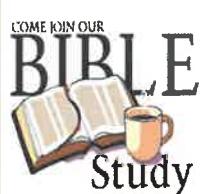
January's hostess is: Suzanne Meeks

Happy New Year ladies, see you around the table in 2026.

~ Julie

Son-Rise Guys

Every Thursday morning—7:00-8:00 am
in the Church Library



"Son-Rise Guys" started hope you will join us as we study the Word of God. We all start out simple, but mature to wisdom. A Band of Brothers studying God's Word together—it doesn't get much better than that!

Your Recipes Wanted

Thank you to everyone who has contributed recipes for the newsletter in the past. My file is beginning to run low again, so if you have more recipes that you'd like to share, please email them to Julia at: secretary@newcovenantpc.net
If you don't have access to email, please put a copy in Julia's box or on her desk.

January 2026 Recipes

Trash Can Crackers

Ingredients:

- 16 oz popcorn oil
- 1 Tbsp garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp onion powder
- 1 Tbsp dry ranch dressing mix
- 1 Tbsp creole or cajun seasoning
- LOTS of crackers, cereal, snacks

Directions:

- Mix all crackers, cereal, etc together in LARGE container
- Drizzle oil over cracker mixture and stir to coat
- Mix all dry ingredients together and sprinkle over cracker mixture, stirring well to coat

Suggestions:

- The recipe says to mix in a food safe trash bag, but any LARGE container will do
- Cracker options: oyster crackers, Cheez Nips, Ritz Crisps
- Cereal options: Chex, Cheerios, Shredded Wheat, Corn Pops
- Snack options: pretzels, Bugles, tortilla chips

~ from Beth Oliver

Cranberry Tea

Ingredients:

- 6 cups water, divided
- 2 family size or 8 regular tea bags
- 1 tsp. whole cloves
- 2—2 1/2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups cranberry juice, cocktail
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

Directions:

- In a large pot, bring 4 cups of water to a boil
- Add teabags, cloves, and cinnamon sticks; cover and steep for 5 minutes.
- Strain, discarding the teabags and spices
- Stir in the remaining water and other ingredients
- Stir until sugar is dissolved
- Serve warm or over ice

Makes 4 quarts.

~ from Linda McCowan

This article shared on behalf of our Kneedles & Hooks Group

Not to Needle, But You Should Get Hooked on a New Hobby

*Reprinted with permission from Charissa Graves,
Hutchinson Tribune*

If you don't have a "grandma hobby," now would be the perfect time to pick one up. Although if you're reading this, you're probably one of the people who still believe in and consume print journalism, which means there's a good chance that you have one already. However, in case you don't, allow me to plead my case.

So, what constitutes a grandma hobby? Sewing, knitting, crocheting, baking, gardening, bird-watching or even reading would fall into the category, although that list is by no means comprehensive. Personally, I find the term a bit condescending, as it seems to reduce centuries of skills and traditions into some sort of supposedly uncool caricature. On the other hand, my grandmas are/were pretty cool, so I consider it a compliment to be compared to either of them. Additionally, the culture surrounding these hobbies is changing, so I don't expect the grandma association to last too much longer.

As one might be able to discern from the title, my purpose here is to advocate specifically for the fiber arts, knitting and crochet, especially.

Aside from the obvious ego boost that comes with turning a ball of yarn into an object than can actually be used in day-to-day life, there has also been a recent surge of research into the measurable positive effects of these hobbies on mental and physical health. This could be attributed to COVID, as people picked up new skills in an effort to fill all of the new time they found themselves in possession of.

What has been found is that people who take up new skills experience improvements in memory and a reduced risk of cognitive decline, as they often need to problem-solve. The meditative nature of these practices has also been proven to lower stress, anxiety and cortisol, and increase serotonin.

Some have even noticed increased attention span, counteracting the effects of the digital age. Crafting forces a person to focus on one thing at a time, completely focusing on where they are in the moment, immersed in the act of creation.

Finally, there's the social impact. People tend to form connections based on shared interests, be that in person or online. I personally have experienced all of these improvements in my own life – and many more – but this one is perhaps the most significant. I've forged more friendships in yarn stores than I have anywhere else, and having a shared passion at the center makes it even more special.

This fall would be an excellent time to start learning something new. By the time winter comes, you could have a new hat, scarf or even something larger if you're particularly ambitious. Or, you could perfect a recipe for your new favorite comfort food, do a puzzle or read a good book. Get lost in something; it'll be fun.

January 2026 Mission Prayer Notes



Murray & Kathy Trim—Japan—TEAM, (The Evangelical Alliance Mission) - since 1988

PRAY for Murray and Kathy as they share the message of GOD's LOVE, Kathy as she is teaching her classes and Murray in his activities and meeting with people. Continue to **PRAY for** health and strength for each of their mothers, both in their 90's, Murray's mom in Nebraska with family, Kathy's mom in the nursing home in Pretty Prairie.

Shelly Zadina – Medical Ambassadors – Albania & the U.S.

PRAISE THE LORD that the mission has allowed Shelly to work from the U.S.A; she does travel here in the U. S. for the mission and does some on line work with those in Albania. **PRAY for SHELLY** as she continues to deal with the pain and problems her leg, especially her knee, cortisone shots have helped the pain. **PRAY for SHELLY** as she cares for her parents, her mom and her physical needs, her dad as he continues the recovery process from a stroke he had some time ago. She asked for prayer for the arrival of a correct part for John's wheelchair. A part was sent, wrong part, a new part has been reordered – may take several weeks for it to arrive.

Fredy and Djana JAVIER – Macedonia – World Outreach (WO)

Pray for the Javier's – as they work with the mission project they have set up in Macedonia and for their children **JAVI (Shavi)** and **SHARON**. **Pray** that we can have much better communication with them in 2026. They have tried to communicate with us, but it was not successful in the past. In communication with someone from WORLD MISSION, who is familiar with the work they are doing they report that the Javier's are doing a great work in Macedonia.

The New Jerusalem / Children of Hope—School in Haiti



Haiti continues to be a very dangerous place. **PRAY** that there will be an end to the gang activity there. Correction on the damage caused by the gangs in October. It was the elementary school and the church next to it, outside of Verrettes, that was destroyed, not the secondary school in town. **PRAY for** wisdom and God's guidance and protection for the teachers and others who work at the schools. There is an uncertainty for us as to what is happening at these schools, and with the students, both the elementary out in the country school and for the junior high and secondary at the school in Verrettes, since the gang attacks and destruction in October. **PRAY for VOLVICK**, one of the founders of the school and also the Principal of the schools, elementary and secondary. He continues to live in Port au Prince and work to support himself, so that the money that we send helps support this school, it is all used for the school and its needs. **PRAY for** his safety as he works in Port au Prince.

LOCAL MINISTRIES

FOOD BANK - THANK YOU for your generous giving to the Food Bank, both putting food items in the basket in the hallway and your generous donations of food items for **LEAVE THE LIGHTS ON**, which was delivered to the food bank. A **BIG THANKS** to **CARL and JEAN SIDEBOTTOM**, who deliver donations to the **FOOD BANK**.

YOUNG LIFE - PRAY for those students who are involved in Young Life activities, that they will hear and clearly understand the message of GOD'S LOVE and their need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. **Pray for Grant Luttrell** and others who work and spend time with the young people.

In the coming year **Grant** is hoping to have more involvement in the Hutchinson Junior and Senior High schools, this is going to require more adult help. **PRAY** for this need and for those **GOD** leads to help and minister to students in these schools.

STERLING COLLEGE - PRAY for the faculty and leadership at Sterling as they work with the students. **PRAY for** new students coming to Sterling for the spring semester and for all of the students as they study in the coming semester.

PRAY for Jose Carrillo, campus pastor, as he ministers to the spiritual needs of the students and plans and directs the **MISSION TEAMS** that will be going on mission trips during their spring break and at the end of this school year.

(Missions continued on next page)

LOCAL MINISTRIES, Continued

SALTHAWK COMMUNITY SUPPORT – THANK YOU to each one who gave to this project for needy students at Hutch High and the eighth grade at Christmas time. At the writing of these Prayer notes we do not have a total for the giving, but know that New Covenant is always very generous in your giving.

Soup Kitchen and Circles of Hope - We do not prepare and serve meals as we have in the past for both of these organizations. It was decided that it is more practical for New Covenant to continue to give financially to both organizations and NOT try to prepare and serve meals for them. (Many others in the community are helping with the preparation, serving and delivery of meals.) We can continue to **pray** for those who work with these organizations and the work they do.

There is information on the Mission Bulletin Board in the hallway about the various local ministries that we support.

We were glad to have many of them here for our "Mission Fair" in early November.

If you have any questions, you can ask Pastor Craig or Glenda Riley.

OTHER MISSION CONCERNs

Zach and Ellie - **PRAY** for wisdom for them as they continue to minister to people that come into their lives in the country where GOD has called them to serve. **PRAISE GOD** for the good time they had when Zach's family was able to visit them this past November. They are rejoicing that **someone** has come to know JESUS CHRIST and is meeting regularly with their team mates for spiritual teaching. This person came to know Jesus Christ through the resources that they have for producing and using digital resources that proclaim the WORD. They ask for prayer for this person to have the opportunity and boldness to share his new found faith with his family.

Our special family—**PRAY** for them as they continue their life here in Hutchinson and the adjustments that come with the activities in which they are involved. **PRAY** for the health needs and healing for the father and for wisdom for concerns for his family. **PRAY** for the daughter going to school, for her activities there and here at church, and for the baby who is such a happy, healthy child and such a joy to all who come in contact with her. **PRAY** for the mother, for her needs and as she goes about her daily caring for her family. **PRAY** for safety for their family members and many other friends and relatives who are still living in their home country.

Project Video—We are adding a new Mission to our Other Mission Concerns – **Project VIDEO**.. This is the mission activity that Kevin Evenson is involved with, he had a mission trip late in 2025 and will have another one in 2026. He will be happy to talk to you, if you would like more information on this Mission and its activities.

WORLD MISSION—We can also be praying for the missionaries in **WORLD MISSION**; these are the missionaries that work with our denomination. Many of them work in areas of the world that are not necessarily welcoming to those sharing the GOSPEL message. Although we do not know them personally, we can pray for them as they carry on the work GOD has called them to do and the places where they serve.

We will be hearing more about **PROJECT VIDEO** and the work they are doing and hopefully more about those serving with **WORLD MISSION**. We can be praying for those working with these missions, as well as others who have been called by GOD to the uttermost parts of the world.

Many thanks to each and everyone who helps with all of the Mission and Ministry activities of New Covenant Presbyterian Church. Your support and prayers for all of these missionaries and activities is greatly appreciated.

A New Year's Joke:

What's a spider's New Year's resolution?

To spend less time on the web.

(from Good Housekeeping)



"We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of God the Father, we too may live a new life."

Romans 6:4



January 2026
Newsletter

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Fellowship Footnotes

January Fellowship Meal

Well, the holidays are over, and a new year has begun. And we think the Fellowship Team and all of the wonderful cooks in our congregational family are probably ready for a break. So let's breathe a sigh of relief and celebrate with our traditional annual PIZZA PARTY. We will gather for pizza (from Papa John's—yum!), on Sunday, January 11, at 11:45 am. You don't have to do a thing—just bring your smile, your appetite and and your friends and family to the party. Please see Beth if you have any special requests.



The Fellowship Team has “mapped out” the rest of our potlucks for 2026, beginning with our
February Fellowship Potluck



February's Fellowship Potluck will highlight the Super Bowl. We'll be having super soup and sandwiches. What sounds good to you? Do you have a favorite soup or sandwich that you'd like to share? See you on Sunday, February 8, at 11:45 am, around the table.