



***“Love Each Other
as I Have Loved You”***

The decorations on the tree that we have set up in the church office lobby this month are doubly significant. ‘Love’ is the theme for St Valentine’s Day (February 14), but it is also one of the great themes that Jesus emphasizes during His final meal with his ‘inner circle’ of disciples. Throughout February, Pastor Jamie will be continuing to take us through John’s account of the Last Supper as we continue our sermon series entitled *John: The Eyewitness*.

In Chapter 13 Jesus tells His disciples that He is only going to be with them for a little while longer. But He is going to leave them with very clear instructions about what they are to do when He is gone. *“I give you a new commandment,”* He tells His followers, *“that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”* He wants them to be known as His followers, to bear witness to who He is, and He has a simple way for them to achieve this. *“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,”* He explains, *“if you have love for one another”* (John 13:33-34).

In John Chapter 15, in the passage that Jamie will be opening up for us on February 28, Jesus says again *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”* There were times during His ministry when Jesus spoke in parables and sayings that were hard to interpret and understand, even for His disciples. But the instructions that He left for His disciples to follow – for US to follow – when He spoke to them that last night in the Upper Room couldn’t be more clear. Their job as His disciples – and OUR job as His disciples - would be to love one another. It’s a good thing to be reminded of this month.

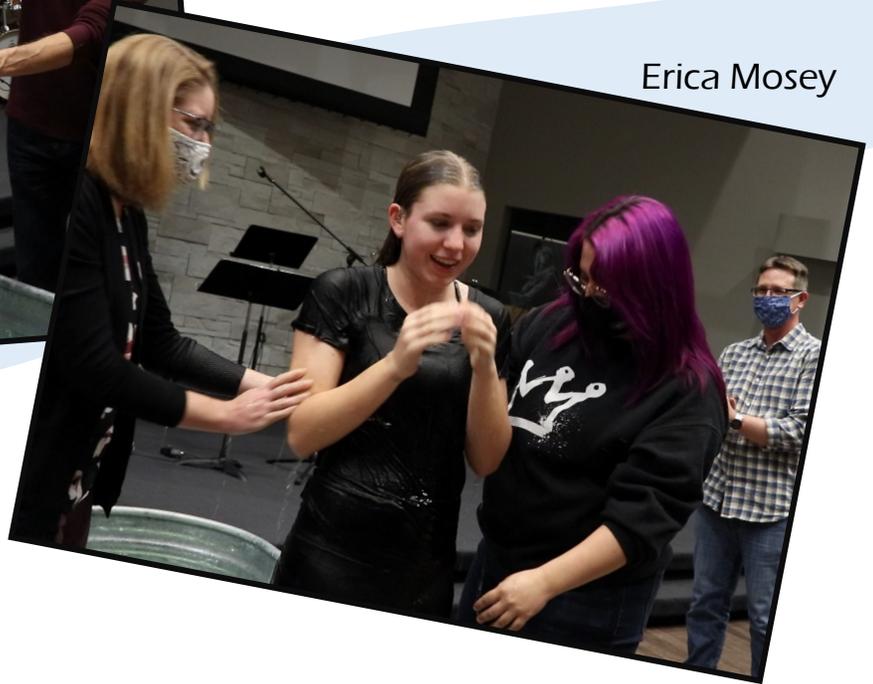


Recent Baptisms!



Jenaya Verwoerd

Erica Mosey



February 14 Missions Sunday!

On Sunday, February 14, as we livestream our Sunday worship service, our guest speaker will be Renata Hamm. Renata is one of our Global Partners. Since 2015, she has worked as a missionary with SEND International in Siberia, where her focus is on ministry with youth and music ministry. She is currently home for a few months, reconnecting with friends and family and supporters here in the Fraser Valley. The last time we had the privilege of having Renata as our guest speaker was the last time she was in Canada, the day before her return to Siberia in October of 2018! This Sunday she'll be reflecting on the words of Psalm 96 as she brings us up to date on her life and ministry.

Also included in the Sunday service on February 14 will be a video montage with some recorded messages of greeting from some of our other missionary partners abroad, coming to us from locations as far away and as far apart as Africa, Asia, and Australasia.



How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds! And how sweet the collection of baked goods & treats that the women of CHatS have been bringing in to the church office over the past two weeks. They are all being donated – in Jesus' name - to the young people who are being cared for & loved over at the Cyrus Centre. To learn more about this wonderful partner ministry of ours, & to make a much-needed financial donation to their work, visit their website at <https://cyruscentre.com/>



Ban on Gatherings Indefinitely Extended

On February 5 the Province announced that the public health prohibition against the holding of public gatherings (which we have been operating under since mid-November, and which was due to be lifted on February 5) will now be extended indefinitely. So although we will continue to make our weekend worship service available online - by livestream at 8:45 every Sunday morning and as a pre-recorded service later in the day – we will not be resuming the practice of holding in-person worship gatherings until sometime in March, at the very earliest.

Last week's announcement did, however, come with an item of encouragement for us to give God thanks for. The Province has encouraged church leaders to start laying plans to resume holding in-person worship gatherings, *possibly* starting in March. We leave the future as always in God's hands, but this is a hopeful sign that we *may* be in a position to resume holding in-person worship gatherings in time for Easter.

BC Recovery Benefit

The BC Recovery Benefit is a one-time, tax-free payment of up to \$1,000 for eligible families and single parents and up to \$500 for eligible individuals.

What you need to apply:

1. Notice of Assessment 2019
2. Social Insurance Number
3. driver's licence number
4. mailing address
5. direct deposit information

You have until June 30, 2021 to apply.

If you don't have a computer but would like to apply for this benefit, contact Pastor Jack during office hours. He will arrange for you to get help.

We Are Family: Feb 12, 630-830pm Online Church Family Fun Night

Family is very important to us as a church. By family we mean all the brothers and sisters in Christ who make up our community. Family is one of our values that we sum up in this way: Jesus died and rose so that all who believe in Him are adopted into His family. Therefore, as God's children we are committed to being a family that loves one another sacrificially. Family also spends time and has fun together.

So, last year on the Family Day long weekend we held our first Family Fun Night at the church building, which was centred around playing games and watching movies together. This year, while we can't host gatherings at the church building, we are moving this event online.

This year's event will have a couple of opportunities to connect:

1. We will be hosting a variety of games for the whole family to play over *Zoom*. They will be appropriate for young and old alike. All you will need is internet access with a webcam.
2. We will also be hosting a couple of movies online with a chat function for people to engage others watching it along with them. You'll have to have your own subscription to the streaming services we'll be using (Netflix & Disney+). There will be at least one movie geared toward children and at least one more geared toward adults.

If you are interested in participating, go to the event page on our church website to register or contact Pastor Zach and he will be in touch with you on the details for the event that you'll need.

zmeisenheimer@sevenoaks.org or 604 818 6045

2020 donation receipts are available for pick up at the church office. Thank you to the many who have already done so! Any receipts not picked up by February 18 will be mailed. Church office hours are Mondays - Thursdays, 830am - 430pm.

Observing Lent through Spiritual Practices

In the long tradition of the Christian church, the season of Lent starts on Ash Wednesday (which falls on February 17 this year), runs for a little over six weeks, and concludes just before Easter. (Lent is formally understood to be forty days in length, although the trick to making this calculation work is to not count the Sundays during Lent as part of the total!) For Christians, Lent is a season of preparation for Good Friday and Easter. It is traditionally a season for somber reflection and repentance, for prayer and fasting and for giving up some of the pleasures of this world, for giving to the poor and for contemplating the ways that Jesus made Himself poor for our sake. Lent is framed as a forty-day season of fasting in order to reflect the forty days that Jesus - immediately following His baptism - spent fasting in the wilderness and enduring the temptations of Satan.

Once again this year, we encourage everyone in the Sevenoaks family to be deliberate about identifying just what spiritual practices God may be inviting you to adopt this season. Perhaps you are being called to do some fasting, or to 'give up' something that has become a bit of an idol in your life. Perhaps you are being called to greater charity for the poor through giving of your money or your time to a worthy cause. Perhaps there is a particular set of Scriptures you are being called to journey with. Perhaps you are being called to new and deeper practices of prayer and contemplation, to practices of silence and solitude and listening for God's voice.

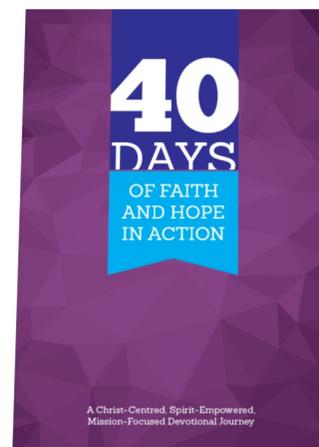
Lent starts on February 17. Will you commit to taking some time between now and then to sit down in quiet prayer and ask God what He has got in mind for YOU for Lent this year? You may discover that He's been very patiently waiting, and hoping you would ask.

40 Days Devotional Guide

About seven years ago, the Christian & Missionary Alliance in Canada created a series of three unique 40-day devotional guides that could be made available for use by Alliance churches across the country. In 2014 we used one of these devotionals as we journeyed through the season of Lent together, and then again in 2016 we used the second one in the set as we once again prepared ourselves for Good Friday and Easter. This year we are making the third and final guide in the series available to you, the members of the Sevenoaks family, to use if you wish, as we spend the next month and a half together marking out the season of Lent.

If you want to use this guide, and if you want to 'line up' your use of it in conjunction with the 40 days of Lent, here is how to do that. Start using the guide on Wednesday, February 17, and then keep using it on a daily basis every day thereafter - excluding Sundays - for the ensuing six weeks. If you don't miss a day you should find yourself on the last page of the guide on Saturday, April 4 (the day before Easter).

Booklets are available at the church office or you can call us & we will mail you a copy.



Season of Discernment

A little over one year ago, on Sunday, January 26 of 2020, a Special General Meeting was held here at Sevenoaks Alliance Church. The primary item on the agenda was a motion to adopt the new set of Bylaws that were being recommended to the church's membership by the church's Board of Elders. The motion passed, and we now have a new set of Bylaws to govern the way we organize ourselves to do the work that God has called us - and is calling us - to do together.

However, at that Special General Meeting another motion was brought to the floor. It was discussed, voted on, and passed. That motion called on the leadership of the church to lead the congregation into a season of reading, study, discussion, prayer and discernment, for the purpose of deciding together whether we as a church want to open up eligibility for election to the Board of Elders to *all* members of the church, including women. Responding to this direction from the membership of the church, the Board of Elders adopted a plan which would have lead the Sevenoaks family through a season of discernment spanning the months of March through October of 2020.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic struck, and all in-person worship services and other in-person ministry activities were shut down the very week that the plan for this season of discernment was to have been announced. Plans had to be postponed, and they have remained postponed until now.

In January of this year, however, the Board of Elders have made a positive decision to move ahead with our conversation on this important topic during 2021, regardless of the logistic difficulties involved, rather than wait until the pandemic is over. Specifically, the Board has asked Pastor Jamie to come up with a plan for leading the church through a season of discernment that will begin sometime over the course of the next several months, and conclude by end of October.

Stay tuned. The specific details of that plan will be announced later this spring.

The logo for 'montage Church Family Talent Night' features the word 'montage' in a large, bold, teal-colored font with a slight shadow effect. Below it, the words 'Church Family Talent Night' are written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The background of the logo is a faded, grayscale image of a group of people, likely the church family, smiling and looking towards the camera.

montage Church Family Talent Night

The Show Must Go On!

We are pleased to announce that montage, our popular annual church family talent show, is going to be able to go ahead this year **VIRTUALLY**. On **Friday, March 12, at 7:00 pm**, we will be broadcasting our talent show via livestream over the internet. And **YOU** can be in the show!

If you and/or the members of your household have an act that you'd like us to consider for inclusion in this year's show, please email tolson@sevenoaks.org with a brief description of your act. Upon approval, you will be asked to video-tape it at home and send it in to us no later than **Friday, March 5**. Eligibility is limited to members of the Sevenoaks family, and recorded 'acts' cannot be any longer than **5 minutes** in length.

This could be your big break! But mostly it's a chance for us to have some fun together as a community, even though we aren't able yet to all gather together in person.

So don't be shy! Let your talent shine, and be part of the light that we want to shine into everyone's homes in March.



Capital Campaign for Roof Replacement

After 38 years of faithful service, and A LOT of patching up as time has worn on, the roof over the Main Auditorium (previously known as the Worship Centre) has finally worn out. It now needs to be completely replaced; the sooner the better. The leaking has grown to be so significant that we can no longer effectively patch it, the longer we put off replacing it the greater the risk of structural damage inside the building, and the more expensive the replacement will be.

We have received a number of competitive quotes, have selected a contractor, and plan to get the work done this summer. The overall cost will be \$150,000 to \$160,000. This amount is of course too large to fold into our annual budget, and so it is necessary for us to carry on a capital campaign for the purpose of raising the necessary funds. That campaign has already begun, and our goal is to raise \$160,000 by the end of June.

The Board is aware that this is not an ideal time to launch a capital campaign. Many households are under financial strain due to the pandemic. But in launching this campaign now we trust, as we always do, in God's provision. The members of the Sevenoaks family have always been faithful in giving when the need has arisen, and we are sure that you will rise to the challenge again.

To donate to the capital campaign, you can give through any of the various channels that are open to receive your regular tithes and offerings (see box to the right.). If you want some or all of the amount that you are giving to go toward the roof replacement project, simply designate it as giving for the Roof Fund. If you are unsure of the best way to give, or of how to designate your gift properly, or if you just want to make sure that your gift has gone to the right place, contact Jenn Pitzel, bookkeeper, directly. jpitzel@sevenoaks.org or 604 853 0757 during office hours.

Financial Giving

Cheerful, sacrificial giving is part of our life in Christ, an act of worship to the living God & an expression of trust in Him. Your generosity helps us fulfill our vision of knowing Jesus & making Him known.

Online via Tithe.ly

Make a secure, one-time donation or set up a recurring gift to the church using *Tithe.ly*. Use a credit card & designate where you want your gift to go.

Online Banking

There are 2 ways to give through your financial institution's online banking site:

1. Bill Payment

Add **Sevenoaks Alliance Church** as a payee. Note your offering envelope number as your account number.

2. E-Transfer

Add **life@sevenoaks.org** as a payee. Enter the amount you want to give & make up a security question. Then be sure to send the security question answer for the e-transfer in a separate email to **life@sevenoaks.org** so that we can accept it.

Cheque

Make a cheque payable to **Sevenoaks Alliance Church**. Ensure that your name or offering envelope number is clear for tax receipt purposes. Place the completed cheque in an envelope & mail or bring it to the church office.

Thank you for supporting the ministry of Sevenoaks Church!

Contact Information

Sevenoaks Alliance Church

2575 Gladwin Road

Abbotsford BC V2T 3N8

Office hours: M-Th 830am-430pm

Help us keep your information current.

Contact Tammy at the church office or

email ttoews@sevenoaks.org