

# CHILLING NEWS

that *Warms* the heart  
from The Evangelical Covenant Church of Alaska!

Reaching People for Christ's Sake from near the North Pole

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**The Evangelical Covenant Church of Alaska** [ECCAK] is non-conference "field" of the Covenant Church of America. We are dependent on the gifts from churches and people to carry out our mission for Christ's sake in Alaska.

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Nathan Toots  
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## Hooper Bay: From Tragedy to Thanksgiving



Teams of people showed up in Anchorage to help load the trucks of furniture

The news about the fire destruction in Hooper Bay on Aug. 3, 2006 was shocking. Rev. Nathan Toots, Assoc. Field Director of ECCAK, stated, "God must have something very special planned for Hooper Bay." Those words were prophetic. In the aftermath, we have seen God move in marvelous ways by working through His people. The list is far too long to name everyone, but our hats go off to all, especially the folks who rallied by going to Hooper Bay to help erect the new houses before THANKSGIVING! Dave Petersen, from Soldotna and pilot/carpenter, was one of many who just packed up and went to Hooper Bay.

The plan was for many skilled carpenters to come and help train Hooper Baynites in the home construction. Working in cooperation with Amundsen Education Center in Soldotna, it will be possible for these construction students to receive credits from the State of Alaska for volunteering to help build the thirteen new homes.

Many people, churches and organizations gave to ECCAK, including Covenant World Relief. A Task

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## The Elim Story I: The Ambassadors of Blessing

By Joel Delps

From July 29 through August 8 of this year, six individuals from Northwest Covenant Church (Mt. Prospect, IL) traveled to Elim, Alaska to participate in a mission trip to partner with Elim Covenant Church in their ministry. The trip's focus was primarily a work project with attention being given to the parsonage that was in very bad disrepair. Each of its windows were replaced and trimmed out; the flooring and two doors were replaced; most of the bathroom and kitchen plumbing were renovated (including adding a water filtration system); the front porch was rebuilt; and the roof was repaired. Basically, a lot of work was accomplished for the glory of God. In addition, the Good News of Jesus Christ was proclaimed. A two-day VBS was held for the children of Elim where the attendances were 22 for the first day and 33 for the second. The children sang songs, played games, worked on crafts and a mission project, and heard stories from the Bible. In addition, the mission team also took part



in two special worship services. One service was one of song

and story-telling from a member of the team who is gifted in these areas. The second service came at the end of the week and proved to be a pinnacle for the team in their time in Elim. The time of worship was filled with song, testimony (both from the team and those of Elim) and sharing of the word, as one of the team members provided the homily. The service concluded with a presentation of a gift to the team in the form of T-Shirts with each team members' name embroidered (by Teresa Allen) on it. Every one of the members of the team had an awesome, eye-opening, God experience in Elim. We are all committed to continuing to support the ministry at Elim Covenant Church. We are so thankful for the time that we were able to spend with the wonderful people in Elim and are especially grateful for the hospitality and love shown to us by the people of the Elim Covenant Church. Pastor Terry and Teresa Allen went way above what was necessary in opening their home to us and providing three delicious meals every day.



Our Team: 19 churches, CYAK, CCF, CBC, KICY, CRC, & ACC

## How Can I Help?

- **Pray:** Our bi-monthly newsletter called, "The Chilling News," is full of stories about the people and the ministry of ECCAK throughout the state. It also has a daily prayer calendar. Please let us know and we will add you to our mailing list.
- **Encouragement:** Writing and/or calling those who serve in the bush is a great ministry! Want to adopt a church or a pastor? Ask for a prayer card of a pastor.
- **Mission teams:** There are often times when we have need for teams of people to come and join with a local church, camp, college, youth group, etc. for a specific construction project or outreach event.
- **Volunteers:** The ECCAK office needs volunteers to assist in administration, grant writing, special projects etc.
- **Financial:** God often calls peo-

ple to give to ECCAK beyond the normal local church tithe or churches to place ECCAK in their mission budget. Some are lead to leave a gift through estate planning to carry on the work in Alaska into the future.

- **Teachers or nurses:** Christian teachers or nurses often come to Bush Alaska as "missionaries" and serve in the local Covenant church during off hours.
- **Pastors and Youth Workers:** Often we have empty pulpits and are in need of pastors, short and long-term. Many villages have no one reaching out to the youth.
- **Donate Air Miles:** Many people accumulate free air miles. Please consider donating some to ECCAK to help a bush pastor and family get away for R & R.

## Giving A Hand To Uzbekistan



The Korean Hope Covenant Church in Anchorage has been involved in ministry in Uzbekistan for a number of years. A nursing home and orphanage have been established among the Muslim Koreans which has opened the door for discipleship. There is a desperate need to drill a well for potable water. Right now, they have to go several miles just to bring back drinking water. The monetary goal for this well is \$10,000. We are 1/10th of the way there. If 1/10th of the Christians receiving this newsletter contributed \$100 each we could reach our goal. What a wonderful gift that would be!

## The Importance of Punctuation

By Rodney Sawyer

Following is a letter to a man named "John" with all the punctuation omitted.

Dear John I want a man who knows what love is all about you are generous kind thoughtful people who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior you have ruined me for other men I yearn for you I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart I can be forever happy will you let me be yours Gloria

A group of people were asked to add what they thought to be the correct punctuation. Two letters emerged with entirely different meanings!

### LETTER 1: Dear John,

I want a man who knows what love is all about. You are generous, kind, thoughtful. People who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me for other men. I yearn for you. I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart. I can be forever happy--will you let me be yours? Gloria

### LETTER 2: Dear John,

I want a man who knows what love is. All about you are generous, kind, thoughtful people, who are not like you. Admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me. For other men, I yearn. For you, I have no feelings whatsoever. When we're apart, I

can be forever happy. Will you let me be?

Yours,  
Gloria

With this in mind, did you ever stop to think about punctuation in the Bible? The Greek and Hebrew languages were the languages our Bible was originally written in. There is no punctuation in those languages. Therefore, most people fail to realize how very dependent they are on the scholars who translated the Bible. This would, of course, include all punctuation! Is it possible, that if some of the more controversial passages were punctuated differently, it would change the meaning? Or perhaps clarify things? That is why non-scholars, who are students of the Word, are encouraged to use several translations during personal Bible study time. There is comfort in numbers, but also confidence in gaining the proper rendering of a passage.

That also is why the Spirit of the law should take precedence over the letter of the law when studying the Scriptures. II Cor. 3:6 says, "He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." Be careful not to get so caught up with the letter, that you miss what the Spirit is trying to say! Doctrinal hairsplitting often keeps some churches from hearing the Spirit's missional call.

## The Elim Story II: The Acknowledgement of Blessing

By Teresa Allen



As I sit at the computer thinking of what has been going on in the last few days, I can't stop the tears from flowing down my cheeks. How blessed we are! I ask, "Why should it be us that is blessed so much?" Each of the Alaska Mission Team members that have come from the Mt. Prospect Covenant Church near Chicago, Illinois have taken time off from their

jobs and family life to come to a place far removed from any comforts of home. Most of them have slept on the floor in sleeping bags and maybe have been able to take showers every couple of days. They have been working from 7:30 in the morning to sometimes as late as 10:00 or 11:00 at night. Long hard days. Of course, the sun doesn't go down this time of year until about 3:30 in the morning—it gets dark for a couple of hours—then its light again. What an incredible amount of work they have done. As you look at the pictures of the work that has been done here, please remember to pray for each of these workers and their families—That God would truly bless them abundantly.

### The Role of Arctic Barnabas Ministries

The Elim trip could not have happened without Eric Mayer of Arctic Barnabas Ministry. All the planning went through him. He also coordinated a similar trip with another team to Scammon Bay. The folks at Scammon are no less grateful .for God's provision!



"A Christian is a keyhole through which other folks see God."  
Robert E. Gibson

### Hooper Bay: From Tragedy to Thanksgiving

Continued from pg 1



Teams of people showed up at the Port of Anchorage to help load the trucks of furniture

Force team was selected to help Pastor Grant Funk oversee the money and to help in the purchase of the right things at the right time. A great “deal” was negotiated with Bailey’s Furniture in Anchorage and furniture for all thirteen homes was purchased and shipped free on a barge already headed to Hooper Bay with construction supplies.

We could certainly fill up the whole Chilling News with only a tidbit of all that God did and is doing. But please join us by remembering both the victims as they cope with their losses and those who are on a rigorous schedule to turn tragedy into thanksgiving by November 23!



The truck then hauls everything to the barge.

### Chip Swanson Retires: NOT!



Field Director Rodney Sawyer gives Chip Swanson his "official" retirement plaque at his home in Unalakleet with his wife Joanne at his side. The plaque is certainly not representative of Chip's lifestyle, however; he continues to be very involved in the Covenant Bible Camp and "works like a horse," as some describe his day-to-day activities.

Joanne is a well known Alaska artist and paints from her new home on the hillside which has an inspiring view of Unalakleet. To see her work, go to [www.artnatam.com/swanson/](http://www.artnatam.com/swanson/).

### AK Blessed with Pastors—Missionaries

Our bush churches were blessed with three traveling pastors and/or missionaries this summer: Paul Swanson, retired pastor from MN; Herb Stromquist (picture unavailable), also from MN (summer only, otherwise AZ); and Jonathan (and his wife Indira) Maraj from India. God only knows of how much He used all of them in our midst, but we do get glimpses because of so much positive feedback.



Jonathan Maraj



Paul Swanson



Fishing in the North River...it doesn't get any better than this! From left to right, Larry Shooguruk , John Hege, Brad Webster, and Rodney Sawyer.

Answer to Brain-Teaser:  
Education

Answer to Riddle:  
Happy Birthday

Our Para-church: Campus Christian Fellowship in Fairbanks & in Anchorage, KICY in Nome, CYAK statewide, Alaska Christian College in Soldotna, Chickaloon Retreat Center in Chickaloon, Covenant Bible Camp near Unalakleet, and Chaplains in armed forces.

## Pastor Leader Retreat "One of the Best!"



Pastors and leaders sit around the table soaking it in as Dave and Carol share.

At least two of our pastors said, " This year's retreat was one of the best we have had." A large part of the "Success" can be credited to our speakers. Dave Kersten and Carol Lawson, from the Department of Ordered Ministry, who came from Chicago to Alaska to teach one of the External Covenant Orientation Program (CEOP) classes. Even pastors who did not need the CEOP sat in on the discussion and were blessed as the focus



Carol Lawson (left) and Mark Meredith (right), look on as Dave Kersten (center) expounds on matters that relate

was on the office of pastor. Also, Mark Novak, Superintendent of the Pacific Northwest Conference, came up from Washington and shared from his heart and experiences on leadership.

We were not only blessed with good spiritual food, but also we were taken care of with great physical food. Mary Helwig and Stephanie Wetherington provided us with meals that nourished our bodies! M-m-m-m good!

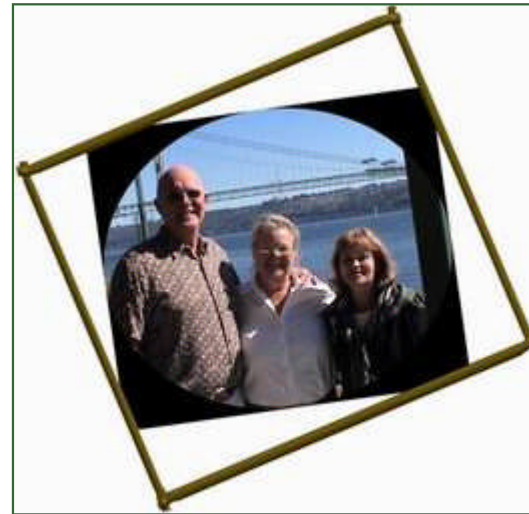
And finally, the retreat was held at InterAct in Palmer, AK. We are confident that everyone would give them an A+ for facilities!

Mark Novak shares on leadership in our evening sessions.



We were not only blessed with good spiritual food, but also we

Our churches: Anchorage First, Bethel, Eagle River, Elim, Fairbanks, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kalskag, Korean Hope, Koyuk, Mat-Su, Mekoryuk, Mountain Village, New Song, Nome, Scammon Bay, Shaktoolik, Unalakleet, White Mountain



Nancy poses with Doug and Linda Olsen from Gig Harbor. The Sawyers stopped there on their way home from the Superintendent's Meeting to thank the folks at Harbor Covenant Church for their involvement with the camping ministry over many years!

### BRAIN-TEASER

What word can you form from the words ICE and OUT?

See page 9 for the answer

### Riddle

A man is sitting in the local grocery store feeling rather poor and hungry, for he was broke. He sees a man at the checkout counter pull a wad of \$100 bills out of his pocket to buy a can of beans. He goes up to the rich man and says to him, "I have an amazing talent: I know almost every song that has ever existed." The rich man laughs. The poor man says, "I am willing to bet you all the money you have in your pocket that I can sing a genuine song with a lady's name of your choice in it." The rich man laughs again and says, "Ok how about my daughter's name, Joanna Armstrong-Miller." The rich man goes home poor. The poor man goes home rich. What song did he sing?

Answer on pg 9

### Alaska Street Gangs



## CHIC 2006

“No Ordinary Day”  
By Brian Nanninga



Two Alaskan's of many of CHIC

This summer almost 125 students and staff from across the state of Alaska began a journey that covered thousands of miles, numerous plane and bus transfers and most of the United States. Though it was significant in terms of physical travel, the spiritual journey that began during that same week was for many of our students a much longer road and an even more significant experience. Joining a diverse group of students from

throughout the Covenant, our ministry to high school students received a shot in the arm as students worshipped, played, explored, learned and simply listened. Through powerful messages they learned the truth about how out of the ordinary our faith and our God is and were invited into a life that would be anything but ordinary. This fall as students return to school and ‘life as usual’ my hope is that God will continually remind them of His call to step out into His extraordinary plan for their lives. It is a plan that leads to healing, hope and grace, not only for themselves, but for those in their families, villages and cities.

### PRAYER

Grant Funk’s son Caleb was deployed to Iraq mid October with the Army National Guard. Please keep Caleb, his unit, and the Funk’s in your prayers, that God would make Caleb a beacon of light to his company, as well as the Iraqi people that he comes in contact with.

Also, continue to remember John Grauer who is also serving in Iraq on an extended tour in Baghdad. His wife and two daughters worship at Anchorage First.



### THE BARE FACTS ABOUT BEAR FACTS

by Rodney J. Sawyer

When I took a class on bears a number of years ago, we learned that when a grizzly bear attacks you, the first thing you should do is to roll up in the “fetal” position. I am not sure they have properly named it. If a grizzly bear attacked me, I would probably be thinking more along the lines of calling it the “fatal” position!

## A Happy Ending!

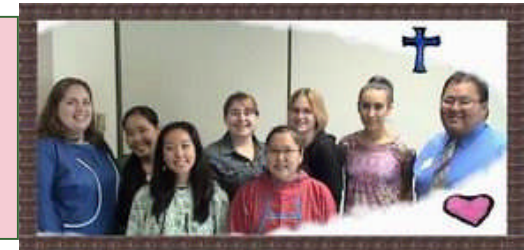
By Jana Shoemaker, Community Covenant Fairbanks



The journey to Emmaus continues in Fairbanks. Our congregation took a giant step of faith during the Spring of 2005 and began negotiations on a wonderful building in downtown Fairbanks (formerly Zion Lutheran Church on Airport Road). By July 2005, our negotiations allowed us to move in and lease as we went through the process of collecting sufficient down-payment to purchase.

Rob Hall from National Covenant Properties became our expert on church financial and legal issues, and walked us through that complicated process in the most thorough and amazing way, and Don Fensterman from ECC coached us through the church development process. We discovered the practical reasons we are part of this denomination and the enormous support and resource base which is available to Covenant congregations who take a faith step. Not only do we have a wonderful new location and 24/7 building in Fairbanks now, which we (and National Covenant Properties) own as of September 11, 2006, but we also have a new perspective on how to be an effective community church. This photo cannot show the enormous excitement and sense of being in God's rest that each of us on the Council and in the congregation feel at this closing of one part of the process and beginning of the next step, keeping the momentum going. Praise be to God for His love and faithfulness!

### Gal Pals at CYAK House!



The first ever CYAK House with females! Jason and Sarah Battiest (far left & far right) pose with the "CYAK House" girls who all attend the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The Battiests serve as dorm parents. How thankful we are for Jim Congdon for renting this large "dorm" to CYAK. Of course, John Hege's CCF men spend some of their time there. I wonder why?

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