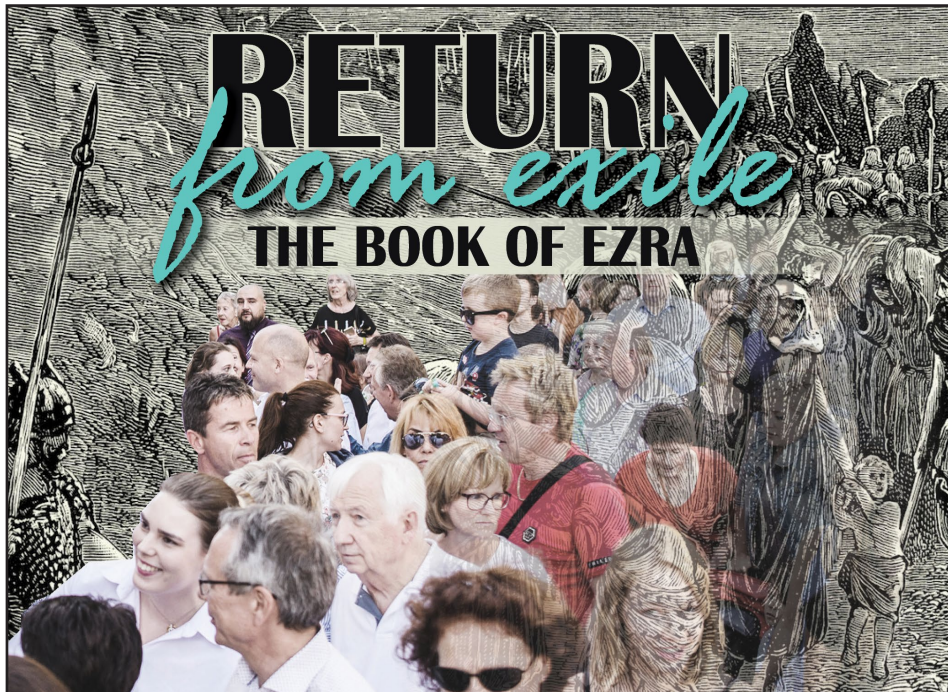




Embracing all. Feeding spirits. Reflecting Christ...  
Changing lives forever!



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2020 - 10 A.M.

RETURN FROM EXILE:  
COME OUT & COME HOME

## LIVE STREAMING

CCPC live streams our worship services every Sunday morning. Please join us in spirit by going to [www.covenantcommunitypc.org/live-stream](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/live-stream). You can give, fill out a Connection Card, and also view archives of past services and sermons all from the comfort of your home.

**Ministers** - All members of the congregation

### Staff:

**Pastor** - Jim Gates

(757) 615-1799 or [jim@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:jim@covenantcommunitypc.org)

**Director of Children & Family Ministries** - Amanda Fuls

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**Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries** - Dan Frost

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**Director of Music Ministries** - Les Fraaza

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**Bell Choir Director** - Ruth Wrynski

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**Housekeeper** - Carol Anklam

### Church Office

(715) 359-6467 or [ccpc@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:ccpc@covenantcommunitypc.org)

1806 Weston Avenue, Schofield, WI 54476  
[www.covenantcommunitypc.org](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org)



## Gathering Around the Word

**Prelude:** "On Christ, the Solid Rock I Stand" Les Fraaza

### Quiet Reflection and Preparation for Worship:

Today we conclude our "Return from Exile" with the people in the Book of Ezra. This is a long journey, not merely a single event. Have you had an experience of exile? How are you called to return to a spiritual life? Return to church? Return to God? What first steps can you take today on that long journey home to Christ?

### Welcome & Announcements

**Call to Worship:** Psalm 130:5-6

*I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,*

**And in his word I hope;**

*My soul waits for the Lord*

**More than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.**

**\*Hymn:** "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (vs. 1,4) #366

**\*Call to Confession:** Ezra 10:1-2

"While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women and children gathered to him out of Israel; the people also wept bitterly. [Then one said,] 'We have broken faith with our God ... but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this.'" Let us also confess our sins, but let us do so in hope, knowing God's boundless grace. Please join me in the prayer of confession.

**\*Prayer of Confession:**

Father, you know our sins and the sins of our ancestors. You know that we have acted selfishly in ways both large and small. Some of our sins we hesitate even to name aloud. Some, to our shame, we boldly boast of to one another. Like the returned exiles, we too have broken faith with you. Forgive us today not because we are deserving, but because Jesus is sufficient. Forgive us not because of the depth of our sorrow but because of the riches of your grace. Forgive us, but do not let our lives revert to similar patterns this coming week. Empower us to true repentance, so that we might turn away from our sin and come out of all that hinders us from following you faithfully. In the name of Jesus, we pray.

(We keep a moment of silence for reflection)

**\*Assurance of Pardon:**

2 Corinthians 5:21

Here again the good news: "For our sake, God made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." On the cross, Jesus absorbed all our self-centeredness; on the cross, he poured out his selflessness upon us. Believe and live according to the gospel: because of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

**Amen.**

### Children's Message

### Period of Fellowship

## Proclaiming the Word

**Old Testament Reading:** Ezra 10:1-17, 44 NRSV Bible

**Special Music:** "River Flows in You" Caitlin Kyle

**New Testament Reading:** Revelation 18:4-8 NRSV Bible

**Sermon:** Return from Exile: Come Out and Come Home Jim Gates

## Responding to the Word

**\*Hymn:** "Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling" (vs. 1,3) #418

### The Sacrament of Communion

### Offering

**Offertory Music:** "Battle Hymn of the Republic" National Christian Choir

Connection Card and giving are available on the live stream web page.

## Bearing and Following the Word into the World

### Announcements

**\*Benediction**

**\*Choral Benediction:** "God Be with You Till We Meet Again" (vs. 1, 2) #542



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**SECRET A.G.E.N.T.S. 2020-2021**—Calling all Secret and Jr. Agents! It is time for another mission! Students will be partnered with an adult who will pray for them regularly and anonymously exchange letters through March, at which time we will celebrate with a Reveal Party! Registration is now open (For adults: [www.covenantcommunitypc.org/secret-agents](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/secret-agents); for students, 4th -12th graders: [www.covenantcommunitypc.org/jr-agents](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/jr-agents)) and we kick things off on September 13! Jr. Agents... if you register by September 11, you'll be entered into the fall kickoff raffle drawing! Join this amazing ministry of prayer, mentorship, and generational connection!

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT L.I.F.E. VIA ZOOM**—Partisan politics aren't new to this election (or to this century of elections). Nevertheless, today the feeling of division along party lines in our nations feels almost like a tangible thing. How do we as a church work as a unifying force in a season of division? Of course, we look to Jesus. Our politics have nothing on 1st century Jewish culture. Into that world, Jesus brings a brilliant, original, and God-fearing method of dealing with the political divide. Join us on Wednesday nights (September 16 - October 21) from 6-7pm (via Zoom) to discuss a "Christ & Caesar: House Divided," and together we can learn from Jesus what a unique Christian witness might be in our world today. Contact Jim Gates ([jim@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:jim@covenantcommunitypc.org)) with questions.

**IN-PERSON WORSHIP RESERVATIONS**—Reservations for next Sunday, September 13 will open **TOMORROW** (Monday) September 7 at 9am. Please go to [www.covenantcommunitypc.org/reservations](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/reservations) to secure your family's spot for the 10am service. You can also call the church office at 715-359-6467.

**SEATS & FEETS/89Q PARTNERSHIP**—We are so grateful to 89.5 FM in Wausau for partnering with us and our Seats & Feets ministry! **NOW** through September 27, we invite you to donate brand new, packaged socks and underwear for kids of all ages. These contributions will be distributed through our Hearts of Hope ministry, local school clothing closets, and our Care Closet/Food Pantry. Donations can be dropped off at 89Q (3500 Stewart Ave., Wausau), or at our church. Join us in meeting the most basic of needs for our community!

**CCPC COOKBOOK PROJECT**—We are still accepting recipes! We are especially in need of recipes from our phenomenal male chefs of CCPC. Also, we are calling all participants in past CCPC Gourmet Dinners, as we will be devoting a chapter to these amazing meals. We need your assistance to find all of these past recipes! Our goal is to have the proofed version to the printers by early October, so please consider sharing soon! Please visit our website for submission instructions ([www.covenantcommunitypc.org/cookbook](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/cookbook)). If you are interested in helping, please contact Colleen Geurink ([cgeurink@charter.net](mailto:cgeurink@charter.net) or 715-359-6038).

## BIBLE STUDIES & SMALL GROUPS

**MEN'S & WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM**—This Fall we will dive into the Old Testament and focus on the first six "minor" prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, and Nahum. They are so named because their books are shorter than those of Isaiah or Jeremiah, but there is nothing minor about their messages! Join us for the start of this new series on September 15 (women) or September 22 (men), at noon, as we begin by studying the book of Hosea! Contact Jim Gates ([jim@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:jim@covenantcommunitypc.org)) with questions.

**WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING VIA ZOOM**—We continue to meet every Wednesday, via Zoom (including *THIS* Wednesday, September 9), for a time of communal prayer. All are welcome! To participate, please contact Jim Gates for the Zoom information.

**A CONVERSATION ON RACE STUDY GROUP**—Our Conversation on Race group will continue in September in a different format; we have concluded our study of the book "Be the Bridge" and will take September to review the racial justice themed films together. To get involved in our film conversations, contact Krista Gates at [gatkri@gmail.com](mailto:gatkri@gmail.com) or Amanda Fuls at [amanda@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:amanda@covenantcommunitypc.org).

## YOUTH, CHILDREN & FAMILY

**YOUTH GROUP VIA ZOOM**—All students grades 6th-12th grade are invited to join us online, using Zoom, *THIS* coming Wednesday at 6pm. If you would like to see video messages from previous weeks, please go to <https://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/youth-group>. If you have any questions, contact Dan Frost ([dan@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:dan@covenantcommunitypc.org)). **Note that our new year of Salt & Light Wednesday Youth Group kicks off on September 16 via Zoom!**

**YOUTH SCAVENGER HUNT**—All 6th through 12th graders and adult drivers are welcome to join us for a mobile scavenger hunt on Saturday, September 12 at 4pm. You pick your teams (including friends that you invite) to be a part of your team and stay in the car with you. We encourage all groups to come up with a team name and put together a uniform (we will vote on the best outfits)! You can even do it as a family. We will be meeting at the church for instructions and playing the game while maintaining social distancing. Please contact Dan Frost ([dan@covenantcommunitypc.org](mailto:dan@covenantcommunitypc.org)) with any questions.

**YOUTH I.D. VIA ZOOM**—There will be *THREE* classes (6th & 7th; Confirmation; 9th & 12th) via Zoom at 9am beginning Sunday, September 13. More information to come.

**KIDS I.D. VIA ZOOM**—Kids I.D. is all about growing closer to God through Bible knowledge. We have special plans for the kiddos so that they are not just sitting in front of a screen! All kids will start in a large group via Zoom and then breakout into two groups (PreK-1st & 2nd-5th grades). Each group will need their own device. Join us starting Sunday, September 13 at 9am.

**KIDS L.I.F.E. VIA ZOOM**—Wednesday nights (September 16-October 21) are all about connecting with church friends and developing spiritual habits that help us grow. LIFE will be fun, faith focused, and friend centered! We encourage each kid to have their own device.

**KIDS CCPC PACKAGE**—Let's face it, printing something at home is a pain... so we've done it for you! Each month we will provide materials to enhance all of our Kids Ministry programming, including some surprises! You might also get to see Ms. Amanda during the dropoff!

**KIDS ZONE**—Resources, Children's Messages and so much more... all at our CCPC website! Check it out at [www.covenantcommunitypc.org/childrens-ministry](http://www.covenantcommunitypc.org/childrens-ministry). **Note that VBS materials will be going away at the end of September!**