

connections church

Fall 2020

WORSHIP

Hi Connectors,

I hope you are doing well and know that I am praying for all of you as we navigate through this season. With that being said, we have had to attend church in very creative ways.

We went into this not knowing how long we will have to do church online and I had to makeshift with what equipment we currently had (which wasn't much). I continued to see how things were progressing and that church online wasn't going anywhere in the months ahead, I needed to act quickly.

I started to research how to livestream church and how video and audio needs to sync together. In my findings it was clear that you cannot just have a camera, computer and a mic, plug it in and go for it. My eyes were opened to equipment and programs that I never heard of, and I've been around professional music equipment for almost two decades. So sleepless nights researching equipment and a lot of trial and error, I was able to Connections Church Online!

Well, a new set of challenges arose. As I was researching how to get Connections online, so was every other church in the world! I wanted to be sure to get the proper equipment from the get go, for a few different reasons.

First, I want to be a good steward of our funds, and secondly, we are working with all volunteers that need to learn this new equipment from the ground up. I needed equipment that can deliver a great product, with room to grow, and it all has to be user friendly.

The equipment that would work best for us was sparse, so I needed to act even faster or we would be out of options.

We were able to get two new cameras, video switcher, appropriate cables, convertor boxes and audio equipment to not only get us online, but to deliver a solid service. Again, my heart behind all of this is, I want you to have the best online service possible.

All of this equipment and workflow is new to the entire team(volunteers) and they are working hard to learn, and better each service to get the good news of Jesus out!

Now, the new challenge we are up against is volunteer workload. For example, the sound engineer needs to mix audio for our in house and online, which are completely different mixes.

With that being said, we can definitely use volunteers!

If you call Connections your home and you're wanting to help get The Word out, please come see me after service or email me at chris@myconnections.church and I will get you connected.

Blessings,

Chris Sanchez
Worship Pastor

30 DAYS OF PRAYER

SEPTEMBER 1-30

Revolution on our Knees:

30 Days of Prayer for Neighbors and Nations

Our 30 days of prayer began September 1.

But it's not too late to get involved. We still have a few copies available if you want to pick up a copy of your own. You can also follow us on social media #myconnectionschurch for daily posts and prayers. We also have several upcoming prayer events:

Sunday, September 6- 5:30pm

ZOOM prayer gathering

Sunday September 13-

Day of fasting and prayer

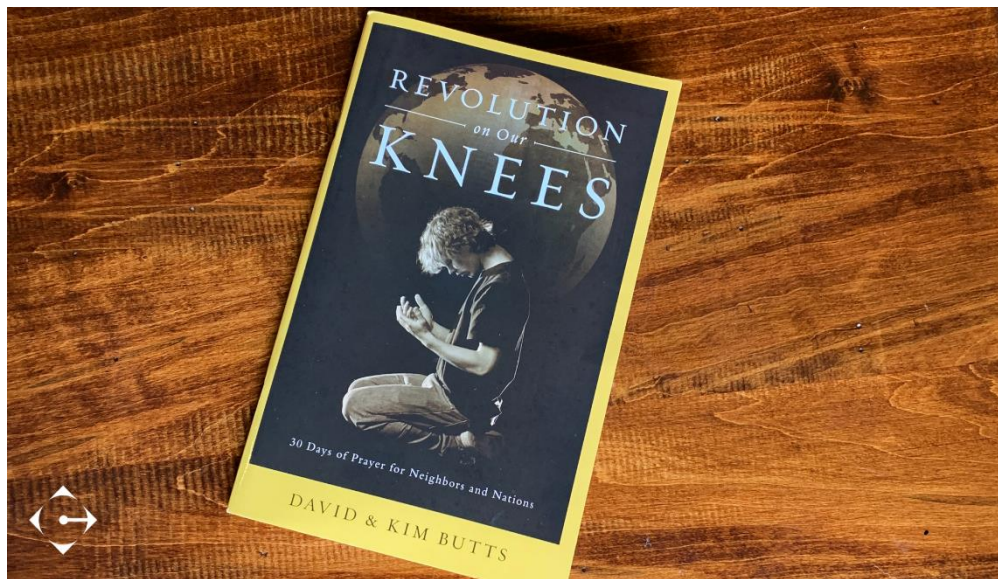
Sunday September 20-

Prayer Walk your Neighborhood

Wednesday September 30- 7pm

Night of Prayer and Worship

Pastor George Saylor



Fall 2020 at Connections

We are not going to let 2020 get the best of us.

We are not going to let 2020 define our lives with sickness, economic crisis and division.

We are going to make the most of 2020.

We will be defined by faith instead of fear.

When we look back on 2020 let's not allow ourselves to wallow in pity and despair. Let's look forward in faith and believe that our God is still in control.

This Fall we begin telling a new story that will define our church and this year:

- It starts with prayer.
- It leads to acts of kindness.
- It draws us into gratitude.
- And it ends with our generosity.

This September we begin with 30 days of prayer. Why? Because the work of the church should always begin with prayer! Prayer truly is the engine that drives the church.

This October we begin 31 days of kindness. We'll be posting a month's worth of ideas for acts of kindness, and post daily prompts. Some acts of kindness will be simple- pick up the phone today to call an old friend. Some will be a little more ambitious- take a meal to a neighbor or buy groceries for a family in need. Each day you'll be encouraged/challenged to do a kind deed in the name of Jesus!

In November we will be making Gratitude Journals available. Each morning you'll be prompted to write down three things for which you are grateful. Each evening you'll write a reflection on what went well that day, and one thing that could be improved.

In December we will turn our attention towards giving. We will have opportunities for you to give of your time, your talents and your treasures through the Christmas season. We'll have "Giving Trees" and serving opportunities that will help us share the incredible good news of Christmas- God is with us!



Pastor George Saylor



As a Board we hope that you are all well. Thank you to those who are coming to Sunday worship services in person as well as those attending online. We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has weighed on everyone in different ways and if you need any assistance please reach out to a deacon, elder or someone from our congregational care team (Barbara Alger and Rich Westra) at care@myconnections.church. Please know that as a Board we regularly pray for our church and its members. While COVID has caused us all to change the rhythms of our church life, the Board has continued to meet and make plans for the future.

In July, Heather Willson and Gabe Ibarra joined the Board as deacons, and Patrick Ritz joined as an elder. Our Board has subsequently met, and the following persons were elected to Board positions as follows: Kelly Tien, President; Jeff Kadavy, Clerk; Gabe Ibarra, Treasurer and Heather Willison, Benevolence Treasurer. Jerry Alger continues on as a deacon and Pastor George is also a Board member. We also wished a special thanks to Iva Prinsen for her completed term as a deacon.

We continue to focus on the usage of our facility. A few of the lessees have curtailed their use of the building as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, while we continue to have dialogue with the Seventh Day Adventist Church for leasing the facility on Saturday mornings, they presently do not have the same need for additional space in a COVID social distancing world. Yet, our long-time lessee, Platte River Academy is continuing and expanding from the homeschool academy only to adding a preschool. You may have seen the parking lot fencing and playground modifications that they have made in order to meet preschool standards. Their presence will provide us with additional revenue to support and expand our ministry at Connections.

The Board is also initiating a strategic planning process over the next couple of months to refine our vision for ministry over the next two to five years. A part of this process has been the opportunity for an expanded role for Chris Sanchez as both our worship pastor and chief of staff. Chris has currently volunteered, with the idea of becoming paid full-time, his services for the chief of staff role in addition to his current part-time role as worship pastor. We have been in discussion with Chris for some time about this role and we are looking forward to its expansion soon. The strategic plan will likely include, among other things, reconsidering our staff structure with a near term hire in family/youth ministry, deepening and broadening our outreach to the community, and effectively stewarding our resources.

(Board News continued)

This vision needs your continued support with time, talent and treasure. Through July our giving was \$11,500 below our budget of \$158,000. Total revenue, which includes rental and other income, is \$18,200 below budget. Still, our expenses have been \$22,900 below our budget of \$190,900, primarily because of unfilled family/youth ministry positions and reduced outreach events. Through July we have had a net surplus of \$4,700. Your continued gifts through the end of the year will be greatly appreciated and will help give us all confidence as we make key plans for the future. Thank you for your prayers and support, and as always, please reach out to one of us if you have questions or concerns.

The Connections Church Board:
Jerry Alger, Gabe Ibarra, Jeff Kadavy, Patrick Ritz,
George Saylor, Kelly Tien and Heather Willson.

The Connections Church Staff:
Kim Crane, Chris Sanchez and George Saylor



Community Gardens

Community Gardens is supporting 2 families during the harvest season from the Community Garden (thanks to the gardeners and thanks Jayne). The garden is open on Wednesdays.

A donation of K-Cups and bars will be delivered for the staff the week of 8/25. At this time, Sand Creek is not having volunteers and donations are allowed so we will have to do a school.





Connection Groups

Connection Groups Fall 2020

2020 has proved to be a challenging year for the church to do groups. As we head into the fall we are committed to create safe and faithful ways for us to gather. Before we get into those details let's remember why we gather people in groups. Hebrews 10:24-25 tells us:

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Meeting together is biblical. It honors God. It encourages us. It is foundational to the mission of being a church. We believe that being in relationships with other believers is an essential part of every Christ-follower's life. Connection Groups contribute to this mission in a few ways:

BELONG. Belonging is perhaps the greatest human need. To know that we belong to God, that we belong in a community of people, and that we are together in God's world.

GROW. In Connection Groups we can grow our faith. This happens through Bible study and prayer with the goal to grow the character of Christ in each person.

SERVE. We desire these groups to be a place to reach out and serve. We can serve the people in our group and in our community through word and deed.

Three Ways to Meet

Home Groups: these groups meet, you guessed it, in homes! The general format is to gather, share a meal, pray, and use the Sermon Discussion Guide.

Campus Groups: these groups meet, you guessed it, on campus. These groups usually pick a book of the bible or other study guide for their curriculum.

Online Groups: some groups will make use of an online platform to gather. Leaders are free to use whichever platform they prefer. Our church can help you set up a "Google Meet."

For a list of available groups please check out our website "Groups" page, or contact Pastor George directly, george@myconnections.church



Prayer Team

I Thessalonians 5:17 (ESV)
"Pray without ceasing."

Certainly the last couple of months have given us time and a great opportunity to Pray without ceasing. It's been a joy and comfort for some of us to meet together, on Zoom and by phone on several summer Sunday evenings, to pray for those affected by the COVID pandemic, that rioting might cease, and now, also, for school teachers, staff, and students as schools start in-person and virtual classes.

How great is the need for us to pray for "those in authority over us" as well! And that our Maker/Creator would guide the great election process that we have freely been blessed with! Dear God, please bless America!

There are many in our congregation who continue to grieve; heal from sickness, cancer, surgeries, treatments. Our Care Team, faithfully, sends out a weekly update on these needs. If you haven't already done so, request to have your name added to <prayer@myconnections.church>.

Now, as we look forward to our Fall season, and increase in activities, please pray for Pastor George, our Worship Team, our staff, our small groups, our outreach to Sand Creek Elementary School, our neighboring Denver Academy, outreach to our neighborhoods, and so much more as listed in this Newsletter, and beyond.

Our Great God says,

"I have loved you with an everlasting love"

Jeremiah 31:3

Let us go forth and share that love with others.