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Save the Date

- The Nest-Tuesday,
January 8 at 7:00 pm
- Prayer-Tuesday,
January 22 6:30 pm
- Men's Retreat-
January 25-27
- Houston trip-
February 16-23

Happy New Year

As I am writing it certainly feels like January right now. As we move into this new year consider participating in some of these opportunities for prayer, study and fellowship.

Prayer

The Prayer Team invites you to join them Sunday, January 6 and Sunday, January 20 from 9-9:45 am in the prayer room where they pray for our church's needs.

Women's Bible Study

This will begin Monday, January 7 at 6:00 pm and Tuesday, January 8 at 9:00 am. Contact Mary Noggle for details: 920-735-9971

Men's Bible Study

Wednesday mornings at 6:00 am.

All Church Annual Meeting

Sunday January 20 right after the worship service.

Men's Retreat

January 25-27 at Camp Lake Lundgren. Plan to join with other men for fun, fellowship and teaching. It is a great time away for renewal and a perfect way to start your year. Contact Marv Schauland for details.

Awana

Wednesdays at 6-7:30. All children are welcome.

Youth Group

Wednesdays at 6:00 pm.

Youth goes to Districts January 4-6. Please pray for this time that they will be strengthened and encouraged in their faith and in their relationships with one another.

Opportunities



Discipleship Notes

Our joyous Christmas season has come and gone and the new year is quickly approaching. The enjoyment of the celebrating our Savior's birth is always one of the highlights each year! However, surveys also indicate that it's often a time of anxiety, fear, and loneliness.

While usually I don't make New Year resolutions, I do look ahead to what I hope to accomplish. At the top of my list is my desire to grow more mature in my walk with Christ. Similar to making resolutions, we should recognize that it's usually easier to set an expectation and more challenging to accomplish. In writing this monthly growth article I plan to help each of us to do just that by concentrating on the Gospel—so let's get started.

I thank the Apostle Paul for frequently reminding us about what it means to be "in Christ." As Christian believers and followers of Christ, we should realize we are "in Christ." because the Holy Spirit has taken residence in each of us. Please read Ephesians 1:1—13 and count the number of times Paul mentions our position in Christ. You're right, ten times. If you missed any try to go back and re—read these verses: 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, & 13. Also, I suggest reading the rest of Ephesians 1 because it's a powerful explanation of Christ's authority. Everything we have is the result of our relationship with Christ and His Spirit. Whenever you become anxious, fearful, or lonely, remember you are not alone. You are 'in Christ.' Let's have a glorious year in Christ.

God Bless,

Tom Deason

Discipleship Ministry Team Leader

Women's Bible Study

January 7 we will begin "Digging Deeper Into The Ten Commandments" by Chip Ingram. We meet Monday nights from 6-7 and Tuesday mornings from 9-10.

Contact Mary Noggle for details- 920-735-9971.

MISSION UPDATE

We have 12 people going to Texas February 16-23 to help with Harvey Relief. Please pray that our hearts are prepared and the team members and their families remain healthy. The team members are: Marv Schauland, Alan and Marilyn Cable, Yon Abel, Larry Bangart, Katrina VanStippen, Chris Matula, Tim and Sue Diestler, Jeff Davis, Amy Ledin and Brett Cast.

Houston Relief also is in need of **Lowes, and Home Depot Gift cards**. If you are willing to donate a gift card, they can be placed in the offering box. Please write the amount on it. Thank you!!

Mission box for the month of January is in need of baby wipes for Mother and Unborn Baby Care. Please place these contributions in the box near the water fountain.

Opportunities



It may be snowing outside but come on in and join us for

THE NEST

Tuesday, January 8 at 7:00 pm

Warm up with inspiration, treats and fellowship

All women are welcome

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, January 5

7:30 at

Golden Corral, Grand Chute

Join us for great food and encouragement



Elders' and Team Leadership Meeting

Tuesday evening, January 22 6:30

This will be a special prayer meeting and everyone in the church is invited to attend. If possible, please make time to join in this opportunity to pray with our church leaders.



Sunday January 20

Immediately following the church

Join us for the annual congregational meeting. Members and attendees are welcome. There will be voting for a new Elder, a financial report and an update on the state of the church.

Lunch will be served prior to the meeting.

Christmas Tea

We gathered, we ate, we sang, and were inspired. Thank you to all who hosted the beautiful tables, cooked the wonderful lunch and baked all those goodies!



18 tables were filled with women who were encouraged to support one another with the words:

"Fix another's queen's crown without telling the world it was crooked."



Parents what an awesome privilege you have! As a parent, you get to be the first person to introduce your child to our heavenly Father and Creator. You are the very first messenger of His amazing truth and love. You can start off with simple truths about God:

- God made everything,
- The Bible is true,
- When we pray we are talking to God...

Thank you for letting us walk beside you and also share simple truths with your child.

The Youth enjoyed fellowship and a lot of laughter at their Christmas Party on December 12. Sundays they use The Gospel Project and Wednesdays they continue with the AWANA Witness Series. Districts are January 4-6 and we have 12 youth going. This is a great time to gather with youth from all over the state and be encouraged.

The Christmas program was a great success. Everyone did so well. It was a great opportunity to tell the Christmas story. Thank you everyone.

AWANA Schedule

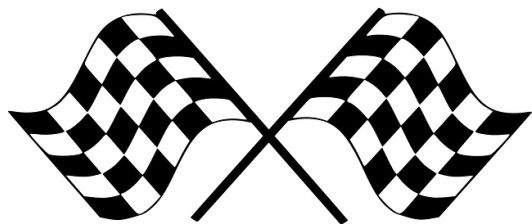
January 2-Pajama Night (wear your pjs)
January 9-Regular Club (wear your uniform)
Pick up Your Grand Prix car
January 16-Hawaiian Night
January 23-Topsy Turvy Night (inside out, backwards, upside down)
January 30-Regular Club (wear your uniform) Leader Appreciation Night

AWANA

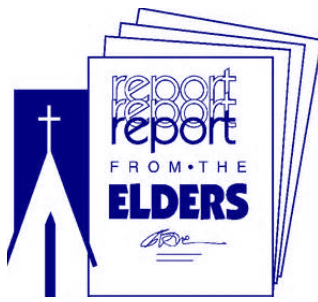
In December we had two special nights; Undercover Night and our Christmas Party. The AWANA kids and leaders came in some intriguing and mysterious disguises for Undercover Night. For the Christmas Party they came dressed as characters from the nativity. It was a great way to end December.

January will have lots of fun activities, including getting and designing the Grand Prix cars. There will also be opportunities to share what they are learning and to show appreciation to the wonderful leaders we have this year.

Check out the schedule on the left to see what's coming.



The Grand Prix is coming! Be ready to cheer on the AWANA kids on Saturday, February 23 at 10:00 am.



*As we pray to our
God and Father
about you, we think
of your faithful
work, your loving
deeds, and the
enduring hope you
have because of our
Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Thessalonians 1:3*

Elder's Report

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, January 20th. That's the day for the ACEFC annual meeting. It will be held right after church and the Packers were kind enough to not give us any reason to rush home to turn on the playoffs.

This is a meeting for both church members and non-members. Even if you are not a member we will be discussing items that will affect you and your family so we encourage everyone to attend.

We will present our budget for our 2019 fiscal year. An Elder candidate, whom we are very excited about, accepted the nomination and will be voted on. And we will have a discussion about where we see God leading our church in the coming year.

One of the main emphases of the Elder board this past year has been prayer. We meet at least two times each month and one of those meetings is devoted to prayer...prayer for individuals, prayer for ministries, and prayer for the wisdom to lead this church in the way God would have us go. Much prayer has gone into the vision for our church and we would like you to be part of the discussion as we present that at our annual meeting.

Please make plans to attend!

Lynn

Regular Church Office Hours

Closed Mondays

Tuesday 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Wednesday 1:30 pm-7:30 pm

Thursday and Friday 10:00 am-4:00 pm





Some “Reflections” from Pastor Greg

Celebrating the Blessings & Benefits of Being Brothers & Sisters in Christ!



A couple months ago I started writing my article for the newsletter by searching among my resources of sermon illustrations and introductions for a good “lead—in.” I wanted to write about “encouragement” and with each quote or comment, I found myself becoming increasingly discouraged with what I was reading. It seemed that most quotes which were intended “to encourage others to encourage others” were approaching the idea from the wrong perspective—from a negative slant.

This article is also about encouragement and this time I didn’t take the time to search for a lead—in. I simply took a look at some scripture passages that described the excitement and enthusiasm that characterized the Early Church and reflected on what gave these first century followers of Christ that genuine sense of hope and determination. Here is a small sampling of what I found. →

Much like what happens throughout our world today, the Early Church faced some extreme situations and circumstances due to persecution about their Christian beliefs and values—it could easily be argued that what they faced was in some ways more challenging than what we experience. But it’s almost impossible to make an accurate comparison—and it’s also a waste of time. What we need to recognize is that God’s Word repeatedly warns us that persecution is part of the program—if we have personally placed our trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior, **God has called us out of the darkness and into His Glorious Light.** But those who have not experienced God’s mercy, grace and love in a life—changing manner don’t have the capacity to understand exactly what has brought us to this unique set of views and values.

So—with this in mind, our discussion could go in many different directions and could focus on several topics. But what I want to say in a very specific way is this: ***As authentic followers of Christ, we’re members of God’s family of faith and we need each other’s encouragement.*** Our society and culture doesn’t understand what makes us tick and frequently they’ll use their lack of understanding against us. They’ll call us names and accuse us of being “phobic” and “crazy” and many other identifications that I’d rather not write or express.

The Elders have determined that we want 2019 to be a year of ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT at Appleton Community Evangelical Free Church!

Please join us in this desire by:

1. Looking to ways to celebrate the benefits and blessings we enjoy from being members of God’s family of faith.
2. Focusing as much as possible on what’s positive through expressions of gratitude and appreciation for one another and by praying for our church ministry and members/attenders on a consistent basis.
3. Being ambassadors for Christ and our church family by prayerfully seeking opportunities to tell others that God loves them and sent His Son into the world to save us from the penalty and problem caused by sin.

—from various selected portions of Acts & 2 Corinthians 1

Acts 2 They were devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship with one another through sharing meals and prayer gatherings. Great reverence for God came over everyone ... Every day they continued to gather ... praising God and showing concern for everyone’s best interests. And the Lord was adding to their number because more people were being saved.

Acts 4 When they prayed, the building was shaken, and they were all empowered by the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God’s Word boldly. Those who trusted the Lord were unified in one heart and mind. ... With great power the apostles were giving testimony about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all.

2 Corinthians 1 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, Who comforts us in all our challenges so we can pass that along by encouraging others who are also facing struggles. ... And our hope for you is steadfast because we recognize that whenever we mutually reach out with God’s encouragement, our fellowship with one another grows sweeter and sweeter. (This is an interpretive translation of these passages.)

As always, with praise for His grace and prayer for His glory, Pastor Greg

Our Mission here at Appleton Community EFC is to lead all people in a growing relationship with Christ.

Growing together in Christ we value:

Biblical Truth

We depend on the Bible as our source of authority in what we believe, what we teach, and how we live. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Worship

We believe that we are created by God to worship Him. Therefore, we live in worshipful response to God's character and activity. (Psalm 86:11)

Prayer

We believe that daily prayer is essential in the life of a believer and as such we pray with expectancy knowing that God is actively involved in our world. (Colossians 4:2)

Evangelism

We believe in sharing the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ with honesty and humility. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Fellowship

We believe that accountability, caring and a sense of belonging are essential for each believer to grow in their relationship with Christ. (Philippians 2:1-4)

Encouragement

We believe we are responsible for caring for and encouraging one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)



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