

April

“Look! The winter has passed, the winter rains are over and gone. The flowers are springing up, the season of singing birds has come.”
 Song Of Solomon 2:11-12

He IS risen! Hallelujah!

Prayer

The Prayer Team invites you to join them Sunday, April 7 and Sunday, April 21 from 9-9:45 am in the prayer room where they pray for our church needs.

Men’s Breakfast

Saturday, April 6 at 7:30 am at the Golden Corral in Grand Chute. Join us for great food and fellowship.

Weekend Serving Trip to Lac Courte Oreilles Indian Reservation

April 26-28. This is a great opportunity to serve. Contact Tim or Sue Diestler for details.

Ongoing Opportunities

Women’s study of Ephesians Meets Monday nights at 6:00 or Tuesday mornings at 9:00.

Men’s Study Wednesday mornings at 6:00.

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

Youth meets every Wednesday at 6:00 pm.

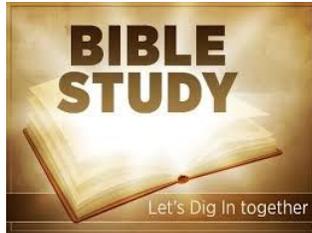
Inside this issue

Opportunities2
 Easter Services3
 Elders Report4
 Youth & Children’s Ministry.....5
 A Word From Pastor Greg.....6
 Missionary Page.....7

Save the Date

- Thursday, May 2- National Day of Prayer

Opportunities



Join us every Sunday morning at 9:00 as we dig into God's Word. We meet in the large room off the Gathering Area.

Everyone is welcome.

Men's Breakfast Saturday, April 6 at the Golden Corral in Grand Chute. We will begin at 7:30 am and be done around 9:00 am. This is a time of sharing and getting to know one another better. All men are invited to join us. Contact Marv Schauland 920-450-2698 for more information.

Men's Breakfast



Mission Opportunities



We are once again going to the Lac Courte Oreilles Indian Reservation April 26-28. We will be leaving Friday afternoon/early evening and returning Sunday late afternoon. We will be working on various projects on the reservation on Saturday. Cost is \$50 per person. Please contact Tim and Sue Diestler for more information. diestlerts@aol.com or 851-3104.

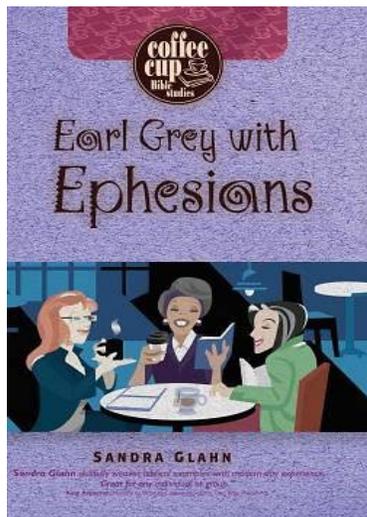
Women's Ongoing Study

We are studying
Ephesians

We meet Mondays at 6
pm or Tuesdays at 9 am.
All women are welcome.

Grab your Bible and
join us.

You are NOT too late!



New Collection Schedule

Due to some redundancy the Donation Board is due for an upgrade. The changes will be as follows.

December-January: St. Joes Food Pantry

February-March: The Family, Help For Homeless

April-May: Child and Unborn Ministries

June-July: LOC and the Shack

August-September: Pillars

October-November: Christmas Child Gift Boxes

Details are on the bulletin above the Donation Box.

The Missions Team thanks you for the generosity you regularly demonstrate. The Donation Box is filled and we are able to bless others in our community that need the help.

Easter Services



Order Easter Lilies

Order forms will be in the Sunday bulletin

Only \$7.00 each!

Plants will be in the sanctuary for Easter service and may be picked up after service that day.



The Nest

Tuesday, April 9

7:00 pm

It's Spring!

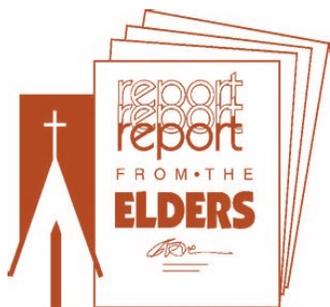
Join us for inspiration
and fellowship



Elders Report

“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:5 NIV



A little over a year ago we bought a large dining room table to accommodate our growing family. The table was beautiful, with a dark wood tabletop offset by a distressed white frame and complete with enough chairs to host our extended family. From the minute that it was fully assembled in our dining room I went to great lengths to preserve its original showroom condition. Coasters, placemats, plastic silverware for the girls...tarps (not really), I wanted to keep it looking as new as possible.

But here was the thing. If you looked closely at the table, you could see where the manufacturer had strategically placed marks, dents, and blemishes to give it a distressed look. All of this was done to try and blend what would be the inevitable scars that would be incurred by the table's use over its lifetime. As time passed and these scratches, fork marks, and dents occurred on the table's surface, I learned to relax, to let them happen. What I once would have looked at as imperfections, I now saw as the building of memories and additions to the character of the table. These were reminders of family dinners, birthday parties, early morning devotions, and discussions between Steph and I over coffee on weekends.

In many ways, we are like this table. We come into the world as pure and wide-eyed children, not yet marred by the daily concerns of life or the tragedies that so often befall all of us in different measure. As we grow older, we sometimes try to mask our hurts and cover up our scars in order to appear as something we are not or to show the world that we have everything together. Christ sees through all of this and through all of this He loves us even more. Not only does He love us as we are, He took the full burden of our scars, our imperfections, our wrongs, whether self-induced or unfairly received, and brought them with Him to the cross. On that day when we stand before Him, all varnish will be removed, all sanded imperfections stripped and displayed in full measure, and if we have made the choice to allow him to be King of our heart, He will lovingly welcome each one of us into His open arms. It is this kind of love that makes me look upon my own flaws, my own struggles, in short, my own sins, and bow in complete humility to the grace given by Christ.

Justin

"THE CHRISTIAN DOES NOT THINK
GOD WILL LOVE US
BECAUSE WE ARE GOOD,
BUT THAT GOD WILL MAKE US GOOD
BECAUSE HE LOVES US."
C.S. Lewis

Youth and Children's Ministry

What's Happening in Children's and Youth Ministry...

Lil' Sprouts: God made the Trees and Flowers.

Sprouts: Easter Lesson. A few weeks ago the Sprouts were introduced to the Wordless Book (The Gospel). Don't underestimate these little ones, God can use them to share the Gospel!

K-5 Evergreens: Will continue in the book of Numbers and the Easter lesson.

Y.A.M's: Sunday School will finish the book of Numbers.

Y.A.M's: Wednesday Night will continue using Witnesses, topics this month are Fear, Persecution, Sacrifice, and Love.

K-5 9 am Sunday School: Will continue in the New Testament.

Food for thought:

Introduction from the Family Devotional, Glorious God Glorious Gospel:

If we, as parents, are to pursue a God-glorifying vision for our children, we must make sure to carefully prioritize and maximize our children's spiritual instruction. While there is an important and God-ordained role for the wider body of Christ (the church) in biblical instruction, parents have the primary responsibility and the greatest opportunity to influence their children's spiritual development. See Deuteronomy 6:4-9. One thing that hinders parents in this regard is the pressure of competing demands on our time and energy. The challenge of priorities is often not the good versus the bad, rather, the good versus the better.

The last Sunday School class for Youth and K-5 will be May 19, they will resume in September.

If WE don't teach our children to follow Christ, the world will teach them not to.

Awana Schedule

- April 3-Regular Club
INCENTIVE NIGHT!
AWANA Store
- April 10-Awards
Practice Night (wear
your uniform and be
ready to practice,
*LAST NIGHT FOR
VERSES
- April 17-AWANA
Awards Night
Ceremony

AWANA

April is the last month for AWANA. It has been a great year with all our wonderful volunteers and clubbers. The AWANA Schedule is on the left for what's ahead in April.

Thank you everyone for all your help!

Please join our clubbers and leaders Wednesday, April 17 at 6:00 pm. There will be songs, awards, cake and fellowship.





Some “Reflections” from Pastor Greg



Liberty & Justice For All?

Over the past few days, weeks, months, and years (and yes, for longer than that!) there’s been a lot of chatter and concern about justice, discrimination, fairness, and equality. This article is simply intended to provoke some personal reflection and promote some biblical reality about God’s justice system.

Many times throughout my years as a pastor, I’ve had the privilege of teaching one of my favorite classes—“How to Study the Bible.” One of the most important parts of this class is learning to observe the biblical text carefully enough to recognize the context and details that enable us to accurately determine the meaning. There was an exercise I used to help teach this process—it was an FBI training film which the class would watch and then answer questions (many of them were tricky). It was interesting to hear the discussion among the students. Simply stated: everyone saw the events depicted within the film from a personal perspective or viewpoint. Some would assume things that weren’t included; others would focus on details that appeared, but weren’t relevant to the crime scene. This provided a lesson that relates to more than Bible study. Throughout life, we need to see how often our views and perspectives are affected by our own personal experiences and emotions. “Often we get in the way of being able to accurately understand the concerns and challenges of one another.”

According to some research being done, the stress and strain of our fast-paced society is making it harder for most people to perceive life from any other perspective than their own. For many reasons, we should find a solution to this “problem” because it’s a double-edged sword that’s causing damage from many angles. This is especially true in the area of justice, fairness, and equality. We live in an imperfect (sinful) society and it’s essential that we look to God and His Word to find the real meaning of justice and fairness. Because our society is imperfect, life is not fair and equality is not possible on this side of heaven/eternity. (It’s impossible to fully cover this topic in a short article—it’s not even possible to cover it in a year’s worth of articles!) But we can introduce the foundation by noting what Romans 3:21–26 says (above). God’s justice system places a strong emphasis on the problem of sin and the goodness of His mercy, grace, and love. All of us are sinners and even though we don’t like to admit the full extent of how sin invades and influences our lives, we can and should acknowledge that:

1. **God is HOLY and is in no way the author or the cause of sin.**

2. **God is JUST and His holiness requires that sin is judged. Punishment is necessary.**

3. **People are all sinners and we aren’t able to “survive” the ultimate punishment for sin by paying for it ourselves.**

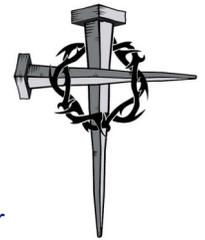
4. **God is GRACIOUS, MERCIFUL, and LOVING! He provided a JUST process to rescue people from this crisis.**

5. **God demonstrated and revealed His justice and righteousness by sending Jesus Christ to be the all-sufficient sacrifice Who took the punishment everyone deserved.**

6. **When (individually) we totally trust in Christ as our Substitute, God (the Judge) declares us to be righteous (forgiven & free from the guilt of sin).**

7. **Justice begins and ends at the Cross! It’s not about my perception of fairness—it’s all about God’s justice!**

Romans 3:21–26 But now (through the sacrifice of Christ), apart from the Law, the righteousness and justice of God have been revealed—even though both the Law and the prophets have previously provided a witness. In a very specific way, God’s righteousness and justice has been seen in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ by all who have believed and trusted. There is no distinction because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. But (those who believe) are justified (declared to be righteous) freely by His grace through the redemption that is only available in Jesus Christ, whom God publicly displayed as the only sufficient sacrifice for sin through faith. This clearly demonstrated God’s righteousness and justice, because God showed restraint toward sins previously committed and demonstrated at the proper time that He would be just as the justifier of anyone who trusts in Jesus Christ.



As we celebrate the Easter season this month, let’s point everyone around us toward God’s JUSTICE system!

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

Lonnie and Smith-Missionaries in Marseille France with EFCA ReachGlobal



All our best wishes for 2019, as we work together for the Kingdom of God! Thank you for your partnership with us! It has been a full year, but one in which we've seen God at work realizing dreams and transforming lives. We are so thankful for his grace to us!

(Be sure to see what's been happening by looking at the bulletin board- there are lots of pictures and updates)

Excuse me, may I ask you a question?

What's the best thing that's ever happened in your life?"

And so begins the conversation anytime, anywhere, with anyone - waiting for the metro, while standing in line, or spotting someone sipping a coffee alone. When one of the elders heard about the training for giving the one minute testimony Lonnie was asked to put it into place. Marc Greiner came down from Mulhouse the weekend of February 9 to do the training at the Merlan Church. Lonnie finds it works in very well with looking for persons of peace in the city as a part of everyday life. As you might expect, the responses vary - - from "no" to "I can't think of anything good that's ever happened to me." Several to date have also led to some very interesting conversations about knowing God.

Prayer and Praise:

- Thank the Lord with us for the additional \$200/ month that has been pledged so far toward our shortfall. We continue to trust the Lord for our needs.
- Praise the Lord for the moments we were able to share together as a church family during the month of December: eating together, sharing our hearts, worshiping together and welcoming not-yet-believers into our midst.
- Thank the Lord for members of the local community who came to the Christmas service at the Merlan on December 23rd and who stayed for the Christmas meal!
- Pray for our Christian university students at the Merlan, that they will be strong in their faith and not give in to the temptations of the world nor the dictates of their culture but follow Jesus Christ.
- Continue to pray for Josué and Dorine whose baby girl, Elina, passed from this life shortly after her birth last December.
- Pray for a couple in our church that continue to experience difficulty in their marriage.
- Praise the Lord that about 15 people were trained in sharing their testimony and for the good contacts they had on the street as they went out afterwards. Truly an encouragement to all!
- Pray for new opportunities to share the gospel here in Marseille in 2019!

We will be in the U.S. for Home Assignment March 13 - July 9. Our daughter, Katharine, and Tony are expecting the arrival of their baby boy the end of March and Nicolas will graduate from Gordon College mid-May. Since Olivia is not in a formal schooling program at this time, but is concentrating on health issues it seemed good to be on hand for these exciting events in the lives of our children and a perfect time to extend our stay and visit you. Lonnie has been busy working out the scheduling as time permits with our 22 churches and 44 individual supporters - - thank you for responding in a timely manner when his e-mail hits your in-box! We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible!

Praying blessing on you and your loved ones, and with all our thanks -

Lonnie and Debbie Smith
EFCA - ReachGlobal

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

Growing together in Christ we value:

prayer
encouragement
biblical truth
evangelism
worship
fellowship

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)

We're on the Web!
applefreechurch.org

Appleton Community Evangelical Free Church
2490 West Capitol Drive
Appleton, WI 54914
Phone
920-735-9971

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

