

Church Vision for the Year

“Fill My Cup Lord”



Inside this issue

Church Calendar for October.....2
Updates & Opportunities.....3
Children’s/Awana.....4
Elders Report.....5
Women’s Ministry, Amy Pankow.....6
Youth.....8-9
Church Happenings.....10-13
A Word from Pastor Greg.....14
Missionary of the Month.....15



Christmas Tea Is Coming

Save the Date

See page 3 for more information!



Operation Christmas Child

See page 3 for more information. Boxes and instructions will be given out Sunday October 15 thru collection day which is Sunday November 12.



October 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lord's Supper 6-8 p.m. Youth Group	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship 6:00 p.m. Elders Meeting	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10 a.m. Women's Bible Study		La Courtes Oreilles La Courtes Oreilles	La Courtes Oreilles
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
La Courtes Oreilles 6-8 p.m. Youth Group	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10 a.m. Women's Bible Study		5 p.m. Youth Fall Fest	Youth Fall Fest
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Youth Fall Fest "Let's Do Lunch" No Youth Group	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship 6:30 p.m. Christian Ed. Meeting	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10 a.m. Women's Bible Study			7:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
6-8 p.m. Youth Group	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10 a.m. Women's Bible Study			
29	30	31				
6-8 p.m. Youth Group	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship				

Updates and Opportunities



SAVE THE DATE: HANGING OF THE GREENS CHRISTMAS 2023

This year we plan to decorate our church for Christmas as a church-wide event on **Sunday, November 19**, after the service. This will include a **lunch** for those who participate along with activities for the children who take part, as well as, the all-important **Packers game on wide-screen TV at noon**. Save the date and stay tuned for more updates.



The Nest

Ladies, join us the 2nd Tuesday each month for the Nest. It's a time to gather, share, create and be encouraged. The first meeting will be Tuesday, October 10 at 7:00 p.m. at church. Join us for icebreaker games, treats, and fellowship! If you have any questions, please reach out to Shay Legg.



Operation Christmas Child

As we draw near to Thanksgiving please remember those children who are very needy and have never heard of Jesus! Fill a shoe box or a box from OCC with small toys, school supplies, or personal hygiene items and OCC will add a brochure about Jesus in their own language. They will have an opportunity to attend "The Greatest Journey" Bible study to learn even more about Jesus! You can also fill a box on line at [Build Your Shoobox Online! - Operation Christmas Child](http://BuildYourShooboxOnline!-OperationChristmasChild) (samaritanspurse.org). Please enclose \$10.00 for shipping and handling. **Boxes and instructions**

will be given out Sunday October 15 thru collection day which is Sunday November 12.

Christmas Tea—Save the Date



Ladies, you are invited to participate in our annual Christmas Tea! It will be held on **Saturday, December 2!** Come for fellowship, fun, food and a time of inspiration. Stay tuned for more information-- but in the meantime, please prayerfully consider if you'd be able to host a table! Contact Amy Pankow if you have questions for what this entails, or if you're interested in helping in a different way!

Men's Breakfast: Save the Date

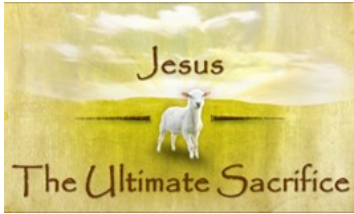
Save the date for Saturday, October 17 at 7:30 a.m. at church for our men's breakfast. All men are invited for a time of food, fun, and fellowship! Please contact Chris Matula or Chet Kamark with any questions!



Come and join us October 15 at Pizza Ranch (5450 W. Integrity Way) We have reserved a community room for after church so we can spend some time eating and enjoying fellowship with one another.



What's Happening in Growing God's Way Children's Ministry



This month the Sprouts and Evergreens will be learning from The Gospel Project that Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for sin, and He speaks to God the Father for us today.

Big Truths: Jesus is Our Perfect Prophet. Deuteronomy 18

The Sprouts will also watch a short 3-4 min. video of The Gospel Project lesson each week. Both age groups will be learning the same lesson at different levels.



Awana kicked off the 2023-2024 season with 80 clubbers! We are SO thankful for the volunteers who give of their time each week. A big shout out to all of our new leaders who joined us this year and to our club directors Ramsey (T&T), Shay (Sparks), and Donna (Cubbies). A lot of work goes into making sure our club runs smoothly and we couldn't do it without our amazing leaders! Please continue to pray for our club, for our leaders and

for the children that we serve each week.

This year we have chosen to raise money for the Africa Child and Schools Initiative and partner with Awana to reach 2 schools in Africa with our goal of \$1,300. This is such a unique opportunity to reach children in the PUBLIC (yes, public!) schools in Africa. For more information about this project, here is a YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/iSF48ftf79Y?si=rjqTRpl4EvRqkc8m>



Elders Report — Desmond VanHouten



Romans 12: 4-6 *For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts according to the grace given to each of us.*

As we have been studying Romans 12 over the past several weeks, it has been impressed upon me in my reflections that Christianity is a team sport. We have all been given a role through our personal talents/gifts and joined on to a team with other believers. As with other teams, we need to carry out our personal tasks while working together as a team to complete the common goal. In Christianity, that goal is to carry out God's will. Simply stated, we have been tasked to work together to glorify God through the way we live and by bringing other people into a relationship with Him.

Our position on the team is supported by the gifts and talents that God has blessed us with. We have all been blessed with spiritual gifts to carry out our purpose that God has laid out for us (Ephesians 2:10). Romans clearly states that we, as members of the body, have different functions according to our gifts. We should be excited to serve and be part of the team, using the gifts He has given us. Unlike in professional sports, we don't have bench players. God does not desire for believers to sit idly on the sideline, waiting for other members to make the play. Every member serves a critical function and is called on to be a contributor of the team.

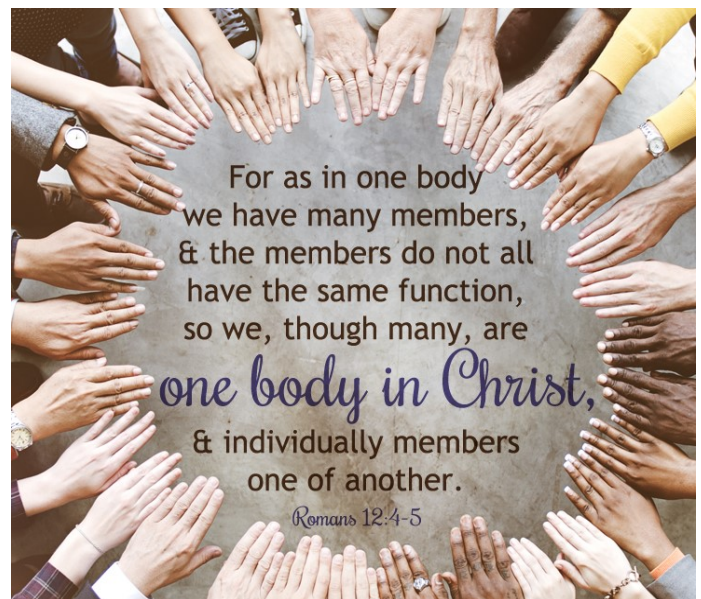
Success doesn't come without practice. Every team practices. Michael Jordan remains arguably one of the best basketball players of all times. While he exhibited natural talents, he didn't fully rely on the gifts he was given. Michael Jordan put in countless hours of practice to continue to refine his skills and improve. As Christians, we need to continue to refine our skills and practice. We need to be in God's Word, praying continuously, and fellowshiping with other believers to continue to grow our skills so we are prepared for game time.

Coaches play a critical role in helping set the strategy for the team, ensuring everyone is aligned with the common goals, and upskilling the players. As a Detroit Lions fan, we have clearly seen the role that coaches can play. During the short Matt Patricia era, the morale of the team was terrible. The players were not enjoying the game and the team was not unified in a common goal. The Lions record reflected the chaos of the coaching staff. When Dan Campbell was hired, he helped to change the culture. The team started to work together and has outperformed expectations. Just as with sports teams, churches can reflect the leadership. Church leaders need to set the strategy for which ministries should be supported (what plays are being run), disciple the members (lead team members through practices) and encourage the members. Bad coaches can bring down good teams, just like good coaches can elevate mediocre teams.

Ego can destroy great teams. A trend over the past decade in the NBA has been to build teams with several superstars. When the stars are more interested in their personal stats instead of winning as a team, the team ends up losing. It is important that we reflect on why we are serving. Are we serving to accomplish the team goal (glorify God and bring others into a relationship with Him) or are we serving to bring ourselves glory? If we are looking for praise or to always be the star player, we should pray to change our heart and focus on glorifying God.

As a Christian, being on the team should excite us. We have been given skills, talents, and the ability to work together to fulfill our purpose on Earth – Glorifying God. We are called to be all in, aligning to the vision of the Church, and serving where we see the need. When we work together, we are able to accomplish the goal and are part of a winning team.

Desmond VanHouten



Dear Women of Faith,

Autumn is here – in all its splendor. The lingering glow of sunlight is fading earlier, crisp mornings are creeping in, mums are teeming in full glory, splashes of yellow and orange are bedecking our trees, and dormant sweaters are being revived for another long stay...

As our thoughts begin to turn to harvest time, cooler days, and the cozy gatherings ahead, I want you to reflect on the importance of fostering intergenerational relationships.

Did you know that there is a difference between the terms *multi-generational* and *intergenerational*? A church body can have multiple generations present, but each generation must intentionally interact and intersect with those from another generation (rather than remaining siloed, for example) in order to be considered intergenerational!

I'm so encouraged that multiple generations are present within our church body – it's one of my favorite things about ACEFC! It provides us with ample opportunity to connect in meaningful ways with others who are in seasons and life stages besides our own – those perspectives and interactions can be so lifegiving and necessary to help us see beyond ourselves or current circumstances.

"So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." ~Romans 12:5

Dr. Will Whittaker says, "As we live side by side, struggling to love each other more than ourselves, we have the opportunity to learn and grow with each other as we move on our journey of faith— each person in the family with strengths and weaknesses helping [one another] when they are weak— and they in turn reciprocate. We were made to live together, to be shaped by one another... not simply co-existing, but together— in the messy times and the beautiful. Leaning on each other as the intergenerational church."

I'm passionate about fostering intergenerational relationships. I find it fascinating that we're always both the older and the younger woman that Titus 2 talks about—we all have examples of women in our lives who are older than us. I want to encourage and remind our older women – "older" whether by age or stage – that our younger women NEED you. I also want to challenge each of us, even the teen girls, to think of ourselves as the older woman who can be an example to someone younger than us.

Women need others of various ages and stages in their lives. They need older women to support, challenge, gently correct, or encourage them:

... as they face isolation among their peers for going to church or liking "Jesus music"

... as they agonize over the piles of homework, pressure of exams, or the performance demands of a new job

... as they sift through singleness or purity in dating

... as they seek to prayerfully put a new husband's needs above their own and as they understand what it means to die to self and become a helpmeet

... as they suffer through the sickness or loss of a precious child or pregnancy

... as they wipe dirty faces or struggle to find time to go to the bathroom, much less study their Bible

... as they struggle to get dinner on the table even after using all their coupons

... as they discern the best schooling options for their family in a tide of polarizing views

... as they struggle through a stagnancy in their marriage or seek counsel on how to communicate better with their husband after years of building invisible barriers

... as they learn how to be an empty-nester or try to rediscover their interests

... as they receive a shocking diagnosis

... as they navigate the paperwork and new routines of retirement or the healthcare system

... as they grieve the loss of a life-long spouse or friend

... as they perhaps outlive their dearest friends or family, and question why they haven't been taken to Glory yet?

Can you relate to any of these seasons currently? Have you already endured them previously? No matter what age or stage we relate to the most: we need each other, we have value, and God gives us to one another to speak life and wisdom into our relationships.

Rejoicing, comforting, advising, partnering, supporting, challenging, loving, helping... whether you are 83, 43, 23, or 13... we are always an example to the younger women in our lives.

I'm praying that all of us would surrender, serve, and savor every moment of Life with Christ together.

Grace as you grow,

Amy

Children's Church



Church Happenings—Youth Group

Youth Group—Scavenger Hunt



2nd Place Team



1st Place Team



Church Happenings—Youth Group



YOUTH GROUP

If you are in middle or high school, join us Sunday nights from 6pm-8pm. We meet at church, unless otherwise posted.

WHAT WE DID LAST MONTH

September was a short month in terms of Youth Group as there was no Youth Group the Sunday prior to Labor Day. Marshall Legg made a special appearance to help us finish off our study of Ephesians and he brought a unique perspective with his military background. We took one Sunday to read through and talk about the book of Jude - which felt like the perfect introduction into our next study: Cold-Case Christianity. Christianity could be defined as a "cold case": it makes a claim about an event from the distant past for which there is little forensic evidence. Students will be challenged to assess the evidence and eyewitnesses behind our Christian beliefs using principles employed by investigators. We hope through this study, it will help them develop a more reasonable, evidential Christian faith.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

Date	Time	Location	Event
Sunday, October 1st	6:00pm-8:00pm		Regular Youth Group
Sunday, October 8th	6:00pm-8:00pm	Church	Regular Youth Group
Friday, October 13th	5:00pm	Mission Church	Leave for Fall Fest
Sunday, October 15th	Afternoon	Church	Return from Fall Fest
Sunday, October 15th			No Youth Group
Sunday, October 22th	6:00pm-8:00pm	Church	Regular Youth Group
Sunday, October 29th	6:00pm-8:00pm	Church	Regular Youth Group

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The [DISTRICTS Youth Conference](#) is held every January with the purpose of bringing youth groups from the [Evangelical Free Church of America's \(EFCA\) Forest Lakes Districts \(FLD\)](#) together to grow in their relationship with Christ. This year it is being held January 12-14, 2024. The goal of this conference is to create an environment through large group rallies & seminars where students can experience God together and have adult leaders who can walk alongside their students as they go home.

Student Spotlight: Alejandro Pagan Vega

Grade: 10



How long have you been attending youth group at ACEFC? I've been attending youth group for about 4 years.

What do you see yourself doing in 5 years? I see myself studying engineering and continuing my volleyball career.

What do you see yourself doing in 10 years? In 10 years I hope to see myself working and visiting family all of the time.

Favorite thing to do in your free time? My favorite thing to do in my free time is video games and listening to music.

Favorite food: My favorite food is anything Italian and my mom's bacon wrapped meatloaf.

What is your favorite memory from Youth Group? My favorite Youth Group memory was attending districts 2 years ago - sitting in the hallway and playing card games and talking with everyone.

If you could have a super power what would it be and why? If I could have a super power it would be teleportation so I could travel anywhere in the world.

Tell us what God has been showing you in the past year? In the past year, I've been dealing with a lot of anxiety and just getting frustrated all the time with how I was doing spiritually and just with everyday tasks that caused a lot of stress. So I began doing devotions as often as I could while. While reading, it taught me how to just be patient with things. I always try to rush, but it also, just not to worry about everything. He's shown me what it's like to have the Lord with me in my spiritual walk and has made me grow closer to Him everyday.

Church Happenings

Women's Brunch



Church Happenings

Sunday Morning Devo's with Lisa and 3-5th Grade Girls



Church Happenings

All Church Kick Off—Fill My Cup Lord



Church Happenings

Women Making Blankets for Adult/Teen Challenge—Round 2



Some Prayerful Thought's from Pastor Greg

“Would You Like A REFILL? “Well, That Depends ...!”

The theme for our Annual Ministry Year Kick–Off is “**Fill My Cup, Lord!**” and is asking “**Is Your Cup Empty? Are You Tired? Is Your Fire Burning Low? Come Refresh, Renew, Recharge!**” A recent Sunday announcement was made prior to our worship service placing an emphasis on this event and these questions seemed to *resonate*, *reverberate*, and *rattle* the walls. Many, if not almost everyone, seemed ready to admit that *rest* is needed, but very simply stated, the pace of life doesn't seem to allow us to *retreat* long enough for us to gain the *refreshment*, *renewal*, and *recharge* that's appears to be desperately needed.

With that being said, I'd like to attempt to provide a couple biblically–based *recommendations* and *reminders* that might give some *relief*, leading to some sort of *remedy*.

1} In 1 John 5:21, we find one of the most unique closing statements for a book of the Bible. Rather than giving a benediction, blessing, or pleasant sounding farewell, John concluded this powerful letter written to the Church with this straightforward and bold instruction, “**Little children, guard yourselves against idols!**” Throughout this letter, John covered several important topics and some have suggested that the most emphatic ideas in 1 John are seen in two sections. First, in 2:15–24 where he warns against becoming too attached to what this world offers us. Especially notice 15–17 (Don't fall in love with the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For what this world offers, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. This world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.) The second section includes most of chapters 3–5 where John reviews what Jesus taught His disciples in the Upper Room on the night before He was crucified. The emphasis here is loving one another in the same way God has loved us, especially since God is the author of what love really is. Love isn't a thing, it's an intentional action! *So, why did John's final instruction warn us about idolatry? And what's the relationship to finding refreshment? If we're willing to look at this with a teachable heart, we should realize that we are creatures of habit. We often develop a regular routine to recharge our spiritual batteries, or refill our reservoirs (cups). It's helpful to ask ourselves or analyze what are we using to do this? Throughout my life, God has often taught me lessons that relate to the idols where I turn to relax. You've often heard me mention how sports has been both a good outlet and a not–so–good outlet for me. I could probably name some others, but I'll summarize by saying anything that might be a replacement for what only God can provide for us is dangerous!*

2} In Ephesians 4–6, Paul repeatedly reminds us to be careful in the way we walk. Obviously, he's not referring to the step–by–step strides we take in a literal way, but he is warning us about our step–by–step approach in dealing with the culture where we live. Please focus your attention on 5:15–17. (Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then don't become foolish, but always stop to discern what the will of the Lord is.) I'd like to zero in on the impact and importance of *making the most of your time, because the days are evil*. If and when we want our reservoirs refilled, it might be a good idea to ask ourselves and analyze how we're *investing* our time. Please note that I intended to say *investing*, rather than *using* or *spending*. Every one of us has the same amount of time available each day. God gives us the freedom to decide what we should be doing, and His Word provides many guidelines and some specific guardrails that teach us about making wise investments with the precious moments God gives. Throughout my life, I've been taught many lessons by the Lord about time management. Since His Word is an excellent source for help in this area and prayer for wisdom is always essential, **setting time aside for Bible study and prayer should be a priority. With that in mind, we might also want to prayerfully observe where we can make the most eternal impact with the activities we're involved in doing. Maintaining a full cup might be a result of consistently seeking to do what the Lord has placed in front of us with a willing and watchful attitude. Again, noting the words in Ephesians 5:16, “making most of your time, because the days are evil.” Finally, remembering Romans 12:9 & 21, “Let your love be without hypocrisy; abhor (hate) what is evil; hang on tightly to what is good. Don't be conquered (overcome) by evil, but conquer (overcome) evil with good.”**

With prayer for God's glory and praise for His grace,

Pastor Greg



It's football season, the kids are in school and we are well underway with ministry at UGA.

Our summer was much-needed. Last semester was our busiest between discipling students, raising support, traveling to see supporters, Carrie and I each traveling for work and the kids' activities; it was a lot.

Since May, I kept in touch with a number of guys I disciplined last year - checking in on them and even doing some small studies. Some of them are now graduates, others will be returning this year and one (sob) transferred.

I have celebrated the return to Jamaica over the last month and we are slated to go back in April to hold more training camps to teach American

Football and share the Gospel. The NFL evidently liked what we did there in June and it's possible they will be even more involved in the future.

Lacrosse just wrapped up try-outs and a returner from last year asked me about joining the team small group which starts the first week of October. I love this time of year because there's a lot of unknowns and so much potential - you kind of anticipate what the Lord is going to do.

As I'm writing this Carrie is at a Cru conference in Minneapolis for all staff who serve as International Sending Coordinators. This continues to be a great role for her.

Please pray for us as we continue to work on raising additional support this year as well as for myself as I look to reach other club teams this year.

Thank you again for your continued support - we've very grateful.

Chris & Carrie Davis

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)



Appleton Community
Evangelical Free Church
2490 West Capitol Drive
Appleton, WI 54914

Church Office Hours
Closed Mondays
Tuesday—Friday
8:30 - 2:30

We're on the Web!
applefreechurch.org

