

Thursday, May 2, 2024  
National Day Of Prayer



See Opportunities on page 3



Rejoice in the  
LORD

A·L·W·A·Y·S

AGAIN I SAY

rejoice

PHILIPPIANS 4:4

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# Church Calendar

# May 2024



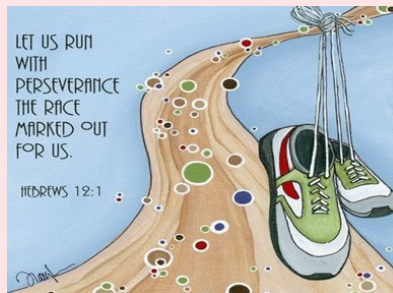
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10:a.m. Women's Bible Study	2  NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Spring Brunch for Daughters after church  6-8 p.m. Youth Group @ church	6:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study  10:a.m. Women's Bible Study			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
 6-8 p.m. Youth Group @ church	6:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Discipleship  6:30 p.m. The Nest Potluck	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study  10:a.m. Women's Bible Study  6:00 p.m. Elders Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Ministry Team Mtg.			Youth Group @ MacDonald's 5:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
"Let's Do Lunch"  No Youth Group	6:00 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			
26	27	28	29	30	31	
6-8 p.m. Youth Group @ church	 6:00 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			

# Updates and Opportunities



## National Day of Prayer

We'd like to encourage as many people as possible to participate in the National Day of Prayer, set for Thursday, May 2. **The church sanctuary will be open that day from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** for anyone who might be looking for a quiet place to pray. Also through much of the day, there will be Church members here to pray with you if that would be your desire.



As another encouragement for greater involvement, especially for those who might not be able to come to the church to pray, we're setting up a **Prayer Relay**. We have set up with Sign-up Genius and we're asking people to volunteer for 15 minute time slots (or longer if you desire to take more than one period of time). The Church Office will start the Prayer Relay by praying during the initial time slot and then the next person on the list will receive a phone call and the caller will pray briefly for that next person before hanging up. Each person on the Relay list will receive a call with a prayer, will pray for their time slot, and then will call the next person on the list and pray with them. There will be a list of prayer requests provided, but everyone is free to pray for whatever is on

their hearts. Please consider this an urgent call to pray for our families, our church, our schools, our work, and our country! Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to come together and pray!



Ladies, please join us for our **Spring Brunch** after the service on **Sunday, May 5th!** The focus of this time is **multigenerational fellowship**, with a special emphasis on **daughters** –bring your daughters, your granddaughters, your daughters-in-law, or just yourself, we are all someone's daughter! Amy Pankow will be sharing a couple thoughts on living as Daughters of the King, and there will also be a **short time of sharing**, updates and announcements in the ministry, and a **simple craft** (bookmark and bracelet-making!) to engage our youngest ladies (and the young at heart!).

## The Nest-Tuesday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m.



Join us Tuesday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m. for our final Nest until Fall. Bring a dish to share and join us as we celebrate the great fellowship we've had this past year. **All women are welcome.**



## Come and join us May 19 at Pizza Ranch (5450 W. Integrity Way).

We have reserved a community room for after church so we can spend some time with one another after our church service. This is an opportunity to enjoy fellowship with others from our church family.



Mark your calendars now with the dates for the rest of the year:

June 9

August 18

October 20

July 21

September 15

November 17

December 15

# Church Happenings—Children's Church & Awana



Our Awana year wrapped up in April with our annual Awards Night. This was an amazing night of children and leaders sharing the work that God has done through the Awana program. We had 5 Timothy Award recipients this year, including 3 clubbers who had been a part of our club for 9 years, starting in Cubbies. We also had a video Message from Cubbie Bear, Sparks and T&T lead us in some worship songs, we presented awards to the clubbers, and celebrated with some cake. It was a wonderful night! Check out our end of the year slideshow video here: [Awana 2023-2024](#)

We hope to see everyone back in the fall! Stay tuned for Awana Registration this summer!



## Elders Report—Dean Pankow



Are we there yet?

Greetings brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Many good things have been happening in our church this past month and I believe that many more are still to come. Just to name a few: we now have 3 more elders on the elder board, we have 225 new and very comfortable chairs in the sanctuary (with a big shout out to all who helped fund them and to those who helped put them in place) and we 5-6 new people looking to become members.

But we are still waiting for the results of the survey before committees and ministries can begin looking and planning forward again. So, are we there yet? Yes and no.

I can remember as a missionary in Cameroon trekking with my team into the grasslands of the area we were to start a new ministry. Our guides knew the way, but we new missionaries were worn out from the journey, hot, hungry, and very much out of our comfort zone. We, like the kids in the back seat of the car, were asking the guides “how much longer do we have to go?” The guides would just smile at us and say, “just a few more hills.” As much as we were eager to get to our new destination, we weren’t prepared for the effort to get there or for really knowing what we were going to do once we got there.

As a church we are almost at our new destination. The results of the survey should give us a good idea of what we as a church body and church leadership need to be doing to move forward again. It has taken some emotional, physical, and spiritual effort and trauma to get us to this point. We have even lost a few of the team on this arduous journey, but maybe we can pick them back up once we know what we are doing.

Are we as a church ready to take the steps and to do the work once we do reach our destination? Are we praying for God’s direction and help, as decisions come our way? Are we looking to see how we each can be part of the solution to answer the questions the survey results will bring us? And to use the gifts that God has given to each one of us for the building/ rebuilding of our church body?

We are just a few more hills away, but then the real work will begin.

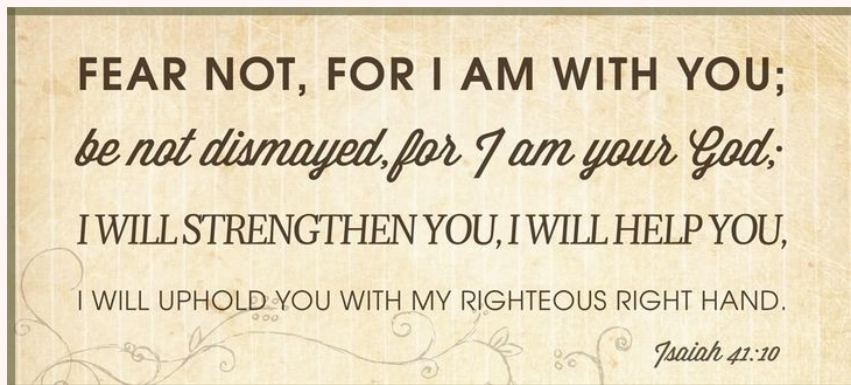
God in Isaiah 41:10 says “fear not for I am with you, be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you and I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

We are not alone in this effort to get our church back on its feet again. This is God’s church and Jesus is our head. He will direct us in the way He wants us to go, and He will empower us to do the work that needs to be done to get there. We just need to be ready and willing to help Him do it.

Yes, we are almost there.

In His Care,

Dean Pankow



### Count on Change

A recent study in the UK found that simple health habits, like having fruit with lunch or running before dinner, took about 66 days to become a routine. More complex behaviors take longer. New research is shedding light on how long it takes to solidify habits. Handwashing takes a couple of weeks, while going to the gym takes four to seven months, according to a recent study by Katy Milkman. “You can’t mindlessly go to the gym the way you mindlessly shampoo your hair,” says Milkman.

Has this ever happened in your life? Maybe you heard some inspiring new scientific data about mental or physical health or a new diet trend? Maybe you have felt convicted to spend more time in prayer? Maybe your completion percentage on that Bible App plan never even hit the double digits? You see, we only make the changes in life when we *understand the personal value*. Something that works for me may not work for you.

The reality is that God wants more from your life. He wants you to be successful in all the ways you desire to grow. According to a recent Gallup study between 43% and 49% of our Gen Z brothers and sisters do not feel what they do each day is interesting, important, or motivating (2024 Gallup, Inc). How would you feel if you knew (and believed!) that the God of the universe wanted a deeper relationship with you? Would that change your behavior? Would that change your sense of purpose? Well, you know He does. So what is stopping you from making those couple of changes you need to make? Yes, it will take time, and yes, you will fail but if you persevere God will do something new in you!!

Eph 4:20–24

[The way of the world] is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Pray that God will show you where you can grow. When you figure that out, write it down, put it on your fridge, and commit to making Spirit-led changes. Tell a friend to keep you accountable and ask several friends to pray for your success. You got this!

Pastor Andy

### Children's Church



Children are our future leaders!

Let's fill them with the love of Jesus!

Dear Sisters,

At the advice of a friend a while back, I've been trying to apply an insightful and helpful little **Take Two** rule when it comes to waiting on the Lord... When I'm tempted to take things into my own hands, or when I'm feeling strong emotions about something that's happened, I've been trying to pause and Take Two – two minutes, two hours, two days, two weeks, two months, two years. "Two" simply described the amount of time my friend resolved to wait before reacting or "jerking the wheel" of life too sharply.

The purpose of this practice is to encourage us to pause and make sure that we're *seeking God in prayer, listening to Him through His Word, walking by the Spirit, and giving Him time to work* before taking things into our own hands or making matters worse.

*The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. ~Lamentations 3:25*

The older I get, the more I realize what doesn't need my input – and what simply needs a chance to shift, blow over, and smooth out. Depending on the context, intensity, or time-sensitivity of the situation at hand, I've been trying to decide which "two" I need to take...

*Two minutes* – maybe a chance to calm down before responding to my child's fussy attitude is all that's needed. I need to check my attitude before I can correct another's! Sometimes a couple minutes is enough time to reset my heart before responding.

*Two hours* – to be patient when the house is messy and I'm frustrated that the afternoon got derailed... usually, two hours later, things don't seem as overwhelming as I initially felt them to be, whether by a perspective shift or by methodically tackling the most pressing things.

*Two days* – this might be the right choice in order to think and pray before responding to an irritating email. I need a little extra time to process my frustration, ask the Lord to help me be less offendable, pray over what's truly worth addressing, and write in a way that's both constructive and gracious.

*Two weeks* – the likely amount of time that I need to extend grace (usually to myself most of all!) as our family rhythm suffers during household sickness or while my husband is traveling. Other times it's patience for a heavy mood to shift, or for an answer to prayer in a relationship.

*Two months* – it'll probably take longer for me to see a bad habit weeded out of my own life, or those of my children. Or, to wait with expectancy for a bigger prayer to be answered.

*Two years* – to work on grieving through a loss, to recover from a painful situation, to reach a long-hoped-for milestone in motherhood or family life, to practice contentment with my home until we can save up for that big ticket item or upgrade, to finally understand the merit to someone's perspective or choices that I previously disagreed with or prematurely misjudged...

***Is there any area of life where you might want to Take Two?***

I hope some of these examples will encourage you to consider how you can Take Two in your own life as you find yourself waiting on the Lord. While we wait, may we pursue the Lord and anticipate His help and wisdom to meet us where we're at. *"For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him."* ~Psalm 62:5

*Your Sister,*

*Amy*

# Church Happenings—All-Church Potluck





# Church Happenings—The Nest



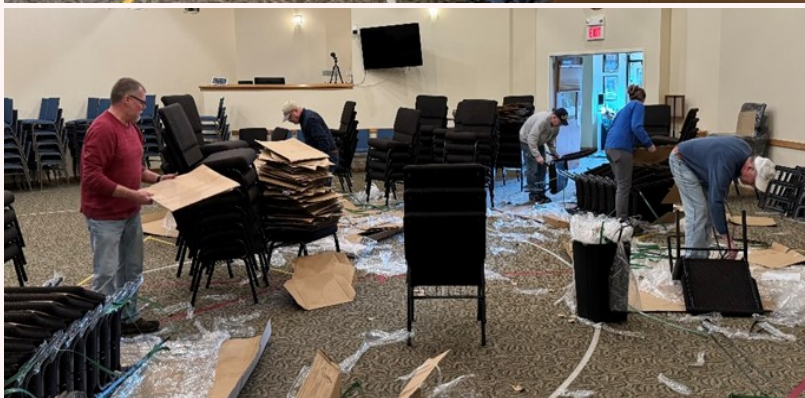
# Church Happenings—Easter 2024

Thank you so much to those who made Easter so memorable this year by bringing the empty tomb into our sanctuary . . . and then . . . making it disappear again. I cannot describe the depth of my gratitude! For in Him we live, and move, and have our being . .

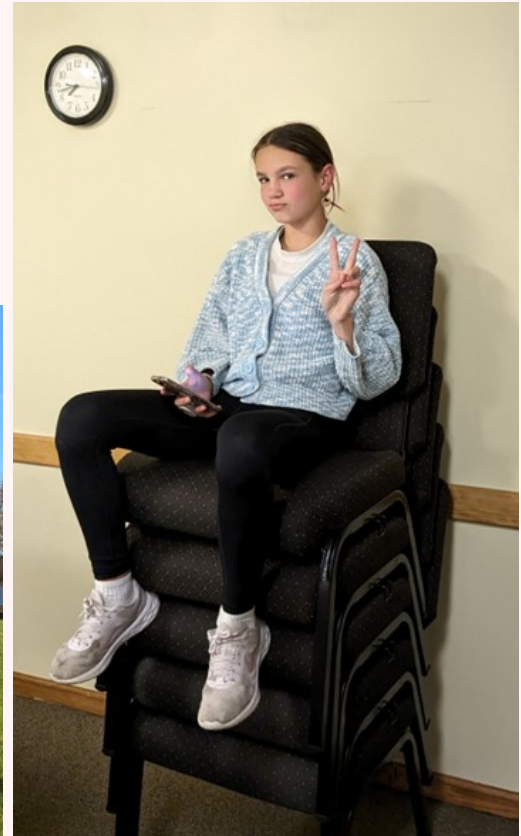
Gary Noggle



# Church Happenings—Quilts Delivered & New Sanctuary Chairs



# Church Happenings—Youth Group



# 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

We continued in the book of John and were able to discuss the lesson in a large and small group setting. We also had our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Mario Kart Tournament! The Sell family reigned as the Mario Kart Champions this year: Finn – 1<sup>st</sup> place, Elly – 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and Ethan 3<sup>rd</sup> place. An honorable mention goes to Ezra VanHouten for placing 4<sup>th</sup> and making it to the final championship game!

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

Date	Time	Location	Event
Sunday, May 5 <sup>th</sup>	6pm-8pm	Church	Regular Youth Group
Sunday, May 12 <sup>th</sup>	6pm-8pm	Church	Regular Youth Group
Saturday, May 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:30pm-9pm	The MacDonald's home	MacDonald's "Playplace" (dinner and fun)*
Sunday, May 19 <sup>th</sup>			No Youth Group
Sunday, May 26 <sup>th</sup>	6pm-8pm	Church	Regular Youth Group

\*Weather permitting. Otherwise we will meet at church.

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: HAILEY VANLINN



**Grade:** 6th

**How long have you been attending youth group at ACEFC?**  
5 months

**Favorite thing to do in your free time?** Watch TV, iPad

**Favorite Food:** Orange chicken from Panda with noodles.

**What is your favorite memory from Youth Group?** Fitting 29 cheese balls in my mouth.

**If a movie was made about your life, which actor would you like to play your role?** Adam Sandler because he's hilarious.

**What has God been teaching in the past year?** God has taught me that friends are like sugar and salt and that I can be friends with anybody at any age. Also, that I'm strong and can push through hard times – especially when I have friend drama. I can be myself and still be loved.



## *An Invitation for Prayer: Investing Time at the Throne of Grace!*



Each year on the first Thursday in May, we celebrate The National Day Of Prayer! In view of this, I'd like to focus some additional emphasis on the prayer by drawing everyone's attention to how we as a Church are encouraged to value prayer as one of our highest priorities. **“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.”**

Here are a few quotes that help to introduce what I'll be highlighting in this article:

“Any concern too small to be turned into a prayer is too small to be made into a burden.” —**Corrie Ten Boom**

“The greatest tragedy of life is not unanswered prayer, but unoffered prayer.” —**F.B. Meyer**

“We should consistently keep in mind that the power of prayer is in the One who hears it and not in the one who says it.” —**stated by too many people to name**

“Prayer should not be regarded as a duty which must be performed, but rather as a privilege to be enjoyed.”  
—**E.M. Bounds**

“Someone has said that the marks of a strong church are wet eyes, bent knees, and a broken heart. We'll never be powerful until we let God be God and jealously guard His honor.” —**Erwin Lutzer**

There are many biblical passages that teach us about the power and purpose of prayer. Some of my favorite ones include: **Philippians 4:6–7** “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” **Colossians 4:2–4** “Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.” **Hebrews 4:16** “Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” **Ephesians 6:18–20** “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” In reading and studying what **Nehemiah** wrote about what happened when he stood up, stood out, and stood strong against the evil that was holding back Israel from bringing glory to God, I'm deeply impacted by the high priority he placed on prayer to properly prepare for the all the challenges involved in that rebuilding project. So here are a few brief, but beneficial principles about prayer.

1} Our gracious Father in Heaven is always available to hear our prayers!

2} Prayer is a **privilege** that we enjoy once we've entrusted our lives to the Lordship of Jesus, our Savior. It's also a **protection** against the dangerous damage that we can face from being distracted by anxiety, worry, fear, and doubt. Prayer is intended by God to lead toward an assuring sense of **peace** that calms our minds.

3} Prayer should become a top **priority** for us before we begin to resort to something else by responding and reacting to something that has caused us concern. Too often we tend to try to work things out too quickly before we go into prayer mode!

4} One of the best ways to strengthen our prayer lives is to model our prayers after various passages in the Psalms that includes prayer, or what we read in the Apostle Paul's prayers in his letters. (Example: Ephesians 1 or Psalm 63 among many others.) Also, always pray for God's glory to be seen and His will to be done!

There aren't any people among us who aren't in need of prayer as we navigate through our contemporary culture!

**Praying for God's glory and praising Him for His grace,  
Pastor Greg**

# Church Happenings—Men's Breakfast



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)



We're on the Web!  
[applefreechurch.org](http://applefreechurch.org)



**Regular Church Office Hours**  
Closed Mondays  
Open  
Tuesday—Friday  
8:30 am – 2:30 pm

