

Great is the
Lord,
and Greatly to be
Praised!



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Church Calendar for September

September 2024

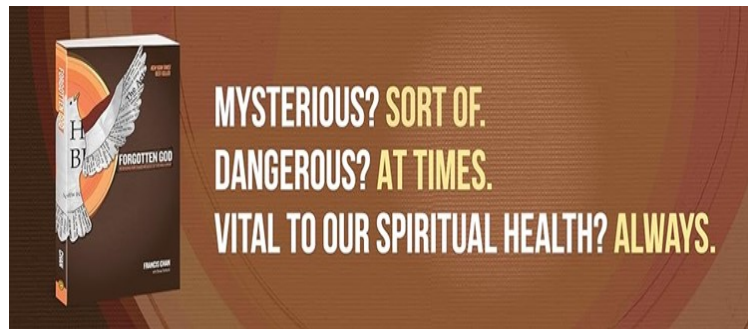


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No Youth Group		6:30 a.m. Discipleship 6 p.m. Elder's Mtg.	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
"Bible Sunday" Biblical Conflict Resolution after church 6-8 p.m. Youth Group @ Church		6:30 a.m. Discipleship	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 6-7:30 p.m. Awana			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
"Let's Do Lunch" No Youth Group	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study 6-8:30 pm Youth Group Skate Night	6:30 a.m. Discipleship 6 p.m. Elders Mtg.	6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10 a.m. Women's Bible Study 6-7:30 p.m. Awana			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Biblical Conflict Resolution after church 6-8 p.m. Youth Group @ Church	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 6-7:30 p.m. Awana			
29	30					
6-8 p.m. Youth Group @ Church	6 p.m. Women's Bible Study					

Updates and Opportunities



October 4th 6pm - 8pm
Join us for:
Worship, Games,
S'mores, Fellowship!
Bring your Lawnchairs
+ Beverages!



**MYSTERIOUS? SORT OF.
DANGEROUS? AT TIMES.
VITAL TO OUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH? ALWAYS.**

Ladies Fall Bible Study

"The world is not moved by love or actions that are of human creation. And the church is not empowered to live differently from any other gathering of people without the Holy Spirit. But when believers live in the power of the Spirit, the evidence in their lives is supernatural. The church cannot help but be different, and the world cannot help but notice."

Join us this Fall for a study of the Holy Spirit using *The Forgotten God* by Francis Chan. We will begin Monday September 16 at 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday September 18 at 10:00 a.m. Both meeting times will cover the same lesson so choose what works best for you. Cost is \$15.00. This will be a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the wonderful gift of God's Holy Spirit.



Mission of the Month for August/September– Pillars Homeless Shelter

Canned fruit, cereal, washcloths, lotion, dryer sheets, hand soap, cough and cold medicine, sunscreen, textured hair products, ear buds, headphones, laundry baskets, etc.



Lac Courte Oreilles Indian Reservation Trip

The fall trip to the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation will be **October 11-13**. Cost is \$50 per adult, youth are welcome if accompanied by a parent. We leave Friday late morning/early afternoon and return Sunday afternoon and car pooling may be available. If you want to know more about this trip, please contact **Tim 920-851-9803, or Sue 920-851-3104**.



Come and join us September 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.

October 20 November 17 December 15



Growing God's Way Children Ministries

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



The children have been learning about the Prophets Elijah & Elisha from 1 & 2 Kings. They talked about how God is the one true God and that God's Words are true. Jesus' miracles show that He is the true Son of God.

They also talked about how years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the gospel with the world.

They also learned that we do not have to work hard to show God we love Him. Instead, He showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and He hears us when we cry out to Him!



Join us for... **Awana Clubs**

Cubbies
Ages 3-4

WEDNESDAYS 6:00-7:30

Starts September 11th!

Truth & Training
Grades 3-6

Sparks
Grades K-2

Puggles
Ages 2-3*

*Puggles is for Leader's children only

Awana starts September 11th! If you haven't registered yet, you still can! Invite a friend to join in on the fun too! Awana runs from 6-7:30 on Wednesdays from September to April. There are clubs for children ages 3 through 6th grade!

For more information and to register, visit our church website: <https://acefc.churchtrac.com/card/10>

We need Shepherds for our Sheep! If YOU or someone you know would love to serve as an Awana leader, please contact Pam at appletonawana@gmail.com.

Elders Report—Dean Pankow



Change is in the air?!

For many people it is always sad to see the summer slip by. With the start of September and Labor Day right around the corner we know that the summer season is coming to an end. And the cool days of Fall will soon begin. Change is in the air!

The Elder Board is feeling the change as well, but in a different way. With the church survey results now in hand and the recommendations from the survey advisor on our agenda at every meeting, change is coming.

We are in the process of looking over almost every document regarding the policies and procedures, the bylaws, job descriptions and ministry teams. With the help of Pastor Greg,

Pastor Andy and the staff, we are fine tuning them for clarity, effectiveness and relevance.

Pastor Greg is also in the process of laying down a Biblical foundation for the rebuilding of the church body to include a new vision and new mission statement. He is hoping to complete that before he retires in June of 2025.

Two of the elders are also hosting a training seminar on Biblical Conflict Resolution open to anyone connected in some way to our church. It is a seminar that trains the biblical way in how to handle conflict with our brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as with family members, friends or co-workers. The first part is on Sept 8th and the second part is on Sept 22nd, both after the service.

Some of you who are reading this maybe thinking “enough is enough”, we don’t want any more change! We just want to go back to the way things were! You know, we come to church, we sing some songs, we say some prayers, we hear a good message, we greet some friends, and we go home.

I don’t think that we are in a position to go back in time. God is the one who was showing us through the survey and the crisis that prompted the survey that some things needed to change. We as a church needed a new direction, a new vision, a new mission and a willingness to follow God until we get there.

God’s purpose for all believing churches, including ours, is that He may be exalted (Eph 1:12), that we proclaim the manifold wisdom of God (Eph 3:10), that we may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ (Eph 4:11-15) and that we Go and make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:18-20).

Those are not options or choices, but they are God’s plan for all His churches. We cannot follow Him if we are looking back or moving backwards or standing still. The changes that will come will help us to stay on track and keep moving forward to fulfill God’s purposes for our church.

God is wanting to renew our church, so that He can use it for things that He has already planned.

As God was speaking through Isaiah to the people of Israel who were still in captivity in Babylon.

“Remember not the former things nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:18-19

Trusting in the God who has changed me...

Dean Pankow



Biblical Illiteracy Is At Astonishingly High Levels In The Church, New Study Reveals

By Ken Ham

Is the exodus from Egypt a New Testament or Old Testament event? What about the crossing of the Jordan, the healing of a man born blind, a miraculous escape from prison, or the healing of Naaman's leprosy? It's hard to believe, but according to a new study, 1 in 10 "American Protestant Churchgoers" (11%) can't answer those sorts of questions.

The survey asked this question, "Of all the stories found in the Old Testament of the Bible, which one is your favorite?" (As a side note, I don't believe we should use stories when talking about the Bible as story means "fairytale; not true" in our culture today. So I'll use "biblical accounts" throughout this blog). Of those surveyed, 11% answered with an account from the New Testament, not the Old. Another 10% either couldn't identify a single account from the Old Testament or had no favorite passage. Biblical illiteracy is rampant. Interestingly—and not surprisingly given our research—the second-most-popular account is Noah and the ark (marginally surpassed by the exodus and Moses), and when combined, 32% of favorite accounts were from Genesis.

The study also looked into churchgoer's confidence in their ability to quote, summarize, or accurately recall various accounts—and the results were dismal. For most of the accounts they asked respondents about, around 25% of respondents said they could only provide a quick overview of each account (some, like Noah's ark, had higher degrees of confidence than others).

Now that might not seem too bad—after all, 24% of churchgoers claim they can recite all of Daniel and the lion's den from memory, and 39% think they could accurately summarize it, and numbers for other popular accounts were in that ballpark. But the study also had a control—and that's where it gets worrisome.

The study asked respondents about the story of Romulus and Remus. Now note that I said story this time. And that's because this is a mythological account from the ancient Romans to explain how Rome and the Roman civilization were founded—by twin brothers, fathered by the god Mars and cared for briefly by a wolf and a woodpecker. One brother later kills the other, among other atrocities. It's certainly not real history and is nowhere found or mentioned in the Bible. So what did survey respondents say when they were asked about the story of Romulus and Remus?

Only 39% recognized this story is not part of the Bible. Only 4 in 10 churchgoers! The others believed it was in the Bible but that they "couldn't tell any of it" (33%), an astonishing 16% said they could "give a quick overview," 6% said they could recall most of it, and 1% even said they could recite it from memory! It's shocking that 6 in 10 churchgoers were unable to recognize that a Roman myth isn't in the Bible. And, for me, that calls into question the honesty of their answers regarding other biblical accounts!

Biblical illiteracy is at astonishingly high levels in the church. So many Christians don't know their Bibles because they aren't reading them, and they aren't receiving biblical teaching from all of God's Word in their churches. They know a few fuzzy basics and that's about it—and that's dangerous because it's God's Word that changes hearts and minds, that is powerful, and that is our weapon in this spiritual battle we're in. Without God's Word, Christians are weaponless and largely defenseless, unable to effectively live for Christ.

And we have no excuse. We have more access to God's Word in print, audio, digital, and even video formats than ever before. Think about the many people groups who don't yet even have any of the Bible in their language. We have more access to good Bible teaching, study helps, and resources. And yet Christians are apathetic, their Bibles are dusty, and their children are left to glean their worldview from the culture with a moral lesson thrown in during Sunday school each week. It's a far cry from the commands throughout Scripture that God's Word be constantly on our lips and in our hearts and minds.

Ken Ham is an author, speaker, and the founder and CEO of Answers in Genesis and its two popular interests: the acclaimed Creation Museum and the internationally known Ark Encounter.



“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

These verses are often read at weddings. I have been asked to read them several times during a loved one's special wedding ceremony. They are a wonderful picture of selfless love, an ideal.

Until recently, I have reflected on these lovely verses from the viewpoint of my own failure to meet this standard of love. I am all too aware of the times when I have not loved this way. Perhaps you have done this too. We hear this read at a wedding and perhaps sigh a bit knowing that the road ahead will be anything but smooth and this kind of love will, at times, be missing.

The word for love in these verses is agape. It is the word used in the New Testament for the kind of love God has, His selfless love for us. Realizing this has been an eye opener for me. I knew it was agape love described here but did not take it beyond the human realm. This is God's love in perfect detail. This is the love our hearts long for and only God can give.

We have often been told, or least I have been, that God is love. I don't know about you, but I have sometimes wondered what God's love looks like, especially when I am going through a terrible, heartbreaking situation. Well, here in Corinthians 13 is the description I've wanted.

Reading these gorgeous verses describing God's love, flawless and unfailing, fills me with awe and floods my soul with joy. This is love I can count on. This love never fails. Always protecting, always trusting, always hoping, always persevering. God's love is not based on my performance, He keeps no record of wrongs. Oh, how precious to know this is the love of God for us.

The next time you hear these verses read or read them yourself remember Whose perfect love this is describing, the unchanging, endless, boundless, unfailing love of God, for you!

*Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky. ~ Fredrich M. Lehman*

Praying you feel His love-your Women's Ministry Team

Church Happenings—Men's Breakfast



Church Happenings—Youth Timber Rattlers



Church Happenings—All-Church Fall Kickoff Potluck



Church Happenings—All-Church Fall Kickoff Potluck



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

After almost 6 months, we have finally finished the book of John! But wait . . . there is more. We also had a very wet and rainy night at the Timber Rattlers game, and we enjoyed a fun afternoon of Slip ‘N’ Slide Kickball (Thanks to the Diestlers for hosting). We will include pictures from the Slip ‘N’ Slide Kickball in the October Newsletter.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

Date	Time	Location	Event
<i>Sunday, September 1st</i>			<i>No Youth Group</i>
<i>Sunday, September 8th</i>	6pm-8pm	Church	Regular Youth Group
<i>Sunday, September 15th</i>			<i>No Youth Group</i>
<i>Monday, September 16th</i>	6pm-8:30pm	Skaters Edge	Christian Skate Night
<i>Sunday, September 22nd</i>	6pm-8pm	Church	Regular Youth Group
<i>Sunday, September 29th</i>	6pm-8pm	Church	Regular Youth Group

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ADALAY LEGG



Grade: 6th

How long have you been attending youth group at ACEFC? 3 months

What do you see yourself doing in 10 years? 15 years? Being a veterinarian or working in an animal shelter

Favorite thing to do in your free time? Read and/or play outside

Favorite Food: Orange chicken & fried rice.

What is your favorite memory from Youth Group? Singing “take me out to the ball game” in the pouring rain.

What is your favorite athletic activity and why? Playing softball because I like the pace of the game and how close and exciting it can be.

What has God been teaching in the past year? God has been teaching me to trust in Him in every situation and that if I remain in Him, He will guide me through anything that is unclear.

Not only is Adalay being spotlighted this month in the newsletter, but she was also baptized last month!

Some Prayerful Thought's from Pastor Greg

Taking Some Time For Reflection: Regardless Of How Much Technology Has Changed Our Lives, The Lord Will Always



There've been a couple times recently when something (most likely weather) has caused the electrical power to go off. Many of our regular activities come to a stand still. During daylight hours, it's still possible to read or do something else, but in the evening hours, it's more challenging to see without a flashlight or a candle. During my devotions today, something triggered my mind to think about how much our lives have changed because of the various advancements we often take for granted. Typically these are things that we've raised to a level of necessity. It seems as if we depend on them to make our lives easier. In some ways, life has become simpler because of technology. Each of us could make a list of the things we use every day that help us do what we need to do. Our lists would have many things in common, but in some cases they would vary due to the various roles we play or responsibilities we have. There are other items that once filled a special part of our lives, but they've become obsolete, old-fashioned or too costly to produce. For example, I have a stack of magazines that I used to enjoy each month when they arrived. I can't explain exactly why I've kept them, except for saying that they hold a special place in my heart for the way they informed and instructed me. Currently, I use various online resources that fill that role in my life, but it's just not the same as holding what I'm reading in my hand! Beyond that, even though I recognize that there are several advantages we enjoy from the growth in technology, I also wonder if we look as carefully as we should at how it's affected our relationships with one another and with the Lord?

In general, research on how our actions and attitudes have been affected by social media and technology indicates that there are several relevant things to consider about how we use the "latest & greatest" innovations. On one hand, we should take an objective look at any positives gained by using what's available, but we should also note the effects that could lead to consequences that might be harmful in the long run. To summarize the benefits, let's just say that there are plenty of ways that it can help us get more things done quicker than when we use older techniques. An example of this comes with the next point I'm making. My online research about the concerns related to using more technology includes: **1}** decreased attention spans in both children & adults; **2}** decreased listening skills due to the impact on our attention spans; **3}** personal relationships have become more impersonal & less important (because we spend less time in face-to-face interactions with one another; **4}** time management has become more difficult because we're more easily distracted; **5}** generally speaking we're becoming less patient with one another; and **6}** stress levels within our culture have increased because many aspects of life have become so fast-paced & there's a tendency that we fail to "unplug" or "slow the pace" when we should be resting. (Sleep patterns have been impacted by technology & it appears that sleep deprivation has increased throughout our society.) **One final matter to mention:** Computers & smart phones have resulted in a dangerous level of addiction to pornographic material! That's an issue that deserves far more attention than it typically gets! Please note that this is because it's an epidemic that most people keep secret.

The Barna Research Group has stated, "Technology is shaping family interactions in unprecedented ways, but we seem to lack a strategic commitment to the stewardship of technology. The Christian community needs a better, more holistic understanding of how to manage existing and coming technological advances." With this in mind, I'd like to point out that recent investigations have revealed that the social media giants have used their platform as a powerful propaganda tool to influence how people think. So, let's focus our conclusion on how Paul & John exhort us to be cautious about being deceived & also about avoiding any type of idolatry. Ephesians 5:6 says, "Let no one deceive you with empty words!" 1 Corinthians 10:12-14 points out that when we try to stand on our own without God's guidance, we're taking a risk & we should do everything we can to flee from idolatry. Then 1 John 5:21 gives us a bold instruction, "Little children, guard & protect yourselves from all idolatry." Whenever we depend on things other than the Lord, idolatry & deception just might become an area of serious concern!

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

Mission of the Month— Nikki Tetschner



Dear ACEFC:

Thank you so much for your faithful financial and prayer support. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to invest in college students and you are helping to make that happen. College students desperately need Jesus. I've been on staff for 25 years and I've seen a steady decline in students coming to college with an understanding of what it means to know and be saved by Jesus. Together we can trust Jesus to turn lost students into Christ-centered-laborers.



Our team is kicking off the year on 7 campuses around NE. I spend my time at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Over the last week we have had many events to gather incoming freshmen. We are praying that Christians coming to college will choose to get involved as well as non-Christians who are trying to figure out what they believe.

Cru, Coffee and Coloring. During move-in week at UNL we hosted events in the dorm where students could gather, get coffee and donuts and meet students involved in Cru. We had games, coloring and puzzles allowing students to hang out and have something to do.



Tabling: We have tons of surveys to follow up from our beginning of the year tabling events. We hosted tables at 5 different club fairs across campus. Students filled out surveys about their spiritual interest and desire to hear more about Cru or Jesus. We'll spend the next few weeks following up all of these contacts telling students about Jesus and inviting them to get involved in Cru.

Bible Studies are launching. We have 3 student-led Bible Studies happening across the UNL campus. We will be studying Mark this semester. We had new people show up to 2 out of the 3 studies that launched last week.



Prayer Requests:

Pray that non-believing students would hear about Jesus and have a desire to follow him.

Pray that Christians coming to college would find a place to connect and grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Pray for wisdom for me as I coach our staff women and disciple student leaders.

Pray that Freshmen would get involved across UNL (University of Nebraska in Lincoln). Would you pray specifically that East Campus would see Freshmen get involved in their Bible Study.



Praise God for:

Faithful student leaders on each of our campuses. Rachel, Declan and Clara, the 3 interns that are serving on our team this year.

Our staff team. We get along well and enjoy doing ministry together.

6 new freshmen at the UNL weekly meeting last week.



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