

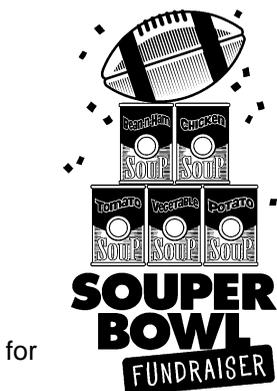
Lent planning workshop

The Worship Committee will be hosting a Worship Workshop at the church from 8:30 a.m. to Noon on **Saturday, January 14**. We will be brainstorming our themes for worship during Lent as we approach Easter. Anyone is welcome to join us. It is a fun experience, gives insight into the worship planning process as well as encouraging stronger connection to the worship experience itself, and is the opportunity for you to help in the creative processes of the church. Come, have some fun with us!

2017 Church Council lunch/planning meeting

The 2017 Church Council will meet following the 2nd service on **Sunday, January 15** for lunch and an extended council meeting to plan committee and church calendars for the year.

Darin Leach, Church Council President



Souper Bowl lunch fundraiser

Sunday, January 29 the youth will be holding a soup lunch after the second service as a free-will donation fundraiser their mission trip this summer.

Are you interested in PNO?

Parents' Night Out (PNO) is a wonderful program for families at Ankeny Christian Church! The purpose of this article is to provide you with basic information about PNO so you can determine if your family would like to participate. We welcome new families who would like to join the PNO rotation!

Basic Information

PNO is an opportunity for parents and children in our church to work together, connect, and support one another by providing childcare in a safe and supportive environment once a month during the year. Each family takes a turn serving as a "host" family 1 or 2 times a year. When you are a host family, you partner with another family to provide childcare, dinner, a craft and a movie/snack to the children of our church from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at ACC. During the other 10/11 months of the year, you can drop your children off for "free" babysitting! For parents, this provides the opportunity to reconnect with someone special to you, run errands, clean your house, or just relax and enjoy some quiet time. For the children, it is a fun opportunity for them to build relationships and have fun with their extended church family.

If you have not been a part of PNO before, no worries! Contact Jennifer Schroeder at 515-528-3665 or bjorklundj@gmail.com with any questions or concerns you have, and we will make sure you have all the information that you need to participate!

Thank you for considering PNO!
Jennifer Schroeder

From Pastor Owen

The images coming out of Syria, particularly Aleppo, these past few weeks have ranged from terrifying, to sad, to simply disturbing. It is enough to cause even the strongest of us to turn away filled with grief, shock, compassion, sadness, disbelief, and astonishment. It is enough to make me, at least, feel helpless.

Multitudes of people are fleeing their homes because of the violent civil war going on in Syria. They seek refuge in other places. They seek safety...and life.

We are knee deep in the Christmas story, both in worship and in the world today. Mary and Joseph must take the baby Jesus and flee to Egypt seeking refuge from the violence that Herod has made upon the people of and around Bethlehem. They seek safety...and life. The holy family is a refugee family.

I imagine that many who heard the news of the goings on in and around Bethlehem in those days felt helpless. I imagine it reminded them of the stories they had heard while growing up of Pharaoh slaying the newborn Israelites in the land of Egypt. I imagine they were filled with grief, shock, compassion, sadness, disbelief, and astonishment.

So, what can we do? Syria is so far away.

Syria may be. But those seeking refuge are not.

A great place to start is by working with and helping our neighbors and those who live among us. While Syrian refugees garner much attention in the news these days, they are not the only ones who flee their homes to seek safety and life.

Over the past couple years, a large, worldwide push has been made to resettle Burmese refugees and close the refugee camps where they have been located. Some of those Burmese families have resettled in the Des Moines area. In fact, Burmese refugees are one of the largest groups of refugees resettled in our area.

During the month of January, Ankeny Christian Church will begin partnering with a number of churches in the Des Moines area along with Church World Service to help refugees near and far throughout the year.

Our worship and mission theme for January is "Coming Home to a New Place." We will explore what it means to be a refugee and ways that we can do something to aid our local neighbors in making their home here. We will have a chance to hear a story of resettlement from a guest, Hser Nay Htoo, who resettled to the United States a few years ago. And we will have opportunities to share Christ's love by serving our Burmese neighbors locally, and, through the work of Church World Service, globally.

Let's do something together!

Shalom,

Pastor Owen

Scriptures & Sermons

Series: Upside Down People in an Upside Down World
last single service

Jan 1 Matthew 2:13-23
"Praise in the Midst of Sorrow"

Series: Coming Home to a New Place
Return to 8:30 & 10:45 am services

Jan 8 Acts 10:34-43
"Coming Home to a New Place: Flight"

Jan 15 Deuteronomy 10:12-19
"Coming Home to a New Place: Stranger"

Jan 22 Matthew 4:12-23
"Coming Home to a New Place: Home"

Jan 29 Micah 6:1-8
Special Guest Hser Nay Htoo will share his story of resettlement.

From Pastor Alison

Wednesday Children's Programming at Ankeny Christian Church

You may have seen that the Christian Education committee and I held a series of town hall style meetings for parents of children under 5th grade. These meetings were attended by parents of children of varying ages and there were some fantastic ideas and discussion that happened during these sessions.

After much information gathering, deliberation and discussion, the Christian Education committee and I have decided that ACC will begin holding weekly children's programming on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. for children K - 5 in the Community Life Center.

We recognize that families have tight evening schedules, and in order to accommodate more families and make Wednesday evenings a bit easier, we will have the Gym open at 6:00 p.m. for families who need a place to sit and eat before evening programming.

The time with the children will be spent playing games, doing interactive activities, and ending our time in prayer - much like CHAOS on a smaller scale. The focus of these nights will be different from Sunday School as they will be more outwardly community and relationship building driven instead of lecture driven.

We have also heard a want and a need for family programming as well. Therefore, the second Wednesday of each month, we will be holding an **All-Church Family Night** in the Community Life Center. During these evenings, ACC will host a free-will donation meal and come up with a fun theme for the evening - potential themes are a game night or a karaoke night.

ALL congregants are welcome to these second Wednesday events, so get them on your calendar now!

The first kick-off event will be held on **Wednesday, January 11** from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in the Community Life Center. At this event, we will be sharing in a meal together (free-will donation to help cover costs) and going over what this programming will look like, and what to expect for the rest of the year. I will be handing out a schedule, going over volunteer commitments, and going over what we will be doing with our time together on Wednesdays. Please come with your calendar ready as I will be asking parents to help me to take one Wednesday this spring to help me with crowd control during our evening programming.

Thank you to all of the parents that attended a meeting or gave me feedback, and thank you to the Christian Education committee for moving this process along, providing helpful feedback, and coming up with a fantastic plan for this ministry.

I am so excited about the future of Children's Ministry at Ankeny Christian Church! I think it promises to be good fun and a good opportunity for our children to come together in fellowship, fun, and community once a week.



PRAISE THE LORD!

From Pastor Alison

Sunday School News

Sunday School continues as usual beginning on **January 8** at 9:45 a.m.

Our preschoolers and elementary school grades will be working further into the story of The Israelites Escape from Egypt through different activities.

Do you enjoy cooking, drama, games, or art? We invite you to use your talents to teach a Sparkhouse rotation which will be a two-week commitment. If you are interested in this fantastic opportunity, please contact Pastor Alison at alisonaccdoc@gmail.com, call her at the church, or contact Angie Olson at angeleyes4379@yahoo.com or 706-424-5415.

Our youth Sunday School classes are continuing along as well! The 6-8 graders are in room 1 with Lori Kruse-Cayton and Adam Olson. They are focusing on a curriculum called "Joining the Story" in which they have been walking through the Old Testament, and learning how to weave their stories into the ancient stories that we hear about so often in fun and interactive ways. They recently talked about creation and made their own creations individually, and talked about the importance of creating together.

The 9-12 graders are in room 5 with Shanon Buckroyd and Eric Lahart. They will continue to use the LinC curriculum, which sparks discussion about current events in our society and how they impact them as Christians. They recently talked about natural disasters and where we find God in tragedy.

Our adult class will continue to be facilitated by Eleke Ukpabi in a classroom in the Community Life Center.

Questions? Email Pastor Alison at alisonaccdoc@gmail.com or give her a call at the church.

CHAOS ensues in January!

Our 6th – 12th grade youth group or CHAOS (Christ Honoring and Others Serving) will be doing many great things within the month of January.

Jan 1 – NO CHAOS due to the Holiday

Jan 8 – *After-Holiday Catch Up*: CHAOS will resume at its normal time (6:30 – 8:00 p.m.). We will be meeting up, sharing our favorite parts of our break, and playing a few games.

Jan 15 and 22 – *Refugee Focus*: During these two weeks, we will be focusing on refugees around our community and world. We will be discussing how to be informed about what's going on around the world and how to be the most helpful and welcoming to refugees in our own community.

Jan 29 – *Souper Bowl Sunday*: The youth will be holding a soup lunch after the second service as a free-will donation fundraiser for their mission trip this summer. Also... it's SUNDAY the 29th, and you know what that means... Dairy Queen! The youth will head to DQ right after we are done cleaning up our soup fundraiser. *We will not have regular CHAOS this evening* in order to watch some football, or watch some commercials.

Keep your eye on the weekly email newsletter for continuing information! If you're interested in being put on the weekly email newsletter, please email me at alisonaccdoc@gmail.com.

Our Larger Family • Sharing Christ's love

Thank you letter



Dear Sunday School classes,

Thank you—from the kids of Blank Children's Hospital. Your gift of crayons to Blank demonstrates your love for children and your awareness of how important support to children and their healthcare really is. We are pleased to acknowledge your generous gift...

Sincerely,
Blank Children's Hospital

January's Special Mission Offering **Local solidarity, global leverage**

This month, in accordance with our worship theme for the month of January, our missions special offering will go towards Church World Service (CWS). CWS has partnered with DMARC to help aid refugees in our community. The group that they are focusing on are the refugees from Myanmar – particularly the people from the southeastern region of Burma. Political unrest and natural disasters have brought many Burmese people here to Iowa, and there is a large Burmese refugee population right here in the Des Moines area.

By donating towards CWS this month, we can ensure that the Burmese refugees in our community have access towards the foods that make them feel more at home, locally through DMARC. Globally, CWS is working on the ground in Karen State to help mitigate the need to flee through disaster readiness training and clean water development.

This month, your donation can make an impact both locally and globally! Your donation will make a difference in the lives of refugees settling in this wonderful and welcoming Des Moines community that we all know and love. Please consider donating to CWS this January!

Special offering report for Nov.

Food Pantry	\$120
DMF-Thanksgiving Offering	\$145

Food Pantry Sunday is Jan. 15

Roger Hackbarth delivered the Food Pantry items for November. There were approximately 65 items.

November shatters Food Pantry Network usage record

November 2016, the DMARC Food Pantry Network served more families and more individuals than any other month in our 40-year history of food assistance, with 18.2% more families served than in Nov 2015.

A total 18,415 individuals sought food assistance from the Food Pantry Network in November 2016. Last November, which had previously held the record, saw 16,281 individuals served. This is an increase of over 2,000 people, or 13.1%!

Guatemala brunch thank you

On Sunday, December 11 members of your Mission Team prepared and served brunch after worship.

Thanks to all the 'workers' and all participants for a successful event.

Plans continue for the Adult Mission Trip February 17-26, 2017. The Team is preparing 200 gift kits to take with them which will be finished during the Sunday School time on February 5. Items for the kits have been donated by many sources including Delta Dental, hotels, individuals, etc.

Still needed: 200 lip balms and 200 gallon size zip lock bags. There will be a box in the Fellowship Hall to collect these.



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Sunday Schedule

Jan 1 one worship service at 9:30

Jan 8 Return to below schedule

8:30 a.m. Worship

9:30 a.m. Fellowship Time &
 Children's Choir

9:45 a.m. Sunday School all ages

9:50 a.m. Praise Team practice

10:45 a.m. Worship



wheelchair accessible

Sharing and Giving by Sarah Williams

"In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35



Sharing and giving are important aspects of life at the Christian Hospital in Mungeli (CHM). Sharing a skill, a story, a relationship with Christ, or an experience seems to be natural to those who grace both campuses.

Chapel is held prior to work every day and includes prayer, singing, and scripture. The entire time smiles, songbooks, and Bibles are shared. This begins a day of sharing and giving.

Everyone who works in the hospital gives of themselves. We tend to patients' needs and give support and comfort in times of distress. At the hospital, families stay with their ill family member while they are hospitalized. They share in the entire experience with their loved one.

Nurses and doctors visit remote villages where they perform physical exams, provide medication, educate about health, and advise about sanitation. The visits are a service of sharing with those who are unable to make it to the hospital due to physical and/or financial constraints.

Giving is one of the most important topics in the Bible. The constant display of giving and kindness makes me glad to be here and reminds me of a Bible verse in which Paul reminds us that Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Clearly God is using the staff and volunteers at CHM to do great work; to share and receive.

Sarah Williams serves with the Christian Hospital in Mungeli, India. Her appointment is supported by Week of Compassion, Our Churches Wider Mission, Disciples Mission Fund and your special gifts.