

Easter Lilies Needed

The Worship Committee is excited to create a memorable Easter experience through decorations, themes and various activities this Lenten season. The culmination of the season is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and the joy of Christians worldwide.

Easter Lilies have long been a living symbol of that joyous event. You are invited to participate by providing plants to decorate the sanctuary. Easter Lilies in memory of someone are welcomed also. Contact Christine with the name(s) and it will be included in the bulletin Easter Sunday.

Please bring the lilies to the church Saturday morning or prior to the first service Easter morning, **April 16**.



Maundy-Thursday Service

Ankeny Christian Church will have a Maundy-Thursday **April 13**. The evening will begin at 6 pm with a potluck meal. The service will begin at 7pm.

ACC Easter Breakfast

Please join us on **Easter Sunday, April 16**, for our annual Easter Breakfast. Breakfast will be served after the first service at approximately 9:30 a.m. for as freewill offering. A menu of egg casseroles, muffins, and fruit will be provided. We hope you can join us for this time of fellowship.

Summer Worship Planning

Join the Worship Committee on **Saturday, April 22**, 2017 from 8:30am-12:00pm to add thoughts and ideas to how we should set up worship for the summer months! This will be a brainstorming session for all, so come share the morning with us. If you would like to join, broaden our plans for the summer and have a need for the nursery, care can be provided. All ideas and suggestions will be blessedly accepted and considered.

Camp Registration Deadline

Ankeny Christian's Education Committee has set **Sunday, April 23** as the deadline to have camp registrations turned in to Pat Sommerfeld, because the summer camps fill up so fast.

Reminder the church will pay half the cost for those attending church camp at the Newton Christian Conference Center.

Youth Sunday and Fundraiser Brunch on April 30!

This year the youth will be leading us in worship on April 30! From music, to readings, to prayers, serving, and preaching, our youth will be doing it ALL! We hope you can join us for this special Sunday to participate in the youth's witness to worship.

After the second service, please join us for a brunch to help fund the youth mission trip this summer. There will be delicious brunch foods and good fellowship all the way around. It's going to be a fantastic Sunday and we look forward to sharing it with you!

From Pastor Owen

Let's begin with two things:

Death sucks.

Following Jesus is hard.

I think the two are related. Following Jesus is hard in part because we know that he goes to the cross, which means death.

As I mentioned in the prayer time the other day, we as a congregation have been carrying a lot of heavy life and death stuff lately. Families we know and love are walking long and difficult roads that teeter between life and death. And we have certainly been touched by death in the past couple weeks and months.

Death, even when it is an expected thing, can be faith shaking. And when it is sudden and tragic it is almost a guarantee to disturb us in the depths of our being and faith. It may cause us to question our fundamental beliefs, I hope that it sends us peering ever deeper into what the Christian faith says about life and death.

Here is the thing, though: we were not created immortal. Our bodies are perishable: for each life there is one, final death. This makes each of our lives ever more precious to us and to God.

Yet the Christian proclamation is that death is not the end. It does not have the final say on our lives or our destinies before God. We defy the obvious, the observable that death is the end. On Easter, we proclaim, "CHRIST IS RISEN!" The power of death no longer has a strangle hold on us – we are freed to live and we are freed to die. We value life with all its preciousness, but at the same time and in the same breath we do not fear death – our own or anyone else's.

As individuals, however, our faith is such a fickle thing (we rehearse that on Palm Sunday). It does not take much to set us wondering – "this resurrection thing, how sure am I?" I would be less than human if I never asked the question, and I would be less than

your pastor to tell you that the question has never been real for me. Resurrection defies the observable. It is not something to be measured, examined, or scientifically proven; it is not something that we can even get our minds around to understand all of its pieces – it is at least and at most mystery.

There are times when those wonderings get the best of us as individuals, times when we begin to say, "I am not sure I believe anymore." It is at those times that the community of faith holds us up. The community of faith is so important, not just to comfort us when we need it, or simply to celebrate our joys when we have them. It is important because it proclaims our faith for us, even when we cannot.

The community of faith and even statements of faith are not 'lowest common denominator' things. They represent the fullness of what it means to be a Christian. When we are not able to shout out "Christ is risen!" from the depths of our heart and faith, the community of faith is there to shout it out for us. The church proclaims faith. This is not to say that the church always proclaims our faith. At some point, we must claim it for ourselves. But at our most profound struggle and questioning, when we do it in the context of our community of faith and remain committed to that community, the church proclaims our faith when we cannot muster it.

We are Christians, part of a huge faith community of people who build us up and hold us in faith. We are an Easter people! We proclaim the resurrection! Death no longer has a hold on us. We do not fear it. We stare right back in its face and shout defiantly: "You have no power over us!"

Shalom,
Pastor Owen

From Pastor Alison

Mid-Week Mayhem

The Mayhem will continue in the month of April! Here is what we will be doing:

April 5 – Lent Theme continues

April 12 – All-Church Family Night: Easter Egg Hunt!

April 19 – Spring Theme

April 26 – Spring Theme

We are looking forward to another great month of Mayhem in the middle of the week! Please email me with any questions you may have.

All Church Family Night

This month our second Wednesday All-Church Family Night will be on **Wednesday, April 12** from 6:15 – 7:30 p.m. in the Gym. This night will be the annual Easter Egg Hunt! *Please note that we will be having the hunt during All Church Family Night instead of on a Sunday!* After the hunt, we will have different spring and Easter-themed activities around the gym. There will also be a meal provided, as per usual.

As a reminder – this is for our entire church family! ALL are welcome to these second Wednesday events!

We hope that you can join us for this fun evening!



Sunday School News

Our Sunday School classes will continue to meet and discuss during the month of April as we journey through Lent towards the hope of Easter and beyond.

Please note that there will be **no Sunday School** on Easter **Sunday, April 16**

We will **need volunteers** for our last Sparkhouse rotation for our preschoolers – 5th grade that runs from April 23 – May 14. 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 angie.olson.91705@gmail.com or 706-424-5415.

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

CHAOS in April!

CHAOS will continue to ensue in the month of April! This month will be a bit of work as we will be prepping for Youth Sunday on April 30^t.

April 2 – Youth Sunday Prep

April 9 – Youth Sunday Prep

April 16 – No CHAOS due to Easter Sunday

April 23 – Youth Sunday Prep

April 29 – 30 – Lock-in for Youth Sunday run-through

April 30 – Youth Sunday! No CHAOS this evening

It's going to be a fantastic month for our chaotic youth! Questions? Email me at alisonaccdoc@gmail.com.

Scriptures & Sermons

Lenten Series: *Look. Listen. Live!*

April 2 Luke 18:31-19:10
"Someone Blindfolded the Preacher!"

Palm Sunday, April 9 Luke 19:29-44
"Of Palms and Ashes"

Easter Sunday, April 16 Luke 24:1-12
"Idle Tales and Wrong Places"

April 23 Luke 24:13-35
"Are We Paying Attention?"

April 30 Youth Sunday

Total Cash Flow for Feb 2017

Revenues - all funds	\$ 24,280.15
Operating expenses - all funds	32,762.24
Mortgage expense & other transfers	4,964.98
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ (8,482.09)

Your giving is important to the life and ministry of Ankeny Christian. Thank you.

A Prayer Shawl ministry

Prayer Shawls available

Do you know someone you would like to give a prayer shawl to? You may pick one up whenever needed. Sign in the book located above the display rack to whom it is going and select a card to enclose. Pick a prayer shawl from the display rack or from the blanket chest in the entryway. Any questions contact Pat Fliger or Carolyn Fisher.

Next "Sit & Knit" group gathering is **Thursday, April 20** at 1:00 p.m. in room 1.

Among Our Church Family and Friends

Prayer Concerns

Norm Honderd; Chuck Fausch; Mother of Suzy Hart; Dennis, brother of Fran Honderd; Kailee & Tara Baldwin; Gary Parker; Makenna Schroeder; Kiersten Mann; Mike Brandenburg; Madison, granddaughter of Ruth Smythe; Latisha Ukpabi's mother Judy and father; Cox family; Lloyd Warner.

Sympathy to Jeni Wilson and family at the loss of her uncle; to Lois James and family at the loss of her husband, Paul; to Pattie Varnum and family at the loss of Don March 14; to the Mann family at the loss of Angie March 16; Glenn Hunter and family at the loss of his Aunt Jean March 20.

Lead Person for 2017: The Prayer Chain can be started by contacting Tara Baldwin at 257-6507 or tleigh.bald@gmail.com

Please let the church office know about hospitalizations, surgeries, etc. The Privacy Act (HIPPA) limits the notifications we get from health care facilities.

Attendance

	1st service	Sunday School	2nd service	Wed
Feb 26	76	32	71	98
Mar 5	77	46	79	44
Mar 12	65	0	38	10
Mar 19	69	40	71	?/12



Our Larger Family • Sharing Christ's love



Easter Offering for *Disciples Mission Fund*

Immigration is the hot topic of our political arena. Some are worried the “wrong” immigrants will come to our shores. However, much of the immigration policies currently in place could even keep the “right” people from migrating to our great nation. Right or wrong, our mandate as Christians to love and welcome the stranger in our midst is a serious and compelling directive from our Lord and Savior. Consider this circumstance from last year:

Easter 2016
To Love

*Minute for Mission by Tana Liu-Beers,
Disciples Home Missions Refugee &
Immigration Ministries*

Immigration promises to be a doorway to a better future, but trying to navigate the legal system often feels like having that door slammed in your face.

Last year a church member in California attended her citizenship interview. Having passed the citizenship test, she waited for the officer to tell her the good news that she would soon become a U.S. citizen. Instead, the officer informed her that she would likely be deported. Together with her pastor, she called Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel in a panic. Since she did not have a lawyer, the Disciples immigration lawyer worked with her to figure out the confusion with her old documents and advised her how to submit the

additional evidence she needed to show that she deserved to become a U.S. citizen.

Recognizing that immigrants face steep barriers to getting the legal help they need, one way we love our neighbors is by helping them protect their rights and understand their options. With support from Disciples Mission Fund, Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel provides legal representation and counsel free of charge.

Your Easter *Disciple Mission Fund Offering* will enable people around the world to experience Love and Hope in the midst of a diverse and sometimes troubling world of walls, barriers, and oppression. Please give generously to this year's Easter Offering.

More information available at disciplesimmigration.org

Thank you letters

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous contribution (Myanmar \$355) to the work of Church World Service –which we appreciate more than ever in these challenging times...

May God bless you for your kindness.

Rev. John L. McCullough
President and CEO
CWS

Special offering report for February

Food Pantry	\$170
Week of Compassion	\$1,036

Food Pantry Sunday is April 16

A total of 22 items was delivered to IMPACT Community Action Partnership located here in Ankeny. Thank you for sharing in the worthy ministry.



Ankeny Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
2506 SW 3rd Street
Ankeny IA 50023-2471

Phone: 515-964-1083

Web site: www.accdoc.org

Pastor.....Owen Cayton

ocayton@gmail.com

Associate Pastor.....Alison Nicoll

alisonaccdoc@gmail.com

Office Manager....Christine Stoffa

ankenyccdoc@gmail.com

Sunday 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

Never Enough! by Mark Behle

"There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, 'Enough!': the grave, the barren womb, land, which is never satisfied with water, and fire..." Proverbs 30:15-16

The land in Lesotho, at least here in the lowlands, never seems to have enough water. Lesotho had a dire drought last growing season. Back in late August the Mothers' Union fellowship of the Lesotho Evangelical Church in Southern Africa (LECSA) was called upon to coordinate the distribution of donated food aid. 240,000 households benefitted from this assistance given, both LECSA and non-LECSA members, in the worst affected areas of the country.

Something else we never have enough of is peace. LECSA held a walk for peace and justice in the town of Mafeteng followed by an outdoor worship service for the community. Mafeteng has for years been plagued by a series of murders involving members of rival famo music groups. Famo music, which prominently features the accordion, originated with Basotho miners working in South Africa back in the 1920s and its distinctive style is still popular today. Those attending the service joined hands in praying for an end to the violence that has troubled the area for so long.

LECSA's annual Leeto la Thapelo (Journey of Prayer) event gathered thousands of church members from early one Saturday morning until Sunday afternoon. Prayer sessions were held where people were invited to come forward to be prayed for by the pastors. Saturday night these servants of God were kept praying from 11:00pm until 3:00am, so long were the lines of people craving intercession. One can never have enough prayer.

Many parts of our world yearn for more water. Many people yearn for healing prayer. And we all yearn for more peace in our world. More than anything we, like the Psalmist, yearn for more of God's presence: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God..." (42:2).

Mark Behle serves with the Lesotho Evangelical Church. His appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Churches Wider Mission, and your special gifts.