



The Encounter

August 2017



A Word from Pastor Eric

In my article last month, I shared with you our church's new mission, vision, and values statements as adopted by the Session at their June meeting. This month, I'll share the highlights of our strategic plan.

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The Session identified four areas of emphasis: 1) Facility and Property Repairs and Improvements, 2) Connecting with People in the Neighborhood, 3) Engaging APC Member Families with Children, and 4) Improving Visitor Retention.

The first phase of the plan will see the Session engage an architect to help plan for the repair and enhancement of our facilities. Some of our needs are strictly practical, such as replacing the leaky flat roof portions of our building and replacing aging air conditioning units. In addition to practical repairs, the Session would like to make some improvements in the functionality and attractiveness of our facility, so that it may more readily serve as a place of welcome and hospitality in ministry to our neighbors. This will include some aesthetic improvements, improved kitchen equipment, and better signage. Included in the facility-related improvements, the Session would like to see our property made more useful for our mission through the addition of things such as a picnic pavilion, dedicated athletic spaces (perhaps a soccer field or volleyball court), and maybe even playground equipment. Please note that the exact nature and extent of these improvements will depend on the guidance we receive from the architect, and the amount of money we are able to raise...which brings us to the next part of the plan: a capital campaign.

In the spring of 2018, the Session will work with all our leaders and a professional church fundraising company to conduct a capital campaign to fund the repairs and improvements envisioned in the first part of the plan. The capital campaign will be separate from our annual stewardship campaign (which funds the yearly operating budget). We anticipate that the capital campaign will invite people to give toward our facility projects over a three-year pledge period. The details will become clearer once we have begun work with the fundraising professionals.

You will have noticed that the Session has chosen to work with professionals in both designing potential changes and in raising the funds needed to carry them out. While there is a cost involved in this choice, the Session has discerned that this is the best route to guaranteeing quality results and maximizing our potential. Before the campaign takes place, the details of the facility improvement plan will be shared with the congregation – most likely in the winter of 2018 – depending on when the design phase is complete.

During the first phase of the plan, we will also be doing some research. First, our Discipleship Committee will be in touch with our younger families to determine how we might more effectively minister to them. You may have noticed that we have a

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Words from Pastor Eric (continued)

good ministry with children and their grandparents, but that we aren't always as effective in serving the generation in the middle. We'll be holding a couple focus groups, and using other means, to gather information aimed at helping us fill the gap in our intergenerational ministry. At the same time, the Outreach Committee will be working on gathering information about our neighborhood, so that we might learn how to better carry out our mission of "sharing God's love through compassion and service in our neighborhood and beyond." Growing out of these research projects, the Session and its committees will devise ministries that address the needs that are identified. We expect that some form of periodic intergenerational events and community outreach events will be the result.

Finally, our Congregational Life Committee will be at work developing a visitor retention plan to help us make the best possible impression on those who visit our congregation – whether for worship or other events. It seems that the percentage of guests who return to APC after their initial visit is somewhat below par, and the Session is committed to seeing that addressed. We desire to effectively show God's love through gracious hospitality to everyone!

I realize that this is a very high-level overview, and that it probably doesn't answer every question you might have. To be honest, even if you had all the paperwork Session generated in the planning process, you'd still have questions – for there are things we don't know. Among the most important parts of the plan are those that call for us to do research – to learn how best to love and serve our members and our neighbors. We don't have all the answers. The important thing is that we are beginning to ask these important questions, and willing to let our future plans be guided by what we learn. I hope you can see that, behind the Session's planning priorities, is a desire to maximize our ministry to existing members and to the community in which God has placed us. Whether we are carrying out research, developing new ministries, or engaging in facility improvements, our consistent goal is to live into our mission of sharing God's love, and our vision that all people will experience God's love through the ministry of Ankeny Presbyterian Church.

If you have any questions about the Session's plan or the process, please feel free to ask me or one of the elders.

May God bless us as we move forward in ministry together!

Your Companion on the Journey,
Pastor Eric

Our Mission

Sharing God's love through compassion and service in our
neighborhood and beyond.

Our Vision

That all may experience God's love.

Mission News

Here's Some Information and Some Opportunities!

Did you know that Ankeny Presbyterian Church has a long tradition of serving a Christmas Eve Dinner each year at the Central Iowa Shelter & Services building at 1420 Mulberry Street in downtown Des Moines? The meal is served to between 200 and 250 people. In all these years members of APC have provided and cooked all the food for the Christmas Eve meal. Because it is a special holiday meal, volunteers from APC have also been the servers/waiters. Usually the meals at the Shelter are served buffet style so being served is unique to the holiday.



The Shelter was founded in 1992 by eight Des Moines churches and has provided emergency shelter since then. A new facility was opened in 2012. This means they can now provide shelter for 100 males and 50 females besides housing and help for Veterans as well as individual apartments for 38 people.

It might seem strange that the Mission Committee would like to focus on a Christmas Eve mission project in July, but it is important to think about it now because we'd like to find some additional volunteers. John and Jane Middents have chaired and organized this meal for the last several years and we'd like a few others to work with them and "learn the ropes" so that we can continue the tradition if John and Jane can no longer do it.

The responsibilities for the chair-people include developing a menu that includes choosing a meat and recipes for the potatoes and vegetables; finding cooks willing to purchase and prepare the food, including desserts; recruiting servers to help at the Shelter; and then leading the volunteers to the Shelter and serving the meal. Set-up at the Shelter usually takes around an hour and then the meal is served for an hour. According to Jane, clean-up goes quickly with all the leftovers staying at the Shelter to be used for other meals.

This is truly a gift that APC gives to some of Polk County's most needy residents. John Middents said, "Jane and I feel drawn to this ministry because it gets us into the right frame of mind for Christmas. We believe if Jesus had been born in this century in Des Moines he probably would have been born in a shelter like this, or if he was proclaiming his ministry in this day and age he would probably be staying in the Shelter while he proclaimed his promises of joy and hope with people."

If you think you could "shadow and help" John and Jane Middents this year as they lead the way to serve up to 250 people at the Central Iowa Shelter on Christmas Eve, please talk to them or to Mission Committee Chair, Marcia McAdoo. Volunteers to prepare food and/or serve the meal are always needed too. If you'd like to be part of this joyful holiday mission then put the date, December 24th, on your calendar and you'll be prepared when December arrives and you hear the call for volunteers.

This is one of the missions that APC has faithfully done for many years. Let's continue this tradition so that we can continue being a blessing to others.

Emergency Food Pantry

June contributions from APC to the Food Pantry totaled 129 items: 40 cans vegetables; 8 - fruit; 5- Peanut Butter; 12 - canned soup; 24 - personal products; 15 - canned fish; and miscellaneous other items. Remember to only donate food well within expiration dates. Fresh produce from your garden is welcome, just harvest before it reaches peak ripeness.

Our donations go to the DMARC Food Pantry warehouse, where food items are distributed to the 13 area food pantries, including the IMPACT food pantry in Ankeny. Thank you to Rick Ruff for delivering our pantry donations each month!



Mission News

**Corozal Community Building
"Before"**

2017



These are the
supports and beams you
helped with!

APC Delegation to El Salvador

Are you looking for an experience that will both touch your heart and fill your spirit? It's not too late to join our mission delegation to El Salvador! We will be traveling September 12-19, 2017 (Tues-Tues). Our week will be spent with our partner community of Corozal, including visits to local schools, and important Salvadoran historical and cultural sites. Our next delegation pre-trip meeting will be August 1st following VBS that evening. Contact Marcia McAdoo for more info: justicebern@mchsi.com

Mission News



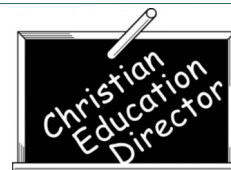
An amazing accomplishment!

Corozal, El Salvador Partnership Update

Our partners in Corozal recently requested our help to provide funds for improving a community building that they use for community meetings and other gatherings. To call it a building is very generous, it was really just an open-air roofed shelter created from scavenged materials. APC provided \$2650 (from the El Salvador Fund) for Corozal to purchase supports, beams, sand, and cement to re-build a larger, better community center. The mayor's office in Berlin (the local government) provided them with the roofing materials. The Corozal residents ably supplied the labor for the project, which they completed this spring. Your support of this partnership truly makes a difference!

From the Christian Education Wing

Summer came quickly and seems to be leaving just as quickly. I can't believe that July is over and August is here. It seems like just yesterday we set the far out August date for Vacation Bible School, and ready or not here it is! It's such an exciting time to see all the kids come together and enjoy learning different stories and songs about our Heavenly Father. Thank you for all your generous donations, it's because of you this even runs as smoothly as it does.



The mission trip to Camp Westminster was awesome to say the least. With the camp located on a lake, things around there get a tad bit weathered. So, the kids' mission was to fix all that had been weathered. They accomplished a lot of in our stay: 4 cabins; scraped, painted, and vacuumed. Front porch; scraped, painted, and vacuumed. Shutters, doors, and chairs were all painted as well.

We of course had a little fun and time to bond. We went bowling one night (I won't brag about having the highest score for the night!), walked The Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes, harnessed up for High Ropes and a Light-house Climb, and requested more team building activities, because they were just so much fun! We laughed, cried, prayed, played a lot of games, and got to know each other a whole lot better. I really hope that each Youth had just as much fun as I did!

As for me and my family, we have spent a lot of time making memories this summer. Bless the ones who gifted our family the Adventureland Pass, as we have made lots of new memories there. We've spent a lot of time outdoors just enjoying each other and God's creation.

While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what *life* is all about.

Grace and Peace, *Amber*



VBS—Last minute things

- ⇒ There is still time to register at www.ankenypcusa.org.
- ⇒ Still in need of about 20ish white shirts with clean backs.
- ⇒ Stay after church on Sunday July 30 to help decorate the church.

Youth Group:

The Youth Group has been meeting periodically over the Summer, planning for the Mission Trip and our Youth Sunday Service.

Youth Group will meet on **August 9 at 6:15 p.m.**

Youth Sunday Service will be **Sunday, August 13.**

Future Dates to remember:

Songs of Praise by VBS kids on **August 6**

Back to School Blessing on **August 20**



Sunday School begins on **September 10** along with **Presenting of Bibles** to Kindergartners & 3rd graders

APC Wednesday will start on **September 13**



Story Time—Every Wednesday @ 9:00 a.m.

August's themes

August 2: Superhero

August 16: Watermelon

August 9: Camping

August 23: School

August 30: Zoo Animals

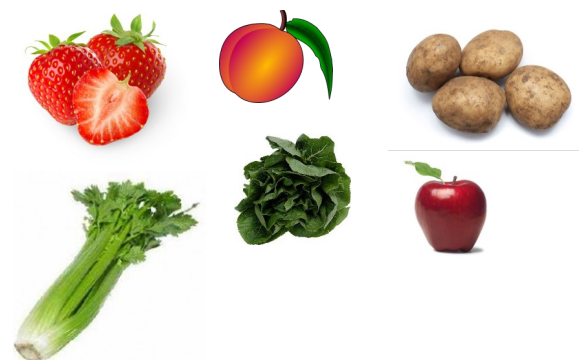
Wellness Team News

Organic Produce: Yes or No?

How can you tell when it's truly better for your health to pay extra for organic produce and when that isn't necessary? Every year the Environmental Working Group (EWG) puts out two lists to guide your selections. The Dirty Dozen ranks 12 popular fruits and veggies containing the highest concentrations of pesticide residue. So if you have limited funds for organic produce, start here. They're ranked from the worst to the best (of the worst).

Dirty Dozen

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Strawberries | 7. Cherries |
| 2. Spinach | 8. Grapes |
| 3. Nectarines | 9. Pears |
| 4. Apples | 10. Tomatoes |
| 5. Peaches | 11. Sweet bell peppers |
| 6. Celery | 12. Potatoes |



The **Clean Fifteen** contains the produce with the least amount of pesticide residue. They're numbered from best to worst (of the best).

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Sweet corn* | 9. Mangoes |
| 2. Avocados | 10. Eggplant |
| 3. Pineapples | 11. Honeydew melon |
| 4. Cabbage | 12. Kiwi |
| 5. Onions | 13. Cantaloupe |
| 6. Sweet peas (frozen) | 14. Cauliflower |
| 7. Papayas* | 15. Grapefruit |
| 8. Asparagus | |



*The EWG warns that a small amount of corn and papayas comes from genetically modified seed. If you want to avoid that, buy organic instead.

APC Wellness Team

Let's get healthy together

Worship Service Attendance

June 2017	410 (4 Sundays)	July 2017	379 (does not include 7/30)
Weekly Average	103	Weekly Average	95
June 2016	360 (4 Sundays)	July 2016	453 (5 Sundays)
Weekly Average	90	Weekly Average	91

Blessing of the Backpacks



Students and teachers are invited to have their backpacks and school supplies blessed for the coming school year. This short ceremony will be held on the front lawn of the church, or indoors in case of rain. Afterwards, we invite you to stay for root beer floats.

Join us as we send everyone back to school with our prayers and blessings!

Sunday, August 20, 2017 2 p.m.

**On the front lawn of Ankeny Presbyterian Church
317 SE Trilein Drive, Ankeny**

Start the school year with a blessing!