



The Encounter

January 2018

A Word from Pastor Eric

A New Year has begun, and we at APC are starting 2018 by taking some important steps that will help us fulfill our mission of "Sharing God's love through compassion and service in our neighborhood and beyond."



Inside this issue:

Staff Thank You 2

Mission News 3-4

This-n-That 5

From the Christian Education Wing 6-7

Session Action Items 7

January Calendar
(see attachment)

To begin with, after worship on Sunday, January 14, we will be having an open meeting with an architect from Design Alliance. Design Alliance is the firm the Session has contracted with to help us plan for upcoming facility repairs and improvements. You might recall that the Session approved a strategic plan for APC last summer, part of which involves fixing and upgrading our building and grounds, and conducting a capital campaign to pay for the work that must be done. This isn't simply to make ourselves comfortable (although replacing the flat roof portions of the building will keep us dryer). The goal is to make APC an attractive center for ministry in our community, both now and for years to come. We want this church to be a place in which our neighbors are welcomed with warmth, hospitality, and care, and in which they discover God's loving presence.

Our facility is already the center for our many ministries of worship, education, care, service and outreach. On our grounds, we also maintain a little library and host a Helping Hand pantry box. In addition, we host the Boy Scouts, an Alzheimer's Support Group, the Optimist Club, and occasional PEO meetings. These are all excellent steps toward fulfilling our mission. But for us to be ready for the future, we need to take care of some deferred maintenance items (like the aforementioned roof), head-off some issues that we see coming (for example, air conditioner replacement), and improve the functionality and attractiveness of our facility (working ovens, anybody?) And so, on January 14th, the architects will work with us to help set some priorities in preparation for our facility improvement projects. If you haven't already completed the survey from Design Alliance (it was sent to you via email in December), please fill out the copy that is in this edition of the Encounter and return it to the office by January 7th. If you plan on attending the meeting with Design Alliance, please RSVP to Kimber in the office (office@ankenypresbyterian.org or 964-0264) by that date as well. Working together, we can make APC even more ready to reach out to our neighbors.

Speaking of reaching out, January 14th will also be an exciting day during worship, as we anticipate receiving approximately ten new members. This is a good sign that APC is on-track and living into our mission. Please help us welcome our new members on that day!

Finally, January 28th will bring a different kind of opportunity for us to fulfill our mission. During 2017, the folks at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Roman Catholic Church worked with a group called AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy), to determine what needs exist and are emerging in Ankeny. The focus was especially

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Pastor Eric (continued)

on issues related to poverty – which, perhaps surprisingly, is a real issue in our city. The result was a lengthy written report, which was first shared at a community meeting at OLIH back in August. Several of our elders attended that meeting, and our Mission Committee recommended that we invite our friends from OLIH to share that report with our congregation. This will happen during the Sunday school hour on January 28. (See the article from the Mission Committee in this edition of the Encounter.) If we are to effectively share God's love through compassion and service, it is vital that we understand what people in our community need. More than that, a number of congregations in town are in the process of becoming members of the AMOS organization, so that they can coordinate their efforts in making Ankeny a better place to live for all people. Our Mission Committee and Session will be determining whether we can also be part of this effort. And so, your attendance and participation on January 28th will be useful for receiving an education about community needs, and for helping us discern whether our mission will be well-served by partnering with other churches in the AMOS organization. (See amosiowa.org for more information about them). I hope you will be present for this special event, for it could quite possibly be one of our best avenues for sharing God's love in tangible ways with our neighbors.

Make no mistake about it, APC is moving forward in its mission of sharing God's love in our neighborhood and beyond. The events of this month are a sign of our growing momentum. Thank you for your support and participation as we carry out the vital work to which God has called us!

Your Companion on the Journey,
Pastor Eric



All of us on staff would like to say **Thank You** for the cards, gifts, notes and monetary gifts that you gave us this Christmas. It is definitely a blessing to work for and with you in pursuing God's mission at APC. Thank you again!

Eric J. Basore

Kimber Jackson

Anna Scott

Jane Widdows

Nancy Petersen

Karen Pasanich

Thank you!

Mission News

Have you heard about AMOS?

The APC Mission Committee is exploring community service opportunities offered through membership in A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy (AMOS). AMOS is a non-partisan organization of Iowa congregations and non-profit organizations working to build strong communities by leadership development and community action. Through its membership in AMOS, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny (OLIH) undertook an assessment of the needs of our Ankeny community. The OLIH study concluded that efforts to address affordable housing, mental illness and transportation would have the greatest impact on this community. A copy of the completed survey entitled "A Needs and Services Assessment of Ankeny: Understanding Today, Preparing for Tomorrow" is available for your review on the Mission table in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like your own copy, you can find the publication online by using the search term "A Needs and Services Assessment of Ankeny" or through the OLIH web site: www.olih.org and entering the search term AMOS.



To learn how APC could become more engaged in our community through AMOS, the APC Mission Committee and Pastor Eric met with Liz Hall, Lead Organizer for AMOS, and attended the August 17, 2017 public meeting where the OLIH AMOS study was presented. An opportunity for our congregation to meet with AMOS staff and to learn more about AMOS engagement will take place at APC on Sunday January 28. For more information about AMOS including an AMOS membership list, see the AMOS web site:

www.amosiowa.org

What is a Helping Hand Box?

APC is host to one of the boxes around Ankeny which operates as "a little free pantry" with non-perishable foods and personal products. Anyone who needs something from the box is welcome to take it. Folks, churches, and service groups from all over town help to keep the boxes stocked. APC is trying hard to keep our box well stocked. Join in the fun and challenge! This goodwill network connects via Facebook – check them out: A Helping Hand in Ankeny. A list of the 12 Helping Hand box locations can be found on the mission board in the Fellowship Hall.

What is appropriate to put in the Helping Hand Box?

Healthy non-perishable food items, just as you would donate to the Food Pantry such as:

- ♦ Canned fruit, veggies, beans, pasta, pasta sauce in cans, peanut butter, canned meat, chicken, or tuna (foil packets work well in winter), rice, soup, cereal, hamburger/tuna helper, ramen, baby food & formula

Personal care products such as:

- ♦ Shampoo, body wash or soap, toothpaste & toothbrushes, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, diapers, baby wipes

Warm items in winter such as:

- ♦ Gloves, mittens, hats, hand-warmers

When it gets really cold out we may pull the canned food items from the box, but typically the boxes empty pretty quickly. During the cold months perishable items such as bread and cheese can be donated, too.

No medicines or junk food please!



Mission News (continued)

Annual Soup & Pie Fundraiser and Silent Auction for Corozal, El Salvador

Donations of pies, auction items, and volunteers are needed! All funds raised directly support our partner community of Corozal with scholarships, fertilizer, and other economic development projects. Contact Marcia McAdoo: justicebern@mchsi.com or Carla Yeager: yeagercc@msn.com with questions or for more info.

Also, bring a crockpot full of your delicious soup for our soup-tasting contest, with prizes for the top three winners. There is still time to enter your terrific soup. Sign-up on a sheet at the Mission table by this Sunday, December 31st.



Pray for Peace in Cameroon

Cameroon Christian and Muslim religious leaders are calling for peace and talks to end the crisis in English-speaking regions of the central African nation that has prompted secession calls.

The religious leaders say the crisis could add to the bloodshed from the Boko Haram insurgency in the north and the crisis in neighboring Central African Republic.

The English-speaking regions of Cameroon have been gripped by crisis for months. Thousands of lawyers, teachers and students and several civil society groups have taken to the streets and launched strikes in opposition to discrimination against Anglophones by the central government and by Cameroon's long-serving president, Paul Biya. Hundreds of protestors have been arrested. An internet blackout across the English-speaking regions was imposed, affecting local businesses and healthcare centers. Schools have been closed in most of English-speaking Cameroon for more than a year, following protests of the overuse of French in the bilingual country.

Cameroon has experienced few major challenges since its independence from France and Britain in the 1960s. But in the past several years, it has been enveloped by a bloody Boko Haram insurgency in the north, the spillover of the violence in the Central African Republic, and calls for secession in its English-speaking regions.

In early October, the separatists in Northern Cameroon declared the independence of a state they call "Ambazonia" and claimed Julius Ayuk Tabe, an information technology executive with the American University of Nigeria, was their president, leading to more violence.

The clergy are calling for honest and sincere dialogue between the government and the separatists to stop what they say may be genocide in the making, but President Biya has maintained that he is not open for negotiation with the separatists.

Our APC members, David and Sue Musoro and Olive Musoro are originally from Cameroon. Cameroon has a high level of religious freedom and diversity. Christianity is the predominate religion and is practiced by two-thirds of the population. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) just celebrated their 60th anniversary in November 2017. Let us join the PCC to work toward justice and peace during these very difficult times.



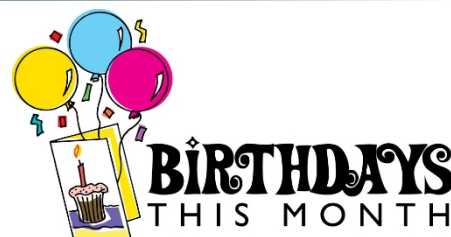
This—n—That

**THANK
YOU!**

The Human Resource Committee would like to thank the congregation for their generous contributions to the Staff Christmas gift fund. Over \$1580 was distributed to the staff!

I'd like to thank everyone for their cards and prayers during this past month. It is wonderful having such a caring church family!

Karisa Pasanchin



4	Mary Selby	16	Adda Morris
4	Amber Kent	16	Jill Vander Wilt
5	Julie Nurnberg	23	Emmett Taylor
8	Aiden Metcalfe	26	Coleen Myers
8	Jay Vander Wilt	27	Linda Wehage
9	Madeline Clancy	29	Diana Haines
13	Bonita Lemon		

Sunday Assistants

Lock up Elder: Al Overbaugh

January 7

Communion Set up & Clean up: Al Overbaugh

Greeters: Eric & Rose Frimpong, Chris Wehrman

Ushers: Jim & Marge Hennings

Worship Leader: Marcia McAdoo

Font of Identity Deacon: Sonja Maxwell

January 14

Greeters: Emmett & Sandy Taylor, Mary Ellen Fischer

Ushers: Arnie & Carole Snook

Worship Leader: Sonja Maxwell

Font of Identity Deacon: Diana Haines

January 21

Greeters: Olive Musoro, Terri Blattner

Ushers: Gary & Janie Owens

Worship Leader: Lee White

Font of Identity Deacon: Arnie Snook

January 28

Greeters: Becky Stadlman, Gary & Mary Weeks

Ushers: Phil & Shirley Pease

Worship Leader: Rita Korn

Font of Identity Deacon:



"Very rarely in the Bible does God command someone to 'Stay.' He opens a door, and then he invites us to walk through it—into the unknown. In All the Places To Go... How Will You Know?, John Ortberg opens our eyes to the countless doors God places before us every day, teaches us how to recognize them, and gives us the encouragement to step out in faith and embrace the extraordinary opportunities that await. With personal stories, scripture, and application, this video series will challenge participants to move forward in a changing world. This group meets from 12:30-2:00 in the Fireside Room and begins January 8th. Please contact Bonnie McCaughey for information or to acquire a participant's guide.

Attendance Figures

December 2017	478 (does not include 12/31)
Weekly Average	120
Christmas Eve 2017	185
December 2016	413 (4 Sundays)
Weekly Average	103
Christmas Eve 2016	162

From the Christian Education Wing

Another year down and a new one to start! Where does the time go?

Thank you to everyone who dropped something by or wished me and my family a Merry Christmas. We traveled to my hometown and spent some much needed time with my parents and family.

I have truly enjoyed this past year and made many memories with everyone here in my "church family". You guys are great and lots of fun. I have especially enjoyed watching my children growing up with this family as well. They have grown so much, and make me proud.

I am excited to see what 2018 has in store!

"As the year comes to an end, don't look back on yesterday's disappointments. Look ahead to God's promises yet to unfold."

~Amber

Sunday School—Resumes on January 7th

- The children will be learning about Jesus's life after he was born. Starting on January 7 and the following three weeks they will discover a new Bible character that helped spread Jesus' prophetic message.
- Reminder—Pick up your child from their classrooms when Sunday School is over.



I hope you enjoyed the Children's Christmas Program. They all did such a wonderful job. It was a great and different way for them to learn the Christmas story.

APC Wednesday—Resumes on January 3rd

- January starts the new semester for APC Wednesday, which means if you pay for dinner by the semester the 2nd half is due. Dinner is \$4.00 per person per week.
- The children's curriculum for APC Wednesday is always a follow-up to what is learned in Sunday School, but adds a character trait to it. This sessions Character trait is Harambee which is a Kenyan tradition of community self-help events; means working together in unity.



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

January's themes

- January 3: No Story time
- January 10: Snow
- January 17: Mittens
- January 24: Snowman
- January 31: Polar Bear



Christian Education Wing (continued)

Youth Group

5:30 p.m. Dinner—\$4.00 per person

6:15 – 8:00 p.m. Mixture of Bible Study from LinC and fellowship.
Once a month we will have a mission type experience.



- The Youth went to the Escape Chambers on November 29 as a team-building exercise. For those of you who don't know what the Escape Rooms are, they are different themed rooms built to test your guile and grit. It's problem solving and team building at its finest. A mission is given to you and there's 60 minutes to complete it, and escape the room you are in. Sounds simple right? The Youth were split into 2 different teams and put in 2 different rooms. Both teams managed to escape their room with only minutes to spare!
- Thank you to all that donated to the Youth Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. They raised a little over \$1,600. It will definitely be put to good use with the upcoming Mission Trip to Lincoln, NE through Urban Plunge.

Nursery

Starting this year we will have a Sunday School curriculum available to Preschool and younger in the nursery during the Sunday School hour. Nancy will be the teacher, and will always be available in the nursery both during worship and after during the Sunday School hour. If your little one would like to stop in and get the bible story, coloring page, and or simple craft for that Sunday they are able to do so. Your child can stay for the whole hour or just come and go at your convenience. It's hard for little ones to sit for too long so having it in the nursery will allow them to play and move around if need be. The curriculum will be very kid-friendly and simple for the little ones to enjoy.



Nursery

Session Action Items

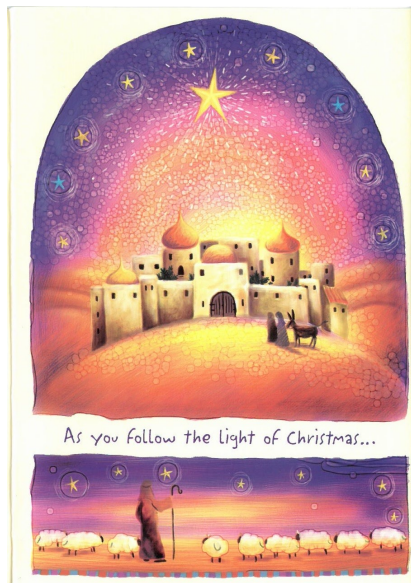
Session took action on the following items during December:

- Approved a Budget for 2018
- Set a Congregational Meeting to approve Terms of Call on January 7, 2018
- Approved a motion to discontinue the music ensemble for 2018
- Accepted Arnold and Carolyn Straub as new members of APC

Session Committee

Please contact any of your Session members with comments or concerns.

A Note from a Neighbor



May His love
shine forever
in your life.

My family is thankful for
your church's commitment to
community service. From Love Lunch
to the Little Free Lending Library, and
most of all story time, we appreciate
all you do. Amber does such a
nice job with the kids. She has many
gifts. Thank you and Merry
Christmas!