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Dear Friends,

Last Sunday I shared with you a message entitled, *Stay Connected*. It was a reminder that our relationships with each other help to bring meaning and purpose to our lives. Little did I know that just an hour after I finished the last service I would have to make a relationship decision.

I rushed to Grand View University after greeting the last person to catch up with LeAnn and Hannah. It was an important day for Hannah as she was involved in scholarship writing and interviews. When I arrived, the activities for the day were almost over. The only thing left were the closing remarks, accompanied by some delectable desserts – not bad timing for me. After picking up my cheesecake and hot cocoa, I was forced to make a decision – where to sit. There were enough round tables, so thankfully our family could sit at our own table – that's what I initially wanted to do, and it's what most people did, but you don't build relationships at your own table. My own words, still warm on my breath, were haunting me. Thankfully, LeAnn quickly mentioned she met a family earlier in the day so we headed for their table and asked if we could join them. We met a great family, and I am so thankful we sat with them. It was well worth the effort.

Continued on page 2

There are two great opportunities to expand your relationship base during the month of February in our church. The first is to join a small group beginning the week of February 12th for a great study entitled *Life Rules*. Small groups are a great way to share your faith journey with others. They are essential in a church of our size with three morning worship services. What is ironic is that even in a large church with people everywhere you can actually feel quite alone. God intended us to share our lives with others. That's why small groups are so important to our church. Our faith journey is not one that God intended for us to take alone. God is always with us, but He created the Church (people) to travel through life with us. It's not too late to join one of our existing small groups or to begin a new one – all you need is a couple people and DVD player. If you have read this far and still don't think you are ready for a small group or you're new to the church and don't know many people, then I invite you to join LeAnn and me for this study on Thursdays in the Sanctuary at 6:30 p.m.

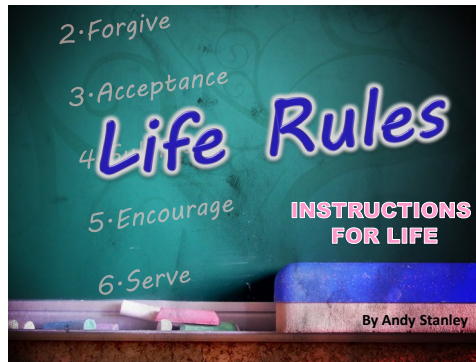
Second, I encourage you to join with others in helping to package meals for Haiti. We are going to package 125,000 meals – that's a lot of food! We need 8-10 people at each Table, and we will have four tables going both Saturday and Sunday to accomplish our goal. It's going to be a great weekend. When you sign up in the Narthex, you might not know all the people at your table, but they are literally your brothers and sisters in Christ. I pray that as we fulfill our goal for the people of Haiti we will also establish new and lasting friendships – that we will see the power of the church united in purpose.

One last thing – that family we sat with at Grand View University – before we left, our daughters were exchanging names and Facebook pages. Hannah remarked, "Now I'll know at least one person when I arrive on campus." Amazing things happen when we reach out to others, and are willing to share life.

Reaching out with you,

Pastor John

Church-Wide Study & Sermon Series



(the weeks of)
February 12th
through
March 25th

Six-week Campaign

Small Group Sign-Up Continues through February 12

Get your instructions for life! You can still be a part of our next church-wide study, "Life Rules," by joining a small group near you. Please contact the church office (967-2991) for more information regarding an available small group or visit the sign-up display in the Narthex each Sunday through February 12th.

Youth Scoop



This new study, written by David Nasser, will address trials, temptations, and triumphs that King David faced to show how the lessons found in David's life are relevant to the issues students encounter every day.

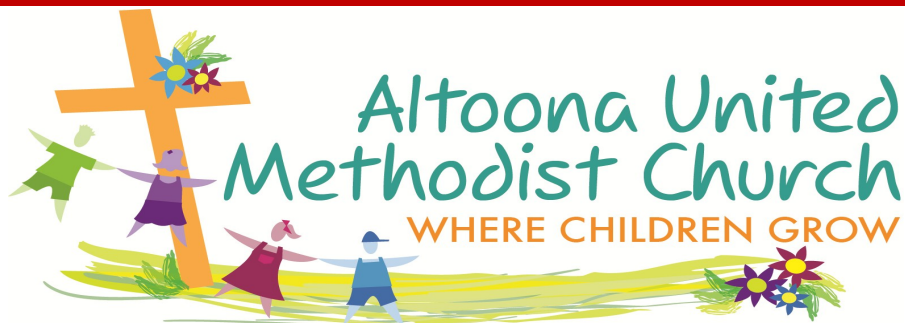
Sunday, February 5th—No Youth Group

Sunday, February 12th 4:00 –5:00 p.m.—Meals from the Heartland packaging at the church
(Please contact LeAnn if you are able to help)

Sunday, February 19th 5:30-7:00 pm—Overcoming Our Giants

Sunday, February 26th 5:30-7:00 pm—When Life Isn't Fair

KING DAVID



Musical Worship Celebration

Featuring Sunday School Choirs

Palm Sunday: April 1, 2012

**Rehearsals during the Sunday School Hour Feb. 19 - Mar 25*





VBS 2012

⇨
June 24-28
⇩

You can join the team!

Email sheleneb@altoonaumc.org

Summer Games Jr. 2012

*Kids grades 2nd-5th (at least age 8) are invited to Camp Wesley Woods

*Choose-Your-Own Adventure options like creek-stomping, canoeing, crafts, slip-n-slide/water games, archery, horseback riding, fishing

*Awesome music, worship, and outdoor chapel

*Small group activities, fellowship, and more!

July 29 - August 1

*Registration begins February 26th.



Mark Your Calendar
for Summer Games
Junior!



Music Notes

We are ramping up for a powerful Palm Sunday celebration on April 1. Music and drama highlighting children's choirs, bell choir, praise band, and festival choir with orchestra will be featured as we partner in ministry with Pastor John for the Palm Sunday message.

If you enjoy singing or play an instrument, plan to join us during the months of February and March. The regular rehearsal schedule is listed below. For interest in Praise Band, please contact Steve McLellan at stevem@altoonaumc.org or call 967-2991.

Wednesday Rehearsal Schedule

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Orchestra | 6:00 p.m. |
| Chancel Choir | 6:30 p.m. |
| Praise Band | 8:00 p.m. |

February Music Schedule

| |
|---|
| Feb 5—Choir 1st service only |
| Feb 12—Choir & Orchestra 1st & 3rd services |
| Feb 19—Bell Choir all three services |
| Feb 26—Choir & Orchestra 1st & 3rd services |

The Worship Concert with Paul Baloche and his recording session band is at Lutheran Church of Hope West on Friday, March 9. Concert tickets are \$10.00 and may be purchased at the door. The band is amazing, and Paul has written many songs currently heard on KNWI and KLOVE radio.

Saturday the artists will be teaching break-out classes on vocals, guitars, drums, and keys, and then answering questions. The training workshop and concert can be done together for \$49 by registering through the church. Contact Steve at stevem@altoonaumc.org.

Pastoral Partners

If you or a family member would like prayer support or a hospital visit, please fill out a prayer card or call the church office at 967-2991.

If you need a DVD sent to a homebound friend or loved one, please contact the church at 967-2991. DVDs may be purchased for \$5 each.

Top Notcher News

A ministry for people 55 and older.

Meetings at a Glance

Tuesday, February 14

- *Host/Hostess: Marla Carr
- *Meet at the church at 9:00 a.m.
- *Tour the Iowa Hall of Pride 9:30-11:30
- *Eat at Spaghetti Works 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, March 13, noon

- *Potluck
- *Host/Hostess: Jerry & Joan Nolin,
Beth McKee
- *Program: Patty Richards, Country
Gospel Singer

Tuesday, April 10, noon

- *Potluck
- *Host/Hostess: Shelby & Howard
Leinen, Marla Carr
- *Program: The Dancin' Grannies
from Albia

Spring Bus Trip May 11 One-Day Trip to Marshalltown

You will be amazed at what Marshalltown has to offer...and so close to home! We will be touring the Fisher Art Gallery and sculptures, having lunch at the Historical Binford House with entertainment, touring the restored Orpheum Theater, shopping, and much more, including some surprises Erma has planned. The cost is only \$49/person. Please make checks to Travelin-Rose Tours and give to Joan Nolin by April 5. Come join us in a fun day and bring a friend. More details will be coming!

Hospital Chaplains-Do You Need One?

On Tuesday, January 10, Top Notchers met for a delicious potluck at noon that was hosted by Bonnie Gibson and Linda & Larry Keller in the Altoona United Methodist Family Life Center. Doug Raymond, chaplain at Mercy Hospital, was our guest speaker. As a chaplain, his job is to help patients and staff deal with spiritual matters related to health care concerns while staying in the hospital. He also visited with us about the importance of having living wills and medical power of attorney. He had the forms with him for anyone who wanted to complete this important paperwork. If you or a loved one requires a hospital stay in the future, you might want to request the services of a chaplain.

Come Celebrate Valentine's Day with Us!

On Tuesday, February 14, the Top Notchers will be meeting at 9:00 a.m. at the church to carpool to the Iowa Hall of Pride. We plan on being at the Iowa Hall of Pride from 9:30 to 11:30. Admission is \$5.00. Following our tour of the Iowa Hall of Pride, we will be having lunch at the Spaghetti Works on Court Avenue at 11:30 a.m. Come join us for a fun-filled morning!

UMW



Join Us

United Methodist Women (UMW) meetings are open to all women at all times. Please join us in February!

Meetings for February

February 2
7:00 p.m.

Conference Room

Abigail Circle

February 21
7:00 p.m.

Sue Dawson's home

Martha Circle

February 16
9:30 a.m.

Conference Room

February Meeting Details

UMW's February 2 meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. Abigail Circle will be the hostess, and Marla Carr will provide the program on prayer and self-denial.

Our mission project in February is sweetened cold cereal for Trinity United Methodist Church Breakfast Club.

Mark your calendars for the UMW annual Tater Topper 11:00-12:30 on Sunday, March 11 . More details coming!

Mark your calendars!

Boy Scout Troop 63

Annual Soup Supper

Help send Troop 63 to summer camp!

February 4

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Family Life Center

Free will donation.



Ash Wednesday Service

Join us on February 22 at 8 p.m. in the Sanctuary for a special Ash Wednesday service. All other midweek activities on Ash Wednesday will dismiss at 7:50 p.m.

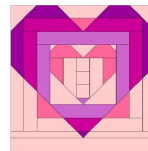


Meals from the Heartland

On Saturday, February 11 and Sunday, February 12, we will package 125,000 meals to be sent to Haiti through Meals from the Heartland. This is possible because of your generous donations during the Turkey Mission Dinner. A variety of one-hour shifts are available on both the 11th and 12th. Contact Jane at janeb@altoonaumc.org or 967-2991 for more information or to sign up.



Every Week at AUMC



Ann Wilson quilts
Mondays at 1 p.m.



Men's basketball
Mondays at 6:30 p.m.



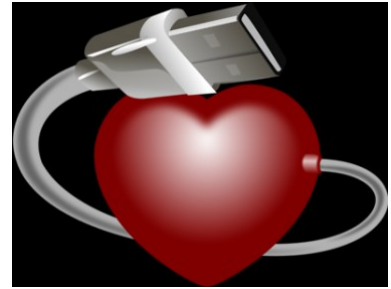
Christian yoga
Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

1. Teresa Stump, Elizabeth Goodale
2. Jackson Hageman, Toran & Shelene Billups
3. Darlene Watson, Larry Keller, Kathleen Deal
4. Ruth Hamilton, Jim VanFosson, Brett Timmins,
Carter Bjorklund
5. Mike McKibben, Michael Collison, Abby Cassler,
Darrel & Carolyn Terpstra
6. Gary Parrott
7. Kris Arendt
8. Kyla Burgett, Zach Bjorklund
9. Ella Weispfenning
10. Linda Cole, Ava Fischer
12. Penny Bos, Tonya Boos, Sarah Millard, Meg Muller,
Garrett Malaise
13. Dennis Creveling, K.J. Bills, Austin Hess, Kyla Stout,
Ian Palmer, Barrett Weispfenning
14. Cheryl Weber, Joanne Andrews, Tanner Warren
15. Jody Person, Jennifer Voss, Sarah Norton, Isaac
Forristall, Doug & Kyla Burgett
16. Chad Kruse, Nathan Cook, Paige Kruse, Cauri
Douglas, Ben Fischer
17. Everett Stapp
19. Jean Fuller, Shirley Johnson, Janice Bogaards,
Michayla Bradley, Matthew & Tami Hess
21. Thelma Thompson, Zachary Arendt
22. Jeff Ebert
23. Eric Carr, Mathew Swaim, Nicole Hasek, Cale
Hansen, Ryan & Niki Rathert
24. Susan Dunlap
25. Lane Hansen
28. Toran Billups, Noah Lundquist, Ellie Snetsellar



Stay Connected!



If you would like to receive our weekly updates via email, please go to the church website.

<http://www.altoonaumc.org>

Under the Resources tab, choose E-newsletter signup. Enter your email address when prompted, and you will begin to receive our weekly newsletters on Thursday afternoons in your email box!

