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Dear friends,

On the evening before Easter our whole family jumped into the car and headed out for supper. It had been a long, busy day full of preparation for Easter Sunday and we were starving. Since we have been to this restaurant before it didn't take long to decide what we wanted and so we quickly ordered and waited for our appetizers to arrive.

As our food was delivered and glasses were refilled I began to make small talk with our waitress. (Here is tip for you: I have discovered that if you show an interest in the people who serve you, they will often take better care of you). Finally, after our third, short conversation I decided to ask her what she was doing on Sunday morning. She responded that she wasn't sure. She might go out of town to see her mom, but hadn't made a final decision. And so, you guessed it, I invited her to come to church. By the look on her face, my invitation caught her off-guard and then she turned to me and said, "No one has ever invited me to church before." Her words pierced my heart – I will never forget them, or the look of appreciation she gave me when she spoke them. And then I began to wonder – how many of our neighbors, co-workers, fellow students, etc., could say the same thing. Too many, I'm afraid.

And then she asked a question I won't forget either. This thirty-something lady asked, "Would there be a place for someone like me? I am single and I don't

have any kids." I quickly responded. "Sure we have a place for you and my wife will look for you and sit with you. We want you to come." As I walked to the car I wondered how many other people are out there who don't think there is place for them in church. Too many, I'm afraid.

I believe we, as a church, are becoming increasingly aware of our need to befriend and share our faith with others by inviting them to join us for worship. So let me say, "Thanks," for all you do to invite friends, family and neighbors to worship. Jesus is so worth sharing with others. We had approximately 875 people attend on Easter. That's a new record. Each number is a person – someone that God loves. Many of the new faces in the services were the direct result of an invitation. Thanks – Together we can make a difference. Together we are Christ's love and compassion extended to this world.

I pray that the Lord will lead us to those who have never been invited to attend church. May God give us eyes to see them, hands to help them, words to share with them and hearts to love them.

Sharing Jesus with you,

Pastor John



# Graduating Seniors!

## **Graduation Sunday is May 22nd**

We will be showing a slide presentation during the worship services and we would like to include pictures of you throughout your life. Please provide us with 5-7 photos to include one baby picture, one of you with your family, your senior picture and any others that show you growing up.

Please mail or bring your photos to the church office by Friday, May 13th.



## Top Notcher News

### One-Day Bus Trip to the Amana Colonies!

May 12th is our Exciting trip to the Amana Colonies for the day. Plan on a big and



delicious lung of swiss steak, fried chicken and the works, including pie at the Ox Yoke Inn. We will be visiting the meat market, woolen mills, furniture store and many shops in the area. After lunch we will travel to the Old Creamery Theatre, where we will laugh through the comedy "Dixie Swim Club".

There are a few seats still available. The cost is \$85.00 per person, which includes all of the above, bus/driver, escort and more. If you are interested in the great trip, please contact Joan Nolin at 967-2773 as soon as possible.

For those already signed up for this great bus trip, please be parked in the North church parking lot by 7:45 a.m. at the latest. The Arrow Motor Coach will leave at 8:00 a.m. sharp. Plan on a fun-filled day with wonderful fellowship and even meet some new friends.

### Meetings at a Glance

**June 14th:** Tour of Judicial & State Historical Building in Des Moines. Lunch will be at a nearby restaurant. More details to come.

**July 12th:** Noon Potluck with musical guests, The Glory Land Singers from Des Moines.

**August 9th:** 11:30 a.m. meet at Altoona Hy-Vee. Guest speaker will be Paula Winslow, Master Gardener from Altoona.

**September 13th:** Local Mystery Tour. It is doubtful that many, if any of you, have taken this tour so come and learn what goes on "behind the scenes". Following the tour, we'll enjoy lunch at the Machine Shed, in a private room.

**October 11th:** One-Day Bus Trip or Local Tour with lunch out.

**November 8th:** Potluck in the Family Life Center with a WW2 and Veterans Day theme. Come dressed in patriotic colors. Guest Entertainers: "The Andrews Sisters".

**December 13th:** Christmas potluck in the Family Life Center. Table service and coffee will be provided.

### Who are the Top Notchers?

We are an active group comprised of 45-50 people who usually meet the second Tuesday of each month. We have guest speakers and entertainers, travel, and do service projects in the community. The group is open to all people in the community, ages 55 and over. New friends are always welcome. For further information, please call Joan Nolin, Director, 515-967-2773.

# Youth Scoop

Summer Games University

July 11-15th

Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

[www.summergamesuniversity.org](http://www.summergamesuniversity.org)



**For those who have completed 5th-12th grade**

Summer Games University is a Christian camping experience designed to help youth begin and develop an active and life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. Summer Games University is an experience where biblical events and practices are shown through creative worship experiences such as invitational opportunities to receive Christ as Lord and Savior, prayer with the laying on of hands, foot washing service, crucifixion pageant, and etc. Centered on these experiential worship services, biblical pastoral teaching and the leadership provided by a staff of volunteers, Summer Games University encourages young people to live lives based on the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

All registration forms, located online or in the church office, must be submitted to the church office with a \$50.00 non-refundable **deposit by June 1st**. Please DO NOT register online. Our AUMC camp scholarship fund will provide 50% (\$137.50) of the total \$275.00 camp fee. Each camper's **balance is due June 27th** to the church.



*Ride the Waves  
at Youth Group*

**Sundays 5:30-7:00 pm**

**May 1st**

**Searching for Something Bigger**

Gain a greater perspective by understanding God's plans and purposes.

**May 15th**

**Trusting God in the Impact Zone**

Learn how to keep your faith strong when life gets tough.

*We will not meet May 8th, 22nd & 29th due to Mother's Day, Graduation at SEP and Memorial Day Weekend.*

## Soul Surfer Study

This youth study is based on the life of Bethany Hamilton, who lost her arm in a shark attack and courageously overcame all odds to become a champion surfer again, inspiring millions worldwide with her unwavering faith.



Please Make Note Of These Important Dates:

**Sunday, May 22nd-Sunday School Ends**

Sunday, May 29th-  
Sunday School Movie Day

**Sunday, June 26th—June 30th  
Vacation Bible School**

Sundays in July-Summer Sunday School

**Every Sunday - Children's Church**

# Summer Games Jr.

([www.summergamesuniversity.org](http://www.summergamesuniversity.org))

**Camp Wesley Woods**

**Kids ages 8 - 11**

**July 24th-27th**

Register in the church office today!



## Wild for God at PandaMania!

Vacation Bible School

**June 26th - 30th**

6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Ages 4 (by 9/15/11) - 5th grade

**VBS 2011**



## May Birthdays & Anniversaries

1. Melissa Hanson, Jaxson Millard, Dave & Kim Garrison, Rich & Louise Hay
2. Rod Losh
3. Jane Burns, Nolan Long, Nate Person
4. Edna Coughenower, Leighton Overton, Larry & Carolyn McKeever
5. Joni Benson, Ashley Gibson, Joy Hesse
8. Jackson Overton, Nicole Walton
10. Joyce Anderson
11. Shelby Leinen
12. Marla Carr, Skip Conkling
13. Carolyn McKeever, Emily Person
15. Melissa Kruse, Ron Mutchler, Abby Overton, David Robison, Jim Scofield, Brad & Michelle Reichardt
16. Lori Anderson, Braden Gaul, Colin Nickel, Fred & Carol Lockard
17. Carrie Baird-Forristall
18. Zachary Bennett, Stacey Lybarger
19. Addison Whipple
20. Bryan Clarkson, Mike & Barb Cassler
21. Jennifer McElree, Norine Vlieger, Doug & Joann Workman, Mike Lundquist & Sherry Schlundt
22. Tyler Kruse
23. Hannah Paul
24. Kellie DeCamp, Bill Skoog
25. Lisa Schossow, Jake Watson, Casey & Emilie Hansen
26. Mike & Peggy Harmeyer, Herb & Helen Phillips
27. Don Gilson, Tanner Keuning, Carey Zwaschka
28. Chris & Stacey Lybarger
29. Cierra Gowin, Jerry & Joan Nolin, Greg & Jean Hanson
30. Dennis Fritzingler, Skip & Jeanie Conkling
31. Virginia Silver



## New Members & Baptism Classes

If you are interested in becoming a member, our next new members class will be held Wednesday, May 4th and Wednesday, May 11th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the chapel with the reception of new members on Sunday, May 15th. A Baptism class will be held on Sunday, May 22nd in the Family Life Center during the Sunday school hour beginning at 9:45 a.m. Please contact the church office at 967-2991 or [sarahm@altoonaumc.org](mailto:sarahm@altoonaumc.org) for more information or to sign up for these classes.

## Thank You!

For your generosity in support of Blankets+ Sunday.

Thus far \$1,465.15

has been donated which will enable the purchase of 293 blankets OR 7 draft animals OR 1 well pump and hygiene education for a village OR 5 sewing machines for mothers to support their families OR 42 women to receive microcredit loans to provide for their families OR any combination of these. You have made a difference.

