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Hello Everyone,

It was Friday July 15th and my week at Summer Games University Camp had concluded. As I was driving home alone that afternoon I had time to process the fact that not only the campers were coming home excited and charged, but I was too! Was it the fact that I was away from my cooking for a week? Or could it be that I didn't have to clean up after my family for a few days?! No, I believe I felt so fueled because of a move of God and a spiritual time of connectedness with others. I realized how vital it was for me to set time aside to connect with others including the pastors, their spouses and camp staff. I had just experienced a week of "connecting," one of the most foundational aspects of human life.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

Why would God have this verse penned? Because he knew how he wired us! We need each other to function. Without connecting and bonding with each other we will die. Isolation is suffocating. Robert Putman has stated that "As a rough rule of thumb, if you belong to no groups but you decide to join one, you cut your risk of dying over the next year in half." Are you interested in prolonging your life here on earth?! Dr. Henry Cloud says that "people who have strong support systems where they can process their needs, feelings, fears and etc. are: healthier, more likely to respond to medical treatment, emotionally healthier with less stress, depression and anxiety, more likely to reach their attempts to change their lives and are more able to reach their goals." The power of relationships are endless for our physical, emotional, relational and spiritual well-being.

But connectedness doesn't just happen. Staying connected takes commitment. So why not commit to something that may lengthen your life here on earth and prepare you for your eternal life to come? Why not join a small group? Author John Ortberg says the motto for his church's small groups is, "Join a group or die." Our church's motto could easily be, "Join a small group and LIVE!" Relationships are where we get our fuel and our get-up-and-go.

With that being said, I would like to encourage EVERYONE to join or host a small group this fall and grow in your faith, friendships and love for each other and the Lord. Our next six-week study will begin October 2nd. Everyone will have the opportunity to sign up for a small group of their choice during the month of September. We will study *Five Things God uses to Grow your Faith* written by Andy Stanley. Andy serves as the pastor of North Point Community Church in Alpharetta, Georgia which has helped to plant fourteen partner churches throughout the nation. In Andy's ministry he has observed that God consistently uses five things to grow people's faith. Let me encourage you to join a small group this September and discover how these five things may grow your faith as well.

Spurring you on,

LeAnn

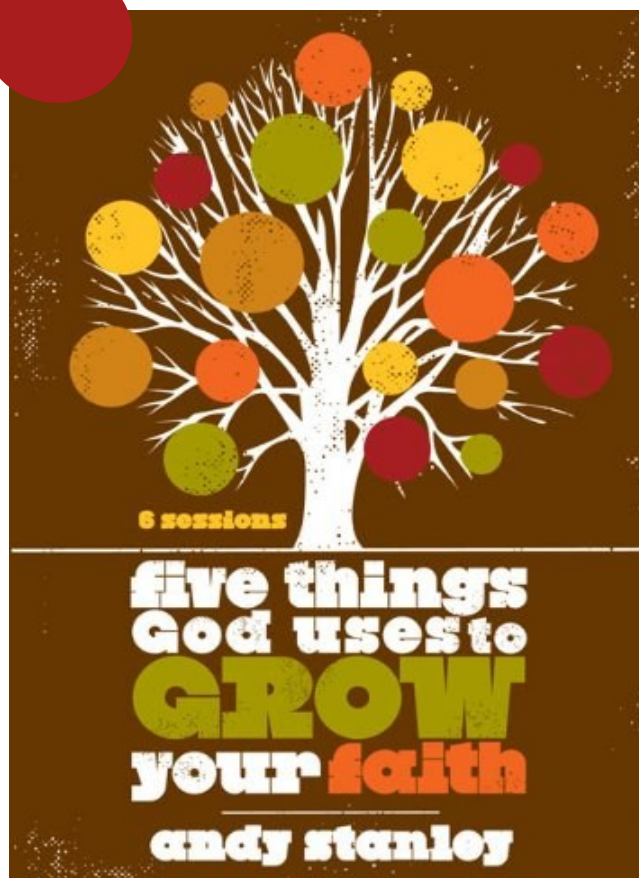
Director of Small Groups

Join a Small Group

Sign Up this September in the Narthex

This October grow your faith in a church-wide six-week sermon series and small group study. Discover how God consistently raises us to new levels of trust and confidence in him through practical teaching, providential relationships, private disciplines, personal ministry and pivotal circumstances.

COME and GROW your FAITH in a small group of providential relationships where you will see that God is not doing something to you, but IN you and THROUGH you.



Top Notcher News

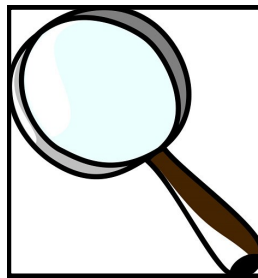


The Top Notchers are scheduled to work at Meals

from the Heartland on Thursday, September 1st from 11:30 a.m. –1:30 p.m. Please plan to meet at the church at 11:00 a.m. for carpooling. Contact Joan Nolin if you would like to help and can be a driver. We have a great group already signed up but need more volunteers for this great cause. Please eat before you come, we will be stopping after our shift at Village Inn for pie and coffee.

Top Notchers Mystery Tour, September 13th

It is doubtful that many have taken this local tour. Not only is it very interesting, but we get to see that goes on behind the scenes. We'll leave by car load from the north door of the church at 9:15 a.m. Following the tour, we will enjoy lunch at the Machine Shed, ordering from the menu in a private dining room. The Merkles are hosting this event. Come join us!



Final Payment on Fall Trip to Illinois is Due September 5th

Please make checks payable to Travelin' Rose Tours and give to Joan. As of this writing, we have only one seat available and that is due to a couple of cancellations. If you are interested contact Joan ASAP at 967-2773. You are going to really enjoy this trip along the Blackhawk Waterways and the fall colors should be fantastic!

Meetings at a Glance

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 13-14th: Overnight Bus Trip to the Dixon, Illinois area. We will attend a log cabin theatre production in the pines, have a boat ride on the river, visit Ronald Reagan's boyhood home, plus much, much more! Full details will be forthcoming.

November 8th: Potluck in the Family Life Center with table service and coffee provided. Guest speaker will be Patrice Peterson-Keys from the Polk County DNR. She will speak on "Owls In Iowa" as well as bring a live owl with her. Donations of food and money will be collected for the local food pantry.

December 13th: Christmas potluck in the Family Life Center. Table service and coffee will be provided. Guest entertainers: Squeeze Box Ministries.

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



YOUTH GROUP (Jr & Sr High)

Meals from the Heartland

Sat., Sept 3rd * 2:30-6:00 PM

Leave and return at the church.

Meals from the Heartland is a non-profit organization composed of people like you who package meals for delivery to starving people around the world. Come hang out with thousands of individuals to show the world what you youth can accomplish! We will package meals at Hy-Vee Hall followed by a group meal. **Reserve your ride by Aug. 31st with LeAnn at leanngaulke@hotmail.com. or text.**



TO SAVE A LIFE

Sunday Sept 18th—"To Save a Life"—Movie—**5:00-7:00 pm**
(note time change)

Sunday Oct 2nd—Begin "To Save a Life" 7-Week Study
5:30-7:00 pm—Church FLC

Please bring \$2.00 for your meal.

At some point, every teen has to decide what their life is going to be about. This study will inspire youth to be Jesus' hands and feet by reaching out to the lost, hurting, left out and lonely at their schools and in their neighborhoods. We all have one life—Do Something!



presentation of Bibles

Who: All incoming 3rd graders

When: Sunday, September 11

Where: AUMC during the
8:30 & 10:45 a.m. services

Please contact the church office at 967-2991 to confirm your child's participation. Thank you!



September 7: Midweek Family Social

September 11: Bible Presentation, Sunday School Open House, Confirmation Meeting

September 11-13: Kids Fest

September 14: Midweek Kick-Off

September 18: Sunday School Begins

September 25: Family Bike Hike & BBQ

Fall Programming Line-Up



Midweek

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the FLC

*9/7/11 - Family Ice Cream Social

*9/14/11 - Fall Kick-Off

*Children ages 3 yrs - 6th Grade

*Puppets option for Gr. 4th—6th

Sunday School

Sundays from 9:45 - 10:35 a.m.

*9/11/11 - Classroom Open House and registration for kids ages 3 (by 9/15/11) - 6th grade

*9/11/11 - Confirmation Meeting

*9/18/11 - First day of class



Children's Church

Sundays during the 10:45 a.m. service

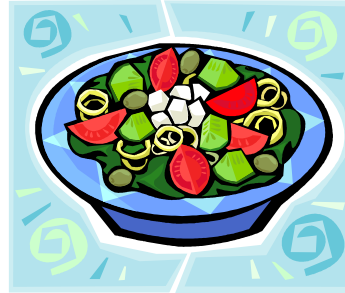
*Children ages 3 and 4 can begin in their preschool classroom

*Children ages 5 yr-2nd gr. start in the Sanctuary with parents and get dismissed from there



September Birthdays & Anniversaries

1. Dave Havenridge, Mary Lou Johnson, Jim & Lori Draude
2. Joe Hanson, Marvin & Linda Cole
3. Ron Manock, Hannah Arendt, Doug & Joyce White
4. Allison Wood
5. Kyle Bjorklund, Michelle Sloan, Heather Mahoney
6. Matt Sheeder, Jeremy Hinde, Matt Aswegan, Gary & Carol Dillow, Rick Theilen & Juli De-Geest-Theilen
8. Kathy McElree, Karl Hansen
9. Isaac Sloan, Tyler Ciesielski
10. Jake Havenridge
11. Erik Gibson
13. Aimee Van Fosson, Jeremy & Mary Long
14. Sam Otto, Terry & Jacque Coghlan
15. Chuck Walton, Kim Perry, Dakota Jones, Kyle & Tess Bjorkland
16. Austin Muller, Megan Zwaschka, Angie Coghlan
17. Jordan Gaulke, Lynn Gibson, Darlene Head
18. Ken Knowler, Matt & Sarah Millard, Michael & Leslie Oaks
19. Tami Hess
20. Cindy Paul, Steve Carroll, Jacobe Boos
21. Sarah Niswander, Logan Tekolste, Sharon Clement
23. Sharon Creveling, Ella Keuning
24. Cory McElree, Brian Arpy, Warren & Teresa Stump
26. Anya Mukraj, Ashlynn McCann, Steve & Sheryl Zwaschka
27. Megan White, David Porter, Jean Koch, Jim & Kim Van Fosson
28. Oral Thompson, Jason Boos
29. Michael Lundquist, Cole Collison, Steve Kellerhals, Ryan Moreland
30. Melody Hageman, Nicole Cressey, Jared & Katie Keuning, Gary & Tammy Stapp



United Methodist Women Salad Supper

Mark your calendars for Thursday, September 1st at 6:30 p.m. for the UMW Salad Supper. Please bring a salad to share. You won't want to miss this evening full of fun, food and fellowship.

The guest speaker will be Kathleen Deal.

All women are invited to attend. You don't have to belong to the UMW to attend.

United Methodist Women Meetings for September

Abigail Circle will meet at:
Jacque Coghlan's home
Tuesday, September 20th at
7:00 pm.

Martha Circle will meet at:
9:30 a.m. in the large conference room at Church. Sue Tomlin is the hostess.

Our mission of the month is to collect school supplies, canned fruit or vegetables for Caring Hands Christian Community Food Pantry

The Mission Committee continues to collect supplies to fill school bags and layette kits. There are containers located near the Welcome Center to collect your purchases. If you would like the Missions Committee to make your purchases for you, please make your check to AUMC with "School Bag Supplies" or "Layette Kit Supplies" on the memo line. Please visit the Welcome Center in the narthex for donation envelopes.

Please bring your donations by September 17th so we can assemble all the bags and kits for the ingathering. Thank you in advance for your purchases of

any of the below listed supplies and financial gifts.

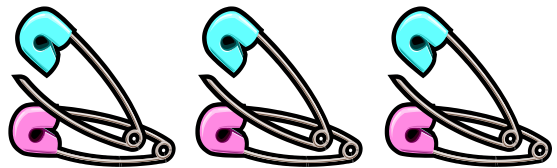
School Bag Supplies

- (3) 70 page wide ruled spiral or bound notebooks, 8.5x11
- (1) 30cm metric ruler
- (1) Box of 24 crayons (24 only)
- (1) 2.5" eraser
- (1) Blunt Scissors
- (1) Hand held pencil sharpener
- (3) Unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers



Layette Kit Supplies

- (6) Cloth diapers
- (2) Gowns or sleepers
- (2) Diaper Pins
- (2) Receiving Blankets
- (2) Shirts or Onesies
- (2) Baby Wash clothes



Spots are available for Meals for the Heartland

packaging event. Please see Jane Burns or call the church office at 967-2991 to get registered for this opportunity to give time and effort to fee the hungry of the world.



Come ride or walk with your friends and family for the AUMCGBH on Sunday, September 25th. We will meet at the shelter house behind the church at 4:00 p.m. Hot dogs, chips, beverages and homemade ice cream and bars will be provided beginning at 4:45 p.m. at our destination If you are unable to ride please still plan to attend for the food, fun and fellowship!