



April 26, 2018

Greetings friends,

What a lovely service we enjoyed last Sunday! All four of our honored young men did such a nice job. We are proud of their work this past year and look forward to watching what God does in their lives going forward!

On Wednesday, my sisters, Mark and my brother-in-law drove over to Omaha and the funeral of my sister-in-law's brother. I think many of us can regret the fact that one of the rare times we see the families of our "in-laws" is at funeral. This is especially true when the families live 3+ hours apart. There are times when I really wish this wasn't so, because, in this case especially, there is similarity in our two families that we recognize and appreciate.

They are also a large family – 8 siblings to our 6 (sadly though, now we're 6 and 6). Both of their folks are gone – we knew them and "lost" them in the same span of years as our parents. They grew up in the same era and the age range for them 1st to last child is 12 years to our 9. They are Huskers, while our loyalties are split between Cyclones and Hawkeyes. They have their pranksters and mischief-makers just as we do. They work hard and play hard. But

most of all, they love each other deeply and value the bonds of family. They all love Jesus and each works to make a difference in their world. Why wouldn't we enjoy spending more time with them?

Anyway, in spite of the circumstances, it was good to see them. As we grow older and more of us begin to go home to Jesus, it is a blessing to reconnect and appreciate those who remain with us. God is good.

This Week at Grace – Pastor Fred's message, *Abiding in the Vine: Connection to Life*, is inspired by John 15:1-8. Greeters this week are Mark & Joan Barrett and Craig & Savannah Jensen. Those serving as ushers include Dale & Lynn Henricks and Duane & Sharon Matson will serve as liturgist. Worship begins at 9:15 with Coffee Fellowship following at 10:15. Sunday school classes meet at 10:30. Please join us!

Claudia Pauk and Cathy Hermanson continue to look for special music for our Sunday worship services this summer. Catch one of them at church or contact the church office if you would be willing to share your musical gifts or know of someone who would like share to their talent.

Music Sunday is set, as is our custom, for next Sunday, May 6th. This is the Sunday when each of our choirs (Chancel. Touch of Grace Bells, Children's Bells, Children's Choir) share a couple anthems from their 2017-18 repertoire. Favorite hymn numbers are called out by the congregation at designated times during the service and a wonderful worship experience is enjoyed by all!

May 14th is Mother's Day! You're invited to come join us as we celebrate Mom during our Worship hour! Following the service, we'll have packages (1/2 dozen rolls) of cinnamon rolls for sale! This is a fund-raiser for our Thanksgiving Ingathering projects.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend worship on May 20th. A Farewell Reception honoring Pastor Fred is planned following the service. Pastor Fred will be with us through the month of June.

Loaves and Fishes/Story City Market Matching Program

Loaves and Fishes and Story City Market have begun a matching program. When a case of advertised Best Choice brand product is purchased for Loaves and Fishes, Story City Market will match this donation with another case. Sales must be completed through store management. All case donations will be delivered to the pantry. With questions call Judy Miller at 515.520.1593 or Sue Bohner at 515.290.5905

The people of the North Central District churches will be gathering together on Sunday, May 6, at Webster City Asbury UMC for our District Conference and our Pre-Annual Conference session. At that time, we will also give thanks for the ministries of Harlan and Deb Gillespie and bless them on their way.

AGENDA:

1:15-2:00 – Light lunch served

2:00 – Dist Conference begins by recognizing the Gillespie's service

3:15-4:30 Pre-Annual Conf session.

You are invited as individuals or as churches to write Harlan and Deb a note to let them know how their time with us has impacted you. You may send your card/letter to the district office or there will be a basket available at the May 6 event.

We received word this week that long-time Bethany Life Chaplain, Sandy Anenson, plans to retire on July 15th. What a wonderful ministry she has shared in our community over the years. Her husband, Stephen Anenson, retired a year or so ago from his 30+ years of ministry at Immanuel. The Anenson's have moved down to Ankeny to be closer to both their sons (who are also Lutheran pastors and serving in the Des Moines area) and their young families. We've long appreciated Sandy's genuine smile, her insight, and her warm and gentle ways. She is beloved and valued member of the Bethany Life community and will be dearly missed.

As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer:

Duane O'Tool; Denny Michel; Caleb Michel; Jackie Royer (Sharla's friend); George Mackey; Tim (Becky Barclay's brother); Julie Jacobson; Sara Dappen; Norman Patti; Pam Hillis; Lois Johnson; Cooper Leeman, Taylors in Africa

News You Can Use

Sunday, April 29

9:15 AM Worship

10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship

10:30 AM Sunday school

Wednesday, April 25

7:30 PM Bells

Sunday, May 6 MUSIC SUNDAY

9:15 AM Worship

10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship

10:30 AM Sunday school

**Faithfully,
Cathy**