

OCT—DEC 2019

ALBERT CITY E-FREE CHURCH

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

PASTOR'S NOTE: PASTOR JESSE

Greetings ACEFC family!

One of the most important ways to have a successfully functioning business, marriage, or church is to have proper communication between all parties. Since beginning my position here in Albert City, I have seen some breakdowns in communication. These breakdown mainly happened as a result of the fact that we are a busy church! With so many ministries going on, information just seems to get lost or mistranslated. You have all played the game of telephone, right? I put the idea out there about a church newsletter and it was received with a lot of positive feedback.

The purpose behind this quarterly newsletter is to proactively communicate with the congregation. Most communication breakdowns can be avoided by getting information out ahead of time. This also gives you, the congregation, time to think upon what we as a church are currently dealing with. These newsletters will come out in the middle of every quarter. This will help us as a church stay on the same page by re-capping congregational meetings, by giving you a heads up as to what is coming up at the next congregational meeting, and some of the stuff in-between.

WEBSITE RE-CONSTRUCTION: PASTOR JESSE

I want to thank our secretary, Karen, for all of her wonderful work on maintaining our church website. The website is a vital tool in today's technological age as it serves as the new "front door" to the church. Before a visitor steps into our church, they will visit our website, check out our Facebook page, and any other forms of internet presence that we have. Not only are local lowans visiting our webpage, but people from all over are visiting it. For example, as I sit here on a random Wednesday, already 335 people have visited the website. A random IP trace shows someone from Poland visited. In the last week, we have had 4060 visits to our site and in the last month 14,871 visits have been registered to our site.

All of this has been said so that the importance of our internet presence can be felt. People are downloading sermons, looking at our belief statement, and seeing what types of ministry we have going on. Recently, there has been a need expressed to re-brand our website, which many agree with. This is a time consuming and somewhat daunting task, but one we must address. Continued...

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With the obligations that Karen and both pastor's already have, the website is not a priority; however, we have had a donor step forward to cover the cost of having the website re-constructed. Praise God! We are hoping to see some changes in the next few months by better utilizing our internet presence.

If you are someone who is interested in helping with this, or in helping to maintain and update the site after re-construction happens, please let us know. We would appreciate someone serving in this capacity.

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2020 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: PASTOR JESSE

It may be hard to believe but the annual meeting is right around the corner. As mentioned in the opening article, communication is important. One major topic that we want to communicate ahead of time that will be discussed at the annual meeting are the church by-laws, specifically how the church is governed. The elders and the general board have both voted to proceed forward in re-structuring the church government. This is not a new topic as it has been brought up throughout the years. The difference is that now there is a vote to move forward with re-structuring.

The ultimate goal is to remain a congregationally governed church. This means that the congregation has final authority, just like it does currently. The major items of the church such as budget, staff, by-laws, etc. will be voted on and governed by the congregation as a whole. Even any proposed change in governing will have to be voted on by the congregation and passed in order to be implemented. Again, this is how we currently make these decisions. The major change that we are looking into is to go from two boards, the general board and the elder board, down to only one board, the elder board. This model of church government is referred to as "Congregationally governed and elder led." In simplest terms, the goal is to remove the general board in order to create a much smoother and more efficient way of doing the church business and to empower those who do ministry to do ministry more fluidly. The offices of the general board will still be functioning offices, they will just be removed from the governing process of the church, thus making them non-leadership positions, which also creates a larger volunteer pool from which candidates can be nominated for positions. The elder board will still be accountable to the congregation's authority but they will also have the flexibility to lead the church without multiple layers of government to work through.

Board re-structuring is a process that many E-Free churches have gone through in recent years. The multi-layered board system that we currently model is often cumbersome and takes a lot of people's energy away from doing actual ministry. As a church, we want to empower those who do ministry to do it as effectively as they can while still maintaining accountability through the governing process of the church. Please pray about this and come prepared in January to discuss it in-depth.

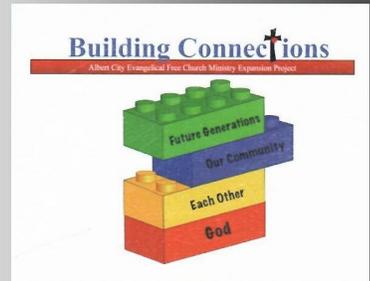
BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE: ALAN SUNDBLAD

In 2011, church leadership saw a need for expanding our facility space. Our congregation was growing. The sanctuary was being outgrown. Sunday school space was also limited. Expanding our transition space was also important. Without being able to arrive at any solutions ourselves, after much debate, church leadership at that time decided to involve a group independent of our church that could help clarify and coordinate a plan for moving forward. Brown Church Development is that group that was sought out.

Brown Church Development is an organization that works solely with churches. They help to objectively assess the purpose for building, identify areas within the church that may need improvement, and provide demographic studies. Additionally, they are a resource for project design, consulting, counseling, finance and building. They will be alongside through completion. They will also serve as general contractor for this project.

Over the course of this time, from 2011 to present, \$1.4 million has been raised towards this project. Based on congregational approval in 2017, that is the amount of cash on hand we need before moving forward with construction. \$1.4 million is 2/3 of the overall projected project costs in 2017. Reaching this mark means we can now begin the bidding process.

Brown Church will oversee this process. We have given them names of local contractors from whom bids will be sought. This process of gathering bids will likely begin in early December. It will take 4-6 weeks before we have formal bids to review. We have 45 days from when we receive the bids to review and then accept or refuse those bids. Assuming they are favorable and accepted, construction could begin in early Spring.



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WHAT ABOUT "WAITING?": PASTOR JESSE

After reading Alan's update on the building project, most of you probably asked this very question, since it was the conclusion that the elders came to in September. As elders, we continue to pray about this project. God had put it on our hearts to wait in September and not move forward with building. Taking out a major loan was not the direction God had for us in September. Since then, God has shown us that we do need to continue stepping forward in faith to find the direction that He has for us. The next step is to actually get bids and see where the final cost for the building project is. Getting bids does not lock us in to having to build, we still have the ability to say no, but it does give us a final cost of the project and the ability to make an informed decision of the direction we go with from there. So, in essence we have been and still are waiting. Please continue to pray for this project, the building committee and the elders.



Evangelical Free Church
To Know Christ and To Make Him Known

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YM CORNER: ASSOCIATE PASTOR STEVE

Reflections:

Our focus beginning this fall has been to live on mission for Jesus. In youth ministry this will look different for each student depending where they are in their relationship with Jesus. Some students need to hear and receive the gospel. Others are infants in their faith and wrestling with simple truths of the gospel. Then there are those who have been maturing and exploring how they live out their relationship with Jesus, proclaiming the gospel as they go. No matter where they are at individually, as a youth group we are committed to growing together and loving others in the gospel.

Current:

We are currently spending time in the book of Romans in our evening gatherings. As we are going through this study we are reminded of our new position in Christ when through faith we trust in what He had done for us. Because our challenge is to live on mission for Christ we want to see how what Jesus has done is more than just changing our position before God: being saved, forgiven, or children of God. We now have a relationship with Jesus and His Spirit is alive in us so that everywhere we go we carry the gospel with us and He has equipped us for this life and ministry.

Looking Ahead:

We have a couple big weekends away this winter with a high school weekend in Corralville and a Jr. high weekend at Hidden Aces. These weekends serve our ministry well as a time to getaway and be encouraged in our relationship with Jesus in a unique environment surrounded by other people who love Jesus. The youth typically return from these weekends spiritually refreshed to live on mission in their schools, homes, and communities. The other way these weekends serve our ministry is the opportunity our teens have in invite non-church friends allowing a non-threatening introduction to Christ, youth group, and the church. Inviting these friends is a simple step our students can make as they live on mission for Christ.

Your Part:

Prayer - Please pray for our youth ministry. Pray for the students, parents, and youth leaders.

Volunteer- We have started "Rise" a youth mentor program contact Nichole Evans or Andrea Hogrefe for more information.

Give - Lastly you can contribute financially to scholarship youth for our trips. Contact Pastor Steve about options