

**Reaching UP in our LOVE for God!
Reaching IN in our LOVE for one another!
Reaching OUT in our LOVE for the world!**

The Free News Goes Green!

The Free News is 'going green' and we are ecstatic! We hear daily about the importance of conserving natural resources and we're about to join the bandwagon with the newsletter. Going green will afford us these benefits:

- We will use less paper and fuel (necessary for mail delivery)
- We will save money on both paper and postage (sorry Ron & Craig - we still love you).
- We will be able to use color on our online newsletter making photos brighter, clearer and in general, simply more appealing.

This is how this will work. The Free News will be published directly to the new website. It will appear in the exact same way that you are accustomed to seeing it now. You simply will go to the website, click on the Stay Connected tab at the top of the website page and then on the monthly newsletter that you are interested in. You will be able to access both the current issue and archived issues from the website. You may choose to register to receive an email with a link each month when the newsletter is posted and it will come right to your email inbox. Now for those of you who do not have access to a computer or the internet do not worry. We will make several copies of the newsletter and make them available to you at the Information Desk in the foyer. All you need to do is stop by and grab one.

You may be asking when this will all happen. We intend to finish out this calendar year by mailing out your copy of the Free News. Beginning in January it will only be available online or in the foyer at the Information Desk. Even though you'll be getting a paper copy via snail mail for the next few months you may choose to go ahead and start reading it online now. If all goes well the new website should be up and running by September 1st or shortly thereafter. Please feel free to do so as it is available now on the website. We are alerting you of this upcoming change early so you can begin to mentally prepare. We will be reminding you of the change each month from now through December. We hope you are as excited about this as we are! ☺

September Prayer Focus

Pray for one of your child's school teacher's or one teacher you know for the local schools. You might concentrate on praying for:

- Truth to be taught
- Faculty and administration
- Rejected or failing students
- Children of divorce, abuse or neglect
- Christian students to stand firm and be leaders
- Spiritual warfare
- Sexual purity
- Decisions for their future.



WELLNESS WALK CHAMPIONS

Congratulations to everyone that participated in the 1st Annual Wellness Walk. GEFC came out of the gates determined to finish strong. After 8 weeks of walking, running, swimming, bicycling, and more we covered a grand total of 10,532 miles. This is amazing! Community churches also participating included Grace UMC 5,688 miles, First Lutheran 4,835 miles, First UMC 1,936 miles. Congrats to everyone who finished the race set before them!

Sermons & More Online

Did you miss a Sunday? While taking notes was there a reference that slipped by you? Well worry no more because all of our sermons will be available online at our completely redesigned website. On September 1 the new and improved website will be unveiled at www.gefc.org. You will find information about our various ministries, articles to help you and your friends get to know Jesus. You will also be able to download and listen to our weekly sermons, read our monthly newsletter, submit prayer requests and make online contributions when you are away from home. We also look forward to posting other resources to help you Reach Up, Reach In and Reach Out. ☺

Reaching Out Through Missions

by Kevin Dykstra



Sandy & Gary Wittevrongel serving in Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina.

In the January issue of the Free News we introduced you to Gary and Sandy Wittevrongel as missionaries that GEFC began to support this year. I don't believe that very brief introduction did an adequate job of describing, or giving you a flavor of, their ministry.

To recap, the Wittevrongels are with ReachGlobal serving in Mostar, Bosnia & Hercegovina. Gary is the City Team leader for the Mostar City Team which focuses on the leadership development of pastors and workers of the Evangelical Church of BiH. They have also taken on the additional responsibility of being Europe Area Coaches where they work with church planting teams.

In January, Gary and Sandy attended ReachGlobal's first all Europe Area Staff conference where they, in their role as Europe

coaches, presented a seminar entitled "Authenticity and the Glory of God". February found them in the Czech Republic with the Europe Directional Service Group that serves the needs of 130+ missionary singles and families across Europe. The focus of this group is to increase emotional and spiritual health of their church planting teams.

March brought the Wittevrongels to Sarajevo where they were invited to give a presentation on marriage for the occasion of Woman's Day (March 8) which, in Eastern Europe, is like a combination of Valentines Day and Mothers Day. April was a busy month with a number of events including a pastor/worker retreat for men entitled "Battle for Men's Hearts" and one for pastor's wives, "Battle for Women's Hearts". What was unusual about the women's retreat is that it

was led by men.

During the first week of May, Sandy traveled to Lisbon, Portugal to be part of the ReachGlobal women's conference. There she presented two seminar/workshops entitled "Five smooth stones.....weapons for the Battle". Seventy women attended this conference.

So you can see that Gary and Sandy's ministry keeps them very busy with travel to many places and events. They were able to spend a month or two back here in the states recently (you may recall they came to Geneseo and were introduced during the morning services one Sunday in June). However, as you read this article, they will have returned to Bosnia. Please be in prayer for their ministry as well as for continuing health and safety for them. ✝

Please be in prayer for the ministry of Gary & Sandy Wittevrongel as well as for continuing health and safety.

Women's Ministries get started in September

A WOMAN'S HEART: God's Dwelling Place

Join us as we embark on a fascinating journey, led by Beth Moore via video, into why God would choose to live in a wilderness tabernacle, made by human hands, and what that means to your life today. This study will begin Thursday, September 18 at 9:30 am (childcare is available upon request for the morning study) and Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm. A sign-up sheet will be available at the Information desk, ABF classes, or by

calling the church. PLEASE register early so that materials can be ordered.

LEARN TO KNIT with RUTH

Ruth Windy is excited to bring a beginners knitting class to GEFC and the community. If you are like many you've wanted to learn now to knit but never had the opportunity to be taught from an experienced knitter. Ruth Windy will be here to get you started with confidence on Thursday, September 25 from 1:30-

3:00 pm. She will teach beginners how to knit a scarf. Each student is asked to bring a 4 oz. skein of Red Heart yarn, size 10 knitting needles, and a desire to have fun learning.

AM READING CONNECTION II

Come and discuss Randy Alcorn's book, *Heaven*, on Tuesday, September 2 at 10:00 am. This is an informal Book Club so please feel free to invite your friends and neighbors to join you.



God blew through Geneseo - Did anyone notice?

by Pastor Greg Chenoweth

On July 21st, my testosterone ran high and I had a great time playing with my Stihl chain saw. (And I paid for my fun Monday night—ouch!)

But for those who had major property damage, fun wasn't in the cards. I'm sure there were many expletives that were being hurled around town as we walked outside and saw the destruction from the storm.

As I drove around town, and saw two-foot diameter and 50-foot tall maples strewn all over the streets and yards, some lying on houses, I found myself speechless except for frequently blurring, "Wow!"

And then I considered the power of the wind to splinter and uproot these majestic beautiful trees, and I said, "Whoa!"

I was reminded of an ancient Psalm written by King David of Israel (No. 29), "The voice of the Lord is over the waters [rain]; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars [or maples]; the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon [or maples of Geneseo]...The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning...The voice of the Lord twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

According to the Psalm,

on Monday we heard and saw the voice or power of God. When I stopped to think about the power of the Creator and Commissioner of the wind that blew through town I shut my mouth in awe. Monday morning, we got a little taste of the power of God. Actually, what we saw compares to the fringes of His ways. "His mighty thunder [power] w h o c a n understand?" (see Job 26:14)

I don't pretend to know all of God's intentions in blowing through town. But I can't help but wonder if one of His objectives was to get our attention. "Hey, I am here, and I am not silent."

How do I relate to a God who bends and breaks 50 – to 75-foot trees with a puff and blows them around like they were pieces of straw? Is it possible to tap into this limitless power and apply it toward changing my life?

The hopeful news of the Scriptures is that this powerful God wants us to relate to Him and to experience His life – transforming power. Jesus responded to a skeptical religious Leader, "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit of God" (John 3:8).

We couldn't see the wind on that Monday, but we sure saw its affects.

Likewise, we cannot see God, but we can see the effects of His Spirit in our life. The question is, "Do I have His Spirit blowing through my life?" Don't be fooled, not all agree with Oprah Winfrey that everyone has the Spirit of God.

According to the Scriptures only those who relate to Jesus Christ possess His Spirit (Romans 8:9).

The storms on July 21 reminded me and I hope our town, that God is a powerful God who is worthy of our humble worship. Like King David said, "Honor the Lord for His glory and strength." (Psalm 29:1)

Dining Out Together

The third season of Dining Out Together kicks off at 6:00 pm on Saturday, September 20th at the Geneseo Culvers. What is Dining Out Together you ask? Well it's pretty simple, ministry directors, Ron & Rita Ford, select a date, time and restaurant location for the church family to meet and have a meal together. It's proven to be a great time of fellowship and connection for all those who participate. Each family is responsible for the cost of their food. Contact Ron or Rita Ford 944-4283 if you have any questions



Senior Pastor,
Greg Chenoweth

The hopeful news of the Scriptures is that this powerful God wants us to relate to Him and to experience His life-transforming power.



The Best of Both Worlds

by Pastor Michael Mauriello



Pastor Michael Mauriello

“Our plan is to move all small groups to Sunday evening, meeting at church so that we can have the best of both worlds.”

Last January, our youth group tried an experiment in outreach and leadership. Our students formed small groups, invited friends to join them, and began leading others in Bible study and spiritual discussions. The energy from these groups was exciting; we were able to include new students and initiate new discussions. Unfortunately, the school schedule towards the end of the year severely impacted our groups ability to meet, and due to attrition by sports, school, work, and band, many of our groups whittled down to a few people or had to stop meeting all together.

In our feedback sessions with students at the end of the semester last year, our students told us they were enjoying small groups, but missed large group being weekly rather than simply twice a month.

Over the last couple of months, I have wrestled deeply with what to do with

our small group structure at Sr. High Youth Group. After a lot of thought, gathering wise counsel, analyzing student feedback, and prayer, we have come to a new format for Sr. High that unites the best of the small groups we initiated last semester with the energy of large group times.

Our plan is to move all small groups to Sunday evening, meeting at church so that we can have the best of both worlds. This is how the new structure should work. We will meet weekly on Sunday Evenings at the church:

- 6:15-7:00 general hang out time
- 7:00-7:15 worship (a new component)
- 7:15-8:15 small group time
- 8:15-8:30 reflective worship
- 8:30-9:00 general hang out

In small group times, caring adults and leadership students will work through Biblical issues, themes, and books as we seek to follow the Lord. These are discussion based times, and we hope they will be creative and engaging times for our students.

Special outreach events will be designed by our leadership students. I remain convinced that by allowing our students to outreach to their friends in small groups, we create the best possible way of creating relationships and spaces where students can experience the power of the gospel and follow Jesus Christ. Please pray for our time this semester, as we continue to minister to your students. Please pray as we do more small group oriented teaching this year during our Jr. High times on Wednesday evenings. I am very excited to begin meeting regularly with our 7th & 8th graders again! ☞

See You at the Pole

Jr. & Sr. High Event

See You at the Pole is September 24. At 7:30 am, both Jr. Highers and Sr. Highers are invited to gather around the flag poles at their schools in order to pray for their teachers, coaches, families, friends, and government leaders, as well as revival in their schools and in America with other Christians from the other churches in Geneseo's school district. That same

evening, there will be a See You at the Pole Rally at 1st United Methodist Church from 7:00-9:00 pm



Our Jr. Highers will go there as a part of our evening activities, and Sr. Highers are invited to come and participate as well. This event is sponsored by Geneseo Youth Ministries Network (GYMN). ☞

**Youth
Events**
FOR THE MONTH



Sunday, September 28th, 2008 (time will be announced soon). For Sr. High Youth Group, we will be doing our Annual Scavenger Hunt during youth group time! Always a good time, look forward to seeing you there. ☞

Are YOU Registered?

by Ron Ford, Elder

Our election is 60 days away—November 4th.

It is absolutely critical that Christians be registered, be informed, and vote our values. As believers, we have a duty to be involved in the democratic process. We must vote our values, beliefs, and our convictions.

Americans are blessed to have a “government of the people, by the people and for the people.” But — democracy has one requirement — **PARTICIPATION.** The most basic democratic participation is voting. When you vote, you help determine who will lead our nation, make our laws

and protect our liberties.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau 35% of eligible Americans are not registered to vote and less than half of the voting age population actually votes in any given election.

What’s worse, Christians often vote at an alarmingly low rate. When Christians fail to vote is it any wonder that policies are enacted, judges are appointed, and laws are made that are contrary to our values.

When you vote you are directly impacting peoples lives — so this November election:

1) Be a registered

voter—get registered NOW

- 2) Be informed
- 3) Vote your values

Billy Graham— evangelist says “if America is to survive, we must elect more God-centered men and women to public office—individuals who will seek divine guidance in the affairs of state. Imagine the impact that Americans of faith could have on the future of our nation, the character of its leadership and the moral health of its people if we all participated in the democratic process — **REGISTER — PARTICIPATE—VOTE.**



Americans are blessed to have a “government of the people, by the people and for the people.”

The Nursery Nook

by Stacey Cotty

As we are approaching the end of summer, it is time to finish off our nursery volunteer schedule for the rest of the year. Through the past few months we have seen a need to reevaluate the traditional 2 volunteers per shift, partly due to the new layout of the nursery and partly due to the increase in children. We now will have a nursery team member (Dee Ann Kuster, Annie Henthorn, Rebekah Reynolds, or Stacey Cotty) oversee the nursery during all 3 shifts every Sunday as well as help watch children, and answer any questions volunteers may have from how the divided nursery functions, how the diaper genie works, where the snacks are located to

helping new families when dropping their children off for the first time.

Even with a nursery team member present, we see the need of a 3rd additional volunteer during the various shifts to ensure the safety of the children as our attendance has increased. Currently, the attendance during the ABF and 2nd service averages between 13-15 children with up to 17-20! That is quite a few little ones we need to ensure are well taken care of. With this increase of children and a limited number of volunteers, you may see your name on the schedule more often or in a different time slot. We truly value all of our volunteers and

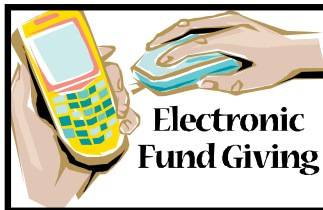
greatly appreciate all your assistance with caring for the youngsters. If you feel led in becoming a nursery volunteer, please let us know as well and a team member can get you started with the Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) approval process. The CAP policy is a requirement to work in the nursery.

We wish to extend a gracious thank you to the anonymous monetary donor that made a generous contribution to the nursery earlier this summer. We are still deciding the best use of this donation for maximum benefit to the nursery as well as the children. ☺



Pizza & "First Fruits"

by David Jones, Administrative Council Director



Hopefully I have your attention with the title of this article! What in the world do they have in common? I like pizza, but I would not imply that it's a fruit!

Let's look back at the Old Testament book of Ezekiel 44:30 *"The first of the ripe fruits and all the gifts brought to the LORD will go to the priests. The first samples of each grain harvest and the first of your flour must also be given to the priests so the LORD will bless your homes."* Do you know that there is an easy way to give your "First Fruits" to the Lord? It's called E-Giving. The Joneses have been using internet Bill-Paying for

several years to pay all of our monthly bills, including our planned giving to GEFC. We have had a check delivered to the church twice a month addressed to the treasurer for the amount of our tithe. But having a bill paying system was required for this to occur. Now, Dan Leigh, our GEFC Treasurer has set up an E-Giving system that does not require a bill paying system. All you need is a savings or checking account and access to the internet to set it up. You can do a single gift each time you want to give or you can set up a recurring payment, like we have set-up, to draw from your bank account for the amount and day of the

month that you desire.

By E-Giving, you have a way to truly provide the "First Fruits" to the Lord. In our example, the amount is drawn the day of my payroll deposit, providing a predetermined amount to the Lord. The first distributions from my paycheck! The church receives my tithe whether I'm in town or not and has access to the funds on a more timely basis than through normal giving. And I don't have to write a check!

So where does the pizza come into this? The only time I write checks anymore is when pizza is delivered to our house! ☺

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Geneseo Food Pantry

As the cost of gas and almost everything else continues to rise, life becomes increasingly hard for people on fixed incomes and families in which the working adults earn minimum wage, currently around \$7.00 per hour. Imagine trying to provide housing, food, and the necessities of life. Your support helps families bridge the gap between what they can afford and what they need to survive. Thank you for remembering us in your giving through the summer months.

We will be very grateful if you will save 100 ounce or smaller detergent bottles for us. When we receive shipments from River Bend, the jugs are often 200 ounces. When we refill small containers, detergent may be shared with many more families. Thanks so much for your help!

Food needs for August are: ramen noodles, canned vegetables, canned fruit, condiments (catsup, mustard, mayo), boxed cake mix, and muffin mixes

Non-food needs are: Bathroom tissue (we are very low), laundry detergent (small sizes are best and may be purchased at Dollar Store), adult-size toothbrushes, bar soap, shaving soap, razors, and school supplies

If you have any questions about the Geneseo Food Pantry please contact our GEFC representative, Beth Dykstra.

THANK YOU!

Dear GEFC Friends,

Thank you very much for the Camp Scholarship money to help me go to Camp Timber-lee. I had a really good time. My favorite thing was high ropes, and swim time. I hope I can go back next year. Thanks again for helping me.

Ryan Ford

A sincere thank you to all those who prayed for me and sent cards during my recent series of radiation treatments. Everything went quite well. Your care and concern is greatly appreciated. II Corinthians 12:9

Roland Eklof



September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1  OFFICE CLOSED	2 AM Reading Connection II 10:00 am	3 Awana Leader Training 6:00 pm Jr. High Youth Group 6:30 pm	4	5	6 Awana Leader Training Conf. in Moline 8:30 am
7 Non-church shower 1:00 pm Sr. High Youth Group 6:00 pm	8 Missions Meeting 7:00 pm	9 Elder's Meeting 7:00 pm	10 MOPS 9:00 am Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High Youth Group 6:30 pm	11 	12	13 Reynold's Baby Shower 2:00 pm
14 Sr. High Youth Group 6:00 pm	15 Administrative Council Meeting 7:00 pm	16	17 Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High Youth Group 6:30 pm	18 Women's Community Bible Study 9:30 am & 7:00 pm	19 Scrapbooking @ Mauriello's 7:00 pm	20 Date Night 4:00-8:00 pm Dining Out Together at Culvers 6:00 pm
21 Fellowship Feast 12:00 pm Sr. High Annual Scavenger Hunt	22	23 MOPS 6:30 am Elder's Meeting 7:00 pm	24 Awana 6:25 pm Jr. High Youth Group 6:30 pm	25 Knitting with Ruth 1:30 pm Women's Community Bible Study 9:30 am & 7:00 pm	26	27
28 Prayer Group 7:45 am Sr. High Youth Group 6:00 pm	29	30	COLLEGE ADDRESSES - If you are a college student or parent of a college student that is still actively involved in GEFC, please provide us their email and mailing address for publication in the October issue of the Free News. You may provide this information via the Welcome Card, telephone 944-4667, or email gefc@gefc.org . This includes college students living at home as well!			

Free News

September 2008 Volume 13, Issue 8

Geneseo Evangelical Free Church
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Phone: 309-944-4667

Fax: 309-944-4668

E-mail: gefc@gefc.org

Sunday Worship Services

- Conventional Service - 8:15 am
- Contemporary Service - 10:45 am

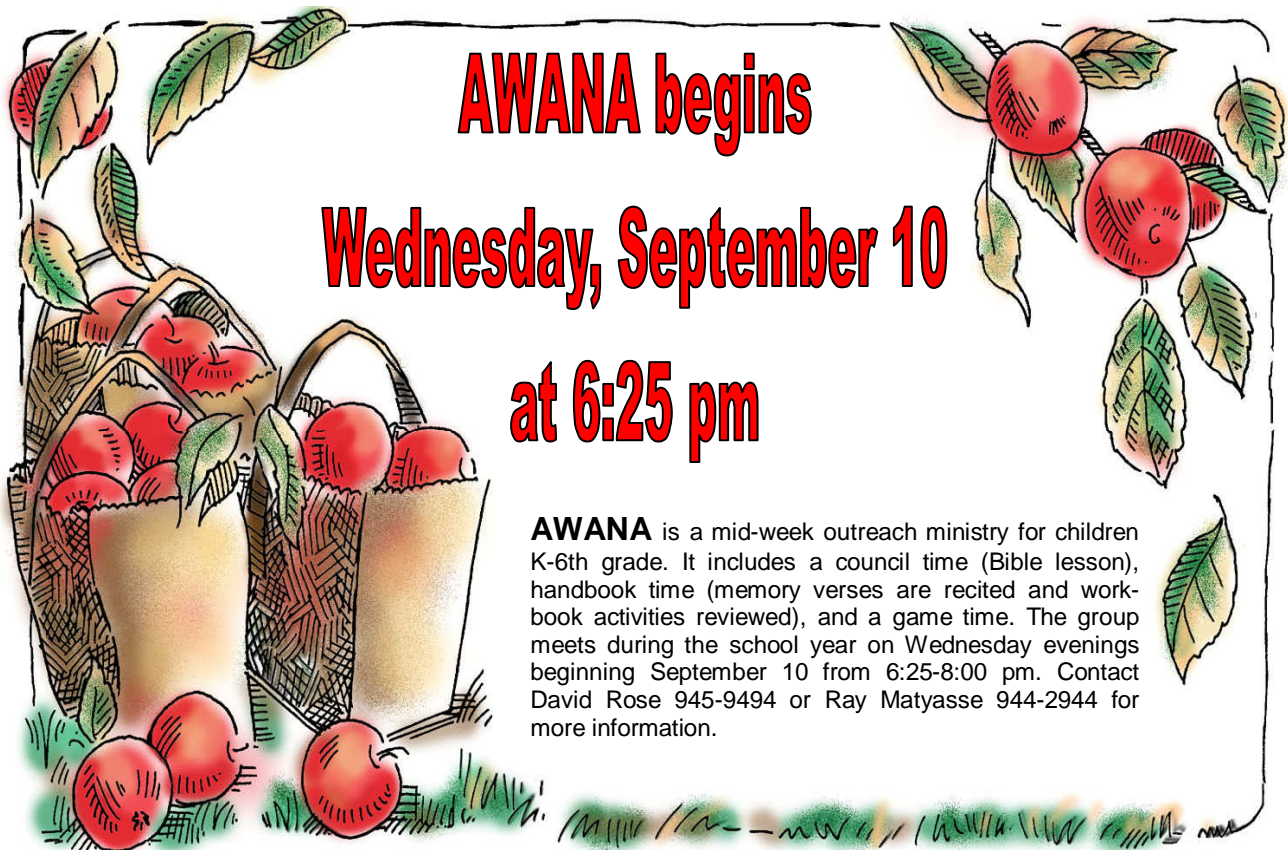
Christian Education - 9:30-10:30 am

Senior Pastor - Greg Chenoweth
Associate Pastor - Cliff Gilleland
Student Pastor - Michael Mauriello

The FREE NEWS

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AWANA begins
Wednesday, September 10
at 6:25 pm

AWANA is a mid-week outreach ministry for children K-6th grade. It includes a council time (Bible lesson), handbook time (memory verses are recited and work-book activities reviewed), and a game time. The group meets during the school year on Wednesday evenings beginning September 10 from 6:25-8:00 pm. Contact David Rose 945-9494 or Ray Matyasse 944-2944 for more information.