

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

## O the OFFENSIVE cross Death By Love

by AJ Reynolds, Worship Director

Easter celebrations are always surrounded by bright colors, happy bunnies, and kids so hyped up on sugar they reach speeds up to 30 miles per hour! And why shouldn't it be a day filled with fun, this is the holiday that we celebrate new life, specifically Jesus' risen life from the dead, giving us the opportunity for new life in Him. This is the holiday where we as Christians celebrate our "Good News". But what about the other "Holy Week" days our faith celebrates? Growing up in church, I was familiar with Palm Sunday and even Good Friday, but somehow one important celebration slipped through the cracks of my faith: Maundy Thursday. On this night roughly 2000 years ago, the "Last Supper" took place and Jesus was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, beaten multiple times, and walked to be "sentenced" to death by His own creations. I realized that in my own life I had celebrated my new life on Easter without truly understanding the cost at which that new life came: I had celebrated the joyous empty tomb without understanding the atoning, bloody, **offensive** cross.

On this Maundy Thursday (April 9, 2009), we will be hosting an in depth study of the history of crucifixion, how Jesus died, and how His death effects our lives today. The event will be at the Geneseo Central Theatre with two showings (6 pm & 8 pm). The purpose of this event is to bring people who have never thought through Jesus' atoning death face to face with their Savior in the midst of His sacrifice.

Our challenge to you is to find 3 people you know outside of the church and buy them a ticket to this event. Tickets are for sale now for \$3.00 each to cover the cost of the event and with 177 seats in the theatre, we are hoping to sell out fast.

At GEFC, we say we want to be known as a church that reaches **up** to God, **in** to each other, and **out** to our hurting community. Church, here's one chance to reach **out**, to bring help to hurting, to bring the remedy to the sick. Pick up your ticket (and your friend's ticket) today! Tickets can be purchased at the information center on Sunday morning or the church office during regular office hours. --- ☞



**Maundy Thursday, April 9**

6pm @ Central Theatre  
**Death by Love**

**Good Friday, April 10**

7pm Communion Service

**EASTER SUNDAY**

**Sunrise Service – 7am**

@ Oakwood Cemetery

We'll retrace the disciples' steps from the cross to the empty grave.

**Easter Breakfast – 8:15-9:15am**  
Fellowship Hall

**Easter Service – 9:30am**

**There will be no ABFs,  
Children's Sunday School,  
Children's Church  
or 10:45 service**

## iPray Conference

Quad Cities Prayer center is planning a second annual Prayer Conference. David Perkins will return as the guest presenter for the conference. He spearheads Desperation, a national effort to mobilize a generation to live in desperate pursuit of God and also is the founder and director of a collegiate house of prayer called the Furnace. David is passionate about effective discipleship and diligent prayer being established within local church youth ministries.

The theme of the conference is "iPray" and will be held Saturday, May 9, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with check-in beginning at 8 a.m. The conference will be held at Stoney Creek Inn Conference Center on River Drive in Moline. Lunch and materials are included in the price.

Please register individually by filling out a form that can be found at the Information Desk. Registration must be made by March 26 so registrations and a check can be sent in before April 1, when the price increases. Our Leadership Training budget line is designating \$300 toward payment of the \$49/ea. registration fee. Call Teri Walters if there are questions - 944-8116. --- ☞

## Elder News

by Carl Brinkmann



Charlotte & Carl Brinkmann, Elder

**Equipping men.....to assume the spiritual role of leadership in the home, the church, the community .....**



**MEN'S MINISTRY**

In the absence of an Adult Ministries Leader, I thought I would update the progress made since my last report in the area of Men's Ministry. The Purpose of Men's Ministry at GEFC is to:

- Establish an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer and the daily reading and study of God's word. We want to glorify God by growing increasingly in the grace, knowledge, love and image of his Son, Jesus Christ.
- Equip men to develop the skills necessary to assume the spiritual role of leadership in the home, the church, the community, and the world-wide finding and maintaining the proper balance for each of these areas.
- Develop authentic, loving relationships with other Christian men through fellowship, mentoring, accountability, and praying for each other.
- Obey Christ's command to "make disciples of all nations" by evangelizing in our community and the

world.

- Reach out and touch our community with Christ's love through service projects and various men's activities.

Craig Anderson has taken the position of Men's Ministry Leader. Under his leadership fall the following 3 positions:

### **Men's Ministry Activities Leader Craig Henkhaus**

Included under Craig responsibilities is the goal of 4 activities/year appropriate for men in our church family. Father/son activities and outreach events would be included in this. The target shooting event last year would be an example of such an activity.

### **Small Group/Bible Studies Leader Chris Kuster**

Included under Kris's responsibility is developing and promoting men's small group Bible studies by recruiting, training and coordinating curriculum. Kris is currently in the process of establishing at least one group of men for a study.

### **Men's Service Projects Leader Steve Rogers**

Responsibilities include building a team that

provides oversight and leadership to meet the service needs of the church family (especially widows, single parents, elderly and orphans) and the community where appropriate. In doing so he will maintain a list of men with varying skills, and establish and maintain a system to notify/request help in meeting needs. The scheduled painting of the CPC is the most recent example of this type of project.

Men please see these leaders with any ideas and interest you may have in the areas of their responsibility. Look for the new bulletin board in the hallway near the men's rest room for information concerning men's ministries. --- ☞

## **Whitford Bridal Shower**



Ladies, you are invited to a bridal shower for Rachel Whitford, daughter of Reed & Cheryl Whitford on Saturday, April 4 at 10:00 am at the church. --- ☞

## There is POWER in prayer

**Note: Our Prayer Coordinator, Teri Walters, tracked down answered prayer stories to encourage the family of God. Your answered prayer story can be submitted to [gefco@gefco.org](mailto:gefc@gefco.org)**

The power of prayer has helped my Mom get through the first 3 of the 4 hard chemo treatments. My Mom has had to do a lot of sitting in the lobby and has met so many people around affected by breast cancer. Prayer helps her not be nervous and calms her. It is God's choice what to do, and the church family is helping us out in so many ways.

- Matthew Johnson

The power of prayer has influenced my life tremendously within the last two months more than any other time in my life. I have found that God has answered my prayers through little signs and big pictures. I had been struggling with so many problems in my life and I did not have God in my life one bit. Strangely on February 1st, my twentieth birthday, I had been dealing with a rough time of depression, anxiety, and confusion with no direction to go. I decided to pray for the first time in two years and tears came to my eyes. I spoke to God and asked for him to bring a miracle or something short of it. Then two weeks later He gave it to me which brought me an opportunity of a lifetime, a second chance with all my

trouble and as of this day and the rest to come God will be in my life forever and ever.

- Jesse Gessel

A few weeks ago Greg said something in his sermon about God speaking in an audible voice and it reminded me of when God yelled at me.

A friend and I had started going to a small country church, taking the kids with us every week. Our husbands would go once in a while, then Russ started attending regularly with me. It was normal for the pastor to give an alter call for anyone who wanted prayer.

It could have been for salvation, health needs or just for life's problems. A friend of mine had gone to the alter, I knew the problems she was going through and I felt God urge me to go pray with her. However I was in the middle of the pew, five people to the left of me and four to the right. I thought, I will just stand here and pray for her so as not to disturb anyone. Again I felt God urge me to go to the alter and pray with my friend. It's okay, I'll just stand here and pray, after all God can hear me just as well standing here as at the alter. Then I heard a loud booming voice say "GET UP THERE !!!" I quickly lifted my head to see who was talking, but every one around me still had their heads quietly lowered in prayer. It did not take me long to figure out WHO had been speaking. I quickly

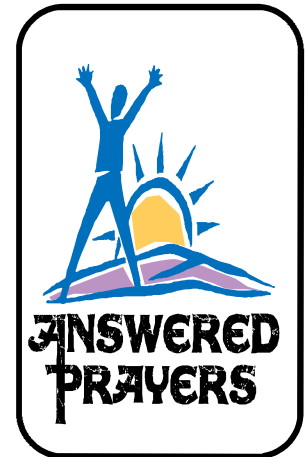
excused myself and went to the alter to pray with my friend. As we prayed I heard others come to the alter and some leave. When the pastor ended the prayer session I was surprised to see Russ standing next to me praying. On the way home we usually discussed the sermon or the music, but he was quiet most of the way. He did ask me why I went to the alter. I said to pray with my friend, then I laughed and told him how God had yelled at me to get up there. Russ said he had been standing there, knowing God wanted him to go to the alter, so he prayed, "God if you can get Judy to go up there ,so will I".

I laugh about the day my (heavenly) father yelled at me, but it reminds me of the importance of obedience. We may not always have a complete understanding of why God wants us to do something, but we can have complete trust that if it is His plan it is for our good. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths. Proverbs3:5-6

- Judy Iwinski --- ☞



**Nick & Annie Henthorn**  
1431 King St.  
Sidney, NE 69162  
308/289-2733



**"...and as of this day and the rest to come God will be in my life forever and ever."**



## More on maturity

by Pastor Michael Mauriello



Pastor Michael Mauriello, Youth Pastor

**Be very careful: Do not harden your heart against the truth.**



On March 8<sup>th</sup>, I preached my way through four chapters of Ephesians, and arrived at the following conclusions.

- 1). God is building his people to be a temple.
- 2). God is inviting his people to build along with him.
- 3). Because God is the architect and the client, he gets to build the way he wants too.
- 4). Because we are building alongside God, we should build in his way.
  - a. God builds through grace
  - b. God builds through his Word
  - c. God builds until the work is done

And I ended with the following point: God's work will only be done when we are all mature and unified.

What is maturity? Maturity is non-conformity. Could we press a little farther on into Ephesians? Look at how Paul continues on into his letter:

Eph 4:17—So I tell you this, and insist on it *in the Lord—that you no longer live like the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.*

I want you to see something. Immaturity is built off of two things—the first is ignorance. The second is the hardening of

the heart. Both the mind and the heart play a key role in the development of Christian maturity.

Have you ever noticed that growing up is not easy? That's because as we grow up, or in order to truly grow up into adulthood, we have to embrace certain truths about the world, certain truths about right and wrong, God and humanity. Our willingness to see these truths as right and wrong does not matter, they remain right and wrong because they are right and wrong. We have to soften our hearts to the truth, so we can embrace it, especially when the going gets hard.

Two things can happen. We can be ignorant of what right and wrong really are. This seems to be the case of the emerging generations of students who have been divorced from biblical teaching and a Christian worldview. Or, we can be cognizant of the truth, and choose to ignore it because of the hardness of our own hearts.

I would much rather have people be ignorant of truth *than be hardened to the truth*. Why do we harden ourselves to the truth? I think there must be lots of reasons, but I think that God's truth requires us to be God-ward rather than self-ward. God's truth requires us to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. (Titus 2:12). This requires us to give up our natural way of doing things and conform to something which is somewhat alien to who we are.

Maturity is hard, especially when it requires me to say "no" to something I want that might be unhealthy or destructive. Paul gives three big things we ought to say no to. First is sexual immorality. Second is destructive speech. And third is greed. All three are poisonous to growth in Jesus Christ. And we can especially harden our hearts when we think these three things will help us more than the truth of God's word.

Be very careful: Do not harden your heart against the truth. If you do, only God can soften it again. If you find yourself hardened, repent and beg God to restore you. And take heart, knowing that God is the one who softens the heart, and replaces hearts of stone with hearts of flesh! ☞

## High School Senior Parents!

Do you have a student graduating from High School in May? If so, Pastor Michael needs pictures of them growing up for a slide show on our Baccalaureate Sunday. You may submit up to 6 photos by May 1st. --- ☞

## Paintball Sunday for Youth Ministry

April 19th is our annual Jr. & Sr. High Paintball outing at MVP! We leave directly after church and return for a cook-out. Parent chaperones are needed.

- 1) Student pays for gun rental and field fee.
- 2) Dress in layers!!!!
- 3) Must have signed permission slip and an MVP waiver.
- 4) Bring a dish to pass for the cook-out.
- 5) Girls can come too!

Register by April 12th! ☞

## Missions Corner by Teri Walters

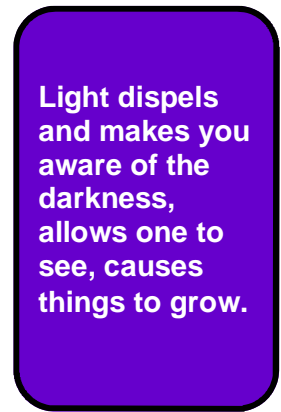
You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste - its strength, its quality - how can its saltiness be restored? It is not good for anything any longer but to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure - bushel - but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble and good deeds, and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven. - Matthew 5:13-16 (amplified version)

If you are a child of God, a believer in Jesus Christ, you are salt and you are light. Salt brings out the taste in the food it is

sprinkled on, makes it desirable. It heals wounds, it causes thirst, it preserves. Light dispels and makes you aware of the darkness, allows one to see, causes things to grow.

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you are salt, you are light, you are a missionary - someone who offers the Bread of Life, the Living Water, healing from sin and eternity with Almighty God. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, the light of Christ in you (the Holy Spirit in you) exposes the darkness, causes eyes to be opened and it causes growth.

Are you salty salt - a brightly shining light? Then you're a missionary. --- ☞



## Men's Church Softball begins in May

It's that time of the year again; school gets out, the weather gets warm, the grass gets green, and churches in the Geneseo area show how much they truly mean to one another by hitting little white balls and arguing calls.

Yes, it's church softball season! In the past, Nick Henthorn headed this ministry up for the church. Now, I am heading it up. This should frighten many of you, so I'm hoping that an able administrator and coach is willing to come alongside me and relieve me of this responsibility. Seriously, all I want to do is

be a designated hitter, or the catcher.

**FAST FACTS:** Interested in playing?

1. Well, you can sign up on the website, information center or in an ABF class.
2. There is a cost of \$20.00 to play for the season. (This covers any extra equipment we might need, and hopefully new tee-shirts for the team).
3. The season is from May 11 through August 5.
4. We play every Monday and Tuesday evening

(either at 7:00 or 8:15).

5. We need to ump most nights.
6. You must be a regular attender of the church (that means you come at least 3 out of every 4 weeks).

If you have to miss some games, just let us know ahead of time.

This has always been a fun ministry for our church, and it's a great chance for our guys to hang out together. Let me know if you are interested in playing by April 12<sup>th</sup>. ☞





## McCallister Baby Shower

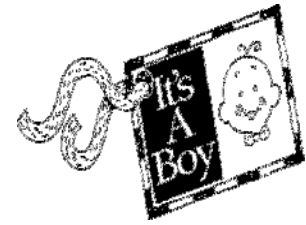
Ladies, Blessed Expectations invites you to a baby shower for Phillip and Erin McCallister. They are expecting their first child (a girl) sometime in June.

The shower will be held on Saturday, May 2 at 10:30 am at the church.

The McCallister's are registered at Toys R Us and Target. If you'd rather contribute toward a group gift you can do so via the

designated envelopes available at the information center or any one of the Adult Bible Fellowship classes. Donations for a group gift will be collected through Sunday, April 26th. Checks can be made out to Teresa Johnson.

Please note your intentions to attend the shower on the envelopes too. We hope to see many of you there. --- ☞



Blessed Expectations would like to announce the birth of Ellis Cole Craft. He was born to Cole & Kelly Kraft on February 27, 2009 weighting 8 lbs 14 oz and measuring 20 inches long. Be sure to get a peak of this little bundle of joy on a Sunday morning. --- ☞

**New toddler curriculum in the nursery during the Sunday School hour!**

## The Nursery Nook by Stacey Cotty

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, our new nursery was dedicated. With the generous donation from the Leroy Stoneking family the new nursery was made possible. Jerry Stoneking and Ivne Lindblade, Leroy Stoneking's son and daughter, attended the dedication and received our

tokens of thanks.

We have also begun implementing a new curriculum for the toddlers during the Sunday School hour. Each month we have a special theme with a Bible story, songs and activities for the toddlers. The children are very

receptive to our new learning time and especially enjoy the singing and dancing in their new nursery.

If anyone has not checked out the new nursery, feel free to stop in sometime and see what all our excitement is about. ☞



## Our deepest sympathy

Daimon Cundiff and his family as they mourn the loss of his brother who passed away February 21, 2009.

## Dining Out at Danny Boy's Pizza

You are invited to Dine Out with us at Danny Boy's Pizza immediately following 2nd service on Sunday, April 19.

The fellowship and fun are free but you're responsible for the cost of your meal.

The purpose of Dining Out Together is to provide opportunity to REACH IN as we fellowship together over a meal without the mess and fuss at home.

If you have any questions about Dining Out please contact John and Peg at 309/887-4444. ☞

| Sun  | Mon  | Tue   | Wed  | Thu  | Fri   | Sat   |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|---|
|   |  |   | 1<br>Awana<br>6:25 pm<br>Jr. High Youth<br>Group<br>6:30 pm<br><br>SOLE 8:15 pm      | 2  | 3<br>Homeschool<br>Group<br>10 am   | 4<br>Men's<br>Lenten<br>Breakfast 1st<br>Presbyterian<br><br>Whitford<br>Bridal<br>Shower<br>10:00 am |
| 5<br>Partners In<br>Prayer<br>7:45 am<br><br>Sojourners<br>Fellowship<br>6:30 pm<br><br>Sr. High<br>Youth Group<br>6 pm  | 6<br>Missions<br>Meeting<br>7 pm                   | 7<br>Women's Book<br>Club 10 am<br><br>Financial<br>Peace<br>University<br>7 pm                     | 8<br>MOPS<br>9 am  | 9<br>Death By<br>Love<br>Central<br>Theatre<br>6:00 pm | 10<br>Homeschool<br>Group<br>10 am<br><br>Communion<br>service<br>7 pm      | 11  |
| 12<br>7 am Sunrise<br>Service @<br>Oakwood<br>Cemetery<br><br>8:30 am<br>Breakfast<br><br>9:30 am<br>service             | 13   | 14<br>Elder's<br>Meeting<br>7 pm<br><br>Financial<br>Peace<br>University<br>7 pm                    | 15<br>Awana<br>6:25 pm<br><br>Jr. High Youth<br>Group<br>6:30 pm<br><br>SOLE 8:15 pm | 16   | 17<br>Homeschool<br>Group<br>10 am<br><br>Crafting @<br>Mauriello's<br>7 pm | 18<br>Date Night<br>4 pm  |
| 19<br>Partners In<br>Prayer<br>7:45 am<br><br>Dining Out @<br>Danny Boy's<br>Noon<br><br>Sr. High<br>Youth Group<br>6 pm | 20<br>Administrative<br>Council<br>Meeting<br>7 pm | 21<br>Nursery<br>Leadership<br>Team Meeting<br>9 am<br><br>Financial<br>Peace<br>University<br>7 pm | 22<br>Awana<br>6:25 pm<br><br>Jr. High Youth<br>Group 6:30 pm<br><br>SOLE 8:15 pm    | 23<br>Sit & Sew<br>1:30 pm                             | 24<br>Homeschool<br>Group<br>9 am   | 25  |
| 26<br>Partners In<br>Prayer<br>7:45 am<br><br>Sr. High<br>Youth Group<br>6 pm  | 27   | 28<br>MOPS<br>6:30 pm<br><br>Elder's<br>Meeting 7 pm<br><br>Financial                               | 29<br>Jr. High Youth<br>Group<br>6:30 pm<br><br>SOLE 8:15 pm                         | 30   |   |   |

## Free News

April 2009 Volume 14, Issue 4

Geneseo Evangelical Free Church  
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### Sunday Worship Services

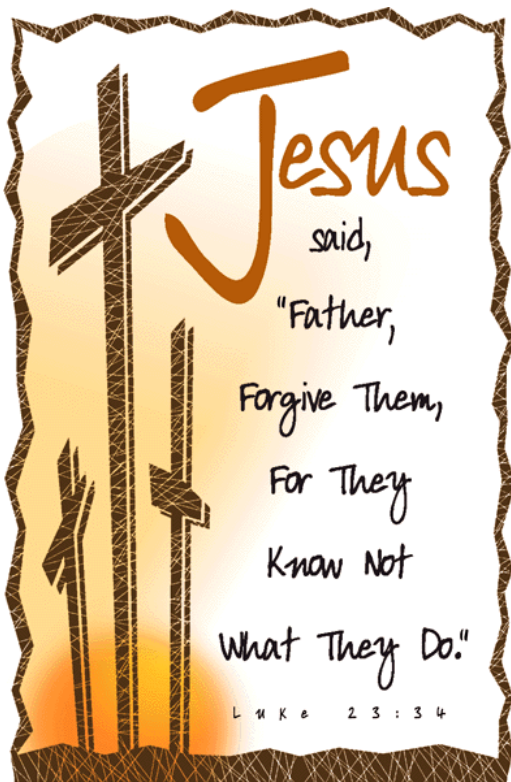
- Conventional Service - 8:15 am
- Contemporary Service - 10:45 am

**Christian Education** - 9:30-10:30 am

Senior Pastor - Greg Chenoweth  
Student Pastor - Michael Mauriello  
Worship Director - AJ Reynolds

### The FREE NEWS

Is published monthly by  
Geneseo Evangelical Free Church



Easter Sunday is the most important day in the Christian calendar. It's the day Christ proved he is Lord over sin and death. Let's join together to celebrate and rejoice.