

October 2026 Encounter

*Ankeny Presbyterian Church
317SE Trilein Drive, Ankeny, IA
Office@ankenypresbyterian.org*

A Word from Pastor Eric

One of the things I've been thinking about lately is how we learn to live our faith. Certainly, we learn through scripture, worship, prayer, and study. But some of the most important lessons of faith are learned simply by doing things together; sharing a meal, listening to someone's story, helping a neighbor, working alongside someone younger or older than ourselves, and discovering that compassion can become something we practice with our own hands.

That idea is at the heart of our growing emphasis on intergenerational faith formation at APC. Rather than thinking of Christian education as something primarily for children (or something that happens only in a classroom) we are creating different opportunities for all of us to learn and grow together. Our Spirit & Table gatherings, Spirit & Service projects, FAITH5 at home, as well as worship, and other shared ministry experiences are all part of that effort. Each gives us another way to connect faith with everyday life and to learn from one another across generations.

Our next Spirit & Service gathering will take place immediately following worship on Sunday, October 18. Building on our August Spirit & Table event, which focused on creation, we'll turn our attention to caring for our fellow creatures.

We'll begin with a brief visit from a representative of the Animal Rescue League, who will help us think about the important place animals hold in our lives and communities. Then we'll roll up our sleeves for a hands-on service project: repackaging bulk cat and dog food into smaller bags for distribution through the Ankeny Service Center's food pantry.

For families experiencing financial hardship, caring for a beloved pet can become one more difficult worry. Our animals are often treasured members of our households. They become sources of companionship, comfort, affection, and even a sense of home during uncertain times. Helping provide pet food is one small way we can help our neighbors care for animals they love while stretching limited resources for other necessities.

And there is something wonderfully simple about this kind of service. We'll gather around tables. We'll hear a little. We'll learn a little. We'll work together. Children can participate alongside adults. Older adults can work alongside younger ones. And somewhere amid scoops of dog food and bags of cat food, we may discover again that following Jesus often looks remarkably ordinary: noticing a need, caring about it, and doing what we can together.

As always, refreshments will be provided. We are Presbyterians, after all. Even the kingdom of God requires snacks.

I hope you'll join us after worship on October 18 as we learn, serve, and spend time together, making life a little easier for our neighbors and their beloved animals.

Your Companion on the Journey,

Pastor Eric

READING THE BIBLE WITH BONHOEFFER

Beginning Sunday, October 4, our Adult Sunday School class will begin a six-week study, Reading the Bible with Bonhoeffer, meeting from 10:50–11:50 a.m.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German pastor and theologian whose Christian faith led him to resist the Nazi regime and ultimately cost him his life. But Bonhoeffer was more than a courageous figure from history. At the heart of his life was a deep engagement with Scripture and a persistent question: What does it actually mean to follow Jesus in the world in which we find ourselves?

Using the new video study Reading the Bible with Bonhoeffer, featuring pastor and author James C. Howell, we will explore how Bonhoeffer read Scripture and how his insights can help us listen for God, understand Jesus, practice discipleship, and think about what it means to be the church in our own changing world.

Each session will include a short video along with Scripture, conversation, and discussion. No advance reading is required, so you are welcome to participate whether or not you purchase the accompanying book.

Those who would like to go deeper are encouraged to purchase Howell's companion book, Reading the Bible with Bonhoeffer: A Study in Discipleship and Courage. It is available from Amazon: simply search Amazon for "Reading the Bible with Bonhoeffer James C. Howell." The paperback ISBN is 978-1791041687, which can also be entered in Amazon's search box to make sure you have the correct book.

Come join us as we read the Bible in conversation with one of the twentieth century's most compelling Christian voices—and consider together what faithful discipleship might look like for us today.

SUMMARY OF THE SEPTEMBER SESSION MEETING

The Session met on September 14 and began the evening with a presentation and discussion on LGBTQ+ inclusion led by Jordan Mix of Iowa Safe Schools. Session also received reports highlighting a busy season of ministry, fellowship, mission, and planning at APC.

APC welcomed two new members, Ed Jones and Melissa Shinn, bringing total membership to 190. Average worship attendance during August was 109.

Several ministries are moving forward as part of APC's Five-Year Plan. The recent Spirit & Table gathering focused on creation, the FAITH5 initiative is encouraging faith practices at home, and plans are underway for an October intergenerational mission project supporting the Animal Rescue League. Congregational Life continues work on creating pathways to belonging, inclusion programs, fellowship opportunities, and cultural celebrations.

There was also good news from Mission: APC exceeded its \$6,000 goal for school desks in Corozal, raising \$6,645! Twenty-seven APC members participated in the August AMOS conference, and upcoming mission activities include the World Communion Offering, a pet-food packaging event on October 18, YSS meals, and other community service opportunities.

Facilities improvements continue, including restroom accessibility work, gutter and building repairs, and exploration of improved sanctuary acoustics and automatic restroom doors. The new Metronet connection has also resolved previous livestream sound problems. Human Resources is exploring the possibility of a Community Engagement Coordinator to help APC carry out the community-engagement goals of the Five-Year Plan; any proposal will be considered by the appropriate committees and Session before moving forward.

Financially, APC remains in a positive position, and \$9,450 has been transferred toward the planned Facilities Improvement Fund. Stewardship planning for 2027 is underway. In worship, fall choir has resumed, improvements to livestreaming continue, and plans are already taking shape for World Communion Sunday, Thanksgiving, and Advent.

If you have any questions, please speak with one of the elders or with Pastor Eric (937-838-6765, eric@ankenypresbyterian.org).

IOWA PRESBYTERIAN GATHERING – AUGUST 29, 2026

Marcia McAdoo

It was my pleasure to attend the annual Presbyterian gathering of the Tri-Presbyteries: Presbytery of Des Moines, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and Presbytery of North Central Iowa. This meeting was hosted by Ames Northminster Presbyterian Church. Featured guest speakers were Elona Street-Stewart, an executive of our Synod, and Rev. Steve Shive, an executive of the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks (Colorado). Ken Rummer's music was delightful as he played violin as a member of the string trio.

Of the several breakout sessions that were available, I chose two: Holy Imagination and Rural Shrink Smart. Below is a brief summary.

Holy Imagination – Rev. Steve Shive

There are three levels of imagination in any organization or in any person:

1. Essence – our core being
2. Dreaming – new ideas, visions of what could be
3. Consensus Reality – practical world, where the work gets done

A healthy church or healthy person needs all three.

Three forms of Imagination:

1. Fearful imagination – what if everything falls apart? Moving from fearful to curious re-opens the brain
2. Fantasy imagination – everything will magically work out
3. Holy imagination – grounded in reality, occurs at the intersection of courage, discernment, curiosity, and creativity

What are examples of holy imagination?

- The gift of the Holy Spirit enables us to glimpse the kingdom of God before it fully arrives.
- Genesis 1 creation story shows us divine imagination of God
 - Chaos is not the absence of God, but where creation begins
 - Remaining open to God allows us to form something new
- Acts 2 Pentecost story shows us the imagination of spirit-filled diversity
- The Kingdom of God invites imagination; Jesus expanded our perceptions

The holy question to ask: I wonder what God may be up to among us?

Rural Shrink Smart – ISU researchers Kimberly Zarecor, Megen O'Toole

In this project we explore small and shrinking rural communities in Iowa that have been able to protect quality of life and community services for their residents even as they lose population.

There are 938 towns in Iowa. 80% of towns have a population of less than 1,000. Half of the towns have a population of less than 500. Counties considered non-metro account for 72% of the counties in Iowa, but only 14% of the population.

There is a disincentive for towns to unincorporate because the county then needs to take over their services (police, fire, maintenance, etc.). Towns continue to exist but shrink.

Iowa at one time had 11 congressional representatives, and now only has four. Our voice on the national stage has less impact.

- Population loss is a variable that can't be changed.
- Churches, particularly mainline, share anxiety about population loss and the loss of younger families.
- We all need to accept the fact that numbers in rural Iowa will continue to decrease and we need a mindset of acceptance.
- We also need to move beyond a deficit mindset.

There are three types of relationship connections:

1. Bonding
2. Bridging
3. Linking

We participated in an exercise to consider all the places we were in one day. Then consider the interactions/connections we made that day with another person. Then ask myself the questions about each of these interactions:

- Do I make a sense of belonging, either strong or weak, in my interactions with others?
- Do my connections carry outside of church?
- Do I help others feel like they belong?

Regardless of our view of the church and its purpose, we need to meet people where they are, not where they "should be." For some the church does fill the role of social club, etc. This is not bad, it is a beginning. If we as a congregation are serving God with passion and joy, that will welcome others more than any programs, worship styles or traditions.



IOWA HOMELESS YOUTH CENTER

"We always get great meals from Ankeny Presbyterian. Thank you!"...IHYC

Thank you! to everyone who contributed to the meal that was delivered to the Youth Center in September! We get notes of appreciation every month for the meals that we provide.



The meal for October will be meatloaf, mac n cheese, green beans and dessert. It will be delivered to the Youth Center on Monday, October 19th. Sign-up sheet for food contributions is on the Mission table. In addition to the meal, any personal care items or clothing placed in the bin next to the Mission table will also be delivered. The Center seeks donations of the following:

- Undergarments and socks (adult sizes)
- New or gently used clothing, suitable for work or school (adult sizes)
- Hygiene products (shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shaving supplies)
- Feminine hygiene products
- Laundry detergent
- Bedding
- Towels
-

Contact Carla Yeager at (515) 669-8620 or yeagercc@msn.com.

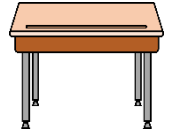


EAST ELEMENTARY PTO: THANK YOU!

Hello again! I just wanted to let you know that with your generous donation, we were able to purchase 772 snacks for East's students. This is over 25% of what we need for the entire YEAR. Thank you again so much for your support.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our fundraiser for new desks for the students and teachers in our partner community of Corozal, El Salvador. Our goal was to raise \$6,000, and once again, APC responded with remarkable generosity, raising **\$6,645!**



The Salvadoran Pastoral Team will oversee the purchase and delivery of the desks, and we hope they will be in place in time for the start of the 2027 school year in January.

We are deeply grateful for your generosity, compassion, and commitment to supporting our sisters and brothers in Christ. Your gifts are making a meaningful difference in the lives of these students and teachers. Thank you for sharing God's love in such a tangible way.

Our Sister Parish Presents

BINGO FUNDRAISER

*Sunday,
November 8th*

\$50/FAMILY OR \$25/PERSON

2pm to 4pm

Pay at the door, as early as 1:30pm
ANKENY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
317 SE TRILEIN DR. (50021)

Support OSP • Have fun

Volunteer Opportunities

One of the best things about volunteerism is that each volunteer comes in with their own talents, skills, and tender heart moments. If there are fun, impactful, and engaging offerings you'd like to share with our community, let me know. Maybe you know how to play the saxophone, and you'd like to play us a tune, are super knowledgeable in the history of local architecture, or know fun card tricks. I'd love to help curate something magical for you and for our Mill Pond residents. Midge Slater

Letter from Mill Pond

My name is Ashley Salem, and I am the Life Enrichment & Volunteer Director here at Mill Pond. We have many opportunities to create an impact for our volunteers by helping to enrich the lives of our older adults. I am reaching out to see if anyone in your community may want to volunteer with us. If you have anyone interested, I'd love to speak with them.

Some of our current opportunities:

-Bingo:

On Wednesdays at 1:30 pm, we have Bingo in the assisted living dining room. I am looking for 2 volunteers at 1:00 pm who can set out and display the bingo prizes on the prize table. I will bring the prizes on a cart to the assisted living dining room. On the 1st bingo of the month, I am looking for 3 volunteers to help serve cookies and beverages.

-Monthly Bulletin Boards:

I am looking for 5-7 volunteers who can decorate each bulletin board (there are 11) at the beginning of each month. I have borders and themed month headings. Perfect for a former teacher, or someone who loves crafts and being creative.

-Monthly Birthday Party:

Our birthday parties are a big celebration. I am looking for 5 volunteers to help move tables and chairs, and 4 volunteers to help serve cake and beverages.

One-to-One's:

If you enjoy reminiscing and spending time getting to know someone, I'd love to have you volunteer to do 1:1 visits. You can do puzzles, card games, or talk about the old days with our residents.

Pet Visits:

Our small(or large) furry friends can warm the heart. If you have a friendly pet and you'd like to bring a smile and perhaps a cuddle opportunity to our residents, let me know. I'd like to meet your furry loved one and talk to you more about going door to door to our residents' apartments to say hello.

One of the best things about volunteerism is that each volunteer comes in with their own talents, skills, and tender heart moments. If there are fun, impactful, and engaging offerings you'd like to share with our community, let me know. Maybe you know how to play the saxophone, and you'd like to play us a tune, are super knowledgeable in the history of local architecture, or know fun card tricks. I'd love to help curate something magical for you and for our Mill Pond residents.

Thank you,

Ashley Salem

Life Enrichment & Volunteer Director

O: [515-965-3154](tel:515-965-3154)

Wellness



LUNCH AND LEARN

Thursday, November 12

11:00 AM

Join us for another Lunch and Learn on November 12 at 11am. The program will be "Scams and Frauds" presented by a representative from the Ankeny Police's Community Engagement Team. Enjoy a sack lunch from In the Bag and learn how to avoid being the victim of a scam or fraud. Please sign up by November 5 if you plan to attend to ensure a lunch for you. Invite a friend or friends but be sure to sign them up so they too will have a lunch. Sign-up sheets will be on the mission table in the Fellowship Hall.

Facilities

It's Working Well! An Update on our Solar Array

For the past four months, Mid-American Energy has charged APC **nothing** for electricity usage! In fact, during these extra sunny months, we are building reserves (currently around \$300) in our account as we generate excess energy for the grid. It has been more than a year since the array's installation, and we are quite happy with its performance, seeing it deliver a significant decrease in our energy expense. Our timing of its installation also allowed us to secure a rebate of \$24,500, which was received in December 2025. The array is monitored on an ongoing basis by both our Facilities Committee (specifically Dan Hucka) and the installing company (Eagle Point Solar).

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

Have you been thinking about what makes this church run so well?

Have you been wanting to get involved but you don't know who to contact or what committee would best suit your interests?

For the next few weeks we will spotlight each committee. Let's all do our part and use our gifts God has so graciously given us.

Facility Resources Committee: Hammering Out Fun Each Month

The Facility's Committee fills the "handyman" function for our building and grounds. It's a great group of about a dozen people who have been on the roof and in the nooks and crannies of the church. We are all too familiar with spaces you had no idea existed! Team members bring their coffee and latest jokes or teasing to our monthly meetings, so we share laughs and fellowship before heading out to do projects.

We have:

- ☐ Those who love to paint
- ☐ Others who are truly masters at woodworking
- ☐ A couple of basic plumbers
- ☐ A talented roof-leak-finder-repair guy
- ☐ A computer geek or two
- ☐ A networker who digs up resources for us
- ☐ A retired Deere engineer who is our amazing mower repairman.
- ☐ A realtor who understands the big picture of church properties
- ☐ Volunteers who find peace and meditation on the riding lawn mowers in the east yard.
- ☐ Our minister who prays for us and helps us coordinate with other committees as needed.
- ☐ Other retired engineers and an HR person who contribute their expertise and historical knowledge about the church building.

We're made up of humble doers, whose individual talents are recognized and so very appreciated, who keep the facilities safe, attractive, and running well. Want to learn more about our truly fun and talented team? Contact Elders Jay VanderWilt or Del Konopka



OCTOBERFEST POTLUCK

Come and join us for our next Potluck on October 20th at 5:30 pm. We will be celebrating fall with an Oktoberfest theme featuring brats and hot dogs provided by Dave Lawson. Please bring a side dish to share. Drinks and table service will be provided.



Trunk or Treat

Once again, we will be hosting a Trunk or Treat night as a way of connecting with our neighbors. It will take place from 6-8 p.m. on Halloween, October 31, during the city's trick-or-treat hours. The Outreach Committee would like to make this another great year — in the past we've served about 400 children! Please be thinking about your trunk design and start stockpiling treats. Sign-up sheets for trunks and donations will appear in the fellowship hall. Our goal is to have at least twenty-five trunks. Please pray that this event will be a success in

communicating love and care to the families in our neighborhood.



Caroling

It's time to mark your calendars for Sunday, December 13th, at 3:30 PM for one of our favorite ways to share the joy of Christ's birth with those who may especially appreciate a visit during the Christmas season with caroling. More information will be coming out in the next Encounter. Watch for further details!

Hospitality

Greeters:

4th: Lee & Alice White, Tim Little & Carla Yeager
11th: Sam & Heather Housker, Mary Ellen Fischer
18th: Rick & Del Konopka, Jan Klinker
25th: Ray & Lola Peters, Marta Neill

Ushers:

4th: Ron & Sue Faerber
11th: Gary & Mary Weeks
18th: Gary & Janie Owens
25th: Jay & Jill VanderWilt

Worship Leader:

4th: Phil Pease
11th: Bonnie McCaughey
18th: Audrey Kobus
25th: Lee White

Welcome Desk:

4th: Cathy DeMoss
11th: Ray Peters
18th: Jo DeHart
25th: Ken Nelson

Church Lock-up:

Jay VanderWilt

Little Library:

Mary Kleis

Wednesday Night Child Care

7th: Sue Faerber & Jan Klinker

14th: Marcia McAdoo & Janie Owens

21st: Lori Lawson & Bonnie McCaughey

28th: Janie Owens & Carla Yeager

Mowing of APC:

1st-3rd: Dave & Lori Lawson

7th-10th: Dave Dirks

14th-17th: Theron Smith

21st-24th: Mike Myers

28th-31st: Noah Wood

Home Communion

Al Lamp- Gary & Janie Owens at church

Sonja Maxwell- Ray & Lola Peters at church

Kelly Murray- Alice White & Bonnie McCaughey

Emily Wycoff- Cathy Bucklin & Jan Ross

Nadine Greiman- Mary Weeks & Marge Hennings

Birthdays:

1st: Pastor Eric Pasanchin

2nd: Larry Zach

4th: Neiley-Joy Musoro

6th: Nora Von Brown

7th: Ron Van Heukelom

12th: Addie Brooks

12th: Eli Brooks

13th: Max Brewbaker

13th: Dave Lawson

13th: Evie Von Brown

15th: Erica Doud

19th: Franklin Kobus

24th: Sondra Lazear

28th: Dan Hucka

30th: Liam Doud

31st: Jeff Von Brown

31st: Adam Meier

Anniversaries:

17th: Adam & Ashley Meier

20th: Chuck & Karen Miller

27th: Rich & Bonnie
McCaughey

28th: Steve & Lori
SchraderBachar

