



The Newsletter

"Celebrating Christ, Community and Communion Every Sunday"

6435 N. NEW BRAUNFELS AVENUE,
Tel.: (210) 828-5728
Church Office Email: halamoheightsc@satx.rr.com

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78209
FAX (210) 828-5809
Church Website: www.AlamoHeightsCC.org



JUNE 2016



Blanket Sunday Offering will be received during Morning Worship on Sunday, June 19th and Sunday, June 26nd.

Alamo Heights Christian Church has been honoring the men of the church with Blanket Sunday. This year we will be collecting money through the month of June...especially morning worship on June 19th **Father's Day** and June 26th.

Last year **Blankets** were delivered around the world and in **17 States of the United States**. Texas was one of the states receiving blankets.

They are being bought for \$10.00 per blanket. Remember to honor and memorialize Fathers, Grandfathers, Sons, and or Sons-in-law. On the First Sunday of July, we will report the number of Blankets as well as those who have been honored or memorialized.

~AHCC Food Pantry Blog~

In the iconic 1980 film **"The Blues Brothers,"** brothers Jake and Elwood decide to put their blues band back together and raise the money to keep their boyhood boarding school open. However, as they set off on their **"mission from God"** they seem to make more enemies along the way.

Seems strange that a self-proclaimed **"mission from God"** would generate enemies against that mission. While that may have been the case in this movie, the mission of the AHCC Food Pantry has found a different reception. We have been fortunate.

In 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, we read: *"There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other."*

We use the gift of a servant's heart to meet God's mission for us. Having a servant's heart means to not only put other's needs ahead of our own, but to serve with the right motivation—and that is to put God's will first. Rewards, recognition or even gratitude cannot be the motivation to live out true servanthood the way Jesus did. What a great example!

The ingredients for a successful food pantry program include planning, preparation, flexibility and dedication to God's purpose. Before our Food Pantry reignited, we looked to see if there was a need for food assistance in the area, and we joined forces with other organizations like the Food Bank to avoid duplication of service. We prepared spaces within the AHCC campus to meet our initial estimated population, and have had the flexibility to add other elements (such as donated refrigerators and freezers) to meet an increasing need and our capability to store the donated frozen and refrigerated food which we receive.

The AHCC Food Pantry continues to provide food to those in need every month, a number that increases, as more people become **"food insecure,"** having to make the decision to eat or pay bills. In April 2016, the Food Pantry fed 412 individuals. Annually, the need for food increases in the summer. During the school year, 22 million children receive free or reduced-priced meals through the National School Lunch Program. When school is out during the summer months, however, only 2.7 million receive free or reduced-price meals through the USDA Summer Food Service Program.

Think about those children without meals. I know that the children of AHCC do! Last summer, one child shared his lunch with a child who was hungry and came to our food pantry. Small acts can have huge impacts!

Have you ever wondered: Why are we here? What is my purpose in life? Why does it all matter? Whether you are a lifelong Christian or new to the faith, service to others as directed by Jesus may be the perfect opportunity to learn more about God's purpose for you in the world.

We are all on missions from God. Every person in this church has a mission because God created us all with a purpose, for His mission. In truth, He knows us intimately, and He knows every part of us and He knows our capability for great things.

My prayer this month: that God helps each of us to become better examples of what it means to have a servant's heart. May the Lord use our hands and feet to make a difference for His Kingdom, and may our motivation be only God-centered. Amen!



Fathers are Good Shepherds

June is the month in which we celebrate Father's Day. I always hate to go out looking for that perfect Hallmark card because I am one of those people who refuse to buy a card that does not reflect my feelings, those cards are so corny, and my feelings about my own father are so complicated. I spend a lot of time looking for just the right one. My father was not perfect and yours probably was not either. He was human and that is all right. I turned out OK and I am grateful for every moment of my life for it made me who I am today.

When I think about the ideal father, I cannot help but think about the Good Shepherd that Jesus spoke of in many of His lessons. When Joe and I were on a cruise in April, we went to Cozumel. It is one of our favorite places to go. We love to snorkel in the Caribbean waters that are so blue /green and where the fish are so beautiful.

This year we did a scuba/diving type excursion. We went down to the ocean floor about 24 feet below the surface with those diving bells on our heads and continuous airflows that were pumped down to us from compressors on the surface. We walked around a roped perimeter with other tourists being led by a guide and got to feed schools of fish and touch sea life. It was fun for me and my sister-in-law, but not so much for Joe or his brother, Mark. There were divers that hovered above us, watching over us for any sign of distress and we placed our complete trust in them to keep us safe. Mark panicked and had to be taken out of the water, as did one other man. At one point, I became enchanted with some fish and let go of the rope and walked toward the fish and the next thing I knew, the diver had me by the hand gently pulling me back to the rope, lest I fall and my bell fill with water. I wondered if he heard me laughing in my bell. He was being a good shepherd and I actually felt loved and cared for in that moment by that stranger below the surface of the ocean. It was a very

“good shepherd” thing to do. He asked for the “AOK” sign, which I returned gratefully.

We talked about Mary in May and I think about Joseph as a father now. He was a protector of Mary. When he was betrothed to Mary he found out she was pregnant. He thought of divorcing her quietly but an angel came to him in a dream and told him that Mary was carrying Jesus and that all was as God intended. No one else knew of God's plan but Mary and Joseph at that time. What courage it took for Joseph to bear the brunt of all the scandalous talk of the village that must have gone on about how he could not control himself before the wedding. What shame! Yet he took Mary under his care and protection when he could have left her to fend for herself for the rest of her life as a disgraced woman with an illegitimate child. Both Mary and Joseph were good rules-following Jews, but knew when to part from rules to bend to the Will of the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a good shepherd. I wish we knew more about his life with Mary and Jesus and the family. I am sure God picked Jesus' earthly father well.

I think being a good father, or mother, like a good shepherd, takes being in tune with the Holy Spirit in order to work well. No matter who old we are, we still need the good shepherd in our lives. Take time to show your earthly fathers that you love them this month and if you cannot, spend time with the Good Shepherd and thank Him for His guidance in your life. Better yet, take time to listen for His Will for you.

I wish all of our Fathers' a Happy and Blessed Father's Day!

Stephanie Blandford
Board Chair



What is prayer?

We have been looking at “The Definition of Prayer” from the book “The Battle Plan for Prayer”.

“The Definition of Prayer”

Prayer is communion with God in order to...

1. Intimately know, love and worship Him;
2. Understand and conform our lives to His will and ways;
3. Access and advance His Kingdom, power, and glory.

Let us read the book's third definition... Access and advance His kingdom, power, and glory. When we pray, “Give us this day . . . lead us not into temptation . . . deliver us . . .” we are seeking to access God's kingdom resources, for His mighty power to work on our behalf, and for Him to reveal His glory in our situation. God is unlimited in His capacity to

accomplish anything. At the same time, we do not just receive these things but we seek to advance them. *When we seek first His kingdom, that is when so many other things fall into place* (Matt. 6:33). We pray for things that will lead others to submit to His control and give Him the glory due to His name. Those last words of the Lord's Prayer – *"thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever"* (Matt. 6:13 KJV) – are not just for church and ceremony. They remind us that God is owner of all, ruler of all, and worthy of all. *"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen"* (Rom. 11:36). Prayer allows us the priceless privileges to not only know Almighty God better, but to join Him in what He is already doing among the nations for His glory.

God has made us able to pray and do this by redeeming us, by forgiving us, by including us in His inheritance, by giving us the Holy Spirit . . . all the things captured in Ephesians 1 that explain to us who we are in Christ. We worship Him, we thank Him, we listen, we learn, we serve. Through Christ, we enjoy constant access to Him while being able to know we are devoting our whole lives to what truly matters most.

Prayer is not about prayer. It is about a Person – God Himself. When it becomes merely about accessing the provision or protection of God rather than knowing and pleasing the Person of God, then we are getting off the track. Nevertheless, when the one goal of our praying is to live in a relationship with Him – One on One – He will cause prayer to also help us experience His purposes, His plans, His provision, His protection and everything else He intends.

Father, help me never again forget that I am in Your awesome presence when I pray. Help me not enter into it as duty or a mindless activity, the mere repeating of tired words. But help me come with worship, with love, and with a true desire to experience You personally. Help me to abandon my own agendas and self-assurances, wanting to be nowhere else except directly aligned with Your will. And may Your kingdom flow right through this heart and home of mine, taking me wherever You want me to go.

Linda Hawkins, Chair of Elders



A Note from the Deacon's Corner

Discerning our Gifts as Deacons Part One...

"Deacons are, by and large, open-hearted and eager souls, quite willing and able. Deacons who have already put in a full day's work by the time they get to church do much of the actual work in our congregations. Talk about exemplary dedication. Congregations are blessed by the benefit of their leadership."

Beyond simply honoring deacons' dedication to their calling, we need to be concerned with what sustains the service of deacons. We raise the question of staying power because **'burnout'** is evident among deacons, creating major morale problems at the grassroots of our congregations.

Possible reasons:

1. Perhaps we are working hard but not smart.
2. Perhaps we too often fill slots to complete rosters and appoint warm bodies to committees with little thought as to a **'deacon's spiritual gifts'**.

Because our spiritual heritage as Disciples favors a highly rationalistic approach to faith, we are generally uncomfortable with references to the Holy Spirit.

Can we get beyond caricatures and stereotypes? Let us get back to the biblical teaching of our heritage. Disciples have long believed that the 'Spirit' is active in the human soul be reason of God's Spirit breathing divine life into us at creation (Gen. 2:7).

Historically, Disciples have quoted Acts 2:38 as the verse in our understanding of salvation. *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* In the moment of baptism, spirits of human and Holy comeingle and commune. The divine spark that every living soul receives at birth now becomes the indwelling Spirit whom Jesus promised would *"guide you into all the truth"* (John 16:13). Thus, the Spirit makes us strong followers *"rooted and grounded in love,"* according to Ephesians 3:14-19.

The development of our spiritual character ensues as our *"suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us"* (Roman 5: 3-5). The fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) are another way of talking about this internal re-vitalization process. Fruits of the Spirit are essentially manifestations of Christ's life shining through our lives: his character, his compassion, his quiet strength, his courage in danger. All these graces become our as we open ourselves up and welcome the Holy Spirit to commune with our spirit in the depths of our being.

What and how does the Holy Spirit grow within us as Christians and Deacons? What **'Spiritual Gifts'** do us as individual Deacons possess? How can we know that we are using our gifts /talents in the right manner? Think about these questions and any more that may come to mind. In July, Part Two...may answer these and other questions that have not been answered.

In His Name

Parts of this article have been taken from "Your Calling a Deacon" by Gary Straub and James Trader II.

Membership Information

Summer months means that our membership will be going on vacation. If you travel some place special or just to see relatives, please let the church office know. Our Elders would like to know if you are having fun or need help due to illness.

We will be celebrating June Anniversaries/ Birthdays on Sunday, June 12, 2016. We hope to see all celebrants present.

Anniversaries for May 2016



Dr. Roy & Sharon Tucker celebrated their Anniversary on May 10, 2016

Birthdays for May 2016



Jessica Harden, Charlotte Lewis and Grace Scruggs celebrated their Birthdays during the month of May 2016. It was a very special birthday for Grace, She turned 90 years young!



The Church Office needs to know when your Birthday or Wedding Anniversary is celebrated. Please call the Church Office 210-828-5728 and let Sarah know your information.

An additional note from AHCC Food Pantry – On Tuesday, May 24, 2016 the Mission Group from Neosho, MO, blessed us by helping in the Food Pantry before they left at about 9:30 am that morning. The following pictures are of three of their group helping get our boxes ready for distribution. God really knows how to use people when you need them..they were a “Blessing” disguised as a Mission Group for the Christian Inman Center.



Up Coming Events

Wednesday, June 1, 2016

6:00 pm - Ministerial Search Committee Meeting in Minister's Office

Saturday, June 11, 2016

8:00 am – Elders Breakfast Meeting in Kirtley Hall

Sunday, June 12, 2016

12:15 pm – June's Birthday / Anniversary Celebration in Kirtley Hall

Sunday, June 19, 2016 – Father's Day

Blanket Sunday Offering will be received today! Don't forget to honor or memorialize a loved one.

Thursday, June 23, 2016 – **DEADLINE to**

Submit articles or information for June's Newsletter and Calendar****

Sunday, June 26, 2016

Last Sunday to buy a Blanket to remember a loved one.



Check the June's Calendar for additional events taking place at AHCC.