



April Newsletter

Devotional Thought

I was listening to an NPR Hidden Brain podcast the other day entitled, “The Lonely American Man” (<https://www.npr.org/series/423302056/hidden-brain>). One man they interviewed said that he got so lonely at one point in his life he hugged the banister in his house... In the podcast they talked about how the American view of masculinity teaches us that in order to be a strong man you need to be independent and handle all your problems by yourself. “Do not admit weakness or your need for help,” or “the only men who have intimate relationships with other men are gay,” they say. This is all not true, as the research suggests. Men need intimate relationships of trust with other men to be healthy socially. Years ago, as a man grew up, this was mostly satisfied by his extended family; i.e. his brothers, father, uncles, or the men he grew up with in his community. Today, we live in a transient community, where economic pursuits often lead people away from their family and community of origin. When in these new communities, people are reluctant to ever develop relationships because they may be moving in a couple years. The nuclear family is breaking down at an alarming rate. Could this be the result of a breakdown in the extended family and the communities that are formed by a cluster of extended families? Some may think, “Thank God I’m not around my extended family!” I’m not here to make any judgment calls on whether this current trend is good or bad. It is what it is. One thing I do see, however, especially in a new, growing community like Ankeny, is a mission opportunity. There are lonely men (and women and children) out there! They need friends (even if they wouldn’t admit it). More than that, they need Jesus. Because in the end, we know that friendships cannot satisfy the deepest longing of our souls. That can only be satisfied by an abiding relationship with Jesus. Starting right after Easter, we at The Gate will be starting a 5-week series on 1 John. In it, John writes a lot about how much love God has for us and how this flows through us and forms authentic Christian community. I’d love for you to pray for us and join us as we dive into this content and live it out in our community.



Upcoming Events

- Easter Celebration, Sunday, April 1st. Breakfast: 8:30am, Worship: 9:30am and an Easter egg hunt to follow. Be sure to like our event on facebook and twitter and share it with your friends! <https://www.facebook.com/events/329692864186930/>
- Moulton Elementary Sports and Music Camp. Saturday, April 21. Sign up here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/moulton_elementary
- Mill Pond Worship and Fellowship. Sunday April 22nd at 2pm.

Prayer Requests

- For God to send us more people who want to join us in our mission of leading people into growing relationship with Jesus.
- Thanksgiving for the positive response to our series on generosity and that we would grow in this gift.
- That God would bless our Connection Groups as we grow in relationship with one another.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

Pastor Aaron Hannemann





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