



Stow Alliance  
Fellowship

Open Arms . . . Open Hearts . . . Open Hands

NEWS

May 2019



### Thursday, May 2nd

This week, Americans across all 50 states will gather in churches, local businesses, the steps of city halls, schools, neighborhoods and public gathering places for a day of public prayer for the United States of America.

Thursday, May 2, is the National Day of Prayer. While the National Day of Prayer has occurred since 1952, 31 years ago, President Ronald Reagan signed a law designating it as always being the first Thursday of May.

This year's National Day of Prayer theme is "Love One Another." The theme comes from the words of Jesus in John 13:34, "Love one another. Just as I have loved you."

"We tend to forget that Jesus didn't say we would be known by our creeds or by our knowledge or how much we know about the Bible — He said we would be known only by our love," Dr. Ronnie Floyd, president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, said when revealing the 2019 theme at a leadership summit last fall. "And love has been painfully absent in America in so many ways."

The National Observance of the Day of Prayer will occur at 7:30 pm in Washington, DC, and can be watched via live stream at [natinaldayofprayer.org](http://natinaldayofprayer.org). We encourage everyone to set time aside that day to pray for our communities, our state and our country.



### Celebration of Life

Sunday, May 5th

Everyone is invited to a special event on Sunday, May 5th, starting at 6:00pm in the sanctuary. We will be celebrating another year of LIFE Groups with a special concert by our youth choir, Legacy. We encourage you to come and invite a friend, even if you did not participate in a LIFE Group this yer!

### Vacation Bible School June 10th-14th



VBS is coming! Kids ages 3 years old (and potty trained) through 5th grade (completed) are invited to fly with us on the *Lion of Judah Airlines* Monday, June 10th - Friday, June 14th! Registration is available online now at: [www.stowalliance.org](http://www.stowalliance.org) (click the *Lion of Judah Airlines* banner or the link on the Resource Page).

If you are interested in helping out with anything (crafts, games, group leaders, snacks, Bible, etc.), please contact Darlene Risjan or sign up in the lobby. If you are in 6<sup>th</sup> grade or above, and you would like to help with VBS but are not yet an approved worker, please see Darlene Risjan so you can be approved **before** June 1st.

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## John Kitchen, Senior Pastor

### In the Land of the Living

When someone close to us dies it scrambles our thoughts and emotions. We have, of course, the hope of Jesus Christ. If they shared that hope we rejoice for their home-going. But we remain here and must deal with the void left because of their departure and the trauma of soul that is ours in the grief we endure. And it is a real void and a genuine trauma. So how do we go forward “in the land of the living”?

That phrase (“in the land of the living”) came to mind recently as we walked through my father’s final days here on earth. I recalled the phrase from a couple of Bible verses which I’d tucked away in my heart over the years. But today I went searching out that phrase and discovered it is found three times in the Psalms. Those three occurrences are instructive to me as I seek the way forward after the loss of my dad. Perhaps you’ll find some help here too, whatever your current challenges.

*“I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.” (Psalm 116:9)*

That’s an important perspective for me. Dad is gone. I miss him. But I must “walk” through this life—which, because of his death, involves a mountainous pile of new decisions, actions and responsibilities. But I must “walk” each day – moving forward, dealing with stuff. And I must do so consciously “before the Lord.” He is my orientation, my loss need not be. I don’t deny the loss, but I am not defined by the loss. I am defined by “the LORD” who is my life. I am aware of being under His gaze. His face is turned toward me for good (Numb. 6:25-26). I am accountable to Him (Heb. 4:13). In the midst of all this I need both: His grace for me and His authority over me. I’m not in this alone. I am walking “before the Lord,” right here “in the land of the living.” What a grace!

*“I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!” (Psalm 27:13)*

I have hope! Yes, for eternal life. Yes, for reunion with my Dad who died with his faith in Jesus Christ. But I have hope for here and now as well—“in the land of the living.” As I “walk before the LORD” I have every confidence that He is providentially arranging my life and all the affairs that make it up so that “I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD” right here “in the land of the living.” Real time. Real world. Tangible. Identifiable. He will do me good as I walk through all this. His promises to me in the Bible are true. He is good to every one of these. They are given to me so I can affirm that in Christ I am in present possession of all I need to do His will (2 Peter 1:3-4). I will be able to say as Joshua did, “Not one word has failed of all the good things that the LORD [my] God promised concerning [me]. All have come to pass for [me]; not one of them has failed.” (Josh. 23:14) What a grace!

*“I cry to you, O LORD; I say, ‘You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.’” (Psalm 142:5)*

As I sit here—emotions riding up and down depending on the moment—I am already in possession of my greatest treasure! The Lord Himself is “my portion.” That is to say, the Lord is “my inheritance.” Think on that: you’ve come into your inheritance “in the land of the living”! When someone dies we sometimes hear that they’ve “gone to their reward.” I get it, but I already have mine! He has given Himself to me as the best gift an infinite God could ever bestow on anyone. He has enriched me by the gift of His fellowship, favor, love, and presence. I’ve already come into infinite wealth! I sit here the wealthiest man I know—or ever will know. David was right, “I shall not want.” How could I when He is “my portion”? And if in a difficult moment I lose this perspective, the Lord is “my refuge” and keeps me with the promise of restored perspective again down the road. What a grace!

This three-fold perspective, of course, is applicable at all times, not just in times of grief. Would it help if you took a few minutes before the Lord and thanked Him for His presence and promises in your life, right now, right here “in the land of the living”?

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## For Adults

**Spring Missions Sunday** - On Sunday, May 5th, we will focus on mission as we hear from Paul B., international worker in Africa, during both morning services.

**Child Dedications** - A child dedication service will be held on Sunday, May 12th. If you would like to dedicate your child(ren) to the Lord, please call the church office (330-688-7433) by Monday, May 6th to make arrangements.

**Prime Timers** - All senior adults are invited to join us on Thursday, May 16th at 6:00pm in the Seasons Room for a time of food, fellowship, and faith-building. A pizza dinner will be provided and the cost is \$8. Jim Shuman will be sharing.

**Active Threat Response Option Training** - Our Awareness Team has invited Mark Fender to bring his training program to SAF for a one day training event, Saturday, May 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. With the rise of mass shootings across the United States, learn a practical approach to enhance your "Response Options" to protect you, your family, and those attending Stow Alliance. The options taught will equip you beyond the walls of the church on "what to do" and include several different scenarios that will help you apply the knowledge learned. All are welcome to attend.



**Gardeners & Mowers Needed** - Spring is here! Our church flower beds and lawns are in need of some tender loving care. If you would like to help beautify our flower beds or help mow the grass around the church building, please contact Bill Azzarello. A rotating schedule will be put in place for May - September for those who volunteer to mow the grass.

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## Especially for Men

**Men's Breakfast** - Men of all ages are invited to join us for breakfast on Saturday, May 4th at 7:30am in the Seasons Room for a great time of food, fellowship, and encouragement in your walk with God.

**Men's Basketball** - Come and join us as we play on Saturdays from 9:00 - 11:00am in the gym.



**Men's Softball League** - The 2019 softball season is beginning and we will be starting up our men's softball team! Games will be played at Water Works Park on Mondays with practices held here at the church field on Monday evenings and Saturday mornings. There is no fee to play, but a jersey is approximately \$25.00. Men must be 18 or older and attend at least 2 church services per month here at SAF to play. Please sign up in the lobby, if you are interested in playing. Call or text Jason Kallio at: 330-328-5353 with any questions.

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### Stewardship Update Through April 17, 2019:

	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
<b>TITHES &amp; OFFERINGS</b>		
Actual	\$ 40,117	\$200,132
Budget	<u>41,376</u>	<u>220,672</u>
Amount Over/(Under) Budget	(1,259)	(20,540)
<b>GREAT COMMISSION FUND</b>		
Actual	\$ 9,458	\$ 49,945
Promises	<u>2,778</u>	<u>14,816</u>
Amount Over/(Under) Promises	6,680	35,129

### PRAISE Plan

Thank you for supporting the Praise Plan! Your continued gifts will help us with future projects.

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## Especially for Women



**MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)** - MOPS is a group offering hope, encouragement, community, and mothering support to mothers of children from birth through 5 years old. Come join local moms on Tuesday, May 14th for our last meeting of the school year from 9:30-11:30am here at SAF. Childcare will be provided.

**Naomi Women** - All women are invited to join us at 7:00 pm on Thursday, May 9th in the Seasons Room as we create cards of encouragement to send to our shut-ins and others who may need their day brightened. Women of all ages are welcome. All supplies will be provided, and we encourage you to bring the names and addresses of those you know personally who would benefit from receiving one of these cards.

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## Youth Ministry

**Youth Group Game Night** - Friday, May 3rd from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Open to Jr. & Sr. High students and friends. Come and hang out with your friends for a night of fun and games.



**2019 Graduates** - Congratulations to the 2019 graduates! We plan to have a time of recognition and prayer for you during our morning services on Sunday, May 19th. Please fill out the “graduation” section on the back of the Communication Card and plan to be present on May 19th.

**Scholarship Applications** - Seniors who are planning on attending a Christian University are encouraged to apply for the Allison McInturff Memorial scholarship. The Scholarship is open to all undergraduates, and graduate students who are attending Christian Universities. Applications are due by the end of May. If you are interested in applying, applications can be found on the lobby table. Please submit your completed application to Pastor Chris by June 1, 2019.

**Senior Banquet** – Mark your calendar for Monday June 3rd. All Sr. High students and leaders are invited to join us for our senior banquet. Be on the lookout for more details to come.

**Junior High Rec Night** - Junior High Students, plan to join us on Wednesday, June 5th for the annual Jr. High Rec Night! More information will be provided soon!

**Reminder to Student Volunteers** - We would love to have you help out with VBS this year. You will have a blast! If you have not volunteered in the past with any Children’s Ministry events, you will need to go through the process to become an approved worker. You can pick up a packet in the mail room at church or from Darlene Risjan. Be sure to submit your application early in order to get approved **before** VBS training in June!!

**Legacy Mission Trip** - Legacy will be spending time in Cleveland coming alongside Westside Alliance Church and Metro Alliance Church to do some community outreach and service. This will be our big service project this year. Please be in prayer for our Legacy youth. Dates are May 25-26.

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## Sports Ministries

**Co-Ed Volleyball** - will play on Saturday, May 11th and 25th from 7:00-9:00pm. Come and join us!

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## Children's Ministry

**Promotion Sunday** - Promotion Sunday will take place on Sunday, June 2nd. Students 5 years olds entering Kindergarten through 5th grade will move up to their next grade. Those entering 6th grade will join the Jr. High downstairs in room 31.

**VBS Training Meeting** - All volunteers involved with VBS, please mark your calendars for a **mandatory** training meeting! You may attend either Sunday, June 2nd immediately following 2nd service in Room 230 (lunch will be provided) or Wednesday, June 5th at 7:00pm in Room 230 (snacks will be provided). Please RSVP to Darlene Risjan at drisjan@stowalliance.org or 330-688-7433 as to which meeting you will be attending.

**Donations for VBS** - Grab a note off the board in the lobby and help out with VBS by donating needed items for snacks! Items will be due by Sunday, June 9th.

**Volunteers Needed** - Our children's ministry needs your help! We are currently looking for volunteers to fill open positions in the Waddlers & Toddlers class: 3rd Sunday of the month during 2nd service. We also are in need of a lead teacher for our preschool children during the 2nd service for the summer months. If you are willing to help invest in the lives of our children, please contact Darlene Risjan.

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## Stow Alliance Preschool



Stow Alliance Preschool registration is going on now for the 2019-2020 school year! Our preschool offers fun and learning in a Christian environment including Bible time, snack time, story hour, craft time, and field trips! Registration forms can be found on our website ([www.stowalliance.org/preschool](http://www.stowalliance.org/preschool)) or picked up on the table in the lobby. Please contact Jeanne Crowe for more information.

**Acme Receipts** - Thank you so much for collecting Acme Receipts for us this year! We received \$238.51 from Acme's Community Cash Back program. The Community Cash Back Program will begin again on August 8th, 2019! Thanks again!

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## Haven of Rest

### Needed Items:

Canned Fruits & Vegetables	Boys' Underwear (sizes 4t - 10)
Canned Soups	White twin-size bed sheets and pillowcases
Regular & Decaf Ground Coffee	Men's Shower Shoes
Hot Chocolate	Men's Personal Care Items
Presweetened Cold Cereal	Boys' & Girls' Shirts (sizes 2t - 10)
Instant Oatmeal	Women's Undergarments & Bras
Hair Brushes	Metro Bus Tickets for Men's Division
Dish Liquid	Body Wash
Spray Deodorant	LED Work Lights/Flash Lights
Batteries (AA, AAA, C, 9V)	Socket Wrench Sets (standard & metric)

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## *Our SAF Family*

### *May Birthdays...*



*Happy Birthday!*

*May God Bless You on Your Birthday*

Myron Koyle, Sr.	5/3	Irene Abbott	5/16	Theda Rowland	5/28
Dorothy Costen	5/4	Joe Grecco	5/21	Marlynn Soliwoda	
Gina Underwood	5/5	Dale Williams		Dean Jones	5/29
Ethan Wedo	5/6	Steve Stoner	5/22	Samuel Smith	
Carter Trowbridge	5/8	Jason Gavin	5/23	Melanie Warman	
Peggy Armentrout	5/9	Steve Brooks		Caleb Chapman	5/30
Keerstyn Ruppel		Homer Gibson	5/26	Paul Hetherington	
Don Abbott	5/15	Brent Trowbridge	5/27	Lisa MacAdam	
				Keaton Smith	
				Steve Trowbridge	
				Gwen Bauer	5/31

### *May Anniversaries...*

Walt & Gloria Thompson	5/22
Tom & Jan Sparrow	5/27
Jason & Sara Lohmier	5/30

Happy  
Anniversary



If you are not currently on our birthday and/or anniversary list and would like to be, please call the church office and let us know!

### *Our Christian Sympathy To...*

Pastor John & Julie Kitchen and family on the death of Pastor John's father, Dean Kitchen, on April 22nd.

The family of Ann VonGunton, who passed away on April 26th at age 100.