

# The Eagle

January 2015

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United Church of Christ  
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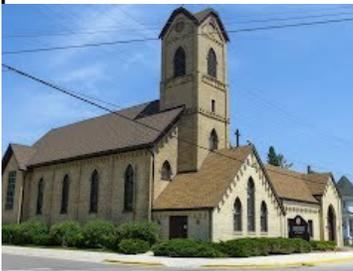
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"Ebenezer UCC Chilton"

&

"Ebenezer United Church  
of Christ Chilton"



## Mission Statement of this Church

Ebenezer United Church of Christ is a vibrant faith community that strives to...

- ◇ Serve the spiritual needs of our neighbors.
- ◇ Transform by walking in Jesus' footsteps.
- ◇ Openly reach out for opportunities to share God's word at home and abroad.
- ◇ Nurture our relationships with God and each other.
- ◇ Empower and embrace faith, hope, and love in God!

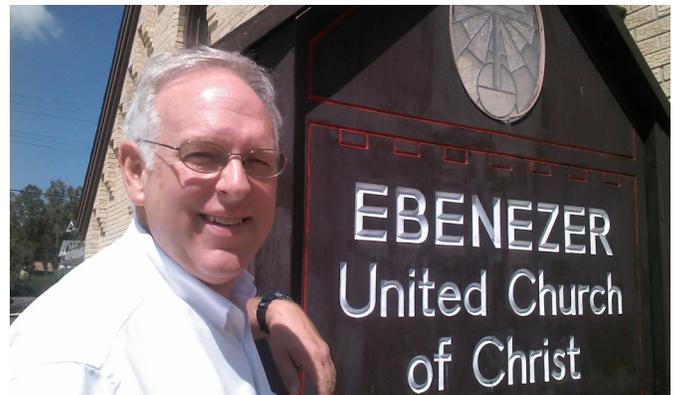


## **PASTOR'S CORNER**

We are a two weeks from Christmas. The church is beautiful in its adornment. The radio is playing Christmas music all day, every day. Shopping is close to being done (no sense in getting into a panic before December 23) and we are preparing homes for family and friends. Cookies, breads and other sweets are baked and wrapped. Yes, the time of preparation is almost complete. One more preparation needs to be completed; are we prepared for the Christ child?

The cleaning, baking, shopping and other activities can serve to shield us from the deeper preparation that is required during Advent: hearing the promises of God for a Savior and preparing ourselves to live as disciples of the child who is about to come into the world. Advent offers us the time to turn the focus of our attention to the prophecies, the intervention of angels into the lives of two ordinary people, and to the meaning of this baby born into a world torn by civil and religious unrest. What are we to make of this time of waiting?

*Cont. on pg. 2*



*Cont. from pg. 1*

Waiting for something has almost become a forgotten blessing in our wired and wireless world. People complain if the computer takes more than 2 seconds to perform a complicated task. To wait at a traffic light seems to tear at the fabric of some peoples' souls. We have so many things to fit into our lives that it almost seems any activity that can't be accomplished in a few minutes isn't worth doing. Yet, we have been purposefully waiting for Christmas since Advent began on the last Sunday of November. Waiting means to contemplate and to understand what is coming. Understanding is rarely gained in a few moments or in a few keystrokes. Knowledge can be found almost instantly but understanding requires patience and time, the essential ingredients in waiting.

When we wait we have the opportunity to listen for the ancient words of promise. When we wait we have the time to hear those ancient words and bring them forward to today, a time that seems so different from 2000+ years ago. When we wait we have the time to allow those words to enter our hearts to convict us and free us, to weigh upon us and lift us. When we wait, those activities that shield us from deeper preparation begin to break down and we enter into a meaningful understanding, both in our hearts and heads, of what Christmas is about.

I read an article in the Grand Rapids (Michigan) Press a few minutes ago about a group in West Michigan that rates various stores according to their "Christmas friendliness." Christmas friendliness was measured by the greeting used by clerks, the number of times Christmas was used in their print and video advertising. I read it with a certain amount of skepticism and prejudice. I don't recall where in scripture Christmas is defined as being related to advertising space. When I shop at any store from January through November I do so to conduct a business transaction. I believe most people probably feel the same way. Yet, when the calendar turns to December suddenly that store becomes crucial to my faith development? Perhaps I'm a bit odd but I'm not sure if clerks wish me a Merry Christmas or a Happy Holidays. I'm more impressed with a clerk, who has been on his/her feet for many hours, can look me in the eye and still muster a smile. I've never made a shopping decision based upon the greeting of a tired, overworked, and underpaid seasonal employee. I do remember the clerks who can share a warm smile, who can overcome the company mandated greeting and communicate happiness at seeing me and serving me.

Waiting allows us to move beyond those mandated words and appearances. We are free to hear the Good News, to understand the Good News and live the Good News, even if it is just through a warm smile at the end of a long shift of work.

Enjoy the lights and music. Enjoy the waiting. Celebrate the birth of our Savior!

Peace and Grace,

*Pastor Mike*



## ***Come and be our friend on Facebook!***

**Just search for "Ebenezer UCC Chilton". We also have a new Facebook location page. To find it, search for "Ebenezer United Church of Christ Chilton" and "Like" us! The friend page is to keep everyone updated on what**

**we are doing here and is an extension of our community. The location page is so new people can find us!**



THREE CHEERS go to the Sunday School students and teachers for a meaningful presentation of the "Innkeeper" at the December 21 worship. Shirley Lisowe dedicates countless hours writing, organizing and directing a script that tells the Christmas story in a perspective that children can comprehend. She is adept at writing for individual personalities and adds or deletes for the number involved.

The text for this year's program conveys a strong message for everyone but sometimes it is not always clearly conveyed as the students portray it and it moves rather quickly. It would be well worth your while to read the text to get the perspective of the 'Innkeeper'. Shirley has several retrieved copies so feel free to ask her for a copy to read – it will certainly add to your Christmas understanding.





## *Christmas Program*

Thanks to all of the Sunday School youth and all their teachers for such a delightful program on the 21st. It is always great to see our kids learning, growing and trying new things. It is doubly great to see them do all these things while testifying to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

May all of you who blessed us at the end of 2014 be blessed by our Lord as we enter 2015.



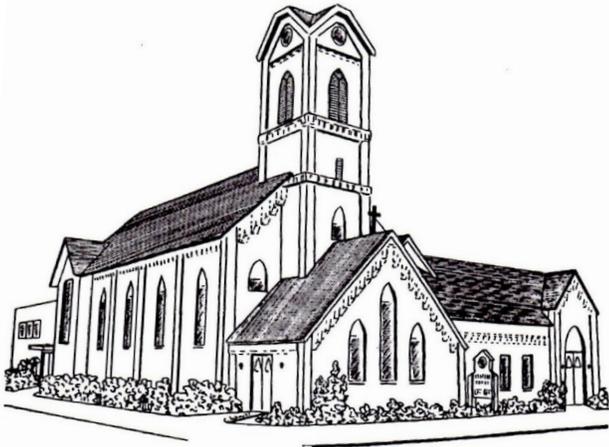
A BIG THANK YOU to Jami Plate for her participation in the children's sermon December 14<sup>th</sup>. It took courage and a big dose of patience to sit in front of the congregation not knowing what is coming next and still smile! A great big hug goes out to you. *Thanks!!!*

## *Bell Concert*

What a wonderful way to experience the beauty of the love of Christ by sitting in the sanctuary late on a Sunday afternoon less than two weeks from Christmas and listening to the beautiful music presented by our Bell Choir.

To each ringer and to Elaine Hessil thank you for blessing us into the final days before Christmas. You are a true Ebenezer gift to the community.





# Newsletter Articles

Please get your articles to Heather by the 3rd Tuesday of the month so she can get the Eagle published before the start of the next month. That means the deadline for the February 2015 Eagle is Tuesday, Jan. 20. Weekly bulletin announcements are due each Tuesday morning.

*Let's let everyone know what is happening at Chilton's best church!*

## Christmas House Walk



Another Christmas House Walk is in the books, and what a great day it was. The weather cooperated beautifully and made for safe travels for all who attended. I estimate 215 people toured the homes and left with lots of inspiration, ideas and happy memories of the day. I was surprised by how many of the guests told me this was their first time attending the event and that they look forward to next year. My thanks, once again, to the Papendiecks, Cmejlas, Gebharts, Browns, Birschbachs and Buechels for opening their homes and to Julie Parsons at Mud Creek Coffee for offering a beverage special for those who attended. Our gift baskets this year went to Marie Mueller, Paul Daun, Susan Wicox, Karen Boehnlein and Carol See. The event raised over \$1,525.00, all of which is being forwarded to OCWM.

## USHERS

**4:** Church Council    **11:** Sunday School

**18:** Annual Meeting

**25:** Kristi & Ray Schnell Tiffany & Kurt Knoespel



## New Office Hours



**MONDAYS**

11 AM - 5 PM

**TUESDAYS**

10AM - 5PM

**WEDNESDAYS**

10AM - 5PM

*January Birthdays*

Denton Aebischer	02
Linda Dorn	06
Janice Kloehn	08
Jane Schroeder	12
Betty Flack	15
Tiffany Knoespel	22
Andrew Papendieck	22
Herbert Woelfel	23

Andrew Van Hoorn	26
Claudia Brown	31
Natalie Adamietz	31



*If your birthday was missed, please let the office know so we can get it right next time.*

**Time to Close the Books**

The 2014 gift giving year is about to close. Please have all your 2014 offerings to the church before December 30. All offerings received after the 30<sup>th</sup> will be credited to 2015.

The church's income for this year was above the 2013 numbers. Congratulations to each and every person who contributed to the church in 2014. You have made a commitment to keep Ebenezer growing and giving it a solid foundation for new ministries in the community.

Thank you for your expressions of faith and trust in God for the future of Ebenezer UCC.

**Offering Envelopes**

You may have noticed a small change to your newest set of offering envelopes. When you receive your new packet of offering envelopes you will notice the red sticker that says you are almost out of envelopes has been moved to the week before you use your final envelope. This small change will allow Heather to get your new packet out to the table before you use your last envelope.

This change helps in a couple of ways. First, the office will have two weeks to get the new envelopes to you. Second, you will always have an envelope at the ready for your offering, no more arriving at church and hoping you have new envelopes for that Sunday.

Thanks for the suggestions that have helped us make improvements to an already good system!



## ***NOTES FROM THE MUSIC CORNER...***

December has been an intense month of practice but is most gratifying to share. The bell choir was very dedicated in long practices that resulted in a “Serendipity” concert on Dec. 14 that was enjoyed by audience and ringers alike. Thank you is extended to all who attended: the kitchen help, the ushers, the narrator and especially all the ringers. Karen and Claudia secretly practiced for weeks so Claudia could play the opening selection, “*The First Noel*” on the bell tree (she memorized 157 measures!). What a pleasant surprise for Elaine! Check out the church website for a video.

Karen shared her bell tree and solo music at several locations. Suggestion has been made to share bell music at Libby’s House. It is hoped that Sunday School students can soon be involved in ringing. All good suggestions, not always enough hours in a day!

Thank you to Don, Kimberlee, & Kyle Pingel for the special music at 11 PM Christmas Eve and to Gail Dederling for a vocal selection on Christmas Day. It would be great to have regular special vocal contributions at future services. Anyone interested in providing vocal music contact Pastor or Elaine.

The vibrant congregational singing always brings meaning and vitality to the worship – keep on making a joyful noise to the Lord!



# MISSION EDUCATION NEWS

The Mission Education Committee would like to thank everyone involved for their help with the recent Cookie Walk . Thanks to the bakers, candy makers, workers and buyers we had a very successful sale bringing in close to \$1400! Amazing what can happen when we work together! Thank you!

THE PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THIS CHURCH

Loving, living, and serving faithfully – uniting God and our neighbors.

<b>Eva</b>	<b>Rod</b>	<b>Joyce</b>	<b>Jane</b>
<b>Louise</b>	<b>Charlaine</b>	<b>Sharon</b>	<b>David</b>
<b>Sheri</b>	<b>Glen</b>	<b>Mark</b>	
<b>Steve</b>			

Due to privacy laws, we can no longer list last names of members of our congregation on the prayer list above because our Eagle goes on the church website which can be viewed by anyone on the internet. Thank you.



Scrip



Please keep in mind to buy scrip if you plan on making a shopping trip, gassing the car, or having dinner out!! It helps our church meet our goals!



We have partnered with United Community to help raise funds needed to help our church. We are using the funds towards our OCWM contributions and the General Fund. Many of you have been using your United Community Card at the partnered businesses and we thank you for doing that. If you do not have a United Community card and would like more information on how to obtain one, please contact the church office at 849-4331.

# JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 New Year's Day	2 Office Closed	3
4 8:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 am Worship (Communion) Constitution Mtg Spanish Ministry 3pm	5 Church office open 11-5	6 Church office open 10-5	7 Church office open 10-5  <i>Bells Rehearsal</i> 6:15 PM	8 8:30 am Men's Brkfst @ 7 Angels	9 Office Closed	10
11 <b>CHILDREN'S SERVICE</b> 8:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 am Worship (Pastor Sue) Council Meeting Annual Report Published	12 Church office open 11-5	13 Church of- fice open 10-5  Girl Scouts 6-7:30 in FH  Eagle Articles Due	14 Church office open 10-5  <i>Bells Rehearsal</i> 6:15 PM	15 1:00 pm Women's Guild @ 7 Angels	16 Office Closed	17
18 8:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 am Worship ANNUAL MEETING Spanish Ministry 3pm	19 Church office open 11-5	20 Church of- fice open 10-5	21 Church office open 10-5  <i>Bells Rehearsal</i> 6:15 PM	22	23 Office Closed	24
25 8:30 AM Sunday School 9:30 am Worship Spanish Ministry 3pm Eagle Published	26 Church office open 11-5	27 Church of- fice open 10-5  Girl Scouts 6-7:30 in FH	28 Church office closed  <i>Bells Rehearsal</i> 6:15 PM	29	30 Office Closed	31

