

The Eagle



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

Feb 2017

Faith in Chilton

by Rev. Michael Safford-Kennedy

This is what I wrote in the Annual Report. I wanted to share this again, for some of you may not have had the chance to read the original. I have great hope and excitement when I think of what this year holds for Ebenezer.

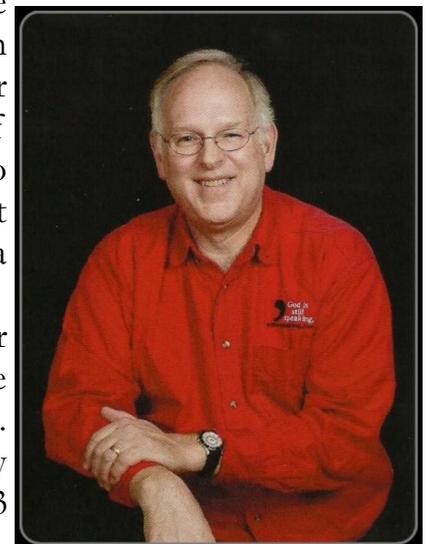
To the believers at Ebenezer United Church of Christ I bring you peace, grace and love from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is living and present here in Ebenezer, throughout Chilton and the surrounding communities.

I have great joy writing this letter because for the first time I this as your settled pastor. When I interviewed with the church in July 2013 my job was to help you prepare for hiring your next settled minister. I had no idea that our paths would not only cross but they would become intertwined. After three years, the search committee, the church, the association and I all heard the call from God that you and I should enter conventual ministry together. You have welcomed and trusted me, praised and corrected me, opened your hearts and shared you secrets, gently and prayerfully shared your pains from the past. I look forward to many years of shared ministry with you and the community.

We enter ministry together at a difficult time for “the church.” Nationwide, church membership continues to drop, continuing a trend that began in the mid 1960’s. There are many reasons for this and scholars agree there is no one reason. Recognizing we live in times of change allows us to ask how do we move forward.

Moving forward is difficult. I believe people are “being sold a bill of goods.” People’s lives are so busy and everyone on television and in print has an exercise program that promises a new you in just 15 minutes per day, or eat this super food and melt away 50 pounds in just two weeks, or God wants you to be rich. None of these satisfy the inner most need of people to connect with God who loves them and seeks them, forgives them, and wants them to become better people. We want to know that God is with us in every moment of our lives. A 15-minute God is not good enough. A God who measures us by our weight is too shallow. A God who cares not about our relationships with family, friends and strangers is not a God to be worshipped.

Moving forward with a message that people want to hear and need to hear is a path which will be blessed. I believe that we worship a God who cares about us and not about our possessions. I believe that God wants a world where there is justice and mercy and forgiveness. I try to share a God who loves *Cont. on pg. 3*



NOTES FROM THE MUSIC CORNER . . .

By Elaine Hessel

*In Christ alone my hope is found;
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace when fears are stilled,
When strivings cease.
My comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand . . .*

This is a part of the text of the February 19 anthem that will be sung by the combined choirs from Our Saviour's UCC that will be visiting Ebenezer from Ripon. Karen has done bell solos at their church for the last 3 years. They do not have a bell choir but do have 2 active vocal choirs so we thought it would be a wonderful way to reciprocate Karen's ringing by having them sing at our worship service! Following is the background of their choirs: For more than sixty years, the Our Saviour's Senior Choir has provided music for Sunday services. In the 1990's, the Choir toured Germany and Switzerland, sang at Carnegie Hall in New York City, and performed at the Air force Academy in Colorado. Dr. David Thompson, Professor of Music at Marian University, is the director. The 'Everybody Singers Choir' was formed in 1980, by Pastor James Mohr's wife, Karen Mohr. Its purpose was to provide informal, easy to learn music for the 8:00 AM service once a month. Kathryn Schieler directs this choir. We will be fortunate to have their combined choirs sing "*In Christ Alone*", part of the text is printed above. It is a dynamic, rousing message!

In addition to the choirs there will also be an instrumental trio (cello, flute & piano) to provide worship music. This is all taking place at the **February 19** worship service – you won't want to miss it!

Congratulations goes out to Claudia Brown for being chosen for the 2nd year to participate in the Wisconsin Choral Directors' Association State Children's Choir. What a thrill to rehearse and perform with 108 fifth and sixth graders in Wausau on January 7. Claudia has certainly 'rubbed elbows' with a lot of musicians since she rang with 663 other handbell musicians at Mall of America!

We are anticipating that the rebuilding and the releathering of the pipe organ should be started soon. This will mean the organ may be out of commission for about 2 months. The complete proposal and cost is posted on the narthex bulletin board for everyone's information. The cost is being covered by an anonymous donation.

Cont. from pg. 1

each of you, who wants you to be loved by your neighbors and to love God with all your heart. This message which strives to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth is a message that will touch people and let them know they are not alone, that God is walking with them, giving them strength and forgiveness. This is what I strive to say every Sunday. This is what I want our ministry together to proclaim.

This year witnessed continued change in the sanctuary. Though not visible, the upgrade to the sound system and the addition of a hearing loop have made significant improvement to the worship services. No longer are there dead spots in the sanctuary where it is difficult to hear the speaker nor does the microphone stop working for short periods of time.

Another change to the sanctuary is the installation of a second air conditioning unit. The first unit, installed in 2015, made a significant difference in the temperatures in parts of the church. The second unit will provide a uniform temperature in the hot and humid summer months.

During the autumn of 2016 we began another Confirmation class. This class has also seen a big change. This class will be the first of two-year classes. This year we will be examining the Old Testament and next year we will dive into the New Testament. The two-year format will allow us to go deeper into the Bible and help the confirmands to see how they can apply the Bible to their lives. We have four young men and one young lady in the class. I look forward to spending time with them every Wednesday night.

Effective communication is an integral part of effective churches. As we continue to grow we will work together to be more effective and efficient in our communication. Ideas are great and when ideas begin to be brought to fruition the church, its committees, and the office need to work together lest we duplicate efforts or find that we have ideas which may conflict with ideas from another committee or part of the church. Effective communication helps the church do its best to minister to its members and to the community.

The church continues to spread the Good News to all people. The Evangelism Committee, with help from everyone will continue its efforts to make a difference in the lives of the community. We have been dreaming of ways to bring God's love to communities outside the church and ensuring the members of the church are also cared for and loved. We placed flowers throughout uptown Chilton in 2016. Business owners, citizens and the City Council were appreciative. We hope to continue this ministry in 2017 and to continue our outreach by letting the community know that Ebenezer is a safe place.

Finally, a thank you to all the people, paid and volunteers, who keep Ebenezer functioning at a high level. Foremost among them is Heather Sylaj, our Administrative Assistant. Heather has grown in her ability to do her job and in her confidence to handle the many unforeseen tasks in working in a church office. The church council is critical to Ebenezer, insuring the proper functioning of the church and providing a source of great ideas for evangelism, worship, and effective running of the office. Many thanks to the council for your dedication. Blessings to all who make Ebenezer such a great place to work.

We have made great progress in the past years thanks to the members of the church, the work of your ministers and the presence of the Holy Spirit. May 2017 be a year we remember with great joy. Amen.

MISSION EDUCATION NEWS

The Mission Committee is planning a Rummage Sale for sometime this spring, but we need your help. Our room in the basement is empty! When you are cleaning a closet or the cupboards or your basement, please think of us. We need your salable items which include pretty much everything but electronics, televisions and computers. Thank you and Happy cleaning! Questions or for pickup call Nan at 418-0149 or Jeanne at 203-4137

Thank you to Lynn and Dexter Sattler for the beautiful poinsettias they provided for the Christmas season. They lend such a beauty to the church and have lasted so long, bringing joy and color to these dreary January days.



Be sure to help yourself to a copy of the January/February devotional guide, "The Upper Room" available in the narthex.



The Annual Meeting minutes were not ready at press time and will be published in next month's Eagle. Please see the Annual Report for the Treasure's Report. We are sorry for any inconvenience.



Ebenezer is fortunate to have had memorial funds to install a Hearing Loop system to aid folks with hearing loss. If you wear hearing aids with a telecoil, the system will either automatically amplify the sound or you may need to turn that function on. If you do not wear hearing aids or if they do not have the telecoil, you may request a headset from an usher.

If you wish to write an article for the newsletter or have any photos you have taken of church related events/people that you are willing to share, please send them to Heather in the office by email (ebenezeroffice@yahoo.com). We want to hear from you!

Happy Birthday

May God bless your years and may you continue to bless Ebenezer!

Diane Sattler	03
Tjark Sattler	04
Linda Marx	04
John Mattes, Jr.	05
Doris Propson	05
Brandon Schneider	14
Darren Sattler	15
James Hertel	19
Andy Hofmeister	21
Terry Schenkus	21
Dyane Boese	26
Tim Van Oss	27

Council Minutes: January 15, 2016

Meeting called to order at 11:15 a.m. Members present: Jamie Plate, Dale Hintz, Kelly Kress, Kelly Brown, Stephanie Ademietz, and Pastor Mike. Karen Cmejla and Fred Kubichka were absent. Kelly Brown made a motion to approve December's minutes. Dale Hintz seconded. Motion carried.

Finances Report:

Our December revenue is \$15,608.

Our December expenditures are \$10,853.

Our general fund balance as of December 31st, 2016 is \$84,916.

Our current balance is \$272,059.

Jamie Plate made a motion to accept the corrected financial reports and a portion of December and January's bills. Dale Hintz seconded. Motion carried.

Minister's Report:

Pastor Mike continues to be busy making many home visits.

Committee Reports:

- **Christian Ed/Music**-No news. Meeting will be held later this month.
- **Evangelism**-Meeting was held this am—many exciting ideas/plans for 2017.
- **Mission**-No new news.
- **Property**-No new news.
- **Stewardship**-No new news.

Old news

*The Annual Meeting will be held on January 22, 2017.

New Business:

Kelly Brown made a motion to make the organist and janitor positions as salaried vs. hourly. Jamie Plate seconded. Motion carried. The change will start immediately.

Kelly Brown made a motion to pay out the special offerings, totaling \$1454, to OCWM. Stephanie Ademietz seconded.

**The next council meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2017—after the annual meeting.

Kelly Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dale Hintz seconded. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Council Secretary, Jamie Plate

If you've stopped by the church the past couple of days or even if you are planning to stop by in the next few days, please don't be surprised to see a mess! We have decided to go through all the files in the office and clean out the unnecessary files. This is a decidedly big project. Of course, in these types of projects, we find many documents that have lost their usefulness over the years but there are also notes from council meetings and annual meetings that may teach us lessons. For instance, yesterday Heather found some minutes from the 1980's that described how the church was arguing about what constituted a quorum and what are the requirements for membership.

As far back as Paul's letters we have struggled to answer the questions what are the responsibilities of membership, who is a member, and how many people belong to a church. I imagine since Paul didn't have a definite answer we too will continue to ask these same questions from time-to-time and our answers will change as time moves forward.

Thank you to all who attended the Annual Meeting on January 22. We had a number of items to address, among them was the definition of who is a member of Ebenezer and what constitutes a quorum for annual meetings. The most important votes were electing two new members of the Council. Congratulations go to Kari Meyers and Colleen Marx for their acceptance of the call to serve on the council. Thanks to everyone who attended the meeting and helped move the church forward.

Sometimes the work of the church is visible to all such as an Annual Meeting and sometimes the work is behind the scenes and is as often said "below the radar" for most people. Shirley Lisowe and Ruth Aebischer have worked diligently for the past year compiling an accurate list of members and their contact information. This is truly behind the scenes work and hard work that is important to the church. Without their work, we would not be able to answer such simple questions as how many members do have, who are they, how can I get in touch with them. Thanks to Ruth and Shirley for their many hours of hard work.

A flower chart for 2017 is posted in the church entry, near the Upper Room rack. Please feel free to sign up to provide either altar flowers or for the communion rail to commemorate a special event or as a memorial.

Newsletter Articles due to the office by email on the third Tuesday of the month.

Weekly bulletin announcements are due in the office on Tuesday mornings.

January 2017

Ebenezer

United Church of Christ
Rev. Michael Safford-Kennedy

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Confirmation 6-7:30 PM Hand bells 6:30 PM	2	3	4
5 INSTALLATION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS Worship 9:30 AM Spanish Ministry 2 PM	6	7	8 Hand bells 6:30 PM	9 Men's Brkfst @ 7 Angels 8:30 AM	10	11
12 Worship 9:30 AM Spanish Ministry 2 PM	13	14 Valentine's Day Girl Scouts 6-7:30 PM EAGLE ARTICLES DUE	15 Confirmation 6 -7:30 PM Hand bells 6:30 PM	16 Women's Guild Mtg @ 7 Angels 1 PM	17	18
19 Evangelism Cmt mtg 8:30AM Worship 9:30 AM Council Mtg after service Spanish Ministry 2 PM	20 Century Ridge Worship 10 am	21	22 Confirmation 6 -7:30 PM Hand bells 6:30 PM	23	24	25
26 Worship 9:30 AM Spanish Ministry 2 PM	27	28 Girl Scouts 6-7:30 PM				

Date	Ushers	Readers
5	Church Council	Noah Brown
12	Sunday School	None
19	Joann Lakin Mark Rusch Wayne & Kelly Kress	Breanna Cook
26	Mike Redig Sue Verrier Don & Connie Waldvogel	Skyler Goerl

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Ebenezer UCC Chilton



Office Hours:

Mon - Thurs 11AM-4 PM