



The Eagle

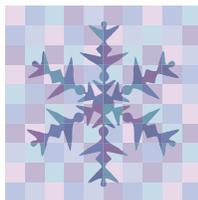


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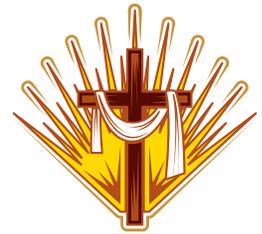


January 2014

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!

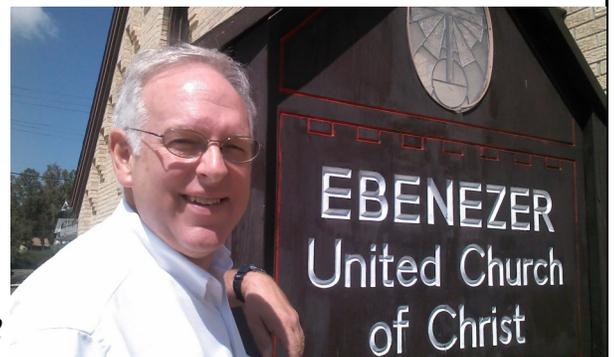


PASTOR'S CORNER

God is always with us! We know it. We believe it. We count on it. Yet, there seem to be times when we forget that simple statement. When we are: angry, sad, hurt, grieving, feeling betrayed, lost, anxious to be rid of the past, and uncertain of the future we sometimes forget the faith statement from the time of Abram to as recently as last Sunday with the Sunday School program. God is always with us.

We sought God's presence many times in 2013: the departure of Rev. Rust, hiring a new secretary, and hiring a new interim minister, 2013 was a challenging time for Ebenezer. In the midst of the turmoil of the year God was present with Ebenezer. God was watching every day seeking out the best way to speak to each person in the congregation urging you forward into the future that God is opening for you. Perhaps you ask, "Why, God, did we have to endure such a difficult year? What can come from such a tumultuous time?"

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When the Israelites were forced from their homes in the early 6th century BCE they believed that all was lost, including God. The nation had been conquered and in those times if the nation was defeated the nation's god was defeated. It seemed that all was truly lost. Yet during that time in which the Israelites were in exile their most creative and soul searching writings emerged. During that time the people began to understand God in a deeper way than before the exile. Today, Jews and Christians alike treasure the writings of those years as some of the most beautiful and thought provoking writings ever produced. While the experience of Ebenezer is not one of exile the past year did find the congregation asking, "Where is God in all this change?"

God's presence was experienced: when volunteers stepped forward to fill the vacancy in the office, when the Council found Heather Hall, when the church faced Rev. Rust's departure with an eye to the future with confidence that God had something new awaiting the church, when I walked away from Community UCC in Elkhart Lake and then was asked to consider Ebenezer UCC Chilton, when the Council stood fast and didn't give up hope in the face of all the change, and finally when the Sunday School staff boldly decided that this was the year not to stagnate but to grow. God was not done working with Ebenezer.

Yes, God was with the church in all those times but even more, God was with each person. God saw the sadness that was creeping into the church as the grief of so many changes in such a short time began to take its toll. God stepped in and spoke to each heart in the church and said, "I will be with you in times of sadness and I will be with you in times of joy." As God said so long ago, "Behold, I will do a new thing." With those words written on our hearts God urged us forward into a time when we began to see a new light. Those difficult times had prepared us for a new time. God's words, shared with us, opened new possibilities for the church.

Today we enter into a new year confident that God is with us. We have seen hard times and begun to learn the lessons which God holds before us. God also holds new lessons for us, lessons that will be learned in times of change, love, grace, and peace.

We begin 2014 with excitement and anticipation. People who left the church filled with sadness are returning with hope and love. People who were hurt are discovering their hearts are healing. Ebenezer is growing, not because life was easy and everyone was comfortable, but because life was hard, and with God present in our lives, we found great growth emerging from hard times.

May God bless each of us, our church, Chilton and the surrounding communities this year.

Peace, *Pastor Mike*

SERVING ON THE COUNCIL

There are times in the life of the church when people are the most needed resource. Yes, every Sunday we pass the offering plate because money is a needed gift to pay the bills and enable the church to do its ministry. However, there are times when we need more than simply putting money in the plate and even more than offering prayers for the church. We have arrived at one of those times.

The church council has two openings, two opportunities, for people to serve. To be eligible to serve on the council you simply need to be a member of the church. The gifts that the council needs is people who are interested in the life of the church. You do not need to be a biblical scholar, an expert in Robert's Rules of Order, an accountant, or any other specialized talent. Are you afraid that you will sit through the first meeting and have no idea what is going on...or maybe even sit through SEVERAL meetings and not know what is happening? Relax that is normal, really, it is normal to feel lost for the first several meetings of any organization. This feeling begins to disappear with each meeting you attend and one day you realize you not only know what is happening you have an idea of how to make a difference.

I realize that the past few years have been difficult for the church and to have served on the Council has required patience, faith and a good deal of grace. Those qualities are always needed but the church has been blessed throughout those times and now the lessons have been learned and we are ready to move into a time of renewal and growth. This coming year will see the church publishing it's profile as it takes more steps toward hiring your next settled minister. The church will also continue to experience growth in attendance and in financial security allowing for new ministries in Chilton and in the wider world.

I look forward to working with the Council as Ebenezer moves into God's future confident in the knowledge of God's love for Ebenezer and for Chilton and its surrounding communities.

Peace and grace, *Pastor Mike*

OCWM (Special Offerings)

This is the first in a series of articles about Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). The offerings described below are the ones familiar to most people because four times a year we take special offerings for these ministries. These offerings are called Special Support because they are above and beyond the most basic support of OCWM.

Our Church's Wider Mission Special Support comprises gifts to the four Special Mission Offerings in the United Church of Christ, per capita dues, and gifts that are specially designated for the Conference, national setting or UCC-related institutions. By mandate of the General Synod, each local church receives promotional material for the four Special Mission Offerings:

One Great Hour of Sharing: Giving Help, Hope and Life

Supports partners in more than 70 countries with ministries that fund development projects, feed the victims of famine, provide services for displaced people, and respond to natural disasters. These ministries are the responsibility of Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources. Received annually on the fourth Sunday in Lent.

Strengthen the Church: Faithfully Building the Body of Christ

Supports church growth and leadership development in the conferences and through the national offices of Local Church Ministries. Received annually on Pentecost Sunday.

Neighbors in Need: Justice and Compassion Like a Mighty Stream

Supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, including ministry carried out by the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) and by the national offices of Justice and Witness Ministries. Received annually on World Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of October.

The Christmas Fund: Remembering Those Who Serve Our Church

Provides financial aid to retired and active ministers and their surviving spouses and children who face overwhelming financial demands, a ministry carried out by the Pension Boards. Received annually on the Sunday before Christmas.



Veterans of the Cross

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day we will receive the special church wide offering "The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross."

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is a unique Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that affords us an opportunity to recognize and honor those who serve our beloved Church. Each year, the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance relies on the [Christmas Fund Offering for the Veterans of the Cross](#) to provide 60% of the annual funding needed to:

- supplement low pensions;
 - supplement health benefits;
 - provide other direct assistance to retired clergy and lay employees;
- and
provide Christmas gift checks to low-income retirees.

One of the special aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds do not support programs, make grants to institutions, or fund advocacy programs, but rather, they provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay employees.

Please make a generous donation to the Veterans of the Cross special offering.

Peace,

Pastor Mike



CHURCH COUNCIL



Two council member positions will be opening soon. Please consider who you would like to put forth as nominees. The nominees should come from the church membership, not the council itself. Also, the council is considering 2 year terms (instead of four) and a council just made of officers, not elders and deacons.

Newsletters 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 2014 Eagle is Tuesday, January 14. Weekly bulletin announcements are due each Tuesday morning.

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

ANNUAL REPORTS MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held January 19 immediately following services. Please set aside this day to offer your presence, ideas, and prayers for the church, the Council, and all its members.

If you are responsible for an organization that needs to submit an annual report for the congregation please submit your report to the church office via e-mail or directly to the church office as soon as possible so we can begin our work for the annual meeting.

Peace, *Pastor Mike*



USHERS

JANUARY 5

CHURCH COUNCIL

JANUARY 12

SUNDAY SCHOOL

JANUARY 19

DEAN & ELLIE PAPENDIECK

KELLY & WAYNE KRESS

JANUARY 26

STEVE & CHRIS STENZ



January Birthdays

Denton Aebischer	02	Andrew Papendieck	22
Linda Dorn	06	Herbert Woelfel	23
Janice Kloehn	08	Andrew Van Hoorn	26
Harvey Hansen	09	Claudia Brown	31
Jane Schroeder	12	Natalie Adamietz	31
Betty Flack	15		
Tiffany Knoespel	22		



If you have a January birthday, and it was missed, please let the office know so we can get it right next time.

Want to help the church financially but don't exactly have the funds to do so? Well, now you can at no expense to you. I am excited to announce that we are rolling out the new United Community program. It is a free, simple program to help raise funds for Ebenezer United Church of Christ and we are asking for your support.

Hundreds of area businesses are offering cash back to Ebenezer whenever you make a purchase with one of your existing MasterCard or Visa credit or debit cards. With your involvement, we can raise substantial funds for our church. It takes a minute to get started and we are asking you to register by **January 31, 2014!** Our goal is to have at least 75 members on board with the program and to raise \$3,000 for our church in the year 2014!

Here's how to get started:

Visit ucmission.com and click "Join Now"

Choose to support "Ebenezer United Church of Christ"

Securely enroll your existing Visa/MasterCard debit and credit cards

Shop at the partnered businesses with your registered debit/credit cards

Raise funds for our church ... it's that simple!



I will be in church the next couple of Sundays set up in the back to help get you enrolled right away if you would like to. It only will take you two minutes. All you need is your credit card that you will be using and an email address. The rest you don't have to worry about!

Thanks in advance for your support and involvement. We are very excited to raise more funds to help support our church and we need your involvement to make this happen!

Mission Committee News



Our recent Cookie / Candy Walk and Nativity Set Giveaway was a big success. We took in \$1411.55 and received lots of comments about how tasty everything was! We would like to thank all of the bakers and the buyers for their support. We couldn't have done it without you! Please remember to stop in the kitchen and pick up any containers that you brought cookies or candy in. Thanks!

We also are planning to have a rummage sale in spring if we have enough to sell. If you have items that you no longer need or use, please consider giving them to us for the spring rummage sale. It is a good way to clear clutter from your home and also to help someone in need. We are already collecting items in our usual room in the basement. If you are unable to get your items there, please call Jeanne at 920-203-4137 or Nan at 920-418-0149.

NOTES FROM THE MUSIC CORNER...

It is so exciting to see the hustle & bustle around Ebenezer in December. There were times it took extra planning to know where to have the handbell practice or to put the equipment! It all worked well! "Sounds of Chilton" required extra toting of equipment (the coldest night of the year!) for dress rehearsal and then the performance on Dec. 13. It was all so rewarding to have the audience response to the bells playing "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and to Karen's bell tree selection "What Child is This". "The Twelve Days of Christmas" will be rung at the 7 :00 worship on Christmas Eve with a bit of explanation that fits the Christian setting. Karen will be repeating her 'tree' selection for Christmas morning worship. There will be no bell rehearsal on Dec. 26 but will resume rehearsals on Jan. 2. A huge THANK YOU must go to all the bell choir members for their dedication in extra rehearsals and all the toting of equipment!



We're looking forward to several vocal additions to Christmas worship. Don & Kyle Pingel will contribute their duet to the 11:00 worship and Gail Dederling will provide a vocal solo to the 9 AM Christmas worship. THANK YOU! Thank you to Gail & Don for joining the Sunday School for "The Best Thing About Christmas" – everyone was energized!

IMPORTANT

Attendance at church picks up as we approach the holidays. During the summer it was easy to write a check or put some cash in the offering plate. It is also easy to forget about your offering envelopes.

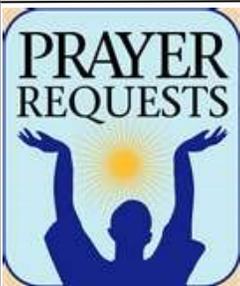
Please remember to pick up and use your offering envelopes throughout the year. Use of the envelopes ensures your privacy and makes recording the correct amount of money to the correct person a simpler and more accurate task.

Don't forget to use those envelopes. (If you need new envelopes just leave a note or call Heather at the church. She'll get new envelopes to you for the next Sunday.)



THE PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THIS CHURCH

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



Eva Kris
Joyce Jason
Tod Louise
Dennis Charlaine

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.

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!

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.

EBENEZER U.C.C COUNCIL MINUTES

December 15, 2013

Members Present: Janene VanHoorn, Andy Hofmeister, Don Waldvogel, Pastor Mike, Karen Cmejla, Tiffany Knoespel. Missing: Jane Schroeder

Meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. Janene made a motion to approve the agenda and last month's minutes and Andy seconded it. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report was given. It was noted that the Mission Committee has stated they are donating \$1000 to OCWM and the remainder will go to the General Fund of Ebenezer from the Cookie Sales. There were about 210 people that went through the houses for the Christmas House Walk and those monies of \$1491 along with \$1000 donated from the Women's Guild and the monies accumulated from the "Community Fund" will also go to OCWM. A total of \$6061 through the date of 12/15/13 will get sent off to OCWM. It was also noted that there has been no record of rent being paid from Happy Hour Nursery for the month of November. Heather will be informed to check into this. The "bills" list was gone over for a total of \$7031.88. Andy Hofmeister approved the Treasurers Report and Bills List and Karen Cmejla seconded it. Motion carried

Minister's report was given.

Committee reports:

Christian Ed had their Christmas program today. Special thanks to Shirley Lisowe and all the teachers and kids for a wonderful presentation.

Evangelism Committee noted NO coffee hour for month of December but will resume again in January.

Property Committee noted that the cabinets, countertops & painting in Parsonage are completed. Ken will be looking into installing a railing on the upper porch of the parsonage and Don is making contacts at Worthington to the possibilities of renting out the parsonage.

All Committees are encouraged to get in their reports to the office for the next months Annual Report.

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Old/Continuing Business:

The Search Committee is hard at it working on the profile to submit to the Association. It was noted that 80 surveys were returned from the congregation to assist in the profile.

New Business:

All End of Year Reports are due by January 7, 2014.

Discussion of filing important records was held. It was noted we should have these in a fire-proof file cabinet. We will check into the safe down in the basement. There was discussion of organizing and installing new shelving unit in the closet by the West entrance for files also.

Other Business:

Discussion was held about other ways mission could go towards our church and/or community vs. OCWM. How much do we get back from OCWM to aide in our church?

There was discussion about the revisions and updates to our church website. Ken Lisowe's son, Aaron, is assisting us with this and helping Ruth Aebischer and Janene VanHoorn to continue with updates. There is a 3-yr term for \$180 to keep the website up and going. The new website name is www.ebenezerchilton.org.

Members/Friends letters have been sent out with a few responses already back.

There has been a \$1000 donation to the Memorial fund from the Clarence Westphal estate.

Andy Hofmeister made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Janene VanHoorn seconded it at 12:05 p.m. Motion carried.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		31 Church office open 9-5	1 Church office closed	2 6:30 Handbell Rehearsal	3	4
5 9:30 am Worship 	6	7 Church office open 9-5	8 Church office open 9-5	9  8:30 am Men's Breakfast @ 7 Angels 6:30 Handbell Rehearsal	10	11
12 9:30 am Worship 	13	14 Church office open 9-5 Eagle Articles Due 	15 Church office open 9-5	16  1:00 pm Women's Guild @ 7 Angels 6:30 Handbell Rehearsal	17	18
19 9:30 am Worship Annual Meeting 	20	21 Church office open 9-5	22 Church office open 9-5	23 6:30 Handbell Rehearsal	24	25
26 9:30 am Worship 	27	28 Church office open 9-5	29 Church office open 9-5	30 6:30 Handbell Rehearsal	31	