

# The Eagle



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

January 2018

“We are just a few days from Christmas. The church is beautiful in its adornment. The radio is playing Christmas music all day, every day. 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?



Waiting for something has almost become a forgotten blessing in our wired and wireless world. 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 first Sunday of December. Waiting offers us a chance to contemplate what is coming. Understanding is rarely gained in a few moments at a traffic light. Knowledge can be found almost instantly, but understanding requires patience and time.

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 to 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 remember an article in my hometown newspaper a few years 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, and the number of times Christmas was used in their print and video advertising. I remember it creating quite a bit of skepticism and prejudice

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within me. I have searched the scriptures seeking a verse that defines the correct amount of advertising for an acceptable Christmas celebration. When I shop at any store from January through November, I do so to conduct a business transaction. Yet, when the calendar turns to December, suddenly that store and their advertising space 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, that 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,

*Pastor Mike*

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

**Thanks to all the Sunday School youth and their teachers for such a delightful program on the 17th.** 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 2017 be blessed by our Lord as we enter 2018.



## MISSION EDUCATION NEWS

Our recent Cookie/Candy/Christmas item sale is over and the numbers are in. We are happy to report that we made more this year than any other year! **The grand total is \$1,454.52** with about \$175.00 of that from Christmas items.



*We would like to thank everyone that made cookies or candy and/or brought Christmas items to sell! Also a great big thank you to the Mission Committee members and to our extra helpers who packaged cookies. This is definitely a group effort - GREAT JOB!!*

Our collection for Puerto Rico Disaster Relief is underway. Please remember the people there and give generously in whatever way you can. \$28 will buy a clean water kit for a whole family; but if that isn't possible, just give what you can. Every dollar counts! Our collection will run through January 7, 2018. THANK YOU!



### Annual Meeting/Report Deadline

The Annual Meeting is on Sunday, January 21, 2018. All articles and/or images for the Annual Report are due to the church office by January 2, 2018! All materials for inclusion can be emailed to [ebenezeroffice@yahoo.com](mailto:ebenezeroffice@yahoo.com).



*Thank you to all those that helped decorate EUCC for the holiday season; it looks wonderful, and greatly adds to the Christmas cheer!*

## Notes from the Music Corner ...

December is always a time for a wide range of music involvement. We are grateful to everyone that contributed to the music of Christmas. In addition to providing worship music on December 10, and for Christmas Eve at 4 p.m., Ebenezer Brass participated in New Holstein's Country Christmas concert on December 3. Several ringers played chimes at Walmart on December 16 for the Red Kettle Match Day. This year they were permitted to ring between the doors so the music could be heard inside the store, as well in the parking lot. Thanks to all the bell choir members for their extra effort.



In addition to the Sunday School students singing for their program on December 17, Meghan Adamietz, as a Junior Ringer, was joined by several Ebenezer Brass ringers to play the prelude. Two confirmands, Patrick Marx on Trumpet and Claudia Brown on Clarinet, added an extra dimension to the congregation singing "O Come All Ye Faithful." The hymn that Mrs. Lisowe chose as the closing for the Sunday School program was especially meaningful and easy to sing. The text was written by the Iona Community of Scotland to the traditional British tune, "Scarlet Ribbon."

It is always a seasonal treat to have Don Pingel sing the traditional "O Holy Night" for the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve service – thank you Don! The prelude for December 31 is going to be very non-traditional as a unique way of rejoicing for the 2017 Christmas season and a special way of welcoming in 2018!

The Jeris Waldvogel scholarship will be awarded to Caleb Delvoux when the bells play for worship on January 14. Congratulations to Caleb!

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*Still looking for a special gift?* Sponsor an issue of the Eagle (suggested value of \$25) or a weekly bulletin (suggested value of \$10)! There are Eagle or bulletin slips on the bulletin board outside the office. Be sure to give the slips to the office so recognition is properly acknowledged.

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**Newsletter Articles** are due to the office on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (unless posted otherwise); be sure to check the calendar for the month's due date. **Weekly bulletin announcements** are due in the office on Tuesday mornings. Please also share any pictures for inclusion! All items should be sent to [ebenezeroffice@yahoo.com](mailto:ebenezeroffice@yahoo.com).

Coffee Hour Sponsors

- January: Women's Guild
- February: Mission Committee
- March: Church Council
- April: Worship/Christian Education Committee
- May: Bell Choir



This is the schedule that was followed last year and will be used again. If any month does not work out for a group, please contact another group and see if they will exchange with you. Otherwise this schedule will be kept and used in years to come. If there are any changes, please let the church office know.

Time to Close the Books

The 2017 gift giving year is about to close. Please have all your 2017 offerings to the church prior to January 1. All offerings received after December 31 will be credited to 2018.

The church's giving this year is on pace to exceed the giving in 2016! Congratulations to everyone who contributed to the church in 2017. 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.

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

We are looking for two members of Ebenezer to join our Council this January. **Please consider volunteering for the council.** If you are interested in becoming a council representative, please see Kelly Kress. Thank you!



**The Confirmation Readers for the month of January are:**

- January 7: Max Miller  
*(no reader January 14)*
- January 21: Patrick Marx
- January 28: Noah Brown



- Denton Aebischer 2
- Linda Dorn 6
- Melanie Dvorak 6
- Carolyn Platner 6
- William Tyson 6
- Janice Kloehn 8
- Ashley Ditter 15
- Sandy Dietz 21
- Tiffany Porsche 22
- Marshall McGinnis 22
- Herb Woelfel 23
- Jarrid Kress 28
- Owen Zwetow 28
- Claudia Brown 31
- Natalie Adamietz 31

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

PRAYER LIST

- Tod Arlene Pat Katy
- Larry Rod Scott Shelly
- David Brian Gracie Lorraine
- Pat Janine Alice Da'Nisha
- Linda Edith Pastor Susan Vern

Due to privacy laws, last names cannot be printed on the prayer list because the Eagle goes on the church website which can be viewed by anyone on the Internet.

*If you want someone added or removed, please contact the church office. Thank you.*

## Council Minutes: December 17, 2017

Meeting called to order at 10:58 a.m. Members present: Jamie Plate, Dale Hintz, Kelly Kress, Colleen Marx, Kelly Brown, and Pastor Mike. Kari Meyers and Fred Kubichka were absent. Kelly Brown made a motion to approve the agenda. Colleen Marx seconded. Motion carried. November's meeting minutes were previously approved via email.

### **Finances Report:**

Our November revenue was \$5,108.

Our November expenditures were \$3,761.

Our total equity, as of November 30, 2017, was \$80,485.

Our balance as of November 30, 2017, was \$279,415.

Colleen Marx made a motion to accept November's financial reports. Kelly Brown seconded. Motion carried.

Kelly Brown made a motion to accept December's bill list. Colleen Marx seconded. Motion carried.

### **Minister's Report:**

Pastor provided a brief synopsis of his activities, during mid-November to mid-December 2017, which included Confirmation, Tuesday and Thursday Bible studies, communion, counseling, meetings, prayer, preaching, and numerous correspondence. Pastor also made several outside visits.

We are averaging 76 people each Sunday and the average offering is \$1,819 each week.

### **Committee Reports:**

- Christian Ed/Music - The children's Christmas program was held on Sunday, December 17. All of the children did a wonderful job! Many thanks to all of those who helped make it a success!!
- Evangelism - No new news.
- Mission - The 7th annual Christmas Cookie/Candy walk was held on Saturday, December 2, 2017, with a profit of \$1,351.02.
- Property - No new news.
- Stewardship - No new news.
- Membership - No new news.

### **Old news:**

No new updates on the Braille system.

No new news on the Property purchase.

The council will be meeting with UCC of New Holstein on 1/2/18 to further discuss the shared ministry.

Further discussions/brainstorming regarding church security, both physical and financial, will be had after the annual meeting.

The 2018 budget was again discussed and near completion.

**New Business:**

The Spanish Ministry is now meeting twice a week. The council decided to raise their rent accordingly. A contract will be drawn up.

Christmas services will be as follows: Christmas Eve-4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Christmas Day will be at 9:00 a.m.

**The council will have 2 members ending their term this year. We will need 2 members to step forward, to fill those positions, by the annual meeting on January 21, 2018.**

**\*\*The next council meeting will be held after the annual meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2018.**

Kelly Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jamie Plate seconded. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

Council Secretary,

*Jamie Plate*

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A flower chart is posted on the bulletin board in the hallway by the church office. Please feel free to sign up to provide flowers for either the altar or the communion rail to commemorate a special event or as a memorial.

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DIFFICULTY HEARING???

Don't forget the Hearing Loop for anyone with hearing aids or the head phones available at the entrance to the sanctuary.

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Be sure to help yourself to a copy of the January/February **"The Upper Room"** in the Narthex. Regular and large print are available.

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### *Adult Faith Formation*

The Wired Word Bible study is offered Tuesday mornings from 10:00 a.m. until about 11:30 a.m. We take on an issue in the news and look at it from a theological point of view. Bible passages are provided for your reflection and study. There is no prerequisite Bible knowledge for this class. We have lots of fun and our discussions always end up going to individual experiences and opinions based upon the Bible and lived faith. Everyone is welcome to drop in and have fun.

Thursday evenings bring an entirely different Bible study. We use the 'My Confirmation' book as a guide for the discussions, but we almost always venture into basic questions about the Bible and its use in services and daily life. This class, that meets from 6:30—8:00 p.m., is ideal for people who would like to brush up on their Bible knowledge. Yes, the Bible can be engaging and interesting.

# January 2018

**Ebenezer** United Church of Christ  
Rev. Michael Safford-Kennedy

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <b>Office Closed</b>	2 <b>Deadline for Annual Reports</b>	3 Jr. Ringers 5:45 p.m., Regular Handbell Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.	4	5	6
7 Sunday School 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Spanish Ministry 4:00 p.m.	8 Confirmation Studies, 6 p.m. in Lounge	9 The Wired Word 10:00 a.m.	10 Jr. Ringers 5:45 p.m., Regular Handbell Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.	11 Men's Breakfast @ 7 Angels 8:30 a.m. Confirmation for Adults 6:30 p.m. Spanish Ministry 6:00 p.m.	12	13
14 Sunday School 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Spanish Ministry 4:00 p.m.	15 Confirmation Studies, 6 p.m. in Lounge	16 The Wired Word 10:00 a.m.	17 Jr. Ringers 5:45 p.m., Regular Handbell Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.	18 Women's Guild @ 7 Angels 1 p.m. Confirmation for Adults 6:30 p.m. Spanish Ministry 6:00 p.m.	19	20
21 Sunday School 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. <b>Annual Meeting</b> Council Meeting after Service Spanish Ministry 4:00 p.m.	22 Confirmation Studies, 6 p.m. in Lounge	23 <b>EAGLE ARTICLES DUE</b> The Wired Word 10:00 a.m.	24 Jr. Ringers 5:45 p.m., Regular Handbell Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.	25 Confirmation for Adults 6:30 p.m. Spanish Ministry 6:00 p.m.	26	27
28 Sunday School 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Spanish Ministry 4:00 p.m.	29 Confirmation Studies, 6 p.m. in Lounge	30 The Wired Word 10:00 a.m.	31 Jr. Ringers 5:45 p.m., Regular Handbell Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.	<b>ALWAYS CHECK THE CURRENT SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENT CALENDAR FOR THE MOST UPDATED VERSION.</b>		

**Ebenezer UCC Chilton**  
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www.ebenezerchilton.org  
ebenezeroffice@yahoo.com  
pastormike79@hotmail.com (pastor)

 **Office Hours:**  
Mon-Thurs 10 a.m.—3 p.m.

Date	Ushers
7	Council
14	Sunday School
21	Don & Donna Pingel, Kimberlee & Jennifer Pringle
28	Kristi & Ryan Schnell, Vern & Edith Knoespel