

# EBENEZER HAPPENINGS



# FEBRUARY 2026

The Monthly Newsletter of  
Ebenezer Reformed Church  
of Morrison, IL

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## Ebenezer Reformed Church

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Our Mission: Helping people  
find & follow Jesus

## Dear Friends of Ebenezer,

As we enter the month of February, our thoughts often turn to love—especially with Valentine's Day on the calendar. Yet, the love we share as a church community goes far beyond cards and chocolates. It's the love that Christ calls us to embody every day: a love that is patient, kind, and enduring.

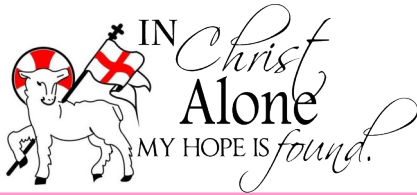
This season, I invite each of us to reflect on how we can deepen our care for one another and for our neighbors. Whether it's through a listening ear, a helping hand, a shut-in visit, or a simple word of encouragement, our acts of love shine the light of Christ in our world. Let us look for opportunities to serve and uplift, just as Jesus taught us.

Our memory verses for the month will help you love your Christian brothers and sisters more deeply if you are willing to commit it to memory. It is Hebrews 10:24-25, which say: *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* What we see in these verses is that a critical ingredient in loving others and spurring them on is to "SHOW UP!" We're to not give up meeting together. We're to be in the habit of showing up for times of worship, fellowship, ministry and prayer. So, I encourage you to not just commit these verses to memory but to put them into practice in some tangible way. If you do, I promise your spiritual light will shine brighter than before!

Keep up the great work that you are doing reaching out in love to others and being generous in your giving. I am grateful for the warmth and support that defines our congregation. Together, let's continue to build a community where everyone feels valued, welcomed, and loved. May God's blessings fill your hearts and homes this month and always.

A Joy to Serve You,

## Sunday Worship - February 2026



1

**Series:** Foundations of the Reformation (Part 5)

**Sermon:** Solus Christus (Christ Alone)

**Scripture:** Colossians 1:15-20

**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean



8

**Series:** Foundations of the Reformation (Part 6)

**Sermon:** Sola Scriptura (Scripture Alone)

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 3:10-17

**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean



15

**Series:** Foundations of the Reformation (Part 7)

**Sermon:** Soli Deo Gloria (The Glory of God Alone)

**Scripture:** Psalm 115

**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean



22

**Series:** Famous Last Words (Lent Series)

**Sermon:** Father, Forgive Them

**Scripture:** Luke 23:32-34

**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean



### COMING UP QUICK!

**taco +  
TRIVIA  
night**

FREE EVENT!



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1  
@ 5:00 P.M.**

### COMING NEXT MONTH:

**85th Annual Father-Son Banquet**

**Tuesday, March 3rd @ 6:00 p.m.**

**Dinner tickets: \$20 for adults**

**\$10 for boys 12 and under**

**Guest Speaker: Don Beebe**

**Former NFL Star**



There are limited tickets available for dinner at 6:00.

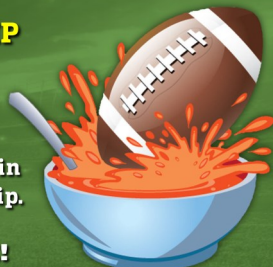
The program will start at 7:00 and is free for anyone (men and women) who wants to attend the program only.

Call the church office for dinner tickets: 815-772-2472

**JOIN US AFTER WORSHIP  
SOUP-ER BOWL  
SUNDAY**

**February 8th**

We will have homemade soups in the fellowship hall after worship. Join us for a tasty brunch in preparation for the BIG GAME!





# February 2026



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Worship 9:30am Youth/Ed Cmt. 10:45am Taco & Trivia Night 5pm	2 Church Life Cmt. Mtg. 10:30am	3 O.M.E. Task Force 3:30pm Bldg. & Property Cmt. 6:30pm	4 Women's Bible Study 1:30pm  AfterShock 5-7pm Pancake Fundraiser	5 Food Bank 9:45am Worship Team Mtg 5:15pm Exec. Team 6:30pm	6	7 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
8 Souper Bowl Sunday fellowship hall after worship	9 Elders/Deacons 6pm Consistory 6:30pm	10 All Church Prayer Meeting 6-7pm 	11 AfterShock 5:30-7pm	12 Food Bank 9:45am	13	14 Men's Bible Study 7:30am 
15 Worship 9:30am Mid-High Class 10:45am	16 President's Day 	17	18 Ash Wednesday AfterShock 5:30-7pm	19 Food Bank 9:45am Diners Night Out 5pm	20	21 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
22 Worship 9:30am Mid-High Class 10:45am	23	24	25 AfterShock 5:30-7pm	26 Food Bank 9:45am	27	28 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
<div style="border-top: 2px solid red; width: 100%;"></div> Pastor J.T. on Vacation						
<b>MAR 1</b> Worship 9:30am Mid-High Class 10:45am	<b>MAR 2</b> Church Life Cmt. Mtg. 10am	<b>MAR 3</b> <b>FATHER-SON BANQUET</b> 6-8pm <b>Guest Speaker: Don Beebe</b>	<b>MAR 4</b> AfterShock 5:30-7pm	5 Food Bank 9:45am Worship Team Mtg 5:15pm Exec. Team 6:30pm	<b>MAR 6</b>	<b>MAR 7</b> Men's Bible Study 7:30am

Memory Verse of the Month: **HEBREWS 10:24-25**

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

## February Birthdays

<b>2/1 Nancy Weber</b>	<b>2/19 Sandi Wilkens</b>	<b>2/24 Nicholas Weaver</b>
<b>2/6 Anna Szabo</b>	<b>2/20 Lilah Buikema</b>	<b>2/27 Keith Hamstra</b>
<b>2/7 Jacob Allison</b>	<b>2/23 Kaylee Pruis</b>	<b>2/28 Bryce Gowan</b>
<b>2/7 Todd Kullerstrand</b>	<b>2/23 Kevin Soenksen</b>	<b>2/28 Cassie Leib</b>
<b>2/10 Joyce Ottens</b>	<b>2/23 Kyle Patten</b>	<b>2/28 Janice Wiersema (L)</b>

➔ Please contact the church office to make sure your birthday is on our list.

♥ Also: If you are married, tell us your wedding anniversary.



## February Meetings At-a-Glance

Sun. 2/1 - Youth/Ed Meeting, 10:45 a.m.  
 Mon. 2/2 - Church Life Committee, 10:30 a.m.  
 Tue. 2/3 - O.M.E. Task Force, 3:30 p.m.  
 Tue. 2/3 - Building & Property Cmt. 6:30 p.m.  
 Wed. 2/4 - Women's Bible Study, 1:30 p.m.  
 Thu. 2/5 - Worship Team, 5:15 p.m.  
 Thu. 2/5 - Executive Committee, 6:30 p.m.  
 Mon. 2/9 - Elders & Deacons, 6:00 p.m.  
 Mon. 2/9 - Consistory, 6:30 p.m.  
 Tue. 2/10 - Prayer Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

## Nursery Schedule

Feb. 1 - Beth Milnes & Kinlee P  
 Feb. 8 - Angie T & Allison Weaver  
 Feb. 15 - Jackie & Alicen Wiersema  
 Feb. 22 - Shawn & Kevin Soenksen



## Sunday Greeters

Feb. 1 - Harvey Z & Karen L  
 Feb. 8 - Jenny P & Susan Bland  
 Feb. 15 - Pepi Allen & Marcia B  
 Feb. 22 - Kathy V & Barb Prins



## Welcome Center

Feb. 1 - Dave & Darlene Schipper  
 Feb. 8 - Jon & Martha Kophamer  
 Feb. 15 - Ken Jansma  
 Feb. 22 - Jack & Susan Bland



## Tech Team

Feb. 1 - Jenny & William Patton  
 Feb. 8 - Scott M & Phil A  
 Feb. 15 - Gregg W & Todd K  
 Feb. 22 - Scott M & Jovie Patton



## Fellowship Hour

Feb. 1 - Tim & Patty Bush  
 Feb. 8 - SOUPER BOWL Sunday  
 Feb. 15 - Church Life  
 Feb. 22 - Ken & Glenda Jansma



## Bell Ringers

Feb. 1 - Josh Gowan  
 Feb. 8 - Kim Schaefer  
 Feb. 15 - Nicholas Weaver  
 Feb. 22 - Jefferson Weaver



*\* Please call the church office if you'd like to be added as a volunteer on any of the service teams.*



## Menu for February:

4th PANCAKE SUPPER (5:00)  
 11th Chicken noodle or Potato soup  
 18th Sloppy Joe's and tater tots  
 25th Pigs in a Blanket and Mac & Cheese



## Bible Lessons for February:

4th Samson & the Philistines  
 11th The Story of Ruth  
 18th Samuel Was Born and Called  
 25th The Ark Was Captured



## **Ladies Aid**

Will not meet in January or February.  
Join us/see you in March!

## **Women's Bible Study**

Please join us for a Bible Study the first Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Our leader is Doris Bielema. In February we will meet on the 4th.

## **Men's Bible Study**

The Men's Bible Study is open to young and old. We meet every Saturday morning at 7:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your Bible. Coffee and donuts will be served. We are currently studying the O.T. book of Judges.

## **Mid-High Bible Study**

The Mid-High class will meet in the Upper Room on February 1st, 15th and 22nd. We will begin a new video series.

## **Heaven's Express**

"Children's Church" for grade school kids on Sunday morning will be held each Sunday. Kids will be dismissed at the offertory.

## **AfterShock**

This Wednesday Night ministry for pre-school through Middle School includes a meal and Bible lesson each Wednesday from 5:30-7:00 pm.

## **Consistory Mtg.**

The Consistory meeting for this month will be on Monday, February 12th starting at 6:00 p.m. for deacons and elders. 6:30 Consistory.

## **Prayer Concerns**

- Pray for those who need restored health, healing, and encouragement: Joanne Peterson, Sandi Gorzney, Marguerite Clark, Ruth Rosenow, Ron Wiersema, Keith Morine, Neva Baar, Fred Hadley, Barb Geerts, Elmer Huizenga, Diane Boelkins, Jeg Weets, and Joyce Wilkins. Pray also for those with special needs or unspoken prayer requests, as well as our shut-ins and nursing/assisted-living residents.

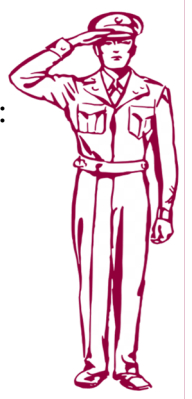
- **Pray for our military men** serving in the U.S. Armed Forces:

**Elijah Bean** (Air Force)

**Gregory Bush** (Air Force)

**Tyler Haan** (Air Force)

**Brevin Pruis** (Navy)



- **Pray for our missionaries:**

Andrew & Sophia Pitcher in South Africa, Ben & Kelita Johnson in Honduras, Jeff & Chelsea Lampen in Germany, Angel Lopez in Mexico, and Joel & Seiko Lovestrand in Japan, Roger & Sue Scheenstra in Africa, and Ryan Karp w/ Chosen People Ministries.

- Prayer is available after each Sunday worship service. There is always an elder there to meet in the prayer room to pray about whatever concerns are on your heart.

- Contact the pastor or church office to put a prayer request on the email "prayer line". Prayer requests will be sent out as soon as the pastor is able to do so.

- Join us for our monthly prayer meeting on Tuesday, February 10th from 6-7 p.m. We will meet in the fellowship hall to pray for our church, our community, our country, and our world.

*Dear Friends of Ebenezer Reformed Church,*

*Hi! My name is Gloria Bellows. I'm the pipe organ at the church. I'm sure you all have heard me. I've provided musical accompaniment for your Sunday services, weddings and funerals. I've been part of your church since 1949. I was young and healthy back then, but now I'm 76 years old and definitely feeling my age. I have some problems. The leathers, little pieces of leather that act like bellows to control the air into my pipes, are so old that they are drying out. Eventually they will leak air, and then no sound will come out. That would be so embarrassing! Recently, the organ tuners were here to tune me so I'll play the correct notes, but I'm so old my pipes still play out of tune and don't sound like they did in my younger days. The organists are doing their best to make me sound good, but it's getting more difficult. I understand my repairs would be too expensive and it would be best for our church to replace me with a new young and healthy organ that will play beautiful music to glorify our God. The worship and music committee has decided to purchase an electronic digital organ which will stay in tune even with the temperature fluctuations in the sanctuary and has minimal, if any, maintenance expense. It is comparable in sound to pipe organs, but higher in technology. It will play music even though the organist is on vacation! Unfortunately, because of my old age and repairs needed, I'm not worth much to sell. Any donation towards the cost of the new organ would be appreciated.*

*Ever your faithful voice in the loft,*

*Gloria*

Note: The new organ will be purchased from the Allen Organ of Iowa for a price of \$134,035. We already have \$14,000 in the organ fund, plus another \$60,000 in pledges. That leaves a total of \$60,000 that needs to be raised between now and installation. A 20% down payment will be made upon signage of the contract. Another 40% will be due 12 weeks later. And the final 40% will be due upon completion of the installation. Make your pledge or donation today in the office or by designated envelope.





## Missionary Spotlight

# Ben & Kelita Johnson

Going back to August—Kelita reported the family had an amazing time in July at Summit Week, hosted every 5 years by Cornerstone Int., in Wilmore, KY. It was a wonderful experience to meet other mission families and the CI Staff—and also to be strengthened in their faith and commitment to the mission field.

Their 4 children started attending a bilingual school in the city of LaCeiba, just 30 minutes from the orphanage—and shared they got off to a terrific start. It marked the first time since their arrival in July of 2023 that all 4 of their children have been able to attend the same school—a real blessing for sure! Kelita asks for continued prayers as they transition to this school and to pray they will continue to do well in their studies and make new Christian friends.

Just recently, a mission team arrived on Jan. 18 to spend a week with them—and left Jan 24. The main task of the recent team was to help run a camp for the kids—Kelita reports it was a huge success!

**FUTURE PLANS** - Looking ahead they continue to prioritize Bible lessons with the children in Urraco on Sat. mornings. They continue to strategize how to best meet the needs of local parents who are helping in the ministry. Ben continues to work with the young people of the ministry by helping lead the weekly discipleship class and by using his skills and pastoral heart to walk alongside parents in the ministry and also missionaries on site. They have future dreams too—and are praying about certification for short-term care for babies, and hope to help Hondurans realize their talents more by starting small businesses or ministries. They also plan to have frequent times of prayer, worship and Bible study in their home and with friends.



**PLEASE PRAY** - That the Lord will clearly lead and help us stay focused while abiding in Him in a world full of great needs and hurts. Please keep GiveHope2Kids staff, volunteers and all the precious children in your prayers. Please pray for protection (physically & spiritually) for our family. And, overall, pray for the nation of Honduras!



### Instant Church Directory



Our online and mobile app directory needs more photos to help us identify and know each other better. Call the church office for help with how to upload the photo of your choice to:

[www.onlinechurchdirectory.com](http://www.onlinechurchdirectory.com)

## Join the E-mail List

Stay informed of everything that's going on at Ebenezer: J.T. sends out a weekly **"Note From the Pastor"** as well as regular prayer chain emails as they come in to him. To get on the list, simply email Pastor J.T. and request to be added: [pastorjt@ercmorrison.com](mailto:pastorjt@ercmorrison.com)

## Note & Disclaimer

All *Ebenezer Happenings* article submissions need to be received by the 21st day of each month to guarantee inclusion in the next edition. We apologize for any missing or inaccurate information within this newsletter. If there are additions or corrections to be made, please call the church office at (815) 772-2472 or e-mail Sue Bond at [office@ercmorrison.com](mailto:office@ercmorrison.com)

## Giving & Attendance

Here's an update on our numbers for the month of January

Date	Attendance	Offering
January 4	120	\$2,136
January 11	112	\$3,284
January 18	126	\$1,536
January 25	120	\$3,629
	<b>Avg. 120</b>	<b>Total: \$10,585</b>

### JAN. Breakdown:

General Offering: \$10,585  
 Aftershock: \$245  
 Camp Fund: \$50  
 Tithe.ly (online giving): \$2,343  
 Mailed Offerings: \$7,350

**Total: \$ 20,664**



This newsletter is a publication of:

**Ebenezer Reformed Church**  
**309 E. Park St. | Morrison, IL 61270**  
**Phone: (815) 772-2472**

♦ **Rev. J.T. Bean, Lead Pastor**  
 pastorjt@ercmorrison.com

♦ **Sue Bond, Office Manager**  
 office@ercmorrison.com  
 Office hours: M-F 9am to 1pm

### Sunday Morning Worship:

Worship Celebration - 9:30 am  
 Fellowship Hour - 10:45 am  
 Youth Bible Study Hour - 10:45 am

*Helping people  
 find and follow Jesus*



**2026 Consistory**

**Elders:** J. T. Bean, Phil Ardapple, Barney Habben, Jon Kophamer, Keith Hamstra, Melinda Hamstra, Sandi Wilkens

**Deacons:** Jenny Patton, Randy Renkes, Darlene Schipper, Brian Tichler, Dave Weber, Gregg Wiersema

**2026 Executive Team**

J.T. Bean (Pastor)  
Sandi Wilkens (Vice President)  
Dave Weber (Deacon Chair)  
Gregg Wiersema (Treasurer)  
Melinda Hamstra (Clerk)

**Elders Meeting Minutes January 12, 2026 6pm**

**Attendance:** Jon Kophamer was absent.

**Devotions & Prayer:** Pastor JT opened the meeting at 6pm with scripture from Titus 1:6-9 followed by prayer.

**Constitutional Question:** The constitutional question was asked and answered in the negative.

**Grieving Members in need of care:** Members in need of care were discussed.

**Sacraments Update:** December 7, 2025, 119 were served communion. 105 served at church and 14 at home and nursing homes. Communion served next on first Sunday of Lent (Feb 22, 2026).

**Membership Care Groups:** Assignments were given for 2026. There are some modifications, but many of them are the same. The districts will be published in the bulletin so that members will know who their assigned elder is.

**At-Home communion visits for 2026:** A schedule for 2026 communion was distributed. Teams of 2 elders as well as Pastor JT and an elder will be on a rotating schedule and will allow all Elders and Pastor JT to visit throughout the year. Each team will arrange and schedule the visits. Liturgy to be used was shared.

**Elder Prayer Room Assignments:** Assignments were distributed for post service congregational prayer.

**Approve Minutes from December Meeting:** There was not a meeting in December so nothing to approve.

**Next meeting and Closing prayer assignments:** Next Elders meeting will be February 9, 2026. Assignments were given for closing prayer. Jon Kophamer is assigned to prayer.

**Motion to Adjourn:** M/S to adjourn after closing in prayer M/C

**Closing Prayer:** Sandi Wilkens closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Melinda Hamstra, Clerk

**Consistory Meeting Minutes January 12, 2026**

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm. Absent were Jon Kophamer, Jenny Patton and Darlene Schipper.

**Devotions & Prayer:** Pastor JT opened the meeting with devotions from 1 Timothy 3:1-13, followed by discussion and prayer.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor JT shared Consistory Guidelines and roles for Elders and Deacons. A new updated Consistory contact list was given for review and will be added to the bulletin for members to have. Prayer was given by Pastor JT.

**Where have we seen God at work at ERC?** -Pastor Craig Sipes -worship music and filling in pulpit -Christmas Concert -Christmas Eve Candlelight service -Movie Sermon series leading up to Christmas yielded a good attendance -Good year of giving

**Deacons Report:** Dave Weber stated they have discussed various projects. Assistance funds being one of them and are looking for suggestions as to where to use the funds.

**Elders Report:** (see Elders minutes)

**Finance:** Gregg Wiersema reviewed Financial report/budget of year end December 2025. **M/S to Approve Financial Report/budget MC. M/S to use the Bush House proceeds to help pay for new boilers. MC. M/S to have Gregg Wiersema's name added to the ERC account at Community State Bank and to remove Marcia Blean's name from account. MC.** Nancy and Dave Weber will need to renew their information to stay on the account with Community State Bank.

**Building/Property:** Brian Tichler has been getting several bids to have the parking lot redone and is ongoing. We are also getting bids on Security cameras for both main entrances of the church as well for the parsonage. He also stated that Ladies Aid would like new chairs for the fellowship hall, they have money they would like to use for this purchase. **M/S to purchase new chairs paid for by Ladies Aid Approx 130 chairs. MC.**

**Church Life:** Phil Ardapple reported they are still working on various activities such as Taco Trivia, Father/Son and Mother/Daughter banquets.

**Worship/Music:** Keith Hamstra reported the December services leading up the Christmas was very well attended. The Christmas concert went very well with the suggestion of having the piano moved closer to the stage so performers could be seen vs just looking at their backs. The Christmas movie sermon series was tied together nicely with the viewing of the movie the day before the church service. It was suggested to try to make the fellowship hall a little cozier for viewing the movies in the future (kids bringing blankets and pillows and maybe a couple of sofas). There was discussion about upcoming sermon series for the year by Pastor JT. Thank you to Pastor Craig Sipes for filling in when Pastor JT was not available. Arlene Dickey and Deb Vanzuiden came to the meeting for a brief update on the new organ we are looking at getting. The GX342a organ will cost \$134,035.00 in which we already have \$64,000 and a pledge from an anonymous donation of \$10,000 making our organ fund \$74,000. The rest of the money we will need to get through donations or fund raisers.

**Youth/Education:** Sandi Wilkens reported Aftershock started up January 7, 2026 as well as Heavens Express started January 11<sup>th</sup>. Camp Manitouqua representative will be coming soon to discuss this year's dates and cost for attending. It was suggested that the "deposit" be increased to \$50.00 per child so that there will be a lessor likeliness of dropout from going to camp. The Mid-High kids would like to have a praise and worship time once a month, thinking first Sunday of the month for about an hour in the afternoon. We need someone to help with this so she asked Pastor Craig and Kathi if they would be willing to do this, waiting to hear back.

**Assistance/Memorial:** Dave Weber reported we have money in the account and need suggestions as to where it could be used/needed. There is \$740.00 left from the Bob Vandermyde memorial fund, **M/S to use the \$740.00 toward the new organ. MC.**

**Sacraments:** no report at this time. Next communion will be February 22.

**O.M.E. Task Force:** no report at this time as first meeting will be January 13, 2026.

**Approve minutes:** No meeting held in December so no minutes to approve.

**Old Business:** By-laws approval. **M/S to approve updated By-laws. MC** Was noted to look at and update every year.

**New Business:** New organ proposal **M/S to purchase the GX342a organ. MC**

**Next Meeting:** Monday February 9, 2026

**Adjournment:** **M/S to Adjourn post prayer. MC**

**Closing Prayer:** Barney Habben closed in Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Melinda Hamstra, Clerk

Our new Elders and Deacons were ordained and commissioned at a special installation during morning worship on Sunday, January 11, 2026.

