



The Monthly Newsletter of  
Ebenezer Reformed Church  
of Morrison, IL

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## Dear Friends of Ebenezer,

I want to update you on a number of key concerns for our church that will be a matter of prayer for all of us a members and attenders here. The first thing is our church finances. I know nobody likes to hear the pastor beg for money. That's not what I want to do either. But the Consistory has had a growing concern for the decline in our general fund over the last 3 years. This concern must be addressed. Please pray for a growing generosity in our giving.

Secondly, there is our affiliation with the Reformed Church in America. We will need to continue to assess what is best for us in the future. Should we stay in the RCA? Or should we graciously exit the denomination and join a new one? This, too, will need to be addressed. One way that will help us to do so, is that I have been invited (and agreed) to be a delegate at the General Synod conference in June. The meetings will be held June 13-18 in Tucson, AZ. I will be going as a elder delegate for the Illinois Classis. Attending General Synod will allow me to gain a first-hand understanding of any further discussions and to have a vote on any legislation that is put forward. Please pray for wisdom and discernment.

One of the things that the elders are planning to do this summer (on Tuesday nights from July 2nd to August 6th) is hold a series of six "Care Group" gatherings with prayer as our main agenda. The two areas of prayer mentioned above will be a key focus, as well as other areas of need that come up between now and then. You will be provided more information about these gatherings in the months and weeks to come, but I am sharing this with you now because it is our desire that every Ebenezer member and regular attender make it a priority to attend their assigned Care Group gathering. And if the date of your elder's care group gathering is a conflict with your summer calendar, you can attend a different night. So stay tuned for more information about that.

For the time being, let's ride the wave our wonderful Good Friday and Easter celebrations as long as we can! There are many exciting events and worship experiences ahead of us. And there are many ways for you to get involved and serve. Enjoy the warmer weather this month, and may God bless you as you seek to grow in Christlikeness each day!

A Joy to Serve You,

*Pastor J. T. Bean*

## Ebenezer

### Reformed Church

309 E. Park St.  
Morrison, IL 61270

Phone: (815) 772-2472

Pastor J.T.'s Email:  
ercpastorJT@gmail.com

### Website:

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

**Our Mission:** Helping  
people find & follow Jesus

# Sunday Worship - April 2024



7

**Sermon: Turning Fear Into Faith**  
**Scripture:** Matthew 14:22-36  
**Guest Speaker:** Carol Kent



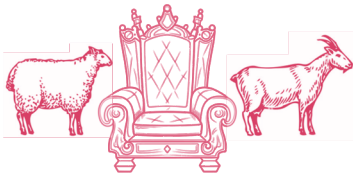
14

**Series:** The Apostles' Creed (Part 11)  
**Sermon: He Ascended into Heaven**  
**Scripture:** Acts 1:1-11  
**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean



24

**Series:** The Apostles' Creed (Part 12)  
**Sermon: Where Christ Sitteth**  
**Scripture:** Acts 2:32-39  
**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean



28

**Series:** The Apostles' Creed (Part 13)  
**Sermon: The Quick and the Dead**  
**Scripture:** Acts 10:34-43  
**Speaker:** Pastor J.T. Bean

EMMANUEL VOICES OF PRAISE  
- AN EXCITING WORSHIP CELEBRATION -

*Back to the Garden*

Friday | April 19 | 7 PM  
Saturday | April 20 | 3 PM  
Sunday | April 21 | 7 PM

202 E. Morris St., Morrison IL 61270

No Tickets Needed  
Handicap Accessible

Our sister church, Emmanuel Church does an annual Spring choral concert called "Voices of Praise". It is open to singers from all over the area. A few of our talented Ebenezer voices will be among those in the choir. There are 3 performance dates coming up April 19-21. The concert is free. You will be blessed!



# April 2024



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4 Food Bank 9:45am Worship Team 5:15pm	5	6 <b>ROOTED</b> <i>in Christ</i>
7 Worship 9:30am Youth/Ed Cmt. 10:45am	8	9 Women's Bible Study 1pm	10	11 Food Bank 9:45am Worship Team 5:15pm	12	13 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
14 Worship 9:30am Mid-High Class 10:45am	15 Elders/Deacons 6pm Consistory 6:30pm	16	17 Ladies Aid 1:30pm AfterShock Mtg. 5:30pm	18 Food Bank 9:45am O.M.E. Task Force 6pm	19	20 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
21 Worship 9:30am Mid-High Class 10:45am	22	23 Women's Bible Study 1pm	24	25 Food Bank 9:45am	26	27 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
28 Worship 9:30am Mid-High Class 10:45am	29	30	MAY 1	MAY 2	MAY 3	MAY 4

## April Birthdays

4/1-Diane Boelkins, Rodney VanZuiden 4/2-Amie Behrens 4/3-Andrew Remrey 4/4-Elaina Allen 4/5-Cooper Wiersema 4/6-Lisa Bland 4/9-Cheryl Kullerstrand, Mark Yarbrough 4/12-Michelle Taylor 4/13-Joyce Wilkins 4/15-Dash Damhoff 4/16-Lisa Wiersema 4/17-Judy Hook 4/19-Collin Bland 4/21-Jaicee Schmidt 4/22-Marguerite Clark 4/23-Mark Ardapple 4/24-Joan Zuidema 4/27-Mary Jo Tichler, Risa Weets 4/28-Loretta Temple 4/29-Nicholas Allen 4/30-Kenzie Bruckner, Madisyn Smith, Mary Jane Connelly

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

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

## Ladies Aid

Ladies Aid will meet April 18 for a special program entitled "Feed The Flock" which will be presented by Mary Lindstrom and Paula Rodrigues. This is a very inspirational program with a surprise guest. All ladies and gents are invited!

Also: Ladies, please join us for a Bible Study the first Wednesday of each month at 1:30 pm in the Noah's Ark room. Our leader is Doris Bielema.

## Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study meets the second and fourth Tuesdays each month at 1:00 p.m. in the 3rd grade room. This month's meetings will be held on April 9th and April 23rd.

## 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. (Note: We will not meet April 6th). Bring your Bible. Coffee and donuts will be served.

## Mid-High Bible Study

The Mid-High class will not meet the first Sunday of April because Pastor J.T. will be taking some vacation time. But it will resume on April 14. It is a class for middle-school and high-school age students. We meet in the Upper Room (3rd floor).

**Teen Class**

## Prayer Concerns

- Pray for those who need restored health, healing, and encouragement: Linda Hook, Ron Wiersema, Jonelle Hook, Kathy Vanderlaan, Keith Morine, Arlyn Zuidema, Velma Dean, Jenny Patton, Neva Baar, Joyce Medema, Fred Hadley, Barb Geerts, Betty Voss, Roger Weis, Joanne Barnes, Elmer Huizenga, Diane Boelkins, Jeg Weets, Joyce Wilkins and the Hugg, Perry & Baker families. Pray also for those with special needs or unspoken prayer requests, as well as our shut-ins and nursing/assisted-living residents.

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

**Elijah Bean** (Air Force)

**Gregory Bush** (Air Force)

**Brevin Pruis** (Navy)

**Luke Wilkens** (Marines)

**Tyler Haan** (Air Force)



- Pray for our missionaries: Andrew & Sophia Pitcher with Wycliffe bible translators, Roger & Sue Scheenstra in Africa, Ben & Kelita Johnson in Honduras, and Jeff & Chelsea Lampen to Germany.

- 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.



# April Meetings At-a-Glance

- Thurs April 4 - Worship Team 5:15pm
- Sun April 7 - Youth/Ed. Cmt. 10:45am
- Mon April 15 - Elders/Deacons 6pm  
Consistory 6:30pm
- Wed April 17 - Aftershock Mtg 5:30pm
- Thurs April 18 - O.M.E. Task Force 6pm

## \$\$\$ Part-time help wanted \$\$\$

for basic landscaping and odd jobs this spring and summer around the church and parsonage properties. Contact Bob Wiersema at (815) 535-7379 if you are interested.

# MEMORY VERSE OF THE MONTH

## Psalm 119:11

I have hidden Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.



## Nursery Schedule

- April 7- Angie Tichler & Allison Weaver
- April 14- Jackie & Alicen Wiersema
- April 21- Shawn & Kevin Soenksen
- April 28- Beth Milnes & Kinlee Prins

## Sunday Greeters

- April 7 - Marilyn Tichler
- April 14 - Jane Haan
- April 21 - Doris Bull
- April 28 - Michelle Hook



## Welcome Center

- April 7 - Sharon Reisenbigler
- April 14 - Ken & Glenda Jansma
- April 21 - Verne & Pat Pessman
- April 28 - Keith & Joyce Hamstra



## Fellowship Hour

- April 7 - Arlyn & Marilyn Tichler
- April 14 - Keith & Luanne Morine
- April 21 - Bob & Jan Wiersema, LaVonne D.
- April 28 - Pat & Verne Pessman, Mark A.

**Note: Pastor J.T. will be taking some vacation time out-of-town from Friday, April 5th through Saturday, April 13th. Pastor will be back in the pulpit on April 14th. If you have need of any pastoral assistance, please contact your elder.**

## ASK THE PASTOR

### What is Rastafarianism?

This question came up after someone watched the movie "One Love" which is a biographical film about the life and music of the famous reggae artist Bob Marley. Rastafarianism is both a religion and a social



movement that has its roots in Afro-Caribbean culture, particularly the island nation of Jamaica. So it is both a faith and a political movement focusing on things like: justice, ending oppression, and human rights. Rastas refer

to God as "Jah", a shortened form of the biblical Yahweh or Jehovah. With this, Rastafarians view black people as the reincarnation of the biblical Israelites, making them God's chosen people who had been enslaved and exiled to Babylon (Jamaica). For Rastas, Babylon represents a white colonial system and stands for evil. They believe Rastafarians will one day be freed from Babylon through the return to the promised land of Zion, which many believe is Ethiopia, or Africa in general. Followers of Rastafari believe the use of marijuana, known as ganja, is spiritual and that the "holy herb" stimulates a meditative state, bringing them closer to Jah. There is no one in a position of leadership in the Rastafari movement but there is a man named Haile Selassie (former Emperor of Ethiopia) whom they believe to be the Messiah. Selassie died in 1975.

For more details and a biblical response, go to:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Rastafarianism.html>



This is Sunday school for 4 year-olds through grade school. Kids will come to worship with their parents and be dismissed for S.S. after the Children's sermon.

### 😄 JUST FOR LAUGHS 😄





## Missionary Spotlight

### The Scheenstra Family

The Scheenstras, their converts, and members of their team are being persecuted and the lives of the Scheenstras have been threatened. Roger and Sue have been flown out from their village while the situation is being reassessed. They are asking for prayers for God's light to be shed into the darkness in the lives of the O people, whom they love. Pray for a shield of protection from the fiery darts of the evil one. Pray for disciples from among the O who can recruit more disciples for the Lord, Pray that God's truth, his justice, and his peace will transcend these extreme challenges. God will hear and honor your prayers. That's what he does. Praise his Holy and powerful name.

**Gary Gray is the father of Ebenezer member Melinda Hamstra. Gary is not a member but a frequent attender along with his wife Jenny (Melinda's mom). Gary would like you to pray for him as he prepares to go on a short-term missions project to Guatemala from April 23 to May 3. He will be going with a team of 17 people from various other churches. The primary focus of the trip will be ministering to people living in the remote villages near Tactic, Guatemala. They will be distributing humanitarian aid (primarily rain boots). They will also be delivering diapers and other aid collected specifically for the orphans living at Vida Children's Home. Please pray for Gary and his team!**



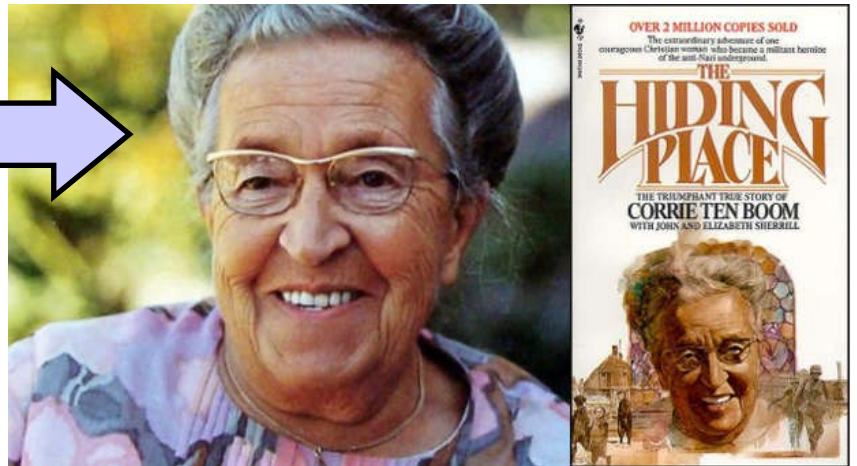




**“ROOTED”**  
**Women’s Conference**  
**SATURDAY, April 6**  
**8:00 a.m. to Noon**  
**@ Ebenezer Reformed Church**  
**Speakers: Carol Kent and**  
**Lauren Alexander**  
**Get your ticket on the “Rooted**  
**in Christ” Facebook page.**  
**Contact Domini Buikema if you**  
**have any questions.**



**Gayle Haas** will play  
 this woman →  
 (Corrie Ten Boom)  
 at this year’s Mother-  
 Daughter Banquet.



## Mother-Daughter Banquet

The Mother-Daughter (and Friend) Banquet will be held on Tuesday, May 14th at 6:00 p.m. The guest speaker will be **Gayle Haas** who will perform an extended monologue in character as the late Corrie Ten Boom who was a Dutch survivor of the Nazi concentration camps during the Holocaust. Tickets go on sale in April up until May 7. Ticket costs are: \$10 for adults/\$5 for kids 2-10/under 2-FREE! Contact Kendra Remrey in the church office to buy your ticket today!



## Giving & Attendance

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

Date	Attendance	Offering
March 3	125	\$9,374
March 10	100	\$5,665
March 17	108	\$7,864
March 24	140	\$30,029. <sup>35</sup>
March 31	TBA	TBA
	<b>Avg. 114</b>	<b>Total: \$39,188</b>

### March Breakdown:

General Fund:  
Aftershock:  
Easter Lilies:  
Father/Son Banquet:  
Iron Sharpens Iron:  
Youth Fundraiser:  
Tithe.ly (online giving):

**Total: TBA**



Keep up with current happenings, watch videos, and browse through photos and new posts.

Be sure to **“Like”** the Ebenezer Reformed Church Facebook page.

**“Share”** our posts to help spread the word about what's happening here.

Watch the Sunday morning Live-stream and post a comment to let us know who's watching and where you're watching from!

## 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: [ercpastorjt@gmail.com](mailto:ercpastorjt@gmail.com)

## Note & Disclaimer

All *Ebenezer Happenings* article submissions need to be received by the 20th 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 Kendra Remrey at [erc.kendra@gmail.com](mailto:erc.kendra@gmail.com)

This newsletter is a publication of:

### **Ebenezer Reformed Church**

309 E. Park St. | Morrison, IL 61270

Phone: (815) 772-2472

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[ercpastorjt@gmail.com](mailto:ercpastorjt@gmail.com)

◆ **Kendra Remrey, Office Manager**

[erc.kendra@gmail.com](mailto:erc.kendra@gmail.com)

Office hours: M-F 9:00 a.m.-1p.m.

### **Sunday Morning Worship:**

Worship Celebration - 9:30 a.m.

Fellowship Hour - 10:45 a.m.

Youth Bible Study Hour - 10:45 a.m.

**2024 Consistory**

**Elders:** J. T. Bean, Barney Habben, Keith Hamstra, Ken Jansma, Martha Kophamer, Jan Renkes, Teresa Stout

**Deacons:** Marcia Blean, Scott Meurs, Jenny Patton, Pat Pessman, Dave Weber, Nancy Weber

**2024 Executive Team**

J.T. Bean (Pastor)  
Ken Jansma (Vice President)  
Marcia Blean (Deacons Chair)  
Nancy Weber (Treasurer)  
Martha Kophamer (Clerk)

**March Consistory Meeting**

The monthly consistory meeting was held on March 11, 2024. Pastor J.T. Bean, Keith Hamstra, Martha Kophamer, Pat Pessman and Teresa Stout were absent.

Ken Jansma opened the meeting with a discussion of Sunday's sermon, **Suffered Under Pontius Pilate**. He also led prayer following the roof replacement presentation.

A presentation on roof replacement was given by Jesús and Carlos from Avila's Home Improvement and Construction. The presentation included many pictures of the roof from the inside and outside. There were also pictures of interior damage caused by leaks. The presenters explained the process for making an insurance claim to cover the replacement. No action was taken.

The question, "Where have you seen God at work in our church?", was asked. Replies: 85 reservations for the Father/Son Banquet and a great program; youth involvement in Sunday services increasing; the possibility of a youth band; Christian Reformed members expressing how comfortable they are feeling at ERC.

The Deacons report was given by Marcia Blean. They continue to tweak the procedure for collecting the offering.

The March 2024 Elders Meeting Minutes were read by Jan Renkes.

The Financial Report was given by Nancy Weber. The balance in the general fund was up from the previous month. Total assets as of February 29, 2024 are \$393,310.09.

There was no report from Church Life.

The Worship/Music Report was given by Scott Meurs. We continue to work on ways to include contemporary music. The choir will sing on Palm Sunday. Plans continue to be made for the Good Friday Service. Carol Kent will present the message on April 7. Jovie Patton has joined the sound system team. There is the possibility of a youth band being put together.

The Youth/Education Report was given by Jan Renkes. The After Shock Swimming Party will take place on March 20. The ERC office has been organizing sign ups for summer camp.

The Assistance/Memorial Report was given by Dave Weber. The balance of the assistance fund is currently \$2387.



**There are envelopes on the table by the sliding doors if anyone, member or not would like to receive a receipt for year end. They also can be used for designated offerings such as Easter. Be sure to put your name on it for proper recording. If you have any questions feel free to contact the office or Nancy Weber at 815-535-2256.**

## Consistory Meeting Minutes Continued

A gift of \$500 was given to Jeg Weets last month with the congregation donating another \$790.

Money from the memorial fund is being used on bathroom updates.

A memorial donation of \$935 was received from the Rick Boelkins Memorial. It was requested it be put in the youth fund.

The Endowment Report was given by Ken Jansma.

The balance of the endowment fund was \$712,738.29 as of the end of January 2024.

M/S to add Sandi Wilkens to the Endowment Committee to serve a 3 year term. M/C

She is replacing Bob Wiersema whose term expired.

The Sacraments Report was given by Barney Habben.

Communion was served to 114 people during the service on February 18. Another 11 people took communion at Rest-have. The elders and Pastor J.T. served communion to shut ins the following week.

There was no O.M.E. Report given.

M/S to approve February 2024 Consistory Meeting Minutes. M/C

New Business:

The church is looking into getting a new phone system and possibly a new internet provider.

M/S for the Easter offering to go to Samaritan's Purse. M/C

M/S to change the April Consistory Meeting from Monday, April 8th to Monday, April 15th. M/C

M/S to adjourn. M/C. Closing prayer was given by Ken Jansma.

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## March Elders Meeting Minutes

Devotion and Prayer: Ken Jansma opened the meeting at 6:00 with a discussion elaborating on Sunday's sermon, **Suffered Under Pontius Pilate**.

Attendance: Members not in attendance were; Keith Hamstra, Martha Kophamer, Teresa Stout, and Pastor J.T. Bean.

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

Grieving Members in need of care: Continue to keep those in your prayers who have family members that are ill.

Care Districts: The care district fellowship dinners were discussed. There were several questions brought up including how the dinners will be funded.

Communion: On February 18 Ebenezer served communion to 114 people during the morning worship service. At Resthave 11 people received communion while watching the service on Facebook. A complete count of those served by elders the following week was not available.

The Spring Classis Meeting on March 19 will now be in Oregon, IL. Pastor J.T. and Ken Jansma will be attending.

Elders were reminded to check their schedules for the Sunday morning prayer room.

Approve Minutes from February meeting: M/S/MC

Motion to Adjourn following prayer: M/S/MC. Closing Prayer: Jan Renkes