



The Monthly Newsletter of
Ebenezer Reformed Church
of Morrison, IL

Inside this Issue:

- ◆ The Pastor's Note
- ◆ Sunday Worship
- ◆ Lenten Luncheons
- ◆ Calendar & Birthdays
- ◆ Ladies Aid & Bible Studies
- ◆ Prayer Concerns
- ◆ Meetings-at-a-Glance
- ◆ Monthly Memory Verse
- ◆ Service Team Schedules
- ◆ Youth and Sunday School
- ◆ Aftershock Pool Party
- ◆ Missionary Spotlight
- ◆ Rooted Women's Conference
- ◆ Father-Son Banquet
- ◆ Attendance & Giving
- ◆ Consistory Reports

Ebenezer

Reformed Church

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Morrison, IL 61270

Phone: (815) 772-2472

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Our Mission: Helping
people find & follow Jesus

Dear Friends of Ebenezer,

Because of the NCAA basketball tournament, March is the month that is known for its "madness"! This year, because of the way the Christian calendar lines up, Easter is coming early. That should create some madness on our church calendar this month...it's going to get pretty busy around here. But I'd love for you to be a part of as much of the madness as you possibly can. It is during Lent in the weeks leading up to Resurrection Sunday that we are all challenged to consecrate our hearts and increase our faithfulness. That happens as we spend more time in the Word, and in prayer. And for those of you who have chosen to give up something for Lent, you are practicing the spiritual discipline of self-sacrifice. These are all good things that strengthen our faith as individuals and as a corporate church body.

We will continue our study of the Apostles' Creed on Sunday mornings. I trust that you are learning and growing in your understanding of this most significant statement of our Christian beliefs. And I will continue my weekly email commentary on the articles of faith contained in the Belgic Confession. I encourage you to attend Sunday mornings, and to read your emails. I put a lot of effort into creating content to fill your mind with spiritual insight and nourishment. I enjoy doing that for you as it is a great benefit to me personally to engage in such study.

Lastly, I urge you to make every effort to engage in the Lenten luncheons on Wednesdays. There will also be very powerful worship services on Maundy Thursday (7pm at Emmanuel Church) and here at Ebenezer on Good Friday (6pm) and Easter Sunday (9:30am). All of these events are designed to gather the body of Christ in meaningful fellowship and worship of God our Father, Christ our Savior, and the Holy Spirit our Counselor and Comforter.

May God bless you this Lenten season, and may you be a blessing to others as we celebrate the joy of Easter! A joy to serve you...

Pastor J. T. Bean

Sunday Worship - March 2024



3

Series: The Apostles' Creed (Part 6)
Sermon: **Born of the Virgin Mary**
Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



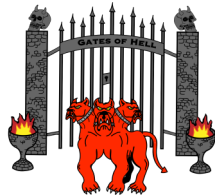
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Series: The Apostles' Creed (Part 7)
Sermon: **Suffered Under Pontius Pilate**
Scripture: Matthew 27:15-26
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



17

Series: The Apostles' Creed (Part 8)
Sermon: **Crucified, Dead and Buried**
Scripture: Mark 15:21-47
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



24

Series: The Apostles' Creed (Part 9)
Sermon: **He Descended Into Hell**
Scripture: Acts 2:22-32
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



31

Series: The Apostles' Creed (Part 10)
Sermon: **Risen on the Third Day**
Scripture: John 20:1-10
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



Lenten Luncheons

Wednesdays at NOON
 Morrison Ministers' Council
 "The Body of Christ"

In this Lenten season we remember all that Jesus did for us. We especially remember the suffering that He went through. As we look at the body of Christ, we also recognize that we as His followers are the body of Christ. Come join us on Wednesdays during Lent, at Noon for a brief Lenten message and a free simple meal.



Wednesday, March 6

First Presbyterian Church

100 E. Lincolnway

The Hands of Christ - Pastor Mike Selburg

Wednesday, March 13

Ebenezer Reformed Church

309 E. Park St.

The Feet of Christ - Pastor J.T. Bean

Wednesday, March 20

Emmanuel Church

202 E. Morris St.

The Mouth of Christ - Pastor Luke Schouten



March 2024



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Worship Every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. ↓					1	2 IRON SHARPENS IRON 8am-4pm
3 Youth/Ed Cmt. 10:45am	4 Church Life Cmt. Mtg. 10am	5 ★ Father-Son ★ Banquet 6pm Presentation in sanctuary at 7pm (all are welcome)	6 Lenten Lunch 12 Noon at 1 st Prez AfterShock 5:30-7pm	7 Worship Team Mtg 5:15pm	8	9 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
10 Daylight Savings Time 	11 Elders/Deacons 6pm Consistory 6:30pm	12 Women's Bible Study 1pm	13 Lenten Lunch 12 Noon at ERC AfterShock 5:30-7pm	14 O.M.E. Task Force 6pm	15	16 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
17 St. Patrick's Day 	18	19 First Day of Spring 	20 Lenten Lunch 12 Noon at Emmanuel Ladies Aid 1:30pm	21	22	23 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
24 Palm Sunday 	25	26 Women's Bible Study 1pm	27	28 Maundy Thursday Worship @ Emmanuel Church 7pm	29 Good Friday Worship @ Ebenezer Church 6pm	30 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
31 Easter Sunday 	APR 1	APR 2	APR 3	APR 4	APR 5	APR 6

March Birthdays

3/5– Em Schroeder, Marjorie Gorzny 3/7–Alyssa Patten 3/8–Arlyn Zuidema, Pat Zuidema
 3/9–Linda Heiden 3/10–Jefferson Weaver, Phil Tichler 3/12–Randi Heusinkveld
 3/15–Cole Bland, Darlene Schipper 3/20–Randy Stuart 3/24–Dailey Damhoff, Vernon Tichler
 3/26–Dave Hook 3/27–Barb Domdey, Patrick Schaefer 3/29–Stacy Worth, Ted Bush

* 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 resumes March 20 at 1:30 p.m. Pastor J.T. will deliver a message and the Officers will serve refreshments. Please join us for the first meeting of the new year!

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 March 12th and March 26th.

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. We're working our way chapter by chapter through the book of Exodus. Bring your Bible. Coffee and donuts will be served.

Mid-High Bible Study

Attention: All youth middle & high school age! Come to the Upper Room (3rd floor) after worship (around 10:45 a.m.) on Sunday mornings for an hour of Bible and book study with Pastor J.T. Bean and his wife Lo. And we always end the hour with Bible trivia where you get to try to stump the pastor!



Teen Class

Prayer Concerns

- Pray for those who need restored health, healing, and encouragement: Linda Hook, Ron Wiersema, Jonelle Hook, Kathy Vanderlaan, Pam Vos, 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.

March Meetings At-a-Glance

Sun Feb 3 - Youth/Ed. Cmt. 9:30 am

Mon Feb 4 - Church Life Cmt. 10 am

Thurs Feb 7 - Worship Team 5:15 pm

Mon Feb 11 - Elders/Deacons 6 pm

Consistory 6:30 pm

Thurs Feb 14 - 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

ROMANS 10:9

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.



Nursery Schedule

March 3- Beth Milnes & Kinlee Prins

March 10- Angie Tichler & Allison Weaver

March 17- Jackie & Alicen Wiersema

March 24- Shawn & Kevin Soenksen

March 31- Beth Milnes & Kinlee Prins

Sunday Greeters

March 3- Michelle Hook

March 10- Doris Bull

March 17- Harvey Zuidema

March 24- Karen Landheer

March 31- Marcia Blean



Welcome Center

March 3- Ken & Glenda Jansma

March 10- Dave & Darlene Schipper

March 17- Nick & Melinda Hamstra

March 24- Jon & Martha Kophamer

March 31- Jim & Heather Coyle



Fellowship Hour

March 3- Jim & Heather Coyle

March 10- Ken & Glenda Jansma

March 17- Jane Haan & Maisie Renkes

March 24- Jack & Susan Bland

March 31- Easter Sunday (holiday)

Fellowship Hour will not be held on Easter Sunday. Everyone is encouraged to spend time celebrating on your own with friends and family.



Wednesdays 5:30-7pm
For Kids age Pre-K to Grade 8
Come enjoy great food, fun times and Bible instruction.

Two more weeks left for AfterShock!

March 6

Pulled pork or Chicken Patties
Mac & Cheese, French Fries
Fresh Fruit, Cupcakes

March 13

Soup Night, Cheese & Crackers
Fruit Pizza

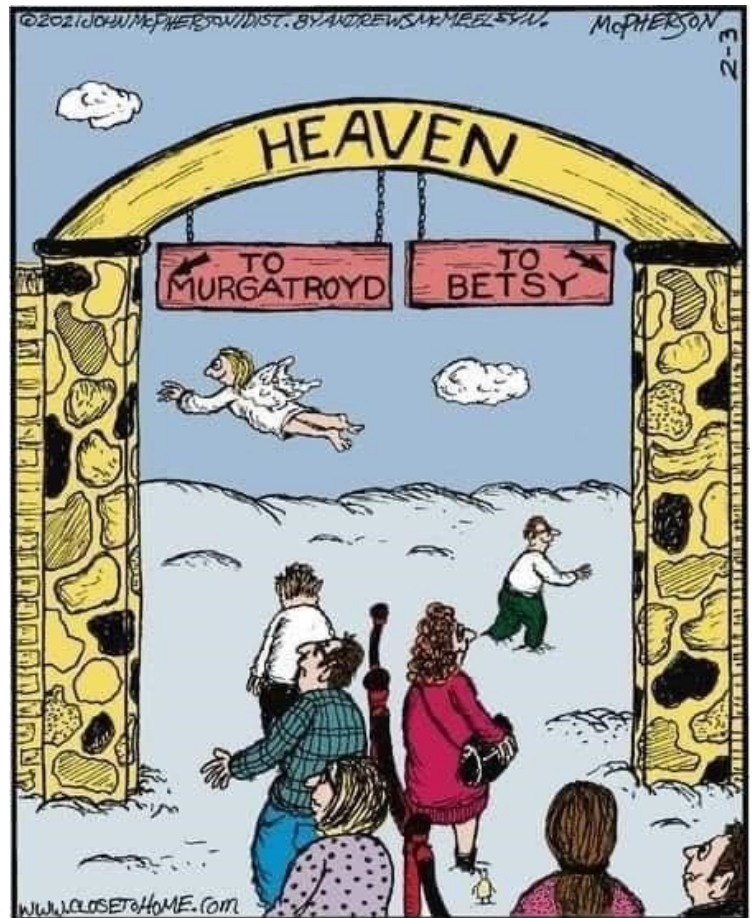
*Menu is subject to change. Veggies & dip, fresh fruit, and PB&J are offered each week.

Aftershock Pool Party
March 20th - 5:30-7pm
at Morrison High School



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 😄





Ask the Pastor: What is the difference between childish and childlike faith?

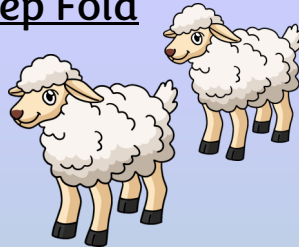
Good question. There is a big difference. Keep in mind, Jesus said: **“Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”** (Matt.18:3). The best way I can think of to explain the difference is to give you two examples.

- First, this is what “child-ish” faith looks like: Stubbornly sticking to your interpretation of Scripture and not being open to wisdom and teaching (petulant pouting). On the other hand, “child-like” faith is: Asking a million questions even though you know you'll never understand all of it. (Why, daddy? How, daddy?)
- For the second set of examples, “child-ish” faith is: Demanding gifts all the time because we like getting stuff from God (like a spoiled child). While “child-like” faith is: recognizing the amazing things He gives us and being thankful because we are in awe of Him. (Look what my daddy got me!)

A POEM FROM PAT PESSMAN

God's Sheep Fold

The Lord is MY Shepherd.
He supplies MY every need.
King David penned this Psalm
To ALL who believe.



So, why should I doubt?
Or, dwell on fear or worry?
When the Good Shepherd is carefully watching me
I've no need to be in a hurry.

I can rest and relax in my Shepherd's arms,
Safe and secure from danger and harm.
Tho' storms of life rage, giving cause for alarm,
All's well in my sheepfold on the Good Shepherd's farm!

For it's there Jesus cares and tenderly feeds His sheep.
But I must listen to His voice and carefully give heed
To the loving words and promises He gives to ME!
YES! I will stay in the sheepfold, because I BELIEVE!

— PSALM —

23



BIBLE JOKES: FUNNY, OR NOT FUNNY?

Do you need to build a boat? Because I Noah guy...he's an “ark-itect” Funny Not Funny

Did you know Jesus is divine? And we are da-branches? Not funny? I'll leaf it alone. I really went out on a limb with that joke. Funny Not Funny

Q: What kind of pork did people eat in the Old Testament?
A: Abra-ham Funny Not Funny

Q: Do you know how to settle church disputes?
A: With canons. Funny Not Funny

Nebuchadnezzar's first dream was pretty confusing. But his second dream really “stumped” him. (see Dan. 2 & Dan. 4)

Q: How did Delilah get into Samson's house?
A: She picked his locks. Funny Not Funny

Q: Did Eve ever have a date with Adam. A: No, she had an apple. Funny Not Funny

Believing only 12.5% of the Bible makes you an eighth-theist.

Q: Who was the most business-savvy woman in the Bible?
A: Pharaoh's daughter, she went to the bank of the Nile and pulled out a little prophet. Funny Not Funny



Missionary Spotlight

The Pitcher Family



Background Info: Andrew grew up in Morrison and Sophia in Chicago. They met at the Illinois Math and Science Academy in Aurora. After marriage, they moved to Minnesota in 1998 and joined Wycliffe Bible Translators in 2010 and served in different capacities over the years in France, Senegal, and South Africa. They have been married for 26 years and have three daughters. Jasmine is 23 and recently married and lives near Baltimore and works as a software developer. Isabel is 20 and a junior at Northwestern University, majoring in engineering. Violet is 15 and a sophomore in high school. From 2016 to 2021 they were based in South Africa, but Covid forced them to do their work via Zoom. So, they decided to return to the US until Violet finishes high school. They are currently serving Bible translation teams in Southern Africa on Zoom via remote assignment.

Update: They will travel to Cape Town, South Africa on March 14th and will help facilitate a workshop and training event for Deaf Christians from all over Southern Africa who are translating the Bible into their native sign languages. This event will go through April 1st.

Prayer Point: Please pray for the safe travel and for wise counsel to be given and received.

Ministry Update: They are in need of more prayer and financial partners and an increase in giving toward their ministry. They are currently receiving 78% of their Wycliffe-determined budget. They have not been able to give significant time to partnership development since launching their ministry in 2010.

Prayer Point: Please pray that the Lord would help connect them to church and individuals who want to join them in His work and get them to 100% in order for them to devote all of their time to ministry.

Contact Info: You can email or snail-mail the Pitchers using the addresses provided below. You can inquire about being put on their email list or about providing financial support: Email: mizmorim@gmail.com
Mailing Address: 594 Selby Ave. #428 / St. Paul MN 55102-3776



Coming Soon: "ROOTED"
Women's Conference

SATURDAY, April 6

8:00 a.m. to Noon

@ Ebenezer Reformed Church

**Speakers: Carol Kent and
Lauren Alexander**

**Ticket sales are available
this month!**

**Contact Domini Buikema if
you have any questions.**

Father-Son Banquet



Tuesday, March 5

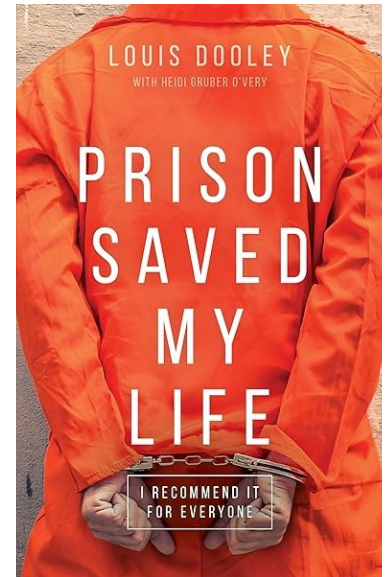
6-8 p.m.

Join us Tuesday, March 5th for the 82nd-Annual Father Son Banquet beginning at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Fulton Meat Market will be catering.

On the menu is: Roast beef, roast pork, mashed potatoes & gravy, corn, green beans, tossed salad, coleslaw, rolls and pies for dessert. Tickets are available from Church Life committee members or in the church office. The prices are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 2-10, under 2 are free. **Ticket sales deadline is March 1st.** Volunteers are needed for kitchen help, pie donations & cleanup. Sign up sheets are posted in the lobby if you are able to help.

Our guest speaker is **Mr. Louis Dooley**. As a young man Louis found himself imprisoned with a life sentence for theft and attempted murder. Through a miraculous turn of events, Louis received Jesus Christ in prison and recognized he had new life in Christ. Today, Louis is a free man providing pastoral counsel to current inmates in hopes of the Gospel setting them free.

Ladies are invited to join the men after their dinner for the program to hear Louis Dooley's testimony: **Program in Sanctuary - 7:00 p.m.**



Mother-Daughter Banquet Coming in May!

It's never too soon to prepare you for the other annual 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 will go on sale sometime in April.

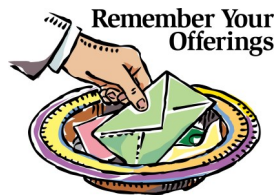
Giving & Attendance

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

Date	Attendance	Offering
February 4	137	\$3,726
February 11	106	\$2,375
February 18	115	\$15,600
February 25	101	\$17,487
	Avg. 114	Total: \$39,188

February Breakdown:

General Fund: \$36,672
 Aftershock: \$711
 Souper Bowl: \$80
 Rick Boelkins Memorial: \$935
 Jeg Weets Collection: \$790
 Tithe.ly (online giving): 1,302.²²



Total: \$40,490.²²



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

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

This newsletter is a publication of:

Ebenezer Reformed Church

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♦ **Rev. J.T. Bean, Lead Pastor**

ercpastorjt@gmail.com

♦ **Kendra Remrey, Office Manager**

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)

February Consistory Meeting

The monthly consistory meeting was held on February 12, 2024. Martha Kophamer and Pat Pessman were absent.

Dave Weber read scripture from Philippians 2:1-5 and Pastor J.T. Bean followed the discussion with prayer.

The February memory verse, Hebrews 11:6, was recited by Consistory members.

The question, "Where have you seen God at work in our church?", was asked. Replies: Worshipers from Christian Reformed attending and getting involved; sermon on creation; Taco and Trivia Night well attended- good food; the work of the Church Life Committee; family in parsonage #2 attending church events.

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

The Deacons Report was given by Marcia Blean:
They are changing the procedure for collecting the offering
They intend to put together a schedule for collecting and counting.
They voted to make a \$500 donation from the assistance fund to Jeg Weets.

The Financial Report was given by Nancy Weber:
Total assets as of January 31, 2024 are \$381,396.96.
A deposit of \$2200 for first month/deposit on parsonage #2 was noted.
An increase in the monthly expenditure for music staff was explained.
M/S to approve the Financial Report. M/C

The Church Life Report was given by Pastor J.T.
The Taco and Trivia Night was attended by 60 people.
A 2024 schedule for fellowship volunteers has been put together and is almost full.
There were 11 different soups and 65 attendees at the Souper Bowl.
The ticket cost for the March 5 Father/Son Banquet is less than the meal cost so the price of tickets may need to be raised next year.

The Worship/Music Report was given by Scott Meurs:
Jenny Patton is getting kids to participate in the February 18 service.
The choir will sing on Palm Sunday.
There will be a Good Friday Service at ERC.
Carol Kent, Rooted In Christ speaker, will give the message on April 7 as Pastor J.T. will be on vacation.
The organ will be tuned soon.

The Youth and Education Report was given by Jan Renkes:
Arrangements are being made for the After Shock Pool Party on March 20.
The committee decided not to host an Easter Egg Hunt, because there are too many others.
Preparations are being made to send kids to Camp Manitoqua the week of July 8.
M/S to approve using the Dixon Bus Company to transport the campers at a cost of \$1,800. M/C

The Assistance/Memorial Report was given by Dave Weber:
The balance in the Memorial Fund is the same as last month.
It was mentioned that the Eloise Bush Memorial Gift may be used for the top floor classrooms.
A gift of \$500 from the Assistance Fund will be given to Jeg Weets.

Sacraments Report was given by Barney Habben.
Communion will be served February 18.

The Property/Insurance Report was given by Marcia Blean.
Ron Williams will be renovating the bathrooms near the Welcome Center.
Marcia is meeting with Jerry House about flooring.
Bob Wiersema's report was read which included roof repairs in the entryway.

The O.M.E. report was given by Teresa Stout.
The committee is glad the congregation is being made aware of our missionaries.
The speaker for the Father/Son Banquet will have copies of his book available.
The committee continues to work on the Mother/Daughter Banquet in May.
They have the informational brochures and are waiting on the holders.

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

Old Business:

Second floor conference room renovation ideas with a missionary theme were presented.

Pastor J.T. shared his January pastoral visits.

More detail for the Elder Care Group Dinners was given. These will be put on the church calendar for summer 2024. There will be a focus on fellowship and prayer.

Pastor J.T. shared that his manuscript, "Seven Things the Lord Hates", has been approved and is in the editing stage.

Leadership training for Consistory members was connected to the Travis Kelce/Coach Reid moment in the Super Bowl, and focused on tolerance and forgiveness.

The next Consistory Meeting will be March 11.

M/S to adjourn. M/C

Closing prayer was given by Marcia Blean.

February Elders Meeting Minutes

Devotion and Prayer: Pastor J.T. opened the meeting at 6:00 with scripture from Philippians 2:1-5 and prayer.

Attendance: All were present except Martha Kophamer (excused).

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

Grieving Members in need of care: We need to keep grieving members Diane Boelkins and Dave Ottens in our prayers. Several of our members have medical needs. Those mentioned were: Linda Hook, Jeg Weets, Pam Vos. Pray for those members and their families.

Membership: Pastor J.T. is going to reach out to Jim and Heather Coyle about attending next month's elder meeting to discuss transfer of membership to ERC. He will also see if Jimmy and Hannah Daniel will attend to discuss baptism and eventual membership.

Care Districts: Care district fellowship dinners were discussed. These will be put on the church calendar in the summer months. The importance of including possible members was discussed.

Communion: Communion will be served on Sunday, February 18. Elders and Pastor J.T. will distribute the elements to the nursing homes and shut-ins the following week.

The Spring Classis Meeting is March 19 in Raritan, IL. Next month the ERC representation will be determined.

Approve Minutes from January meeting: motion / second / motion carried

Motion to Adjourn following prayer: motion / second / motion carried

Closing Prayer: Jan Renkes