



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,

God has a call on each one of our lives. Jesus calls us saying, "Follow me." And if we follow him, he promises to make us into something. Do you know what it is? He promises to make us "fishers of men." In other words, he will turn us into evangelists! Now, that's a job that intimidates most Christians. "I'm no Billy Graham," we protest. How can Jesus expect me to share my faith and "fish" for people?

Honestly, I don't think the disciples in the Bible had a clue what Jesus meant when he said he'd make them fishers of men. But, they followed him anyway. Do you know what the amazing thing is? By the end of the New Testament, Peter, Andrew, James and John had become just that. They had learned to fish for men. They had become men who took the message that Jesus preached and they began to share it in their own spheres of influence—which were all very different. Through their own personalities—which were very unique, God used these men (and women as well) to relay the message of the Gospel to a new generation of people.

This generation understood it wasn't enough just to follow but to follow meant you had to fish. Those followers shared it with other people, who handed off to even more people, who shared it with another group, who shared it with another and another. Now, here we are half way around the world, over 2,000 years later celebrating, and living for, and worshipping a Jewish carpenter—not because people followed Jesus but because a group of people understood that to follow is to fish. Followers fish. Jesus accomplished in their lives exactly what he intended although they probably had no clue what he meant when he said, "I'm going to make you something you aren't. I'm going to make you fishers of men."

A tax collector became a fisher of men. Some prostitutes became fishers of men. A woman by a well who had been married five times became a fisher of men. A man who was filled with demons, after Jesus cast out the demons, he went back to his home town and became a fisher of men. All throughout the New Testament we find that there is a correlation between being a follower of Jesus and being a fisher of men.

You and I are called to the same thing today as disciples of Christ. We are called to become fishers of men. It doesn't matter how old you are, what race or gender, how rich or poor you are—if you're a follower, you're supposed to fish. Keep that in mind whenever you see our mission statement: "Helping people find & follow Jesus"!

A Joy to Serve You, *Pastor J. T. Bean*

Sunday Worship - September 2024



1

Series: Galatians
Sermon: "Hagar and Sarah"
Scripture: Galatians 4:21-31
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



8

Series: Galatians
Sermon: "Freedom in Christ"
Scripture: Galatians 5:1-12
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



15

Series: Galatians
Sermon: "Life By the Spirit"
Scripture: Galatians 5:13-26
Speaker: Pastor J. T. Bean



22

Series: Galatians
Sermon: "Doing Good to All"
Scripture: Galatians 6:1-10
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



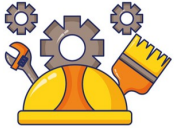
29

Series: Galatians
Sermon: "Boasting in the Cross"
Scripture: Galatians 6:11-18
Speaker: Pastor J.T. Bean



Kicks off on Sunday, September 8th!
(with mini carnival outside after church)

Heaven's Express is our Sunday School program for kids ages K-5. Kids are invited to come with parents to the worship service and are released following the children's sermon to attend Heaven's Express for the remainder of the service downstairs in the Sunday School room. Heaven's Express will be taught by a rotation of gifted adult educators: Jan Renkes, Ann Brackemyer, and Jennie Gowan. The classroom time includes bible lessons, crafts, music, etc. Bring your kids and grandkids to church! We love our young people at Ebenezer!



September 2024



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Worship 9:30 a.m. Mid-High Bible Study 10:45 a.m.	2 Labor Day Office Closed	3 Exec Team 9am Church Life Cmt 10:30am	4 Women's Bible Study 1:30pm AfterShock Kick-off Night! 5:30-7pm	5 Worship Team Mtg 5:15pm	6	7 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
8 Worship 9:30 a.m. Heaven's Express Mid-High Bible Study 10:45 a.m.	9 Elders/Deacons 6pm Consistory 6:30pm	10	11 AfterShock 5:30-7pm	12 O.M.E. Task Force 6pm	13	14 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
15 Worship 9:30 a.m. Heaven's Express Mid-High Bible Study 10:45 a.m.	16	17	18 Ladies' Aid 1:30pm AfterShock 5:30-7pm	19	20	21 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
22 Worship 9:30 a.m. Heaven's Express Mid-High Bible Study 10:45 a.m.	23	24	25 Staff Mtg. 10am AfterShock 5:30-7pm	26	27	28 Men's Bible Study 7:30am
29 Worship 9:30 a.m. Heaven's Express Mid-High Bible Study 10:45 a.m.	30	OCT 1	OCT 2	OCT 3	OCT 4	OCT 5

September Birthdays

9/1 Lyle Upton	9/12 Michelle Hook	9/23 Dale Bull
9/6 Sheri Tichler	9/14 Arlyn Tichler	9/23 Preston Bush
9/6 Tim Bush	9/14 Deanie Damhoff	9/26 Jackie Damhoff
9/7 Nick Hamstra	9/14 Jeff Weets	9/26 Maisie Renkes
9/8 Jason Buidema	9/14 Ron Williams	9/28 Bob Vandermyde
9/8 Shawn Soenksen	9/15 Velma Dean	9/28 Jeremy Bush
9/9 Jan Wiersema	9/19 Barney Habben	9/28 Karen Landheer
9/9 Jane Brooks	9/19 Emily Yarbrough	9/28 Matthew Wiersema
9/10 Molly Brackemyer	9/20 Deb Szabo	9/29 Tonia Weaver
9/12 Dave Weber	9/20 Teresa Stout	9/30 Tim Stout

➔ 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 September 18th at 1:30 pm. A delightful program will be presented by Michelle Renkes. All ladies are invited to come and bring a friend. Jane Haan is in charge of refreshments. See you there!!

Women's Bible Study

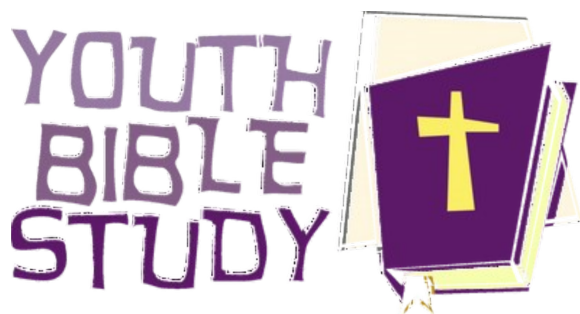
Please join us for a Bible Study the first Wednesday of each month at 1:30 pm in the Noah's Ark room. Our leader is Doris Bielema.

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 New Testament Gospel of Luke.

Mid-High Bible Study

Our weekly class for middle-school and high-school age students. We meet in the Upper Room (3rd floor) for a time to talk, study the Bible and try to "stump the pastor" with Bible trivia questions.



Prayer Concerns

- Pray for those who need restored health, healing, and encouragement: Ruth Rosenow, 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, 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, and Angel Lopez in Mexico.

- 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.

September Meetings At-a-Glance

Tues. Sep. 3 - Exec Team Mtg. 9am
 Thu. Sep. 5 - Worship Team 5:15pm
 Mon. Sep. 9 - Elder/Deacons 6pm
 Mon. Sep. 9 - Consistory Mtg. 6:30pm
 Thu. Sep. 12 - O.M.E. Task Force 6pm
 Wed. Sep. 18 - Ladies Aid 1:30pm



Nursery Schedule

Sept. 1 - Jackie Wiersema & Alicen
 Sept. 8 - Shawn & Kevin Soenksen
 Sept. 15 - Beth Milnes & Kinlee Prins
 Sept. 22 - Angie Tichler & Allison Weaver
 Sept. 29 - Jackie Wiersema & Alicen

Sunday Greeters

September 1 - Pat Pessman
 September 8 - Jane Haan
 September 15 - Harvey Zuidema
 September 22 - Doris Bull
 September 29 - Marcia Blean



Welcome Center



September 1 - Keith & Joyce Hamstra
 September 8 - Verne & Pat Pessman
 September 15 - Nick & Melinda Hamstra
 September 22 - Ken & Glenda Jansma
 September 29 - Dave & Arlene Schipper

Fellowship Hour

September 1 - Dave, Darlene, Barb
 September 8 - Ken & Glenda Jansma
 September 15 - Verne, Pat, Mark
 September 22 - Jack & Susan Bland
 September 29 - Jane Haan

* Please call the Church Office if you are willing to volunteer for any of these service teams.

Memory Verse of the Month

Galatians 6:7-8

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”

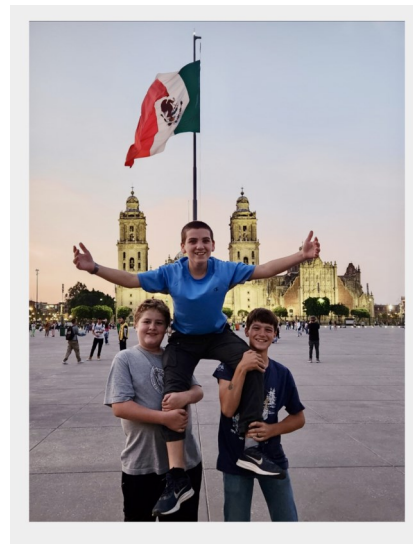


Missionary Spotlight

Since 2023 we have been supporting Ben and Kelita Johnson. The Johnsons left Morrison last July, along with children Zander, Selah, Haven and Thaddeus. They are celebrating their one year anniversary of serving with the mission organization, GiveHope2Kids which provides housing and care to orphaned and abandoned children in Honduras.

In July, Zander went on a mission trip to Mexico City. He joined with members from his former church in Morrison, Kingdom Life, and included some of his best friends from the church. Zander was able to see them for the first time in a year.

From Zander: "I am glad to say I had a wonderful time. I was able to play drums during devotions every day and also visit two different churches and play games with the kids while their parents received medical attention. I was able to use my knowledge of Spanish to assist the group with translating. No one knew Spanish except me. I'm happy to report that 325 people gave their lives to Jesus during this time! It was so cool to go on this trip because I could talk to the locals and also to see my friends from the U.S. I enjoyed getting to do ministry with them in Mexico City with Operation Serve International, and it was great to be with my Illinois youth group. I would love to go again some day. And thank you for helping my family serve in Honduras. I understand better why we are missionaries here and how learning Spanish really gave me an advantage."



In a recent message received last week from Kelita, she shared that the family is experiencing the wonderful privilege of caring for a severely malnourished seven-month-old baby boy (see photo above). As a result, their world has been slightly turned upside down but they are all enjoying every moment spent with this small child. Keep supporting the Johnsons with your prayers and gifts!

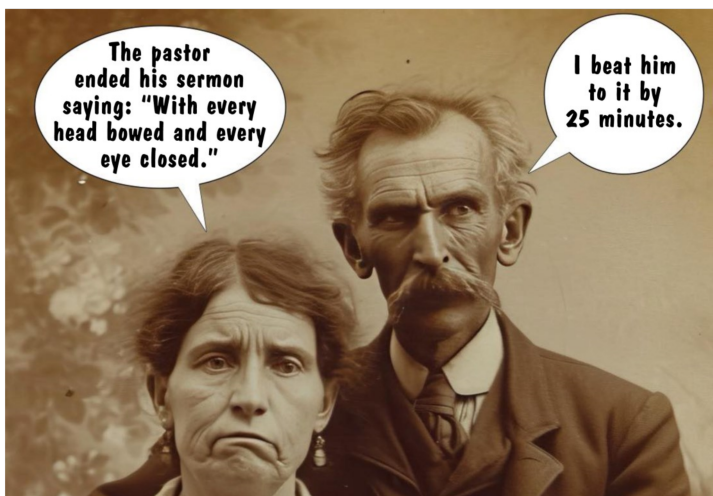


Thank you to our generous donors of school supplies:

Paper towels - 14 rolls
 Kleenex - 48 boxes
 Food/Snacks - 12 packages
 Clorox wipes - 21 containers
 Expo markers - 16 packages
 Cardstock - 4 packages
 Cash donations - \$654

The schools will appreciate your support very much!

😄 JUST FOR LAUGHS 😄



AFTER SHOCK

September Lessons:

4 - God Created the World
 11 - Sin Entered the World
 18 - The First Family
 25 - The Great Flood

September Menu:

4 - Hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, chips, fresh fruit, ice cream
 11 - Walking tacos, nachos, fresh fruit, brownies
 18 - Spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, green beans, fresh fruit, cookies
 25 - Chicken patty sandwich, French fries, corn, fresh fruit, cupcakes

** We are in need of desserts as listed above. PLEASE, if you can donate, contact Courtney Bruckner (or call the church office).*

It's not our job to convince people.
 It's not our job to convict people.
 It's not our job to convert people.
 It's not our job to save people.

It's our job to TELL people!

The convincing, convicting, converting, and saving is the work of the Holy Spirit!

Giving & Attendance

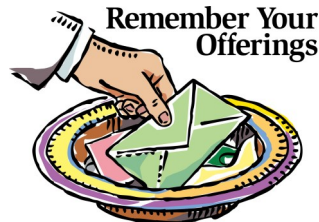
Here's an update on our numbers
for the month of August:

Date	Attendance	Offering
August 4	120	\$8,675
August 11	112	\$5,066
August 18	325 @ Emmanuel	\$1,755
August 25	110	\$4,050
	Avg. 114	Total: \$19,546

August Breakdown:

General Fund: \$19,546
Assistance: \$50
Tithe.ly (online giving): \$1,937.²²

Total: \$22,187.²²



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

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

Find us on
Facebook



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!

This newsletter is a publication of:

Ebenezer Reformed Church

309 E. Park St. | Morrison, IL 61270
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♦ **Rev. J.T. Bean, Lead Pastor**
pastorJT@ercmorrison.com

♦ **Sue Bond, Office Manager**
office@ercmorrison.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.

*Helping people
find and follow Jesus*

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)

August Consistory Minutes

August 12, 2024

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:31pm. Absent was Marcia Blean and Jenny Patton.

Devotions and Prayer: Pastor JT opened the meeting with devotions Romans 12:1-2 followed by discussion and prayer.

Where have we seen God at work at ERC? Care group meetings were well attended. 19 kids went to church camp through ERC. Their testimonies were inspiring. Emphasis and prayers for our missionaries have been heartwarming. The 30+ kids that attended the Water Extravaganza had fun. Especially by soaking Pastor JT!

Elders Report: Martha: (See Elders minutes.)

Deacons report: The Back-to-School Drive is still going on. The deacons have worked out some kinks with the monetary donations

Finance: General fund is sitting at \$107, 117.⁸⁷ July offerings were healthy, but that did include 5 Sundays. **M/S to approve the Finance Report. MC.**

Property/Insurance: Ken Jansma and his committee have been busy gathering bids and information for the roof project. They are getting close to making a decision on which company to use. He also continues to dive into the costs and pro and cons of carrying insurance on the church building. Discussion followed. It will be brought to the congregation at the Annual meeting in November.

Church Life: Met 8/5. They will be working with Youth and Education for a back to Heaven's Express day on September 8 and working with OME with a evening outreach evening on October 20.

Endowment: Ken stated the balance as of 7/31/24 was \$783,123.⁸⁰

Worship/Music-Keith gave the report: Our combined service with Emmanuel will be this Sunday. Joyce is soliciting choir members and distributing the music. A few of our members may also join in with their Praise Team. A slide show is being planned for November 10 in honor of our Veterans. November 27 will be our Thanksgiving service in the Fellowship Hall. Jon Kophamer is working on the Christmas concert which will be December 8 at 4:00 and they have started planning for the Christmas Eve service.

Youth/Education-The 3 summer Wednesday activities had small attendance, but those that came had fun. After-shock starts 9/4 and staff training/meeting is 8/28th. Heaven's Express will resume 9/8 and have a kickoff outside including the bounce house.

Assistance/Memorial: No activity since the June meeting.

Sacraments and Communion: Barney. See the Elders Minutes.

August Consistory Minutes (continued)...

O.M.E. Task force: The Random Acts of Kindness postcards will be placed in the bulletin in September. Brad Hurtig a public Christian speaker will give 2 presentations at MHS on August 21. The one in the evening is open to the public. A Fall Fun Event is being planned for October 20 and will include a dice game and a soup and sandwich supper. A winter fun event is being planned for January 12. The Father/Son Banquet is on the calendar for March 4, 2025 and the speaker will be Rick McGough. The Mother/Daughter banquet will be May 13, 2025. We currently are supporting 5 missionary/families with prayer and monetary support. One of the OME task force goals is to grow in this area. After discussion, **M/S to support Joel Lovestrand with their work in Japan with \$100 monetary monthly starting with Fiscal year 2025.** MC Another of their goals is to share Gospel time with the Aftershock kids in smaller groups. They continue to work on adorning the floor 2 conference room with flags from the countries represented by our missionaries.

Approve Minutes: **M/S to approve June, 2024 minutes.** MC

Old Business: The Youth room updating is on hold for now while we deal with other expenses. The solar project spearheaded by Dave Weber is also on hold as he was running into dead ends and best to wait for now.

New Business: After discussion and distribution of suggested changes, **M/S to accept the revisions of the bylaws as suggested by the Executive Committee.** MC. The fire and security alarm system is quite old and is in need of an upgrade. An anonymous donor is going to take care of this for the church. Thank-you!

RCA Affiliation: This topic has been discussed for quite some time. It was discussed at the Elders Care groups most recently. Pro/Con charts were started. Pastor JT distributed a long document for all consistory members to read and study and be ready to discuss at the September meeting. We hope to bring it to the congregation for a vote at the annual meeting in November 2025.

Next meeting: September 9, 2024. | Adjournment: **M/S to adjourn post prayer.** MC.

Closing Prayer: Nancy closed in prayer. | Respectfully submitted: *Martha Kophamer*, Clerk

August Elders Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2024

Attendance: All elders were present.

Devotions and Prayer: Pastor JT opened the meeting at 5:59pm with scripture Rom. 12:1-2, discussion and prayer.

Constitutional Questions: The constitutional question was asked followed by discussion.

Grieving Members in need of care: Discussion was held.

Care Districts: We reviewed outcomes from the Elder Care groups that were held in July. Overall, we felt the attendance was good. Over 80 attended. Good discussion occurred at all 3 meetings. It was felt this should become an annual event.

Prayer Room: Reminder to cover your assigned Sundays or find a replacement.

Communion: There will be communion August 15 during our combined worship service with Emmanuel. Home communion visits assignments were discussed and will occur the week of the 16th.

Motion was made and seconded to approve the June 2024 minutes.

Next meeting: September 9, 2024. | Adjournment: **M/S to adjourn post prayer.** MC.

Closing Prayer: Martha closed in prayer. | Respectfully submitted: *Martha Kophamer*, Clerk