

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

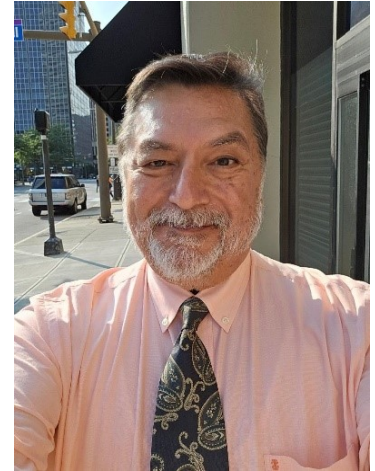
JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year! I hope and pray that this year brings much happiness and blessings. I want to start out this newsletter with good news.

IT IS WITH GREAT JOY THAT WE ANNOUNCE AND WELCOME REVEREND ROBERTO OCHOA AS THE NEW UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TRI-CONFERENCE CONFERENCE MINISTER

Reverend Ochoa was nominated on Monday evening, December 2, 2024 by unanimous vote by each of the three conferences at the Special Joint Annual Meeting held via Zoom.

Rev. Ochoa has a vast background serving in the national setting of the United Church of Christ and currently as UCC Minister for Ethnic Inclusion and Congregational Support for Rural and Small Town Churches for the National Ministries of the UCC. We are excited and look forward to the experience, knowledge and enthusiasm Roberto will be bringing to the Tri-Conference as our Conference Minister.



An anticipated start date for Rev. Ochoa is after the 1st of January. To ensure a smooth transition Rev. Phil Hart will work with Rev. Ochoa for several weeks. More information will be shared when these details are finalized.

We express our deepest gratitude to Rev. Phil Hart for stepping in and leading the Tri-Conference as Interim Conference Minister. He has been a blessing to the conference and staff. We wish Phil all the best on his future endeavors.

As we begin this new chapter in the Tri-Conference, we ask that you extend a warm welcome to Rev. Ochoa.

I feel that Reverend Ochoa's experience in working with rural churches will be of great benefit for the churches of the Tri-Conference. He does plan on visiting the churches in the next couple of years.

The holiday season is over and we are looking at getting back into a regular routine. Sunday School will start back up on Jan. 12th. There will be a potluck dinner on the 5th after church, sponsored by the Missions and Outreach committee. Also, remember about the book review on January 22nd and 29th @ 7:00 pm. As a reminder the Annual Meeting is on January 29th.

I pray that you all had a great Holiday season and celebrated the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

God Bless,

Pastor Kirk Manchester

PLEASE NOTIFY THE CHURCH WHEN:

- If your group or committee plans a meeting or event, so the date and time can be placed on the church calendar and the doors left unlocked.
- A member of your family is admitted to the hospital, so that visits can be made and the Pastor notified.
- Your phone number or email address changes, so that church records can be updated.
- You are planning a move, locally or out of town.
- A new baby arrives in your family or in the family of another church member or friend.
- A member of your family leaves home for college or establishes a new residence.
- A church member or friend dies and you think the church could be of assistance.



All Christmas decorations and the Avenue of Trees will be taken down following the worship service (after the potluck meal) on Sunday, January 5th. Many hands make for light work.



HYMNS ON THE CHIMES

January 1st at 9:15 AM "Auld Lang

***Syne*"** From the UCC Church

January 7th at 10:15 AM. "What A Friend We Have in Jesus" in memory of Margaretha Carstensen from the UCC Church

January 7th at 6:15 PM "Here I Am, Lord" in memory of Don & Jo Meyer's Anniversary from the family.

January 9th at 6:00 PM "God Will Take Care of You" in memory of Rhonda Nemitz from Barry Nemitz and families.

January 21st at 7:00 PM "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" in memory of Ray & Esther Henningsen from David & Cathy Henningsen and family

January 26th at 1:00 PM "Nearer My God to Thee" in memory of Leonard & Edna Kastner from the Kastner family

January 28th at 10:15 AM "Old Rugged Cross" in memory of Johann Carstensen



In Christian Sympathy

- **The family of Bill Benson**
- **The family of Murlin Johannsen**

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

- Revelation 7:17 -

January BIRTHDAYS

1 Austin McMinemee
 3 Gary Peters
 4 Patti Miller
 5 Christine Adkins
 5 Sheila Ferry
 6 Ashley Potts
 10 Renae Rusch
 10 Glenn Barker
 12 Taylor Neubauer
 16 Susan Boland
 17 Josie Krohnke
 18 Evelyn Grau
 20 Jett Paulsen
 22 Clinton Kragel
 22 April Stender
 27 Leon Gosch
 29 Lois Jacobs
 30 Amber Grau
 30 James Streck
 31 Larry Wiebers

November Financials



Income:

Weekly Envelopes	\$6266.00
Loose Offering	\$172.09
Seasonal Offering	\$3.00
Misc. Offering	\$0.00
Misc. Income	\$223.57
Chicken Dinner Income/ Donations	\$0.00
Interest Income- General Fund	\$6.11
Investment Income	\$919.18
<u>Total Income:</u>	\$7589.95

Expenses:

Travel & meetings	\$0.00
Insurance & Taxes	\$263.44
Janitor Supplies	\$9.63
Misc. Expenses	\$2883.75
Music	\$883.00
Office Expense	\$2117.57
Pastor Expense	\$7515.03
Payroll Expenses	\$0.00
Repairs and Maintenance	\$434.81
Supplies	\$132.22
Support Staff Salaries	\$3038.50
Utilities	\$1657.86
<u>Total Expense:</u>	\$18935.81

Net Ordinary Income: - \$11,345.86

January Greeters:

January 5: Derek Johannsen
& Cal Kastner

January 12: Jill Sedore & Sarah Fineran

January 19: Jeremy & Amy Paulsen

January 26: Ken & Connie Boger

January Acolytes:

January 5: Brayton Johannsen
& Taryn Johannsen

January 12: Jersey Bral & Jayton Bral

January 19: Hayden Fineran & Cale Paulsen

January 26: Sophia Luth & Journey Bral

**Annual meeting is
Sunday, January 26th
following the worship
service**

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

**Please contact the office if you
would like an absentee ballot.
Absentee ballots must be returned
to the office no later than Friday,
January 24th in order to be
counted for the Annual Meeting.**

Numbers for the Books

Date:	Attendance:	Contribution:
November 3	53	\$803.00
November 10	86	\$4324.82
November 17	55	\$738.00
November 24	50	\$330.27
Total:	244	\$6196.09
Average:	61	\$1549.02

**2024 Avenue of Trees
Champion**



Journey Bral

Council Meeting Minutes

November 21, 2024

Ben Hansen, CPA called in to discuss the review of the financial books for 2022 and 2023 that he performed in September. He reported all looked in order and had a few suggestions for further steps that could be implemented for internal controls of deposits. Council will give this thought and discuss it at the next meeting.

Call to Order: Council President, Cheri Streck, opened the meeting.

Those in attendance were Cheri Streck, John Dorfler, John Fineran, Josie Krohnke, Leisha Kragel, Seth Neubauer, Kirk Manchester and Tammy Neubauer (Financial Secretary). Absent: John Bahnsen

Opening Prayer: Kirk opened with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made to approve the minutes from the last meeting and seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Financial Report: A motion was made to approve the financial report and seconded. Motion carried.

Bills to be Paid: A motion was made to pay the November bills with the correction of the total to be \$9,098.61 and was seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

CE: Jessica and the committee have been working on the Christmas program. Due to an increase in attendance, Jessica would like one more short table for the Sunday School kids. Council advised the committee was free to purchase what they deemed necessary with the money budgeted for CE for the year.

CSFD: They will be meeting the first part of December.

CSFI: No report

Property: Ken has installed grab bars in the women's restrooms. The ice maker was replaced at the parsonage.

Spiritual Life: A book review on "Mostly What God Does" will be led by Jack Johnson and hosted by the Spiritual Life committee in January and February 2025. They will also host an Easter breakfast.

Missions & Outreach: They will be adopting, and asking the congregation to support them in purchasing gifts for four children through Christmas Crusade. They are planning the meal for Santa Claus day and asking for donations of hamburger and desserts. Money raised will support the Christmas Crusade project.

Stewardship: No report

Pastor's Report: Council reviewed the report submitted, listing visiting elderly, doing a baptism, two funerals and attending meetings. His meeting with the Westside UCC has been moved to December.

Old Business:

A. Chicken Dinner: The chicken dinner cleared \$2,700.

B. Westside Church; The meeting with the Westside church has been moved to December. No other information available.

C. Hurricane Relief: The information regarding hurricane 2024 relief efforts will be given to the Missions Committee for review to see if they would like to lead congregants in supporting this project.

D. Employee Retirement plan: Part time employees are not eligible.

E. Technology: Candice thinks the freezing problem with the technology was due to the PowerPoint program. She has switched to Google Slides and the problem seems to be resolved.

(Council Minutes continued)

New Business:

- A. Proposed Budget: The proposed 2025 budget in the amount of \$177,500 was approved by the council to be presented to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting.
- B. Christmas sacks-80 sacks will be made by council on Dec. 1 at 9:15. Leisha will order and arrange pick-up for the supplies. A motion was made to include snack crackers, small candy bars, cuties, apples and fruit snacks. It was seconded and the motion carried.
- C. Christmas Eve worship: Service will be at 6:00 P.M.
- D. December communion: Will be held December 8 due to the Christmas program Dec. 1
- E. Cookies: Ericka Manchester has resigned from making fellowship cookies effective December 29, 2024. Jersey Bral submitted a proposal to bake 5 dozen treats beginning January 5, 2025, for \$7.50 a dozen. A motion was made and seconded, the motion carried. Council will entrust Candice to advise Jersey if more or less are needed due to special events.
- F. Council meetings: will be held on Wednesday nights at 6:30 P.M., making the next meeting December 18, 2024.
- G. Staff Salaries: A motion was made and seconded for the following pay increases:
Raise Candice and Tammy's wages by \$1 per hour beginning January 1, 2025.
Jessica's wages will be increased to \$21 per hour January 1, 2025.
Jolene will receive an additional \$100 per month beginning January 1, 2025.
Kirk will receive an additional \$2500 per year, beginning January 1, 2025.
Candice, Tammy, Jessica and Jolene will receive bonuses December 1, 2024.
- H. John Wulf money: Council would like to host a teacher appreciation meal for all teachers, preschool and daycare teachers in Schleswig in late winter or early spring. This will be tabled until next meeting.
- I. Resignation: Jeff Boelter has resigned from the council. A motion was made and seconded to appoint Seth Neubauer to complete Jeff's term. Seth will complete his current term in January 2025 and then will serve the remainder of Jeff's term. Motion carried.
- J. Hymnals: Tammy shared her observation that the use of technology to read the words only for hymns, has resulted in kids that don't know how to read music. Many of the songs we sing are from the Worship & Rejoice hymnal, which we don't have in our pews. When the technology fails to work, we need to scramble to pick new songs that fit the service that are in the red hymnal. She requested that we consider purchasing the Worship & Rejoice Hymnals for the pews, to give congregants a choice which they want to use. A motion was made and seconded to purchase the same number of Worship & Rejoice hymnals as there are blue hymnals in pews, using Farm Account money. Motion carried.
- K. Kirk requested that a new clock be purchased that is easier to read for the sanctuary. It was approved to have Candice look for and purchase an easier to read non-digital clock.

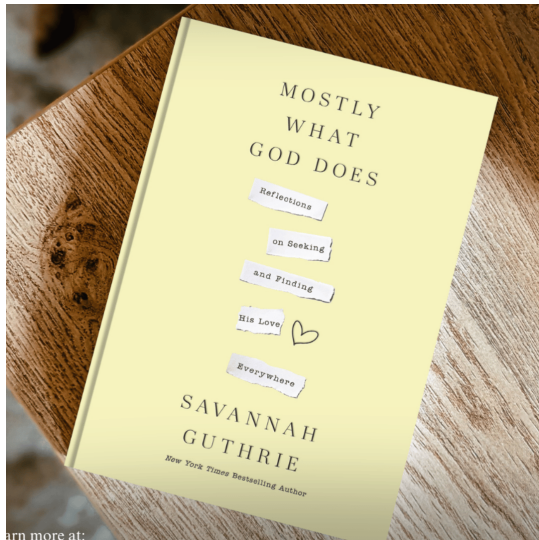
With no further discussion, the Lord's Prayer was said and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Neubauer, Financial Secretary

Council meeting November 26 via text

The Bomgaars bill came after the council meeting. The leaf blower was not on the bills to be paid due to not having the receipt. A motion was made to approve the purchase of a leaf blower at the cost of \$224.69 and was seconded. Motion carried.



“Mostly What God Does” Book review

Led by Jack Johnson

Wednesdays (January 22 &
29, February 5 & 12) at 7
pm.



STEWARDSHIP JANUARY 2025

A new year is rolling in and with it a new fiscal year for the church. Council has voted on a projected budget and will present it to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting. As you probably know, a budget is an educated guess on what it will take for general operations in the next year. Of course, as usual, we have no idea of what our income will actually be as your giving is an unknown to the council but again an educated guess! That giving is supplemented with the dividend income from the Carstensen Brothers stock holdings and miscellaneous income such as the Poinsettia Fund, fund raising projects like chicken dinner and Lenten meals. The operating costs have gone up, the dividends have steadily grown, and now it is your turn to help balance the budget.

As you plan your family budget – formally or informally – please be generous in your gifts to the church. Some have more available than others. Give as you are able. No one knows what individuals give, it is between you and God. And no one should judge how much you give.

Again, I want to remind you that our church is so fortunate to have the farm account for mission gifts and major repairs, the investment account to balance budget and source for our parking lot improvement, The John Wulf money for local mission gifts, and generous givers. Most other churches are constantly fund raising to pay for the electricity and salaries! We are able to share multiple larger gifts for various worthy projects and missions.

Christian Education

I pray this newsletter finds you and your families healthy and humbled from all of the Christmas activities you may have endured. We have had an exciting month with the Sunday School children. We started the month with our Christmas Program “Christmas Cookies” and finished with our last class decorating cookies donated by Shannon Cose.

We are excited to share some fun activities we have planned for the beginning of the year. On January 12th, we kick off our Sunday School classes with Rally Sunday starting at 9:00am and pajamas are encouraged. Classes continue the following Sundays, working our way through more parables, including the Parable of the Rich Farmer (Luke 12:13-21) and the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-20), if you would like to follow along. On January 19th, we will be having a Ski/Tubing party hosted by our CE committee at Seven Oaks in Boone from 2:30-5:00pm. We will need RSVPs by January 12th to make sure we have enough spots reserved. Those wanting to go tubing can choose to go for 1 or 2 hours and need to show up a half hour before our time slot of 3:00 and/or 4:00pm. Please note that no one is allowed under 4 years of age. We can start making reservations for tubing/ski rentals at 4 weeks prior, so the sooner we get your RSVPs the better. Those can be made to the Church office or myself at 712-269-8380. Limited transportation may be available with committee/church members. On January 19th we will also be kicking off our “lounge” during Sunday School. The first few Sundays will be a discovery phase, to allow us to find what works best for you. My goal is to provide a relaxing place for parents, grandparents, and other members of the congregation to go while kids are in Sunday school and get to know each other, have a devotional reading, and watch a half hour video that will show us where Jesus is prophesied as the Messiah eventually through all 66 books. We will first try this in the Church basement and I hope to have coffee/food available most Sundays too. There also could be a book study added depending on the interest of the group.

Jessica Jurgensen

CE Director

