

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

Hello March, and good bye to the freezing cold temperature of February. As we enter into March, Christians thoughts naturally look to the start of Lent. Yes, Ash Wednesday is March 5th. So that means that we will be having Lent service's every Wednesday in March, meal will be at 6:00 and service will follow. Hope to see you there.

As we also had to do a little shoveling of snow the last couple of weeks, I was reminded of a story in "Our Daily Bread." It seems that an older lady was out shoveling her driveway when a Postman noticed her doing this and convinced her to let him finish doing it for her. The lady felt bad that he would be late delivering his other packages. So, she went and got another shovel and started helping. The neighbors watched as them shovel for about fifteen minutes until the job was completed. When they were done, she told him that he was "God-sent."

We have talked in the past about extending (showing) God's love to others. This is a wonderful example of helping others. In a conversation with an expert of the law. Jesus asked him to interpret the law that had to deal with this same topic. The expert answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and Love your neighbor as yourself". I was fortunate after this last snow fall, to experience this same kind of love. As many others in the neighborhood were out shoveling, I had heard the sound of a bobcat out in the area working. I got ready to go out and shovel our driveway. When I opened the garage door, I was surprised to see that someone had come and did our driveway (thank you Chad). Again, this is an example of how people are showing God's love to others and not expecting anything in return. He did it out the goodness of his heart.

Jesus mentioned another example of this from the Bible, is the story of the Good Samaritan. When after two religious leaders ignored a robbery victim. A Samaritan – a person that most Jewish leaders considered inferior. He helped the man in need. When the expert of the law realized that the one who had mercy on the man loved like a neighbor, Jesus encouraged him to do likewise. As we are encouraged to follow this example and help our neighbors. Loving others isn't always easy or convenient. But as Jesus over-helms us with his love, He'll help us love all our neighbors like the Good Samaritan did. So, who can you show God's love to this week.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, please give me opportunities to love all the people You created and call my neighbors.
AMEN.

PS: Remember that the 1st day of spring is March 20th.

God Bless

Kirk

★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!

- 2 Madeline Grau
- 4 Cara Preul
- 9 John Fineran
- 11 Dee Lyon
- 17 Dalton Miller
Larry Kastner
- 19 Wilma McClellan
- 20 Janet Lafrentz
Verdell Kastner
- 21 Kelli Rupert
Janet Whiteing
- 22 Scott Clausen
Abigail Slater
- 23 Emily Bahnsen
Wayne Bliesmann
- 27 Allie Bahnsen
Cal Kastner
Darrell Schmidt
- 28 Trudi Andernacht
Ericka Manchester
- 29 Lonnie Kastner
- 30 Wade Miller
Tammy Neubauer
- 31 John Bahnsen

MARCH HYMNS ON THE CHIMES



March 2nd 1:15 pm "In the Garden" in loving memory of **Gary Schultz** from his family

March 6th 5:00 pm "Holy, Holy, Holy" in memory of **Date Bumann** from CSF Committee

March 6th 5:15 pm "Jesus Loves the Little Children" in memory of **Date Bumann** from CSF

March 9th 1:00 pm "On Eagles Wings" in memory of **Amelia Miller** from her family

March 9th 5:15 pm "Lift High the Cross" in memory of **Malinda Evers** from her family

March 24th 4:00 pm "Shall We Gather at the River" in memory of **Mary Ann Reimer** from her family

March 31st 6:00 pm "You Are My Sunshine" in memory of **Hans Jess** from his family

March Greeters

March 2- Julie Christie & Sandy Lacey

March 9- Vicky Brown & Zola Friedrichsen

March 16- Janet Lafrentz & Judy Strandburg

March 23- Shannon Cose & Paul Outhouse

March 30- Mark & Katie Sharp

March Acolytes

March 2- Jersey Bral & Sophie Luth

March 9- Journey Bral & Taryn Johannsen

March 16- Brayton Johannsen

& Cale Paulsen

March 23- June Jurgensen & Averi Valentine

March 30 - Huntur Johannsen & Ryder Luth



Council Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2025

Mike Goodin spoke with the council about the Carstensen Brothers Equities Fund history since 2010 and the current status. Initially the church received nearly \$1,000,000. He noted at that time the dividends were designated to be used for non-everyday expenses. While he was not able to locate records indicating when this changed, the dividends are now being used to supplement the budget expenses. After expenses are paid for the new parking lot in the spring of 2025, the fund balance will likely be approximately \$3,000,000.

Call to Order: Council Vice-President, John Dorfler, opened the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Council members in attendance were, John Fineran, Josie Krohnke, Leisha Kragel, Seth Neubauer, and by telephone, Cheri Streck. Kirk Manchester and Tammy Neubauer (Financial Secretary) were also present.

Opening Prayer: Kirk opened with a prayer.

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

Committee Reports:

CE: Leisha reported VBS will be August 3-August 6 this year. Sunday School-Tammy will be working with the kids on bells, Janet will work them on singing and they will be sharing their skills during upcoming worship services. The younger kids continue to work on learning the Lord's Prayer and the older kids the Apostle's Creed. The tubing/sledding event has been changed to a bowling party due to the predicted extreme cold. There will be a skating party in February. Upcoming the older kids will attend Youth Jam in Omaha and will plan and lead the worship service on March 30.

CSFD: Kirk reported scholarship checks have been distributed to recipients.

CSFI: No report

Property: Seth reported they took down the nativity scene and made sure the snow blower is running properly.

Spiritual Life: There are 11 signed up for the book study and they will be working on preparations to host the Easter Breakfast.

Missions & Outreach: Hosted a pot luck meal prior to Christmas decorations being taken down on January 5.

Stewardship: No report

Pastor's Report: Council reviewed the report submitted, listing visiting elderly, a funeral, a zoom meeting, counseling, and attending committee meetings. He met with the Westside UCC.

(Minutes continued)

Old Business:

Westside Church: Kirk met with them January 13. They would like Kirk to do two services a month beginning in July and continuing for 6 months. Council questioned the timing of our worship service and how this would affect confirmation scheduling. Kirk was asked to set up a meeting with Jessica and the confirmation parents in the next week to discuss the timing of confirmation next fall. This will be revisited at the next council meeting.

Teacher Appreciation: A motion was made of a total of 56-\$50 gift certificates to Mike's Bar and Grill be purchased for teachers at Schleswig School, Immanuel Lutheran Preschool and Under the Sun Day Care. Funds will come from the John Wulf money. Seconded. Leisha and Josie will distribute them to the learning centers.

OCWM: After discussion, a motion was made and seconded to give \$5,000 from the JAC fund to OCWM. The money will provide funding to ministries of the Iowa Conferences. Motion carried.

New Business:

Christmas Eve Service: Council briefly discussed the Christmas Eve service and the desire for a more celebratory service with a Christmas feel and special music. Plans need to be discussed next fall to ensure efforts are being made to plan a celebratory service.

Annual Meeting: John F. will lead the Annual Meeting on January 26, 2025. Tammy will serve as secretary. Josie will secure three ballot counters prior to the meeting.

Lent Plans: A meal will be served at 6 PM with worship beginning at 6:45 on Wednesday evenings during Lent. The Ash Wednesday service will be in Fellowship Hall as well as the following services. A sign-up sheet for serving meals will be put out, with council serving March 5. Candice and Tammy are working on a change with Easter lilies, to replace the live Easter lilies. More information later.

Future Annual Reports: The by-laws state the time, place of annual and special meetings be published by notice at least five days prior to such meetings. Future annual reports will be printed and placed in the church mailboxes for members to pick up, in a cost saving effort. Members may also elect to have a copy emailed to them, rather than a printed copy. Any printed copies not picked up will be mailed to reach recipients 5 days prior to the meetings.

Technology repairs: Keith Christie repaired technology components on Christmas Day so we would have technology available for Murlin's funeral. A motion was made and seconded to pay him an additional \$100 on top of the cost of repairs. Motion carried.

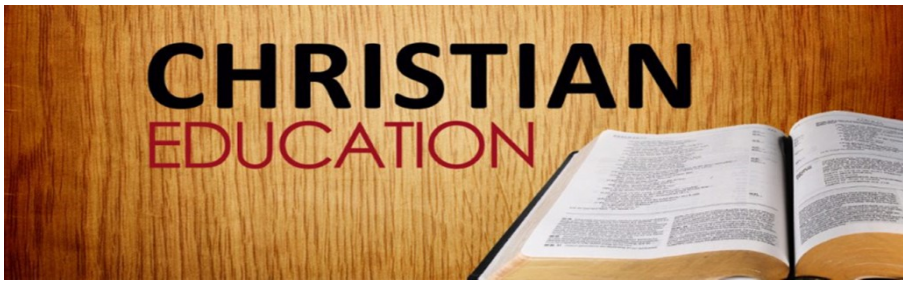
Reorganizational meeting: Council will meet briefly following the annual meeting for an organization meeting.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Neubauer,

Financial and Council Secretary



This month we have been studying a few more Parables. In addition, the younger class has been working on the Lord's Prayer. The older class continues to work on memorizing the Apostles Creed, the books of the Old Testament, and learning to use the hand bells. Our final two Parables are the Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8) and the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), if you would like to follow along. We will then transition into what Easter is truly about. There is a new signup sheet in the Narthex asking for volunteers to help with Sunday School.

We had a great turn out for our Annual Skate Palace Party! We have also had a building crowd for our Light Lounge Bible Study that is at 9:00am on Sundays. I have heard nothing but good comments from those that have attended. Please come give it a try and if you have any suggestions, I am open to new ideas! On March 2nd at 9:00am we are going to begin planning our Youth Sunday material (including breakfast pizza). We will have PreK through 12th grade participating on the actual Youth Sunday scheduled for March 30th. Our next youth fellowship event is "Winter Jam" on March 21st in Des Moines, IA. The following link will give you more information on the lineup: www.jamtour.com/des-moines-ia/ We are asking for RSVPs by March 5th of our 5th-12th graders who plan to attend as Christian Ed will be paying for their concert ticket. This event is open to all. Call or text Jessica at 712-269-8380 if you would like to meet prior to the concert for supper. Pre-Show & general admission start at 6:00pm and main acts start at 7:00pm. I have been told this event will last a few hours.



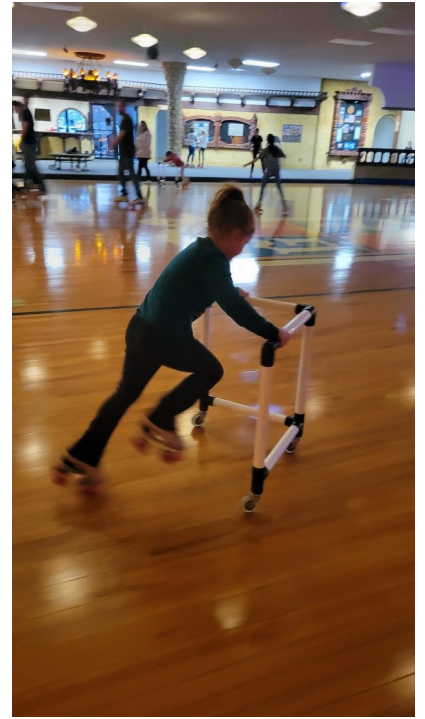
Youth Sunday Planning on Sunday, March 2 at 9 am.
(5th-12th grade) and breakfast pizza.
Youth Sunday is Sunday, March 30th




SKILLET **ANNE WILSON** **KB**
COLTON DIXON **NEWSONG** **MICAH TYLER** **ZANE BLACK SPEAKER**



Skating Party February 16, 2025



January Financials



Income:

Weekly Envelopes	\$5052.00
Loose Offering	\$249.00
Seasonal Offering	\$3.00
Misc. Offering	\$48.00
Misc. Income	\$375.75
Interest Income- General Fund	\$6.02
<u>Total Income:</u>	\$5733.77

Expenses:

Insurance & Taxes	\$361.04
Janitor Supplies	\$9.63
Misc. Expenses	\$0.00
Music	\$240.00
Office Expense	\$520.05
Pastor Expense	\$5586.26
Repairs and Maintenance	\$2853.97
Supplies	\$180.00
Support Staff Salaries	\$4204.75
Utilities	\$2456.93
<u>Total Expense:</u>	\$16412.63
<u>Net Ordinary Income:</u>	-\$10678.86

January Numbers in the Books

Date:	Attendance:	Contributions:
1-5-25	52	\$278.00
1-12-25	55	\$3324.00
1-19-25	24	\$859.00
1-26-25	68	\$598.00
Total:	199	\$5059.00
Average:	49	\$1264.75



CHRISTIAN SERVICE FUND SCHOLARSHIP FORMS are available to college students and high school seniors. If you need an application form, email the office to get one sent to you or you can pick one up in the office.

All applications are due back in the church office by **TUESDAY, APRIL 1st.**

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, United Church of Christ members reach out in the name of Christ to build sustainable communities, respond to disaster and minister to refugees.



The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is administered through Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ. This offering will be taken on **March 30th.** Envelopes are available on the table in the Narthex.

Ash Wednesday Service

March 5th
Meal at 6 pm
with service following



MARCH STEWARDSHIP 2025

The United Church of Christ has four special mission offerings (SMO's) each year. The first we will be collecting this year is One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). The date of the collection will be March 30th, the fourth Sunday in Lent. OGHS supports disaster, refuge, and development ministries within the wider church ministries. Some of the things it supports are funding health education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refuge ministries, and international and domestic disaster relief.

"You're here to be the light, bringing out the God-colors in the world." Matthew 5:14 Giving to OGHS is one way we can heed this call. We create possibility for people forced to flee their homes in search of safety and new promise. We support life-giving recovery effort when disasters devastate communities and overturn lives. We empower partners around the globe in their labors to build sustainable futures. We plant seeds of peace where war has wrought despair and destruction. These words are direct quotes from OGHS information from the UCC.

In addition to monetary gifts to OGHS, you can support this mission in your home, church, and community. Suggestions are tutoring student, make a casserole for a bereaved or struggling family, pick up trash around your neighborhood, make blankets for the unsheltered – let the need beckon you to action.

OGHS has been helping American and Canadian Christians bring God's hope and healing to hurting people domestically and around the world for 75 years. Thank you for supporting OGHS for 75 years. Let us continue to be light in places that need it.



Our Hymnal Decoration Workshop on Sunday, February 23rd was a huge success. We completed over 75 feet of paper chain, 29 snowflake ornaments, and 19 honeycomb ornaments for the big Christmas tree. We had volunteers of all ages and wonderful fellowship while we worked. Thank you to everyone who stayed after church to assemble these decorations.

A huge thank you to Tammy Neubauer & Kim Korwes for planning and serving a light lunch for all our volunteers.

