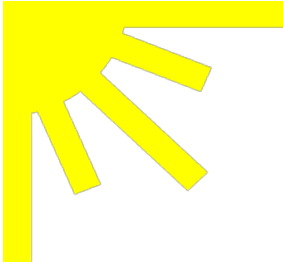


Ebenezer
Today, Tomorrow and Beyond
Monthly Newsletter for Ebenezer United Methodist Church
1971 E 550 North Road, McLean, IL 61754

Pastor: Carl Johnston - 618.614.0658
Email: johnstonc58@ymail.com
Church Phone: 309.874.2304

Website: www.ebenezerstrong.org
Email: mariann111@frontier.com
March Issue 2019



Carl's Corner....

Dear Church Family,

I have enjoyed the pace of the last two months following the very busy Thanksgiving and Christmas Season. The Season of Lent is gearing up with two Bible studies for six weeks, two special Parish services- Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday, two community services for Good Friday at Atlanta and Hopedale at the same exact time. This year I will be at Atlanta for the Community Good Friday Service; next year in Hopedale. The Season of Lent is six weeks long and does overlap into April.

For some this is a time to practice abstinence. This is the idea of "giving something up for Lent" Other people decide to "take up something for Lent." I have three books that I want to use for some focused devotional time. The books are entitled: "40 Days of Doubt: Devotions for the Skeptic", "Lenten Healing: 40 Days to Set You Free from Sin" and "Holy Solitude: Lenten Reflections with Saints, Hermits, Prophets and Rebels."

Others experiment with various spiritual practices. John Wesley fasted from after the supper meal on Thursdays and did not eat again until 3 pm on Friday afternoon. During the fast he was thinking and praying about the arrest, trials, suffering and death of Jesus. According to the Scriptures Jesus was on the cross from noon until three in the afternoon on Friday. Wesley broke his fast with tea and a light meal. This was one of his spiritual practices for over 50 years.

The Lenten season has many themes: Wilderness, Testing and Searching for God to name a few. As I write this, the Special Session of the General Conference has not yet started in St. Louis, Missouri. By the time you read this newsletter, many more things will have become clear and God will still be on the throne. May this time and all the time that God gives us -draw us to depend on God more and more.

Blessings,

Pastor Carl

Ebenezer Church Council

The next meeting for Ebenezer Church Council is **Monday, March 11th**, at 7 p.m. Church Council is open to all who would like to attend.



Thank you to everyone who gave to the Country Breakfast. Your help in putting posters out in the communities, setting up, decorating, making the food, serving that day or cleaning up afterwards was most appreciated. The weather wasn't ideal but it didn't stop the people from coming out for breakfast and a wonderful time of fellowship. Thank You! Ebenezer is truly blessed to have such a great group of people in their congregation.

Parish-Wide Ash Wednesday Service

On **March 6th, at 7 p.m.**, we will have an Ash Wednesday Service at the Ebenezer U.M.C. What is Ash Wednesday all about? From the Book of Worship, I quote, "Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter: we confront our own mortality and confess our sin before God within the community of faith. The form and content of the service focus on the dual themes of sin and death in the light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ" and "The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship, and the Imposition of Ashes can be a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. This practice is the historic focus of Ash Wednesday observance and gave the day its name."

Ebenezer Ladies Lunch

All ladies of Ebenezer are invited to enjoy lunch and conversation on **Friday, March 8th at 11:30 a.m.** – at a location TBD. Please let Linda Bristow know by Sunday, March 3, if you are attending. Future lunches will be the 2nd Friday of each month. For more information or if you have questions, talk to Christy or Linda.

Lenten Bible Study

Mark your calendars now for a 6-week Bible Study. **March 13, 20, 27** and **April 3, 10 and 17**. We will begin at **7:30 a.m.** Expect the study to go about an hour. No pre-work, homework or book to buy. Bring a Bible and your curiosity.

Time Change

Spring forward. On Saturday night, **March 9th** before you go to bed, set your clocks ahead one hour. We would hate for you to be an hour late to church and miss worship and your friends. Celebrate, winter (slowly) coming to an end!



Ebenezer's Weekly Attendance

February 2019

Date	Adults	Children
3	26	0
10	26	3
17	18	2
24	22	2

Upcoming Events in the area.....

Mennonite Relief Sale

The 61st Annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale will be held **March 15-16, 2019**, at the Interstate Center, in Bloomington, Illinois.

Here's a few of the activities going on each day.

Friday, March 15

- 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. Fish / Chicken Barbecue dinners
- 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Rib-Eye Steaks, Butterfly Pork Chops, Barbecues, & Pork Burgers
- 4:30 p.m. Dutch Market / Butcher Shoppe & Booths Open
- 6:30 p.m. Auction Begins
- 7:30 p.m. Auction of Quilts & Comforters

Saturday, March 16

- 6 – 11 a.m. Pancakes / Sausage breakfast
- 7 a.m. Dutch Market / Butcher Shoppe/ Booths
- 8:30 a.m. Grand Auction Begins
- 11 a.m. Rib-Eye Steaks, Butterfly Pork Chops, Barbecues & Pork Burgers
- 10:15 a.m. Children's Auction

Activities continue until sold out.



Save the Date Cunningham Children's Home 15th Annual Festival of Quilts

Friday and Saturday, April 5-6, 2019, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
each day.

Cunningham Spiritual Life Center is located at 1301 N
Cunningham Ave., Urbana, IL.

 hello
spring!

