



**Elkhart Christian Church**  
**(Disciples of Christ)**  
**January Newsletter**

252 N.W. Washington Ave.  
P.O. Box 97  
Elkhart, Iowa 50073  
515.367.5125

[www.elkhart-christianchurch.com](http://www.elkhart-christianchurch.com)

## **Come and Worship**

Chancel Choir: 8:00 am - September through May

Sunday School: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Labor Day until last Sunday before Memorial Day

Sunday School Classes: 9:45 am- following Children's Moment during worship.

Worship Service 9:30 am

Handchime Rehearsal: 4:00 pm – September through May

Fellowship: Immediately after worship

## **Worship Attendance and Offering**

	<u>Offering</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
12/01	\$ 1,428.40	65
12/08	\$ 2,535.00	55
12/15	\$ 1,679.09	86
12/22	\$ 1,276.00	25
12/24-Christmas Eve	\$	62
12/29	\$ 984.44	46
01/05	\$ 1,389.94	45
01/12	\$ 1,089.00	49

Christmas Offering: \$ 467.00

Week of Compassion: \$ 35.00

Pentecost: \$ 35.00

## **Mission Statement**

Elkhart Christian Church is a family of faithful Christians actively caring for the needs of others; sharing our faith through worship, education, and outreach; and providing fellowship that represents Christ's love and presence in our community and our world. Our mission is to nurture and prepare everyone God entrusts to us to become mature and dedicated Disciples for the glory of God.

If you have information for the weekly church bulletin or monthly newsletter, or if you would like to have your birthday printed and it is not already on the list, please place it in the secretary's mailbox, email it to [eccsecretary@windstream.net](mailto:eccsecretary@windstream.net) or contact Mary Jo at the church office. (515) 367-5125.

## Transitions

### **Thelbert “Theb” Vogt**

November 28, 1920 – December 25, 2013

### **Dale William Owen**

July 19, 1925 – January 8, 2014

If there are names that should be included here, please let the church office know.

## Thank Yous

### **A Thank-you from Hollis and Wilma Scott**

Elkhart Christian Church –

Thank you so much for the Xmas box. It was very much appreciated and very very tasty.

We enjoyed it very much,

Hollis and Wilma Scott

### **A Thank-you from Bob and Peg Ault**

Just a kind word of thanks for everything you’ve done

Thanks so much for the gift basket. It was a nice surprise and it helped us out at a hard time.

Bob and Peg Ault

### **A Thank-you from Pastor Anne**

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for your prayers and support during my time of illness in the month of January. I’m hoping the antibiotic cocktail will do its healing work. I also appreciate your continued prayers for my father, the Rev. Dick Gregory, as he was hospitalized again during early January.

In Christ’s Love,  
Anne

### **A Thank-you from Carolyn Welch**

Dear Elkhart Christian Church Brothers and Sisters:

Thank you so very much for the lovely box of assorted goodies and gifts.

I truly enjoyed each and every item. The beautiful calendar is especially appreciated. I didn’t have a 2014 calendar yet and had

been writing sticky notes with January appointments, etc., and sticking them all over the headboard of my bed....

I hope all of you had happy, healthy holidays and may God bless you throughout this new year.

Ellie, the card you designed that was in my box is really beautiful. You're very talented!

Thank you again for thinking of me. God loves you and so do I.

In His Name,  
Carolyn Welch

### **A Thank-you from Leland (Kenneth) and Christine Cunningham**

To all who baked, delivered and played a part in the Christmas goody trays:

Thank you so much for thinking of us and bringing us the wonderful tray of Christmas goodies.

We truly appreciate it!

We really enjoy the card that Ellie makes every year too.

Blessings to all,  
Christine Cunningham

### **Lenten and Easter Schedule**

**March 5**            7:00 p.m.

**Shared Ash Wednesday Service  
at Salem United Church of Christ, Alleman**

**April 6**            9:30 a.m.

**Baptismal Service**

**April 13**          9:30 a.m.

**Palm/Passion Sunday Service**

**April 17**          6:00 p.m.

**Maundy Thursday Communion Service**

We will hold a potluck supper, followed by a simple communion service

**April 18**          6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

**Good Friday Vigil**

Members of Elkhart Christian Church are giving their time to keep a silent prayer vigil in our sanctuary throughout the day Good Friday.

Once again, there will be a special Prayer/Meditation Walk in Fellowship Hall—created by Julietta and Roger Cory.

**7:00 p.m.**

**Good Friday Worship Service**

During the service, the sanctuary will be cleared of decoration until Easter morning.

**April 20 7:30 a.m.**

**Easter Sunrise**

The service will be held in the sanctuary, to welcome in the Light of Christ.

**Men's Easter Breakfast**

As in years past, the CMF will serve breakfast for everyone, between the two Easter Day services.

**9:30 a.m.**

**Easter Service**

All Sunday services are patterned after the Easter service, since we celebrate the Resurrection on the First Day of the Week.

There will be **no Sunday School**.

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

**April 27 9:30 a.m.**

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Laughter Sunday**

Once again, we will celebrate the **second Sunday** of the Easter season with a time for joke-telling, laughter, and music.

**Recycling Tips**

Thank you to all who participate in helping us—**especially CYF, who have made it part of their ministry**—to continue recycling paper, plastic, and metal cans! Even though we no longer have our own recycling dumpster, we've been able to combine the church's recycling with Pastor Anne's recycling, and use the parsonage dumpster.

Every once in awhile, though, we get friendly reminder notes about what to recycle and what not to recycle, so here goes. **Please help the youth in our recycling efforts by doing the following:**

All plastics have to be shaped so that they have a bottle-style neck, or be yogurt tubs. **No lids or bottle caps, please.** They still go in the trash.

**All cardboard**, including cracker boxes, **must be flattened**, and have no food or oily stains.

**Please NO plastic foods trays, plastic cups, Styrofoam, plastic flower pots, toys, or other plastic items.**

**Thanks again!**

### **New Year's Day All-Community Luncheon:**

In spite of the weather, a good number of people enjoyed the New Year's Day lunch, which was sponsored by the men of the church, and open to all in the community at no charge. Around \$400.00 in donations was collected for the Polk County Food Pantry, and about 100 meals were donated to Hope Ministries.

### **Youth Group's Sit Down Spaghetti Dinner!**

On Saturday March 1, 2014 at the church from 5:00 PM-7:00 PM. The youth group will again serve their annual spaghetti dinner. Profits help with camp/assembly fees and other youth group activities.

Prices: Adults \$7.00; Children Ages 4-12 \$5.00; Children Ages 3 and under Free. Meal Includes: Salad, Spaghetti with your choice of sauce: Red Sauce, White Sicilian Sauce, or Some of Both, Bread, Sherbet, and Beverage.

**TAKE OUT DINNERS WILL BE AVAILABLE**

### **Holy Land Trip:**

Calling all travelers... Jerry and Sue Woods, Waukee Christian Church, are organizing a trip to the Holy Land in early 2015. We have not yet set the date - we will wait until we have some interest and then determine the best time to travel.

The group will visit Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee, the Jordan River, Jerusalem, and the Dead Sea (among other places). It's a very affordable and safe trip (Sue was there in 2008) with a Christian travel company that's been in business since 1974.

If you can't make the meeting but want the info- contact Sue at [revwoods.sw@gmail.com](mailto:revwoods.sw@gmail.com) or call her cell at [515-577-4543](tel:515-577-4543). Thanks.

### **Have you ever wished that you could have picked the hymns?**

Well, now on a given Sunday you can! Just talk to Pastor Anne and choose a future Sunday for which you can plan a worship service.

### **Church Building Maintenance:**

There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall for those many among us who have special fix-it skills, or teamwork skills—even if you don't think your abilities are special. We are looking at a number of building maintenance tasks coming up, and we could use your help. For more information, talk to Dave Kalsem.

## **Week of Compassion Partners** **Work for Peace in Syria**

A United Nations-backed international conference is currently bringing together members of the Syrian regime and opposition forces with the aim of ending the war in Syria by creating a transitional government and discussing an unprecedented humanitarian response. Leading up to this meeting, UN and Arab League special envoy to Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, joined church leaders from various Christian denominations in Geneva. John Nduna, General Secretary of the ACT Alliance ([www.actalliance.org](http://www.actalliance.org)), a Week of Compassion partner, was present.

“(This gathering in Geneva) is a unique opportunity to stop fighting,” Nduna said after the meeting. “All the parties should step up to this responsibility and accept that they will have to compromise certain positions. If this chance is missed, I am afraid the war may go on for much longer....”

Through ACT Alliance, Week of Compassion has helped provide emergency assistance to displaced Syrians and host communities since war began in 2011. This has included provisions of health care, food, shelter and education to almost half a million Syrians both within the country and in neighboring Jordan and Lebanon, primarily in refugee camps, as well as to communities hosting refugees.

The UN estimates that 6.5 million people are internally displaced and a total of 9.3 million need humanitarian assistance, nearly half of whom are children. Nearly 2.2 million refugees have been registered in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Over 100,000 people have been killed and many more injured, and civilians in Syria are facing a severe lack of food, water and access to health care....

Week of Compassion staff continue to monitor the situation on the ground in Syria, which remains violent even as talks continue. As the ACT Alliance responds, so will we.

## **Monitoring Domestic Issues**

Week of Compassion is also continuing to monitor issues across North America, including wildfires in California, ongoing needs connected to the recent chemical spill in West Virginia, and any needs that may emerge from the bitter cold across the Northeast and Midwest. As needs emerge, we will respond.

This week's responses:

Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
Virginia, Food Security  
Georgia, Emergency Refugee Assistance  
California, Emergency Refugee Assistance  
Philippines, Typhoon Relief  
El Salvador, Volcano Relief  
Nepal, Cold Wave Relief

### **Development and** **Long-Term Recovery and Rehabilitation**

Oklahoma, Long Term Tornado Recovery  
North America/United States, Ecumenical Poverty Initiative

*Week of Compassion is sharing resources and changing lives. Thank you for sharing your resources and helping to change lives.*

### **Who We Are:**

Disciples Identity—found on our national website

Often we Disciples tend to describe ourselves in the negative, by what we are not: we're not hierarchical, like the Catholics; we don't baptize infants, like the Methodists; we don't require acceptance of any formal creed for membership in the church, like the Presbyterians. The following material is an effort, in positive statements, to focus on who we are and on ways to convey that to those inside and outside our church.

#### *Our identity statement*

- We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

#### *What does that mean?*

- **We practice unity and inclusion at the Lord's Table** for the sake of mission and for the sake of the world as the one family of God. Most congregations do this by celebrating communion every Sunday. That's why we use a chalice as our logo.
- **We practice believer baptism** – that a person makes the choice to follow God's call rather than the choice being made for them as an infant. Baptism is the basis of membership in the



Church and also a mark that every person is called to serve God – the idea of the “priesthood of all believers.”

- **We honor our heritage as a movement for Christian unity** by cooperating and partnering with other faith communities to work for bringing about wholeness – healing and justice – in the world. This is what it means to be “ecumenical.” One example is our cooperative work with the United Church of Christ in Global Ministries for the past 25 years and our newer effort to share staff in the area of family ministries.
- **We are called to study and read scripture for ourselves.** Rather than having tests of faith and creedal statements, we critically and thoughtfully study scripture, taking into account the history and background – the context – in which it was written.
- **We also honor the heritage of Christian unity by staying together** in covenant as a witness to the world that even when we disagree we can still make room, welcoming all to the table as Christ has welcomed us. Our spiritual ancestors were fond of saying, “unity, not uniformity.”
- **We move to answer God’s call for justice** particularly in the areas of care for the earth, the challenges for women and children, poverty and hunger and immigration. We seek to do this work in cooperation with other people of faith. Some say we “get dirty for Jesus” as a way of conveying the hands-on mission orientation of many of our faith communities.

These traits were summed up by former General Minister and President Dick Hamm when he identified the marks of a faithful church as true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice.

***We’re a movement whose time has come!***

From:

<http://www.disciples.org/Home/WhoWeAre/OurIdentity/tabid/67/Default.aspx>

**February Birthdays**

01 Troy Cory  
Noah Snyder  
02 Roy Parmenter  
Brad Cross  
04 Mary Herman  
06 Chelsi Birchmier  
Wayne Gilbert  
07 Roger McHone  
Mark Sorenson  
09 David Risvold  
10 Marva Johnson  
Cindy Kirschbaum  
11 Tiffany Van Gorp  
13 Tom Owen  
Jon Struthers  
15 Keith Van Gorp  
Ken Howard  
Newt Mathis  
18 Nancy Johnson  
19 Ethan Ward  
20 Lynnette Schnetzer  
21 Gabrielle Butler  
22 Robin Luke  
Trevor Hall  
23 Christine Cunningham  
25 Rob Albaugh  
27 Andrew Owen  
28 Matt Owen  
Ruth Morris  
29 Nadine Zimmer

**March Birthdays**

02 Nathan Fitzgerald  
07 Randy Franzen  
13 Greg Cory  
Jean Bean  
Earl Parsons  
Paul Reinke  
14 Peggy Ault  
Dave Kalsem  
16 Vickie Swartout  
18 Rusty Cory  
19 Chip Mathis  
20 Drew Owen  
22 Jon Brown  
24 Connie Passmore  
Brian Edwards  
25 Jonann Cornelius

**March Con't.**

25 Derek Carney  
29 Karen Vos  
Davis Albaugh

**April Birthdays**

01 Jolene (Spratt) Praska  
02 Mary Ann Mathis  
03 Arlys Hall  
04 Coral Sorenson  
05 Rob Owen  
Tate Owen  
08 Austin Albaugh  
09 Lindsey Elmore  
Ron Adams  
11 Elaine Cory  
Rachel Reinke  
12 Dennis Kaltenheuser  
Mary Bevington Ralls  
13 Johanna Hill  
14 Zach Mihalovich  
15 Shannon Snyder  
Audrey Miller  
16 Courtney Parsons  
17 Adam Bean  
18 Nancy Schweiger  
19 Janice Cory  
20 George Butler  
Luke Cory  
21 Dani Cartwright  
Anne Gregory  
22 Spencer Cory  
23 Brenda Dobson  
Amy Stupka  
23 Bruce Carney  
26 Janet Cory  
29 Evan Albaugh  
30 Carl Van Gorp  
Avaree Smith

# Journey

**T**he journey from Bethlehem to Jerusalem is approximately 7 miles; yet it holds the full story of our faith: from the promise of a Savior fulfilled in the birth of Jesus, to his work of atonement on the cross, to his glorious resurrection and ascension, to the birth of the Church that gathers in peoples of every tongue and race. It is here we are living; and while living here, full drama is unfolding around us every week and every day - both in the liturgical celebrations and in the lives of our Palestinian Christian sisters and brothers! The past year or so has been filled with learning, adjusting, renewing friendships and new relationship building, networking, as well as accomplishing. My (Victor) assignment as regional consultant has kept me amply busy with the preparation and execution of a number of significant region-wide consultations, conferences and leadership training workshops that have addressed critical issues exacerbated by the so-called "Arab Spring." The central questions for these ongoing events (encompassing 4 countries) are: "How much religion should be interposed in the affairs of the state, and how much state should interfere with religion?" and, "How can a shared vision be formulated and crystallized for a new future for the Arab Middle East whereby full citizenship for everyone would be assured, human dignity could be preserved, and a decent quality of life could be accorded to all?" The methodology adopted examines different models where different states have dealt with these questions and have found a healthy and meaningful symbiosis between religion and state, and then come up with an authentic Middle Eastern vision for the future of this region...



VICTOR AND SARA MAKARI

Life in this part of the world is intense, especially in Israel/Palestine; it is even more so on the West Bank. Daily life of the people here is full of challenges, possibilities, hopes, worries, disappointments and fears. One can read these emotions on their faces in the crowded marketplace: in their drawn looks, in street demonstrations, in the way many defy rules and authority, in the way many seem burdened and bent down.

But life is also full of joys and potentialities; you can see it in their bright eyes; their laughter and cheerful smiles; in children's innocent play; and among youth, in their defiant confidence in a better future.

O God, we pray for calm, for reason, for good will to prevail, and for your spirit of counsel to guide leaders and those in authority into the paths of peace. We are deeply grateful for the prayers and support of church members and friends as we seek to live out our overriding commitment to the principle of "critical presence" by being an authentic witness to the love and the grace of God.

*Victor and Sara Makari serve with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the Diyar Consortium of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Victor serves as Regional Consultant for the Religion and State in the Middle East Program. Sara serves as editor of publications of Diyar.*



## You make the difference...

The prayers and help you provide through your local congregations make possible the work and witness of GLOBAL MINISTRIES, which is supported by Disciples Mission Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) of the United Church of Christ.

[WWW.GLOBALMINISTRIES.ORG](http://WWW.GLOBALMINISTRIES.ORG)

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(Disciples of Christ)  
252 N. W. Washington  
P.O. Box 97  
Elkhart, IA 50073  
(5125) 367-5125

### Church Staff

Ministers: The Congregation  
Pastor: Rev. Anne E. Gregory  
Board Chair: Dave Kalsem  
Church Sec.: Mary Jo Ward  
Pianists: Brenda Dobson  
Robin Luke  
Organist: Sharon Payne

**"Sharing Our Faith and God's Love"**

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