

The Ceresco Messenger

December 2018-January 2019

Thankful for You *By Ainslee Zou , Student at Goshen College*

Agape: maybe this is a word you've heard, maybe not. *Agape* is the Greek word for love, not found in ancient dictionaries, rather based upon the teachings of the Gospel and Jesus. *Agape* describes Jesus' love for us: love so vast that He gave everything so we could have life and life abundant.

Jesus tells us to love God and love our neighbors as we love ourselves (Mark 12:30-31). We've heard the phrase "love your neighbor," but what does that really mean? In Paul's letter to the Philippians (Philippians 1:3-11), Paul exemplifies showing *agape* to our neighbors and to God. Paul shows what it means to be a follower of Christ and a sister or brother in Christ. Paul shows how connected he is to the Philippians, God, Jesus, me, you.

Paul's letter is not just a letter, but a template. He shows us that everyone's walk in faith may be different, but by no means are they separate. We are reminded that God created us each as individual masterpieces, but Jesus died for us one and the same. These scriptures are appropriately titled "Thanksgiving and Prayer" as Paul thanks God for Christians as well as God's grace. Paul reminds us that loving our neighbors and loving God aren't at all separate, but are sides of the same coin; both are *agape*. Paul reminds us to look around while looking up. Paul prays that our love may abound in wisdom so that we may know how to present ourselves as blameless on the day of Christ, and that we may be filled with the fruit of righteousness, rooted in Christ, all for the praise and glory of God. Paul's words remind us that while life may not be going the way we expected, we can always find the joy in others, in the presence of the Holy Spirit, in Jesus's love, and in God's grace.

From Pastor Gary Schooler . . .

Philippians 1:2-11. These words of Apostle Paul spoke to me when I accepted the call as Pastor of Ceresco Baptist. I depart with the same heart and mind of the body of Christ of Ceresco Baptist. Please my dear friends, reflect upon these words of Paul, for they are significant for the work of the Kingdom of God in each of us.

Your friend in Christ Jesus, Pastor Gary Schooler

Pastor Gary Schooler's Resignation Letter

(This was read by Gary on Sunday, Nov. 4, 2018 after his sermon)

"I have been your pastor for the past six years plus. I have been blessed to serve a congregation that has embraced and loved Phyllis and myself. I have accepted a call as pastor with a local church back home in Grass Lake, MI. This decision has not been an easy decision. I have been praying and seeking God's will since April of this year. I understand that this decision will impact many and there will be a variety of emotions. With that said, I feel that there are many seasons in our spiritual life. My prayer is that God has much in-store for Ceresco Baptist Church. You will always be in my and Phyllis' prayers, as well as close to our hearts. My prayer and hope as your pastor and leader is that you will not grow weary, and stay the course; always expecting much from God; that your next pastor is led by and full of the Holy Spirit of our Living God, for we have grown much together in our spiritual lives; and that Ceresco Baptist will continue to walk with God and with one another.

My last day as your pastor will be November 30, 2018.

May God's hand be on Ceresco Baptist Church.

~ Pastor Gary Schooler

Martha Circle Minutes, Nov. 14, 2018

Present: Gretchen King, Joanne Henley, Lisa Cavinder, Joyce Cary, Ruth St. John, Vi Halder, & Joy Sommers. We opened with Devotions from hostess Ruth St. John. Need to pray after how the elections went. We know God is in control. She read "Hymn of Thanksgiving" from the Secret Place. Also read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24 telling us to live at peace with one another. Secretary/Treasurer report given by Joy. Joy read mission update from Katherine Niles. Sunshine - Vi told who she sent cards to last month. Old Business - no "meeting" next month. Potluck & white elephant gift exchange instead! Church will have 3 Christmas families this year. Need to decide what to do with the rest of the RADA cutlery. October bake sale was \$60 (goes to the roofing fund). Nov. 25th is Fellowship Sunday and Gary's last Sunday. We have plenty of sheets to do roller bandages! Start ripping the sheets tonight! Vi & Joanne will sew the strips into 5 yard lengths. Hostess schedule: Jan 9th Joanne, Feb. 13 Linda Chisholm, Mar 13. New Business - New Project is Items for the Haven of Rest Ministries - we can bring stuff in as we think of it: coffee, Kleenex, breakfast meat, shampoo, towels, laundry detergent, etc. Need to make some more fleece blankets - January meeting we will make a couple more. Scripture review: Mark 6:30-44 Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand. Bible reading for January: Luke 2:41-52 Love Gift \$10.59, Devotional \$10. Closed in Prayer. Refreshments by all, ripped sheets for roller bandages.

Martha Circle Minutes, Dec 12., 2018

Martha Circle met at 6 pm 12/12/18 for our Christmas Potluck & gift exchange. Though no actual business meeting was held, we agreed to accept the suggested White Cross quota of items for Friendship House in Hamtramck. Items are due 12/16, and Joanne will get them packaged and sent. After dinner & gift exchange, additional newly purchased ornaments were placed on the sanctuary tree. Martha Circle purchased lighted garlands for the front of the sanctuary that will need to be hung too.

Church Attendance for the past several months:

July 1st - 38, 8th - 32, 15th - 43, 22nd - 40, 29th - 51.
Aug 5th - 40, 12th - 47, 19th - 38, 26th - 34
Sep 2nd - 34, 9th - 36, 16th - 35, 23rd - 35, 30th - 40
Oct 7th - 30, 14th - 40, 21st - 28, 28th - 35
Nov 5th - 34, 12th - 42, 19th - 37, 25th - 43 Dec 2nd - 31



An Advent Prayer for The Lord to Come

This Advent, Lord, come to the manger of my heart.
Fill me with Your presence from the very start.
As I prepare for the holidays and gifts to be given,
Remind me of the gift You gave when You sent Your Son from Heaven.
The first Christmas gift, it was the greatest gift ever.
You came as a baby born in a manger.
Wrapped like the gifts I find under my tree,
Waiting to be opened, to reveal Your love to me.
Restore to me the wonder that came with Jesus' birth,
When He left the riches of Heaven and wrapped Himself in rags of earth.
Immanuel, God with us, Your presence came that night.
And angels announced, "Into your darkness, God brings His Light."
"Do not be afraid," they said, to shepherds in the field.
Speak to my heart today, Lord, and help me to yield.
Make me like those shepherd boys, obedient to Your call.
Setting distractions and worries aside, to You I surrender them all.
Surround me with Your presence, Lord, I long to hear Your voice.
Clear my mind of countless concerns and all the holiday noise.
Slow me down this Christmas, let me not be in a rush.
In the midst of parties and planning, I want to feel Your hush.
This Christmas, Jesus, come to the manger of my heart.
Invade my soul like Bethlehem, bringing peace to every part.
Dwell within and around me, as I unwrap Your presence each day.
Keep me close to You, Lord. It's in Your wonderful Name I pray.

~Renee Swope, "The Manger of My Heart" from Proverbs 31 Ministries

2018 Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering *Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV):*

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

This year we celebrate over 40 years of the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO). On behalf of American Baptist Churches USA, we have made financial gifts to help many pastors, missionaries and widowed spouses of pastors. This long-standing tradition was established in 1977 to support those who have devoted 15 or more years of their lives to God's service. This year's theme, "Extending Our Hands to Our Neighbors," illustrates the importance of being there for one another and remembering we are stronger together than on our own! Our scripture reference calls us to remember our Christian character to help, support, encourage and serve one another.

We are collecting for this offering during the month of December. Thank you!

Ceresco Baptist Church, Administrative Council Meeting, 12/8/18 MINUTES

Devotions by Rick Frey "A Taste of Life"

Clerks Report - Joy Sommers

Minutes from September meeting were in the Messenger; LifeTouch Directory is done, ready to distribute; Membership Transfers Out - (3) Schooler's St. Johns UCC Francisco Church. Need to find out if they ever transferred from Grass Lake to Ceresco Baptist. Annual Reports for 2018 are due to Joy by January 21st, please! Council doesn't submit their agenda items according to Constitution.

Treasurer's Report - Mary Ivey

Reports handed out, discussion; Changing our banking from Fifth Third to Southern Michigan Bank & Trust (approved at a prior council meeting). Request from Bob Beltz about detailed annual report of income/expenses of the church.

Worship Ministry Team - Mary Ivey

Mary is selecting hymns for Jan/Feb 2019. Joy selecting hymns for December; Christmas decorations will be taken down Jan 6th (soup/sandwiches at noon); Organizational meeting for 2019 is Dec. 18th at 5:30 pm. Joy will be gone Dec 30 & Jan 6. Need someone to run computer/sound if Veronica can't. New sound system installed, thanks to Sam Henley Memorial & Joanne Henley. There will be a training session at 5 pm 12/12/18 for anyone that would like to learn how to use.

Pastoral Search Committee - Rev. Edgar Owens

Process for new pastor search - Ed will work with us in any way that we want his assistance. Recommended that we review our church constitution/bylaws and rules/procedures. Search Committee needs to promote prayer for the pastoral search process. Find ways to organize prayer around the search process. Need to create/update our Church Profile. Top 4 skill sets, salary package, ordination standing, education level, - all this information needs to be provided to Rev. Owens. Also, any other preferences, ie, only want a male pastor, etc. Once profile & skill sets, etc are provided to Rev. Owens, he will then provide the search committee with 4 candidates for the committee to review. Search Committee reviews the profiles which has information on the pastor, demographics, education, benefits expected, etc. Give weekly updates to the congregation regarding the search process. Committee members: Bob Beltz, Glen Cary, Gretchen King, Barry Vavrina, Joy Sommers

Property Management Ministry Team - Roger Sommers

Basement furnace has been fixed. Copier quotes (Joy) - looked over, get additional quotes. Need volunteers for the PMMT. Ed Kirkland volunteered. Heater in library needs to be fixed or replaced. Snow plowing - need to make sure we don't block Hunsicker's driveway view. Need to make sure back walkway is cleared too.

Deacon Ministry Team - Gretchen King

Christmas Family lists are upstairs for those to buy presents for. Our 2019 calendar is now available. MACS Schedule has volunteer positions for anyone interested in helping.

Educational Ministry Team - Sally Beltz

Christmas Party on Dec. 15th was cancelled. Will do something special in Junior Church on Dec. 16th, decorate cookies. Children's Time - rotating schedule for EMT people. Need volunteers for the 5th Sunday.

Boy Scouts - Eagle Scout ceremony on Dec. 26th

Pastor Gary's Quarterly Report (Sep-Nov): Visits (7), Hospital (1), Funeral (Nancy Reed), Deacon meetings, Bible studies, MLGW, MLGP, Annual Meeting, Galilee Baptist (preached for Dr. Michael Scott's 7th anniversary). Read resignation letter on Sunday, Nov. 4th after the sermon. Pastor Gary was paid for 4 weeks of vacation in 2018.

Missions Committee: Members ; Kay Davis, Mary Ivey, Marcy Bonney. RMMO during December.

New Business/Open Items: Gates/signs for parking lot - Gary had set this up with Enbridge, and none of us know about it. Need to email Enbridge and find out what's going on.

People want to know why if they are members that they can't vote at Administrative Council.

During discussion, Joy brought up the actual Constitution and found that Members CAN vote regardless of whether or not they are Council members:

2.3 Holding office and voting a. Only those on the "Active Membership" roll may hold office. b. Only active members may vote on Church matters.

Birthdays & Anniversary listings - need to have two people look at the lists before printing.

Linda Chisholm has volunteered to help assist. Marshall FBC has invited us to attend their Candle Light Service on Christmas Eve at 9 pm.

Pastor Owens closed the meeting in prayer at 11:29 am. Next meeting is March 2, 2019.

2019 Administrative Council Members will be: Rick Frey, Mary Ivey, Dawn Frey, Joy Sommers, Bob Beltz, Kay Davis, Deacon Gretchen King, PMMT Roger Sommers, EMT Sharon Hadley, WMT Rep (not Mary or Joy). Quorum for an Administrative Council meeting is 7 A/C members.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		DECEMBER 2018					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Communion Sunday Rev. Ed Owens Pulpit Supply	Boy Scouts	Bible Study 10 am				Church Break-fast 8 am Admin Council 9:00 am	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Junior Church Special Activity Rev. Ed Owens Pulpit Supply	Boy Scouts	Bible Study 10 am	Martha Circle Christmas Gathering & Potluck 6 pm				
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
Pastor Mary Fair-Matthews Pulpit Supply	Boy Scouts	Bible Study 10 am	WMT 5:30 pm Family Night Potluck 6:30 pm				
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
Rev. Ed Owens Pulpit Supply	Christmas Eve Service at First Baptist Church Marshall, 9 pm	Happy Birthday, Jesus!	Boy Scouts Eagle Scout Ceremony				
30	31	Jan 1	Jan 2	Jan 3	Jan 4	Jan 5	
Fellowship Sunday & Bake Sale! Rev. Dr Ross Lucas Pulpit Supply	New Year's Eve	Happy New Year! New Year's Day 2019			We will be taking down the Christmas decoration after church Jan 6. We will have a light lunch at noon. Thanks!		

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Dec 2	Michael Wood	Jan 1	Michael Meng	Feb 4	Nicole Thomas
Dec 5	Cindy Combs	Jan 2	Alexandria Hamaker	Feb 5	Nadine Coats
Dec 7	Mike Lutz	Jan 4	Avery Goodman	Feb 9	Chris Sorell
Dec 11	Paige Holtz	Jan 4	Elise Kidder	Feb 17	Carlton Anthony
Dec 13	Glennie Swann	Jan 5	Kathryn Straub	Feb 18	Glen Cary
Dec 14	Pat Yost	Jan 7	Olivia Gary	Feb 25	Kelcie Collins
Dec 19	Bridger James Davis #1	Jan 11	Richard Schlee	Feb 26	Gretchen King
Dec 19	Scott Wood	Jan 13	Bob Beltz		
Dec 21	Rayna Sommers	Jan 13	Amelia Davis		
Dec 26	David Smith	Jan 18	Christin Berry		
Dec 27	Candace Ivey	Jan 18	Brian Gary		
Dec 27	John Paschen	Jan 19	Jean Clark		
Dec 28	Donna Ruthruff	Jan 20	Gary Schooler		
Dec 30	Viviana Anthony	Jan 24	Chelsea Kilbourn		
		Jan 25	Emily Ivey		
		Jan 25	Bryan Davis		
		Jan 28	Harlynn Casey		
		Jan 28	Brad Kidder		
Dec 20	Richard & Kathy Straub	Jan 28	Diane Burrows		
Dec 23	Ken & Kay Davis	Jan 29	Ava Marni Bene		
	DJ & Julie Holton	Jan 31	Bailey Davis		
Jan 2	John & Ruth Paschen				

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Dec 20	Richard & Kathy Straub
Dec 23	Ken & Kay Davis
	DJ & Julie Holton
Jan 2	John & Ruth Paschen



Pastoral Search
Committee Members are:

Bob Beltz
Glen Cary
Gretchen King
Barry Vavrina
Joy Sommers, Chair

School Fundraisers - Veronica Anthony, Marshall High School and Viviana Anthony, Marshall Academy. Both are selling Key Cards for \$15 each as a fundraiser for their schools. These are coupon cards for many area businesses!

A New Year's Poem for Christians

Instead of making a New Year's resolution
Consider committing to a biblical solution
Your promises are easily broken
Empty words, though earnestly spoken
But God's Word transforms the soul
By His Holy Spirit making you whole
As you spend time alone with Him
He will change you from within

-- Mary Fairchild



*Thank you to the Memorial Fund
of Sam Henley, and Joanne Henley
for purchasing a new sound system
for the church!
May God bless you, Joanne!*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
January 2019						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Communion & Deacon Sunday Rev. Dr Ross Lucas Pulpit Supply Take down Christmas dec.	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	Bible Study 10 am	Martha Circle 6:00 pm			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	Bible Study 10 am	Family Night Potluck 6:30 pm			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm Submit Annual Report to Joy!	Bible Study 10 am	Information for the February Messenger is due by noon!			
27	28	29	30	31		
Fellowship Sunday & Bake Sale!	Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	Bible Study 10 am		Deadline for 2018 Annual Reports		

Ceresco Baptist Church
230 C Drive North
P.O. Box 35
Ceresco, MI 49033-0035
269.964.9669



Happy New Year

GOD IS ALL YOU NEED

let spirituality
be your new years resolution
may God bless you
we wish you the happiest of years
God is all you need to succeed

