

THE ENLIGHTENER

Clay Center United Methodist Church - Pastor Reuben Langat

921 5th Street - P.O. Box 118 - Clay Center, Kansas 67432-2509

Phone 785-632-3106 - Email: churchoffice@claycenterumc.org - Web site: www.claycenterumc.org



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The Enlightener

January 2024

The end of the year 2023 is here! Time moves so fast. But please allow me to mention a few things about this year. First, I want to thank you for being a huge blessing to me and our church. I am your pastor because of God and you. I constantly thank God for leading me here, a place that I fully enjoy serving God among and with you. Together, God has and continues using each one of us in his vineyard to accomplish his mission. As your pastor, I thank you and you matter to God and me.

Your faithfulness in attendance to our services has been very encouraging. So far our Sunday attendance has been great, but we can make it even greater by inviting friends, family, neighbors and everyone else in your network to come. We are hospitable and we have room for everyone to come in and worship with us. Our weekly activities have been encouraging too. Tuesday at 10 prayers have been great and a source of hope to those in need of prayers. Remember, a praying church stays together. You may be aware that Marabeth started a bible study for high school girls, she tells me it is going great. Zac also recently started one for the young men. I just love when we empower others with God's Word. Of course as you are aware there are other activities for the kids on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and I thank the parents for allowing their children to attend them. They are our future and we must make sure that we invest well for that future we want.

God has continued using our church in missions, both local and global. Our children through their quarters every Sunday have done great. It's fun to watch them do it excitedly! Of course that happens because we support them to do it. It is one of the means that we can teach our children to be generous to the church and God's mission in the world. Additionally, it helps me connect and build relationships with them too. I love the fact that we do not come to church to spectate, but to actively serve as we worship God together. Several of you have given towards our mission in Kenya, thank you so much for your love and generosity that enables the women we serve to have hope.

Talking about serving, we are a church with several volunteers. It brings great joy to see you actively fulfilling the mission God has given you with a passion. Keep volunteering and ask others to do the same too, we still need more servants. Last month during Clay Center community night, it was wonderful to see a number of our church members do sessions on different topics related to our community needs. I was proud of each one of them. Each one of us has been endowed with a gift and a talent, let us use it/them for humanity.

I pray that this season of Christmas brought you hope that baby Jesus brings to us. Remember that Jesus came because of you and me so that we can have life and have it abundantly. The new year lies ahead of us and it will be great too. I pray that we will draw closer to God and together we will do God's mission even more than we did this year. We have an African saying that says "if you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far go with others." I want to go with you because I want us to go far, and our Christian journey is good when we walk and serve together.


I love you and I fully know that our greater days are still ahead.
In Him our Emmanuel,
Rev. Reuben Langat, Ph.D.

KANSASLAND
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SCRAMBLE

Wednesday evening free-offering meal
5:30 pm—6:30 pm
January 3rd- Fundraiser- TBD
January 10th- C.C.W.C- Taco Festival
January 17th- **OPEN**
January 24th- American Legion Post #101- Soup Supper
January 31st- Methodist Men's—Pancake Feed



PRAYER list IN OUR PRAYERS: Elizabeth Carlson, Jillian Browne, Virginia Modean, Shelly Bottcher, Gerald (Rick) Ricketts, Barb Booth, Julie Schulze, Craig Bradford, Cindy Hoverson, Terrie Rush, Howard & Sharron Sump, Madde Lucenti, Pat Deighton, Dr Chris Worthen, Scott Taddiken, Bob Walker, and Patty Stephens.
Serving in the Military: Brenden Kolsky, Drew Sumner, Cooper Coffman, Wyatt Bowles, Doron B. Fishler

 Sympathy and prayers to Steve & Ann Appleton & Family on the loss of his mother and our beloved member Ann Appleton who passed away on December 5, 2023

 Sympathy and prayers to Rowan & Josh Hinkle & Family on the loss of her grandfather Brent "Pops" Rusert.

Our Vision

Worship, Witness, Serve


Our Mission

**Worship God who loves us.
Share our faith by building relationships.
Bring hope to the world we serve.**

Monthly Mission-Church World Service works in partnership with local communities to identify their needs and access the resources they need to build the foundation for a more viable future, including: Blankets, tents, food and other emergency supplies in wake of a disaster. Give tools to fight hunger. Provide comfort in disaster. Protect those who are vulnerable and so much more.

Heart

FOR MISSIONS



Meet Dale Cramer a member who is 85+ years old. Dale grew up on a farm east of Stockton and went to high school in Abilene. Starting in 1957, he was manager of Duckwalls for 28 years. His first store was in Kinsley, Ks. After retiring, he drove cars for dealers putting on lots of miles around the state. Two of his favorite foods are fried chicken and pizza. He enjoys watching westerns (Gunsmoke) and loves to have a joke handy to share with whomever will listen. One of his latest jokes—What did one hat say to the other “you go on ahead” Happy birthday Dale.



Meet Mary Ann Bergmeier a member who is 85+ years old. Mary Ann grew up on a farm ,the third of four children. She went to a one room school called Golden Ridge. Recess consisted of playing softball and tag. She learned to play the trumpet. She took enough college classes in high school that she started teaching in a rural school right out of high school. A childhood memory was making homemade ice cream during winter and chopping ice off the water tank and then crank the handle to churn. Mulberries with cream and sugar was a favorite treat. As a past time she enjoys jigsaw puzzles. Happy birthday Mary Ann.

On Friday morning, December 15th, seventeen ladies of the Clay Center UMC visited The Clay Center Presbyterian Manor, Advena Living, and Liberty Place "Spreading Christmas Cheer by singing loud for all to hear" some of our favorite Christmas Carols. Linda Henry led our jolly group. At each facility, the residents were invited to "sing-a-long"; it was noted that at Advena, even the birds in the aviary "joined in"! When the singing of Carols was done, the group greeted and visited with the residents. At the Manor, the group stopped by to see Linda Henry's mother, JoAnn Bauer, for a little more Christmas Caroling and visiting. The last stop was at El Puerto for food and fellowship.

BUDGET REPORT

November Budget

Receipts: \$27,462.46

Expenses: \$26,627.24

Missions: \$414.99

YTD

Receipts: \$307,643.41

Expenses: \$313,956.72

JANUARY

Birthdays and Anniversaries

85+ years old and 50+ years

Scott & Mary Taddiken

01/03/1970

Gary & Clione Case

01/05/1957

Stanley Pfizenmaier 01/06

Dale Cramer 01/22

Mary Ann Bergmeier 01/23

Marabeth's Memo -

Its' a new year, so that means it is time for a new calendar. Last year I had a flip calendar on my desk with a different saying for each day. Several of us on staff at the church have calendars like this and we often share our favorites during our weekly Staff Meetings. Some are funny. Like for instance, “Everybody Welcome. Well.....come!” or “You will inspire some and annoy others. Do it anyway.” Or the best one “Bring your spiritual marshmallows. Our Pastor is on fire!” I thought that was hilarious and appropriate for Pastor Reuben!

Sometimes they are thought provoking. “Faith is a journey, not a guilt trip.” Or “‘Listen’ and ‘Silent’ are spelled with the same letters.” and “If you’re living like there is no God, you’d better be right!” That one gets you to thinking.

Through the entire year, I have to say, the one that struck me the hardest was from December 8, 2023. It said, “Don’t judge someone because they sin differently than you.” I have read that many times since that day and I have shared it with several people. It is so easy in this time, especially with Social Media, to compare ourselves to other people. We see what everyone does, we see how they look, we witness their impulsive remarks and we judge them. We really do judge them. I suppose in some strange way, that can make us feel better about ourselves. But, the fact of the matter is, we all sin and fall short. Just because someone sins differently than me, doesn’t make them worse than me and it doesn’t make me better than them. Sin is sin. It is separation from God. The world would be a better place if we focused on taking care of our own discretions and did away with the idea of judging others.

Our calendars serve many purposes. They keep us organized and up to date. But sometimes, they can provide great life lessons to ponder. My message for the last day of 2023 said, “You didn’t come this far to only come this far.”

May your 2024 be a year of positive change and growth and may you find God in the most unusual places.

Much Love,
Marabeth Conner

One of the projects of the Clay Center United Methodist Women is to prepare and deliver Christmas Goodie Boxes. This year they packaged and delivered 82 boxes. A special thank you to Darcy Blackwood who heads up this committee & Wallea Bergsten’s childcare singers.

Children Learning About Yahweh

Happy New Year church family!

New year rings in so much anticipation. Studies show that on January 1st, about 41% of adults in the U.S. set resolutions and only 9% of that sum achieves the resolutions they set. I don't know about you, but I am one of the 'other' 59%. How about you? Are you a New Year resolution person? How was 2023 for you? Did you achieve all that you set for 2023? Do you have plans for 2024? For me, I do have plans for the new year, but I also like to look back on 2023 and consider the thread of God's faithfulness and His fingerprints in my life, my family, and my ministry. The prophet Jeremiah puts it this way; **"Stop at the crossroad and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls."** God made sense of my 2023 doubts and answered *some* of them. John Piper, one of the world renown theologians once said that out of the 10,000 things going on in our life, we may be aware of only 3 of them while God is working on the 9,997 other things. God is always working. It is good to look ahead, and the statements above have also reminded me to pause, look back and consider what God has and continues to do.

I am celebrating what God did for our ministry in 2023. We were able to confirm 9 of our youth to be full members of our church. We continued with our tradition of leading the sunrise service and our youth group did a great job; they were greeters, they read scripture, they shared homilies about the resurrection, and helped Pastor Reuben with holy communion. In the summer, our youth attended a denomination wide youth conference in Daytona Beach, Florida. All 30 of us that attended had a great time and this experience will be a story that will forever stay with all of us. At the Great Plains annual conference, our youth group was again recognized for being the hands and feet of Jesus not only in our community but shining the light of Christ among the nations through the many missions that we love to take part in. One of our youth members received the auspicious Harry Denman Evangelism award at the conference.

Our ministry completed a total of four different curriculums from the Seedbed Publishing House. Our Adventurers and Power Pack students all achieved many of our goals by memorizing weekly scripture and reciting creeds. I am proud of what God has done among our young people and what he continues to do this year and the many years to come. For our middle and high schoolers, they continue to impress us with their boldness in reading scripture during worship service and some of them have stepped up to do more by leading worship and preaching the Word. As for our missions, God continues to open up the hearts of our community and church families to provide for the needs of our ministry. We cannot thank our church family enough for the many prayers and support for our fundraising events throughout last year. We raised 168% over our goal during Match Day and packed more than double of our goal for Operation Christmas Child. All the shoeboxes that were packed last year are being sent to Burundi and Zambia. We also adopted a maintenance platoon from Fort Riley that was deployed in Europe.

I pray that the seeds we are planting today will give shade and rest to those coming after us. Thank you so much to all of our church family for your giving heart and intentionally seeking to make our community and the world around us a better place for the younger generation to come. May we continue to be the people of God that seeks His presence in this new year.

Zac Vakadewatabua



Pastor Reuben, I am thankful for you because you greet us at the door at church. My favorite song is "All the People said Amen!" I like Sunday School! Love **Joslyn Avery**

Thank you so very much for the beautiful prayers and squares prayer quilt. It is a very pretty quilt, but even more beautiful are the prayers you all prayed for me. I sincerely appreciate all your prayers and I will treasure the quilt as a reminder of all the prayers you prayed for my recovery. Love & hugs. **Jody Cott**

Thanks to Darcy Blackwood and her crew for the wonderful Goodie Box I received. We are enjoying it and the nice variety of treats! Also, I got to deliver some boxes to our members and each one was thrilled as they received it! This is a wonderful ministry for our church! Way to go UMW ladies! **Cathy Hafner**


Thanks were also received by phone calls and in person messages from **Scott Taddiken, Dale Crammer, Linda Kane, and Rolland Reed** for the wonderful Goodie Boxes that the UMW ladies provided and the Christmas songs sang by Walleeta Bergsten's childcare children.



The Kid's Christmas Program took place in the Sanctuary on December 10th. We had speakers, vocal and instrumental soloist, groups, ensembles, and greeters with a packed house. Everyone did a wonderful job and so many words of praise was heard throughout the program.





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1  Church Office is closed	2 7:15a Girl's study 10a Tue @ 10 11:30a Harvesters	3 9a:15a FFF 5:30p Scramble 6p Memorial 6:15p Youth 6:45p Trustees	4	5 9:15a FFF	6
7 8:45a The Way Service 9:30a J.A.M./ Adult S.S. 10:30a Sanctuary Service 8p AA/Al-Anon	8 6:30p Boy's Study	9 7:15a Girl's study 9:30a Cong Care 10a Tue @ 10 3:30p Adv 5p FFF	10 6:45a Men's Morn 9:15a FFF 5:30p Scramble 6p Finance 6:15p Youth	11 10a Homespun 3:30p Pwr Pack 5p FFF	12 9:15a FFF	13
14 8:45a The Way Service 9:30a J.A.M./ Adult S.S. 10:30a Sanctuary Service 8p AA/Al-Anon	15 	16 7:15a Girl's study 10a Tue @ 10 3:30p Adv 5p FFF	17 9:15a FFF 5:30p Scramble 5:30p Cool Whip 6:15p Youth 7p Church Council	18 3:30p Pwr Pack 5p FFF 6:30p CCCOM @ Mizpah	19 9:15a FFF	20
21 8:45a The Way Service 9:30a J.A.M./ Adult S.S. 10:30a Sanctuary Service 8p AA/Al-Anon	22 6:30p Boy's Study	23 7:15a Girl's study 10a Tue @ 10 Enlightener articles due 3:30p Adv 5p FFF	24 6:45a Men's Morn 9:15a FFF 5:30p Scramble 6p SPRC 6:15p Youth	25 3:30p Pwr Pack 5p FFF	26 9:15a FFF 1p UMW	27
28 8:45a The Way Service 9:30a J.A.M./ Adult S.S. 10:30a Sanctuary Service 8p AA/Al-Anon	29 6:30p Boy's Study	30 7:15a Girl's study 10a Tue @ 10 3:30p Adv 5p FFF	31 9:15a FFF 5:30p Scramble 6:15p Youth	FLC- Family Life Center FEL- Fellowship Hall (basement) Tue @ 10- Prayer & fellowship i FFF- Faithfully Fit Forever - FLC- exercise program UMW- United Methodist Women Home Spun- UMW cluster - Parlor C.O.O.L. W.H.I.P.- UMW cluster- RM 2 Men's Morning- FLC/ breakfast and devotion Adv. - Adventures 1st-3rd grades/ FEL Pwr Pk- Power Pack 4th-5th grades/ FEL Youth Group- HS/ High School, MS/Middle School		

Church Council Members 2024

Officers
Chairperson: Lisa Bauer
Vice-Chairperson: Roy Henry
Recording Secretary: Sara Brockman
Treasurer: Maureen Pfizenmaier
Financial Secretary: Jolie Kasper
Membership Secretary: Kathy Wilder

Members
Pastor: Rev. Reuben Langat, Ph.D.
Church Coordinator: Marabeth Conner
Children & Youth Director: Zac Vakadewatabua
Visitation Assistant: Herb Mugler
Lay Leader: Paige Taddiken
Lay Member/ Annual Conference: Marcy Schooley
Alternate: Paige Taddiken
Chair of Trustees: Russ Taddiken
Chair of Finance: Morgan Cannizzo
Chair of SPRC: Linda Henry
Chair of Memorial: Jerry Habluetzel/ Faun Bauer
Chair of Scholarship: Seth Schooley
Representative of UMM: Dana Bergsten
Representative of UMW:
Jan. & July- Rep. from Homespun
April & Oct.-Rep. from C.O.O.L. W.H.I.P.
Youth Representative: Addy Gurney
Disaster Coordinator: Tom Nelson
Audio/Video & Communication Tech:
Rowan Hinkle & Al Kirtley
Rep. to C.C.C. Ministries: Tom Nelson
At Large Members to Church Council:
Benny Wallace (24), Kendra Liby (25), Derek James (26)

2022-2024 2023-2025 2024-2026

Nomination Committee
Mary Taddiken Mike Sherbert Jericho Hammond
Frieda Knitter Kathy Wilder Preston Rook

Trustees
Tom Siebold Jamie Bloom Eddy Avery
Wendy James Rick Chaffee Jeff Blackwood
Russ Taddiken Aaron Pierson Suzi Carlson

Committee on Finance
Dwight Benninga Darcy Blackwood Marc Gerardy
Janice Urban Bill Oetinger Deb Wallace
Morgan Cannizzo Lynda Reed Brad Wohler

Staff Parish
Scott Taddiken Kevin Hartman Patrick Hayes
Gary Unruh Linda Henry Kate Hoffman
Frances Benson Dawn McGee Aly Schooley

Memorial Committee
Jane Crawshaw Rhys Baker Faun Bauer
Donna Klein Jerry Habluetzel Larry Wilcoxson

Scholarship Committee
Ruth Ann Johnson Brandi Griggs Jenni Davidson
Cindy Habluetzel Seth Schooley Eric Pfizenmaier

VBS Directors
Jenni Davidson Amanda Jameson Jana Laffery

J.A.M. Directors
Amy Burr Elisabeth Nelson Amanda Alderson

Normal Meeting Dates & Locations

Trustees Meeting is the 1st Wednesday of every other month starting in January @ 6:45 pm in the Parlor.
Finance Committee meets on the 2nd Wednesday of every quarter starting in January @ 6:00 pm in the basement room #2
Memorial Committee meets on the 1st Wednesday of every quarter starting in January @ 6 pm in the Library.
Staff Parish Relationship Committee meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month @ 6:00 pm in the basement room #2.
Church Council meets on the 2nd Wednesday of every quarter starting in January @ 7pm in the Parlor. The January meeting has a special date this year and meeting on the 17th. **Reports** are due on the Friday before the meeting from each chair or representative.