



Elders Meeting December 9, 2013

Opening & Prayer-

Senior Pastor Tim Gibson opened the meeting in prayer.

Roll Call-

All elders were present: Wayne Batten, Dick Bickings, Andy Brimer, Mike Capaldi, Mark Culton, Tim Gibson, Scott Holwick, Jason Hoy, Shawn Sommons

Devotion & Prayer-

- Pastor Tim Gibson led the men in a brief discussion focused on Luke 2:25 and the true meaning of Christmas.
- The elders shared in a time of prayer and thanksgiving to God.

Approval of Minutes-

Motion was made to approve the minutes from the November 11, 2013 Board of Elders meeting, seconded and passed.

Financial Report-

- Treasurer Andy Brimer reviewed the financial report (Attachment 1) and a **motion** was made to approve it as submitted, seconded and passed.
- Andy explained that due to Jon Wiegand and his family relocating in 2014 this will be the last financial audit that he leads. Andy requested that the following individuals be trained to conduct the audit in the future: Dale & Gail Tschudy and Rachael Kuntz. The elders supported these selections and agreed to them being trained by Jon Wiegand.

HR Audit Follow: Next Steps-

- Mike Capaldi reviewed options for work to be potentially completed as a result of the findings from the recent HR audit. (See previous minutes for details) The following projects were recommended and all costs with the exception of the handbook are estimates:
 - Re-write the employee handbook to include all legal requirements. (Cost \$1,750)
 - Develop a job description template that includes all legal requirements. (Cost \$100)
 - Develop a workers comp panel. (Cost \$400)
 - Create a legal employment application. (Cost \$100)
 - Develop and provide training on employment law for all supervisory roles. (Cost \$200)
 - Develop a performance appraisal process. (Cost \$500)
 - Develop company sign-offs for various policies. (Cost \$300)
- **Motion** was made to authorize the recommended work to a maximum cost of \$3,350, seconded and passed.
- Mike Capaldi agreed to see the project through even though he will no longer be an elder as of January 2014.

Mike Capaldi Transition-

- Since Mike will no longer serve as an elder as of January, the elders discussed Mike's involvement if any moving forward.
- The elders agreed that Pastor Mark Culton would serve as Secretary to the Board of Elders beginning in January.
- Either Wayne Batten or Shawn Sommons, who are currently members of the PRC, will assume Mike's role as Chairman of the Pastoral Relations Committee.
- As mentioned earlier, Mike will see the completion of the HR audit projects through.
- The elders spent some time talking about potential elder and deacon candidates. There was also a recommendation that we conduct exit interviews for the deacons stepping down to better understand their experiences serving in these roles.

Membership Applications-

- The following individuals were brought forward as applicants for membership: Briel Rhoades, Erik Rhoades, Jessica Whitmer and Adam Whitmer.
- **Motion** was made to accept these applicants as members, seconded and passed.

Pastoral Housing Allowance Submissions-

The four pastors all submitted their estimated housing allowance amounts and breakdowns for 2014. **Motion** was made to accept these estimates, seconded and passed. (Attachments 2, 3, 4, 5)

Pastor of Congregational Care Replacement-

The elders spent some time discussing the next steps regarding the now created vacancy due to the resignation of Pastor Jason Hoy, which is effective January 5, 2014. Several options were discussed including how to manage the workload in his absence. No decisions were taken and the men agreed to continue praying and seeking God's will in this matter. The subject will be revisited at the next elders meeting on January 13, 2014.

Pastoral Reports-

The pastors submitted their monthly reports and summarized them for the elders:

- Tim Gibson, Senior Pastor (Attachment 6)
- Dick Bickings, Pastor of Discipleship (Attachment 7)
- Mark Culton, Pastor of Youth (Attachment 8)
- Jason Hoy, Pastor of Congregational Care (Attachment 9)

Adjournment & Prayer-

The meeting was closed in prayer and adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Capaldi
Secretary to the Board of Elders

December 9, 2013

To: Board of Elders
From: Andy Brimer, Treasurer
Subject: Financial Report for December 2013

Attached you will find the following for the November 2013 Financial Report:

- November Financial Statement
- YTD Financial Statement
- Graphical representation of:
 1. Income compared to projected budget
 2. Expenses compared to projected budget
 3. Income trends in relation to expense trends
 4. Asset trends

In reviewing the financial statements I would like to make the following comments:

- Total income for November was 92% of the budgeted forecast while the YTD giving was at 98% of the annual forecast.
- Expenses for November were 101% of the budgeted forecast while the YTD expenses were at 96% of the annual forecast.

EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - NOVEMBER 2013 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

BALANCE SHEET REPORT / COMPARISON

GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

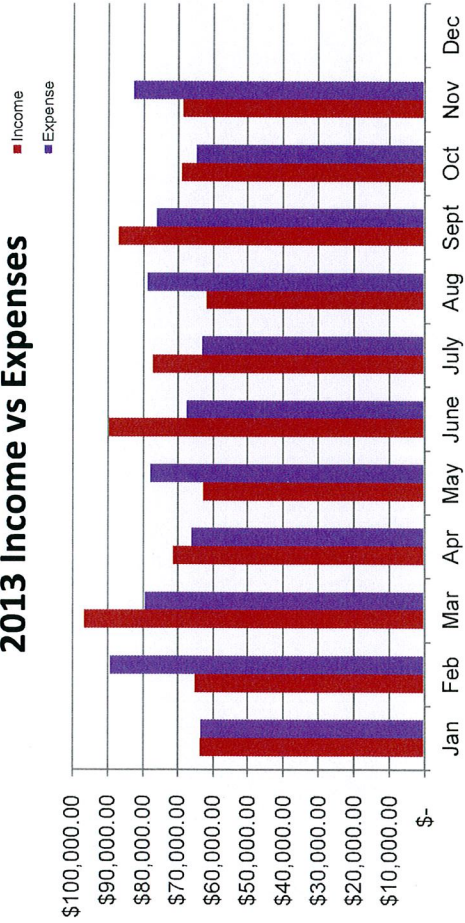
ASSETS	30-Nov-13	31-Oct-13	\$ Change	Income	November	Budget	Variance
Assets - Checking/Savings							
18000 · Checking (KNBT)	435,849.26	451,520.52	-15,671.26	1100 · Offerings / Gifts	67,461.21	74,583.33	-7,122.12
18002 · CDs (KNBT)	67,134.49	67,134.49	0.00	1400 · Interest	37.65	100.00	-62.35
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	90,672.13	90,664.67	7.46	1700 · Memorials	0.00	0.00	0.00
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	5,375.67	5,375.67	0.00	1900 · BCS / Bldg Use	1,084.17	672.25	411.92
Total Checking/Savings	599,031.55	614,695.35	-15,663.80	Total Income	68,583.03	75,355.58	-6,772.55
TOTAL ASSETS	599,031.55	614,695.35	-15,663.80	Expense			
LIABILITIES				2000 · General Finance	9,967.10	4,628.34	5,338.76
Current Liabilities				3000 · Discipleship	2,623.97	2,495.00	128.97
901 · Building Fund	31,253.19	30,323.99	929.20	5000 · Evangelism	129.80	550.00	-420.20
902 · Capital Improvement	-21,454.50	-21,454.50	0.00	6000 · Missions	16,840.76	18,222.50	-1,381.74
903 · Transportation Fund	18.00	18.00	0.00	7000 · Deacon	4,528.48	5,729.18	-1,200.70
904 · Scholarship Fund	2,744.50	2,474.50	270.00	8000 · Worship	0.00	341.66	-341.66
905 · Faith Promise	4,233.18	8,022.52	-3,789.34	9000 · Office/Admin	1,071.16	1,341.67	-270.51
907 · Benevolence Fund	17,853.53	16,945.14	908.39	10000 · Congregational Care	120.00	145.00	-25.00
908 · Music Fund	49.20	49.20	0.00	11000 · Compensation	47,697.37	48,864.52	-1,167.15
911 · Year End Accruals	8,480.16	8,480.16	0.00	Total Expense	82,978.64	82,317.87	660.77
912 · Run For The Children	2,358.01	760.11	1,597.90	Net Ordinary Income	-14,395.61	-6,962.29	-7,433.32
914 · HRA	1,259.86	2,013.66	-753.80	Net Fund Transfer between Accts.	0.00	0.00	0.00
915 · Youth Summer Missions	105.73	105.73	0.00	Net Income	-14,395.61	-6,962.29	-7,433.32
100 · Payroll Liabilities	6,711.71	7,142.25	-430.54				
Total Current Liabilities	53,612.57	54,880.76	-1,268.19	DESIGNATED FUNDS			
Long Term Liabilities				Income			
810 · Mortgage	0.00	0.00	0.00	901 · Building Fund	929.20	0.00	929.20
Total Long Term Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	903 · Transportation Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	53,612.57	54,880.76	-1,268.19	904 · Scholarship Fund	270.00	0.00	270.00
EQUITY				905 · Faith Promise	3,315.00	7,104.34	-3,789.34
900 · Retained Earnings	959,280.04	959,280.04	0.00	907 · Benevolence Fund	2,369.27	1,460.88	908.39
Net Income	-5,982.26	8,413.35	-14,395.61	908 · Music Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
1000 · Opening Bal Equity	-407,878.80	-407,878.80	0.00	OTHER FUNDS			
Total Equity	545,418.98	559,814.59	-14,395.61	902 · Capital Improvement Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	599,031.55	614,695.35	-15,663.80	911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	0.00	0.00
				912 · Run For The Children	3,630.00	2,032.10	1,597.90
				914 · HRA	0.00	753.80	-753.80
				915 · Youth Summer Missions	0.00	0.00	0.00
				Total Other Current Liabilities	10,513.47	11,351.12	-837.65

Andrew J. Bunin
Treasurer

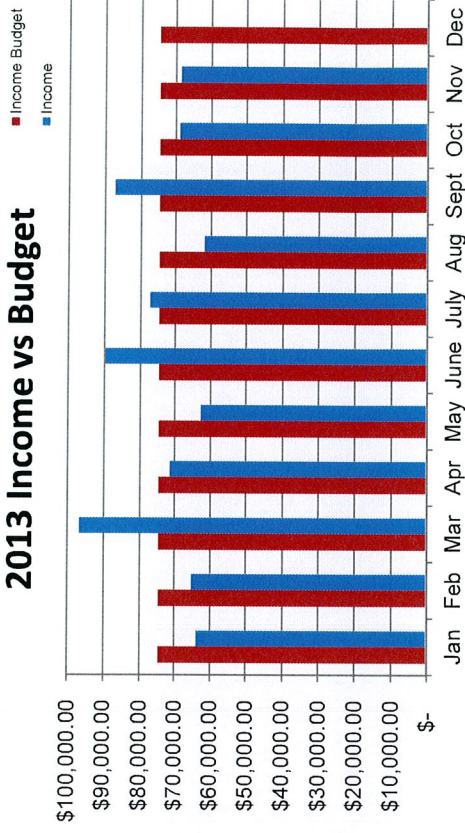
12/9/13
Date

ASSETS				Nov YTD	Budget	Variance	%BGT YTD
Assets - Checking/Savings							
18000 · Checking (KNBT)				803,799.71	820,416.66	-16,616.95	98%
18002 · CDs (KNBT)				744.00	1,100.00	-356.00	68%
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)				340.00	0.00	340.00	N/A
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)				8,167.50	7,394.75	772.75	110%
Total Checking/Savings				813,051.21	828,911.41	-15,860.20	98%
TOTAL ASSETS							
599,031.55				641,463.16	-42,431.61		
LIABILITIES							
Current Liabilities							
901 · Building Fund				29,237.88	36,246.68	-7,008.80	81%
902 · Capital Improvement Fund				19,736.82	28,060.00	-8,323.18	70%
903 · Transportation Fund				482.07	2,750.00	-2,267.93	18%
904 · Scholarship Fund				123,462.75	141,507.00	-18,044.25	87%
905 · Faith Promise				69,739.72	72,233.34	-2,493.62	97%
907 · Benevolence Fund				8,470.61	5,658.34	2,812.27	150%
908 · Music Fund				15,130.24	18,388.33	-3,258.09	82%
911 · Year End Accruals				1,468.52	2,085.00	-616.48	70%
912 · Run For The Children				542,054.86	537,809.89	4,244.97	101%
914 · HRA				809,783.47	844,738.58	-34,955.11	96%
915 · Youth Summer Missions				3,267.74	-15,827.17	19,094.91	
100 · Payroll Liabilities				9,250.00	0.00	9,250.00	
Total Other Current Liabilities				-5,982.26	-15,827.17	9,844.91	
DESIGNATED FUNDS							
Net Ordinary Income				3,267.74	-15,827.17	19,094.91	
Net Fund Transfer between Accts.				9,250.00	0.00	9,250.00	
Net Income				-5,982.26	-15,827.17	9,844.91	
OTHER FUNDS							
Income				16,371.20	0.00	16,371.20	
Expenses				10.00	0.00	10.00	
901 · Building Fund				1,610.99	1,153.00	457.99	
903 · Transportation Fund				30,933.98	76,189.34	-45,255.36	
904 · Scholarship Fund				27,452.21	15,641.59	11,810.62	
905 · Faith Promise				21.00	0.00	21.00	
907 · Benevolence Fund							
908 · Music Fund							
902 · Capital Improvement Fund				0.00	21,454.50	-21,454.50	
911 · Year End Accruals				381.57	500.00	-118.43	
912 · Run For The Children				4,130.00	2,032.10	2,097.90	
914 · HRA				9,750.00	8,371.71	1,378.29	
915 · Youth Summer Missions				1,690.00	3,390.60	-1,700.60	
Total Other Current Liabilities				92,350.95	128,732.84	-36,381.89	

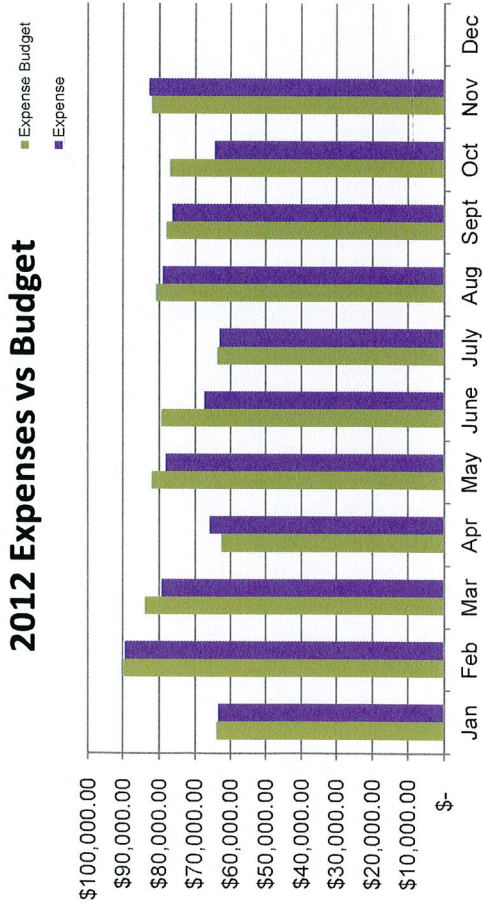
2013 Income vs Expenses



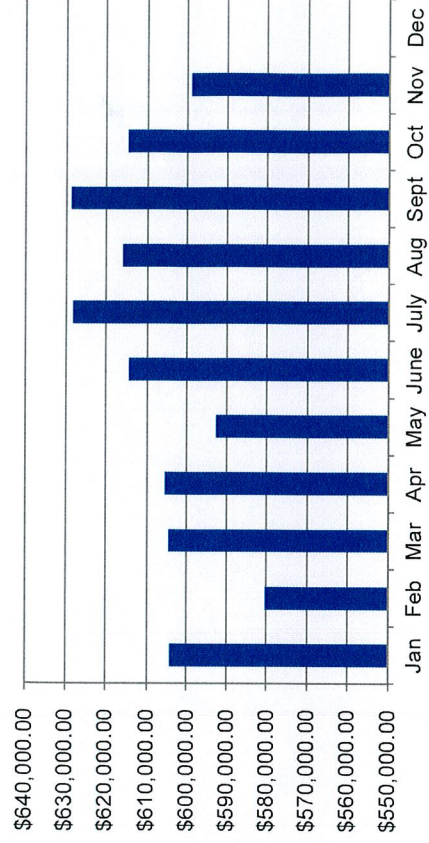
2013 Income vs Budget



2012 Expenses vs Budget



2013 Assets



Pastors Name Tim Gibson
 For the Year 2014

Attachment #2

HOUSING ALLOWANCE (Method 2: The Estimated Exclusion Method)

> Down Payment	0.00	
> Mortgage Payments on a loan or purchase or improve your home(include principle and interest)	14,837.68	(1230.24/mo)
> Real estate Taxes	6,644.00	(553.67/mo)
> Property Insurance	960.00	(80/mo)
> Utilities (electricity, gas, water trash pickup, local telephone charges)	4,800.00	(400/mo)
> Furnishings and appliances (purchase and repair)	1,000.00	(Misc furniture - New Dishwasher)
> Structural repairs and remodeling	2,000.00	(Roof & fence damages due to Hurricane Sandy)
> yard maintenance and improvements	500.00	(General Maintenance)
> Maintenance items (household cleansers, light bulbs, pest control, etc.)	600.00	(50/mo)
> Homeowners association dues	0.00	
> miscellaneous	1,000.00	(Unexpected Items)
Total Estimated Expenses for 2013	32,341.68	

Pastors Name Dick Bickings
 For the Year 2014

HOUSING ALLOWANCE (Method 2: The Estimated Exclusion Method)

> Down Payment	<u>0.00</u>	
> Mortgage Payments on a loan or purchase or improve your home(include principle and interest)	<u>11,312.00</u>	
> Real estate Taxes	<u>5,000.00</u>	
> Property Insurance	<u>350.00</u>	
> Utilities (electricity, gas, water trash pickup, local telephone charges)	<u>7,750.00</u>	
> Furnishings and appliances (purchase and repair)		
> Structural repairs and remodeling	<u>3,600.00</u>	repoint chimney
> yard maintenance and improvements	<u>50.00</u>	lawn work
> Maintenance items (household cleansers, light bulbs, pest control, etc.)	<u>500.00</u>	
> Homeowners association dues	<u>-</u>	
> miscellaneous	<u>-</u>	
Total Estimated Expenses for 2013	28,562.00	

Attachment #4

December 26, 2013

Dear Mike Capaldi,

The Cultons request \$5,630 to be used as our housing allowance for the 2014 year.

Sincerely,
Mark R. Culton II

2014 Housing Allowance Expenses
Jason and Jennifer Hoy
610-261-2772

2012	Mortgage	PPL	RCN	CWSA	NBMA	Oil	Misc.
January	\$700	\$72.36	\$74.13	\$47.50		\$689.65	\$42.40 (oven heating element)
February	\$700	\$81.46	\$88.83				\$198 (ABC-furnace repair)
March	\$700	\$77.35	\$87.70		\$87.00		\$234.00 (Garbage tax)
April	\$700	\$72.20	\$87.70	\$47.80			
May	\$700	\$71.38	\$87.66				\$285 (Integrity Handyman Services-roof/chimney repair)
June	\$700	\$62.22	\$87.66		\$96.00		
July	\$700	\$73.60	\$87.66	\$56.20			\$550 (Woodchip-chimney repair) \$79.15 (Lowe's—mulch, paint) \$49.96 (Walmart—rugs, blinds)
August	\$700	\$123.59	\$87.48			\$774.97	\$39.20 (per capita taxes)
September	\$700	\$103.18	\$87.60		\$90.00		\$91.89 (Walmart—rugs, blender, phone)
October	\$700	\$66.93	\$87.60	\$50.60			\$47.95 (escrow payment)
November	\$700	\$81.21	\$87.77				\$17.96 (Lowe's—mulch)
December	\$702.82	\$69.06	\$87.77		\$90.00		
TOTALS	\$8,402.82	\$954.54	\$1,039.56	\$202.10	\$363.00	\$1,464.62	\$1,635.51
GRAND TOTAL	\$14,062.15						Jason is projecting \$15,000 for 2014

*Mortgage amount changes each December based on real estate taxes and home-owner's insurance (both included in mortgage payment)

Pastor Tim's Ministry Report December 9, 2013

Studying & Preaching: I am thoroughly enjoying our study through the book of Hebrews. Many have expressed how the Lord is using this study in their lives to help them grow and understand. I have been adding application questions on the back of the sermon outline each week in hopes that these questions will facilitate thinking during the week.

Worship Ministries: (From Jennie Flicker)

The past month has been busy with Thanksgiving and Christmas worship preparations. Obtaining music and rehearsing with various students, arranging music, and preparing for the combined Student and Adult Choir anthem are among the big items. A day was spent with most of the staff at the Catalyst Conference. I prepared music & played piano for the prelude at the Women's Christmas Banquet and sang for the Lehigh Valley Prayer Breakfast. Wrapping up end of year tasks and maintaining regular duties while preparing for extra Christmas music is the theme of the ministry right now. Things are going well.

Church Extension Board: I participated in my first board meeting on December 5. It is a privilege to be a part of helping plant churches. I appreciate the men there serving and hope to be a valuable part of the team. It will take a little while for me to get acclimated to the workings of the board and ministry.

Staff: Overall, the staff are working very hard. I'm thankful for conscientious workers who are doing their work "as unto the Lord." We attended a conference in Lancaster, Pa on November 21 put on by Andy Stanley & Craig Groeschel called "Catalyst: One Day Leadership Essentials." There were many good practical helps for leadership presented such as family priorities, time management, focusing on values, accountability, etc. However, the major ministry philosophy that was presented did not fit our philosophy. We discussed this in our staff meeting and it proved to be a valuable lesson for our team. The approach presented at the conference was more man-centered than we desire. Nothing was mentioned of bible study, prayer, theology, faithfulness, the power of the Holy Spirit in ministry, etc. While it was designed to be practical in nature, the emphasis of "high performance teams" and "being relevant" overshadowed what we believe to be a more biblical approach. The approach presented seemed to be more concerned with the "product" that would be presented to the un-churched. They presented a very "attractional" model of ministry as apposed to what we at Ebenezer believe to be the focus of ministry success. Our model is one of faithfulness to Scripture, prayer, and a desire to ultimately please the Lord primarily, rather than pleasing the un-churched. Stanley shared the vision of his philosophy with us that clearly revealed his ministry philosophy. His mission statement is "to be a church that the un-churched love to attend." In my opinion, this philosophy has too much horizontal focus at the expense of a vertical God ward focus. We discussed the differences in the philosophy of Ebenezer and Stanley's model.

LEAD Men's Leadership Training: The class continues to have momentum as we have finished the major section on theology. Currently we are moving into the area of Church health, as well as ministry philosophy. In these sections, my goal is to help our men to articulate and craft a ministry philosophy statement that would fit the model at Ebenezer. The men continue to memorize Scripture as well as faithfully read. Accountability groups seem to be working well.

Kinship Group: Our group continues to meet very successfully. We are going through Piper's Desiring God curriculum. It is spurring us on to deep thoughts of God and love for Him. We are also having very good prayer times and encouragement for each other.

Wednesday Night Bible Study/Prayer Meeting: Our study through the book of Matthew is continuing well. We continue to have anywhere from 30-40 people. This is one of my favorite times of the week. Our corporate prayer times are also very wonderful as we share our concerns with one another and go before the Lord for our needs.

It is with joy that I serve the Lord here at Ebenezer. This last month has been a wonderful month, with the exception of Jason Hoy's departure. The guys on staff have such a wonderful relationship and our like-heartedness makes it not only a joy but an ease to serve with one another. We are all going to miss Jason greatly. He is definitely going to leave a huge hole in our ministry and in our hearts.

Serving Christ,
Pastor Tim Gibson

POD (Pastor of Discipleship) Report – Nov/Dec 2013

As I continue my personal bible study trek through the New Testament my next stop was that great doxology at the end of the book of Jude...

*“Now to **him who is able** to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24–25, ESV)*

As you can tell by my highlights, we serve THE God, who **is able**...He is not learning this ability, nor is He becoming able, but He is able! Able to do two things in reference to His fallible, puny, sinful children, and that is, to *keep us from falling* (idea of falling away or becoming apostate), and *presenting us blameless* (qualifying us for service). He does this **through** Jesus Christ, and **for** His glory!

So the next time I feel discouraged and unqualified because of my sinful failures, I must remember it is not me who is keeping me qualified, it is the eternal, sovereign God!

With that in mind, here is a quick summary of some of the ministry opportunities from November/December 2013:

Kids Crossing

- **CrossTime Sunday School:**
 - Please pray for both a 5th Grade teacher and helper for the **even** months, Dee Sutton will be stepping down at the end of December 2013.
 - **Curriculum change:** Praise the Lord for the Gospel Project material...this Bible/Christ centered curriculum has been well received by both teachers and students.
- **Early Childhood (2&3 year-olds):** Continuing to go well for both services and Sunday School.
- **Children's Church:** The Gospel Project curriculum worship segment is working well for Children's Church with an average of 8 children attending.
- **Wednesday Evening Programs:** Our new Awana program is quickly approaching 100 kids in attendance, which means we do have a real need of more volunteers. It is very exciting to see kids learning and reciting scripture and listening intently to the bible teaching done by our elders. **Please pray that the Lord would send us the necessary volunteers**, and that the scriptures the children are learning may richly dwell in them!

Student Ministry

- See Pastor Mark's report.

Adult Ministry

- **Adult Electives:** Our fall semester of Adult Electives is winding down, and preparation for the winter/spring semester is underway...the only knowns at this point are...Acts (Part 2) – Rich Mastronardo, and Joshua – Pastor Dick Bickings. Please pray that the Lord would send forth some new adult elective teachers so that we may offer a variety of subjects, and give the current teachers a break. We will only have 4 adult teachers available beginning January 2014.
- **Men's Ministry:**
 - **Bethel Series:** Praise the Lord, the program is going very well...between all three classes we have a total of 45 students! The classes are currently on a holiday hiatus and will resume again the first week in January 2014.
 - **Men's Bible Studies/Prayer:**
 - Tuesday mornings from 6:15 AM – 8:00 AM, Men's prayer time with 6-8 men attending.

- Thursday mornings from 6:15 AM – 7:30 AM, This early morning bible study group is currently studying 2 Thessalonians.
- **Men's Breakfast** (December 7, 2013 from 7:30-9:30 AM) - We were blessed by the attendance and participation of approximately 40 men for our delicious breakfast followed by worship, the teaching of the Word on Spiritual-Leadership in the Workplace, and closing with group prayer.
- **Women's Ministry:** Here is an update from Laura...

“Women's ministry had a wonderful night on December 7th celebrating Christmas with our banquet. We had 70 ladies come out for this. The fellowship trio did a wonderful job, and the men were great serving. Lynne Head was our special guest, and we were able to give her a wonderful gift.

Discerning the Voice of God ended and is ending for the women on Monday evenings. We have learned so much and are looking forward to doing Gideon by Priscilla in January.

Went to the Catalyst conference with the staff in November and we learned a lot and had a great time together.

Having a Mother/Daughter conference in 2014 (October) and we have our speakers lined up for that.

Beth Moore Conference is in Hershey May 2 and 3rd and will be promoting that as well.”

Discipleship Support

- **Kinship:** We praise the Lord for the 14 groups with 173 adults and 89 kids involved, and a variety of bible study topics.

Evangelism/Outreach:

- **Manna Ministry:** We are now providing help for those who are truly needy and have volunteers available to meet spiritual needs. We will be looking at a couple of possible facilities in the Pembroke area of Bethlehem in early 2014 where we can provide food and clothing for the needy and hold services for them to reach their spiritual needs.
- **BattleZone at Northampton County Prison:** We've completed our first BattleZone program at the prison and are working on an opportunity to go back in January 2014 and work in the maximum-security level of the prison. Please pray that the Lord would give us wisdom concerning this possibility, and that other men who have been through this study would rise up and help.

Other:

- Continued to meet with several men to counsel and encourage
- Helped in Awana as a T&T Leader
- Helped in MOPS as the 1^{1/2} - 2^{1/2} year-old class leader
- Taught Bethel OT class on Saturday mornings (until 11/9/13)
- Taught Evangelism Class (The Way of the Master) on Sunday mornings for Adult Electives
- Attended Reformed Theology Conference @ Quakertown BFC, on Friday-Saturday, November 15-16, 2013.
- Continuing in Greek I, TNARS seminary course, which is a part of my BS501 Biblical Languages course, as time permits.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Dick Bickings,
 Pastor of Discipleship

Student Ministries Report - November 2013

You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

(2 Corinthians 1:11, ESV)

What can I say about November? It will forever be one of my more difficult months to date. I have never experienced such sorrow as I have while coming to grips with the loss of my brother Ben. I have never tasted death quite like this before. It has been earth-shaking to be sure. And yet, at the same time - I have also never experienced the prayer of God's people on my behalf like I have these last few weeks. We did experience the prayers of Christ's church during Preslie's surgery (which was so very difficult as well). The thing is, God was merciful to us and He delivered Preslie physically, to God's glory! Not so with Ben. In His infinite wisdom and perfect sovereignty (it's hard to type that actually...), He decided Ben should not be spared. Or was he after all? I know that my brother is now spared from the turmoil and struggle with sin. He no longer fights the flesh, but rather is consumed with worshipping our Perfect God in holiness and truth. And so, I guess even our prayers for Ben's deliverance were heard and answered. But it is still hard for those of us trapped in earth's timetable. One thing is for sure - God has given me incredible grace and unexplainable peace through the prayers of Ebenezer members and many others as well. Like Paul, I am thanking God for "the blessing granted us through the prayers of many"! Thank you.

Teaching

- **Middle School**
Using the Core Truth curriculum, in which we go through the core doctrines of the faith - The mini series we are going through now is on *Jesus Christ* and we are calling it *Messiah*.
- **High School**
We will be starting our James study this coming Tuesday.
- **Sunday School**
We are using the curriculum "The Gospel Project".

Shepherding

- Had breakfast with a youth dad who I am trying to encourage to pursue Christ with his life.
- Had the immense joy of baptizing my girl Quinn!

Staff

- Christy Eatmon has moved away from the area, and we are thankful for her service to our students over the years. We continue to pray about God raising up youth workers, particularly with the high school ministry.

Activities

Illuminite - We continue to have monthly outreach events that students can feel comfortable bringing their unchurched friends to. We are constantly trying to improve these so that they are effective. December's illuminite will be our Christmas party.

OCC Shoebox Party - Though I was not able to attend, we had a great time with Ebenezer members of all ages coming together and packing shoeboxes for needy children around the world. I believe the total boxes collected were 383 (including those from BCS). Just as important I believe is the benefit of inter-generational ministry that this event affords.

Other

- Participated in Run for the Children.
- The ministry to the Lehigh wrestling team has officially begun, with a short Bible study every Thursday and opportunities for counseling those days as well.
- My wife attended the Purity Conference "Silver Ring Thing" and gave me a full rundown for future consideration.
- On a personal note, my family planned the memorial service for my brother Ben and I believe Christ was exalted and the gospel trumpeted. There were many people who came from Ebenezer and supported us, which meant so very much.
- Met with Brennan, pastor at Calvary Baptist to discuss young adult ministry and get to know him better.
- Hosted the Unite Meeting for local youth pastors this month.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Culton

PASTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Elders Meeting – Report for 12/9/13

Our Vision: To Accomplish the 3 fold purpose of the Church: Worship God,
Edify the Saints, and Evangelize the World!

1. **Shepherding**

- Many visits to hospitals, nursing facilities, homes. **The pastors are working on a rotation list to keep up with needs.**
- Quite a few going away lunches and dinners before my departure.
- Continue to meet with a few men one on one.

2. **Counseling**

- Counseling cases have winded down. **In my absence, remember to refer folks to Eric Johnson and Janet Vinson if on-going counseling is needed.**
- *Greifshare* and *DivorceCare* are finishing up. Praise God for Shawn Sommons, Byron Roth, Peggy Cook, and Chet Lehmann for doing an outstanding job with the groups.
- Adult elective on how to counsel using Tripp and Lane's curriculum *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* is going well.

3. **Other**

- Continue to attend Wednesday afternoon prayer meetings. **Someone will have to assume the prayer chain and prayer sheet.**
- Working on *Pastoral Theology* Seminary Course. Last one to earn a Masters of Theological Studies degree.
- Kinship is going well. **Kevin Hardy will be the group's leader.**
- AWANA is going well. **John Wiegand will replace me as a leader.**
- Attended CATALYST Conference
- Attended Ben Culton's funeral
- Gave devotional at MOPS Christmas gathering
- Attended men's breakfast

It has been a great privilege to serve with you brothers. I know I am the one leaving, but I feel like the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:36-37 when Paul left. Keep pressing on dear brothers. And don't shrink back from declaring the whole counsel of God! (Acts 20:27)