



# EBENEZER

## United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

# APR '21

Volume 17 Issue 4

Church's e-mail: [ebenezerumc@yahoo.com](mailto:ebenezerumc@yahoo.com)

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### Special Notes

#### District Superintendent Change

Dr. Carl Arrington, District Superintendent of the Appalachian District, will retire on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Lory Beth Huffman will serve as D.S. on July 1<sup>st</sup>. She served as D.S. in the district before.

#### Sunday School Resumed

All Sunday School classes are meeting following worship. Please follow the Covid-19 guidelines.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." *Matthew 28:19*



### Pastor's Note



John Wesley gave the people called Methodist a mission statement. It is "to reform the nation and, in particular, the church; to spread scriptural holiness over the land."

What does that mean? How can we reform the nation? How can we reform the church? What is scriptural holiness?

To reform our nation and our church we need to change our mindsets. We need to stop looking for Republican solutions or Democratic solutions to our problems. We need to stop looking for liberal or conservative solutions to our problems. We need to seek the Christ solution for the problems in our nation, our church, and ourselves. We need to shift our hearts and minds to be like Christ.

How do we shift our hearts and minds? John Wesley gives us the model for how to do that. Methodism was focused in his day on the class meeting. A class meeting was a small group of 10-12 people who met weekly under the guidance of a leader. The leader asked each person the same question. "How is it with your soul?" The group gave guidance, support, and correction where needed. The group encouraged each other to live more like Christ in all aspects of their lives.

This summer I want to start 2 class meetings. I will act as the leader for these two groups with the expectation that after a year maximum the group will break up and start new groups. One group will be in person, and the other would be through Zoom. The groups will meet once a week, and will have no more than 10 people in each. I will share more about this throughout the months of April and May. If you feel called to participating in this, please let me know.

The second part of our mission statement is about spreading scriptural holiness. Holiness is about growing in Christ, and moving on to Christian perfection. Christian perfection means that we love fully as God fully loves us. How we love is not something that we have to guess at. It is based on the Bible. Christian faith is about loving in practical ways ourselves, our neighbors, our enemies, and our God. I will be lifting up ways that we can study our scriptures together as we learn how to be holy as God is holy. I plan to start a Pastor's Bible study once we are past the Covid restrictions. I also encourage you to participate in Sunday School.

Please pray about these things as we seek God's will for the future here at Ebenezer.

In God's grace

April Worship information is on page 3.

### Sunday Services

- 9:00a Worship Service
- 10:15a Sunday School
- 4:00p Adult Choir Practice
- 6:00p Every FOURTH SUNDAY United Methodist Women

### WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

- 6:00p Praise Band Rehearsal
- 6:00p Teens for Christ (Gr. 6-12)
- 7:00p Bible Study—Children & Adults.



### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon.—Friday: 8:30—1:00 p.m.

Phone: (828) 396-2214



## Meetings, Events, etc.

### Holy Week Services

On **Maundy Thursday, April 1**, Pastor Alan will offer drive-in Communion Services from 12:00-1:00 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.

On **Good Friday** we will remember the Passion of Christ in the cemetery (weather permitting) near the picnic tables at 7:00 p.m. Please bring a chair.

### Easter Sunrise Service

Our **Easter Sunrise Service** will begin at **7:00 a.m.** in the Christian Life Center. We will service a hot breakfast after the service. Take-out boxes will be available or eat-in. Sunday school classes will not meet on Easter.

### Food Ministry

*The Lord's Supper Ministry* will begin delivering monthly meals to shut-ins and others in need of special care again on **Monday, April 19th starting at 5:00 p.m.** Please contact the church if you know of someone who is recovering from sickness, or surgery that might like to be added to the list.

### Church Council

The Church Council will meet on **Sunday, April 25th at 3:00 p.m.** in the sanctuary. We thank you for your service on this committee.

### United Methodist Women

The UMW will meet on **Sunday, April 25th at 5:00 p.m.** Irene Austin is in charge of the programming. All women of the church are invited to attend.

### Special Offering Alert

We will be taking up special offerings in April and May to fund the purchase of ready-to-eat meals for the food closet at CCC & TI. Please consider giving to this local mission effort.

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." 1 Peter 1:3 NIV

**THE MOST  
ESSENTIAL  
DOCTRINE**

**For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve...** 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 NIV

"Christianity is a religion of miracle, and the miracle of Christ's resurrection is the living center and object of Christian faith" (Lockyer, p. 53).

There are only two religions in the world that are historically based—Judaism and Christianity. And with Christianity, one historical fact disproven (not just denied or ridiculed) would completely destroy the Christian message—the Resurrection of Jesus. Many people will deny the deity of Christ, and refer to him as a "great teacher" or honor him as a religious founder or leader. But those who truly hate Christianity attack the Resurrection more than any other doctrine of the Church. Why? Why is the Resurrection of Jesus so important to Christianity?

As the Apostle Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15:14, 17, "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith...And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins." The doctrine of the Resurrection is of primary value for on it all the doctrines of grace depends. Our sins are not forgiven. Our relationship with our Creator and Lord remains broken beyond repair. Paul makes this clear when he declares that it is only as we believe in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead that we can be saved: "If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved." --Romans 10:9 GNT

The successor to Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus and then committed suicide, had to be one who had witnessed the Resurrection—seen Jesus alive after his death and burial (Acts 1:22). The first recorded sermon for the new Church in Acts emphasized the Resurrection. See Acts 2:24-32; 3:15. And preaching of the Resurrection resulted in persecution. See Acts 4:2, 5:20.

No Resurrection—no forgiveness of sins;  
No Resurrection—no life after death;  
No Resurrection—no way to heaven, no entry into God's kingdom;  
No Resurrection—no Holy Spirit indwelling;  
No Resurrection—no Church;  
No Resurrection—NO HOPE!

Only the sinless, fully divine and fully human Jesus could pay the penalty for our sins. And our sins must be forgiven and washed away for God, Holy and Just, to welcome us into his divine presence.

Jesus rose with a spiritual body (see 1 Corinthians 15:44-45). "Body and

*(Continued on page 5)*



## UMW Country Store Returns!

**Opening  
Saturday  
April 24th  
8 AM to 2 PM**



The Country Store sponsored by our United Methodist Women's group offers lots of good eats, gently used items, canned goods, and baked goods.

The ladies will cook up a hot breakfast of biscuits with various meats and egg or just butter and jelly. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be sold at lunch time.

Stop in for something to eat, buy a good dessert to take home, and search through other people's throwaways for your treasures. Buy a gift for a friend's birthday, or save it for Christmas (very early shopping!).

All proceeds will be used in the women's many ministries for the coming year.

We thank you for your support.

**We are continuing to collect gently used items, and baked/canned goods, or craft items for the store through April 22nd. Thank you for contributing to this effort to raise funds.**

## Children's Time Returns!

**Sunday, April 18th**

We are phasing back into our worship times some of the liturgy and activities we did in previous services in the sanctuary. **Please see the sign-up sheet to volunteer to provide the Children's Time message on Sunday.** Books with ideas are available on the table at the entrance to the sanctuary. Services will continue in the Christian Life Center until further notice.

## Wesley Class Meetings

*How is it with your soul?*

Pastor Alan will begin two John Wesley type accountability class meetings this summer. If you are interested in being in the in-person or the Zoom group, please add your name to the sign-up sheet on the table at the entrance to the CLC.

See Pastor Alan's article for more information about these class meetings.

## April Worship Information

April 1<sup>st</sup> – Maundy Thursday. Drive Thru communion from 12 noon to 1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

April 2<sup>nd</sup> – Good Friday service at 7 p.m. at the picnic tables by the cemetery.

April 4<sup>th</sup> – Easter. Worship at 7 a.m. in the CLC. Breakfast to follow. Sermon scripture is Mark 16.1-8. Communion. No Sunday School.

April 11<sup>th</sup> – Reggie Helton from the Methodist Children's Home preaches.

April 18<sup>th</sup> – Sermon scripture is Luke 24.36b-4.8

April 25<sup>th</sup> – Sermon scripture is John 10.11-18

## April Celebrations



- 1st—Brian Sears
- 11th—McCall Creaseman
- 12th—Tammy Adams
- 12th—Sonya Crouse
- 12th—Samantha Stone
- 19th—Nancy Sears
- 21st—Emily Haas
- 23rd—Annette Burson
- 25th—Alexandrea Behmer
- 27th—Wyll Baker
- 28th—Cinda McRary
- 30th—Sarah McCrary
- 30th—Rex Teague

*Happy Anniversary!*



- 12th—Jerry & Loretta Helton
- 12th—Russ & JoAnn Knepp

## Our Military

Kyle Blair  
Ricky Garland  
Trey Hefner  
Shane McRary  
Jamie Mullinax  
Michael Potts  
Hunter Tolbert



Please pray for the men and women who protect our freedoms.

Mark Twain once said, "It's easier to fool people than to convince them they have been fooled."

George Washington: *Religion and morality are the essential pillars of civil society.*



## Church Council Minutes—March 28, 2021

Attendees: Pastor Alan Gaylord, Irene Austin, Candace Collins, Ted Daniel, Kim Ellis, Roy Hamby, Bleaka Hollar, Monte Hollar, Peggy Jenkins, JoAnn Knepp, Marsha McRary (Chairperson), Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears, Kenny Silver, and Becky Clark.

Marsha called the meeting to order and read Scripture from Mark 11:45 –The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. We are all called to serve. Do not forget that. Marsha then gave the opening prayer.

Reading of the Minutes:  
Accepted as written.

### Financial Report by Irene Austin

Irene says that we are basically on track for the year. There was a question related to the electricity bill. New thermostats were installed, but the bill has not gone down much. Still, we are using our building more now.

### Old Business

A possible mission effort mentioned at last meeting of doing something at the school was discussed. This would be a onetime deal. Kim Ellis will coordinate and talk to the principle to set up a date to distribute water and snack to parents waiting in line to pick up their child. This will not be used to advertise the church, but just as a gesture of goodwill to the community.

On the question of whether to have a VBS or a community day. Keep thinking about this. A decision will need to be made soon.

There was a discussion about moving some library materials downstairs for the older adults to use. Bleaka will check with the Granite Falls Library to see if they may want to have some of our collection that is not being used.

Kim Ellis said that the VBS stuff can be tossed.

Monte says that we will not be able to move the chair and table buggies anywhere else in the building, because they are too bulky. We may need new shelves to move the books downstairs. The plan is to do this in May.

### New Business

Marsh asked about the possibility of restarting the youth group. Candace and Jason Collins will work on starting this up again.

### Pastor Alan's Report:

**Covid-19 update:** Caldwell County is now designated as "yellow." The projected date to return to the sanctuary is Sunday, July 4th. Before that time, Pastor Alan would like for us to set a date to thoroughly clean, polish, and generally spruce up the sanctuary. He would also like to have the sound system checked to make sure everything is working well. For now, we will begin adding back regular worship items to our CLC services, including children's worship time. Cindy will put out the sign-up sheet for the next two weeks. We will restart the children's worship time on Sunday, April 18th.

Pastor Alan wants to begin two **John Wesley type small accountability groups** this summer. One would be in person meetings; the other would be through Zoom. A sign-up sheet will be prepared for people who are interested in joining one of the groups. More information will be in the April newsletter.

We have a **change in District Superintendent**. Rev. Carl Arrington is retiring. Rev. Lory Beth Huffman will be returning as our DS.

**The Missional Network** of pastors is working to begin a campus ministry at CCC & TI. One of the

suggestions to help at the college is to purchase some ready-to-eat foods for the food closet. A motion was made to do so. There was a discussion of how to pay for the items. Instead of using the Thank Bank funds, as was first proposed, it was decided to ask for a special offering for this purpose instead.

We will take up the offering in April and May.

**The Global Methodist Church** is now the proposed name for the new branch of the United Methodist Church if/when the church splits. The Global Methodist Church will be for the "traditionalists." Some of the changes being considered: pastors will still be appointed; church property would be owned by each individual church and not held in trust for the Global MC conferences; "Local" Pastors would now be Deacons on the path to being ordained (if they so desire); Bishops would be term-limited, not for-life appointments. The General Conference has been postponed for another year, so nothing will happen until that meeting. Each District Conference would vote on which group to join; then each individual church in the district would vote on whether or not to follow the district's choice.

### Other notes from Pastor Alan:

Reggie Helton from the Methodist Children's Home will be preaching on April 11th. Pastor Alan and his family will be going to Pennsylvania April 5th- April 11th. The pastor announced that he has some unopened V-Go system boxes for diabetics. If you know of someone who can use them, please let him know.

Marsha closed the meeting with prayer. The next council meeting will be on Sunday, April 25th at 3:00 p.m. Please note the time change.

Minutes by Cindy Sears.







## Something to Pray About, continued

soul were reunited and restored to their original beauty and strength and raised to the highest level..." The threefold significance of the Resurrection is:

- It was a declaration of the Father that Christ met all the requirements of the law. See Philippians 2:6-11;
- It symbolized the justification, regeneration, and final resurrection of believers. See Romans 6:4,5,9; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 15:20-22;
- It was the cause of our justification, regeneration, and resurrection. See Romans 4:25; 5:10; Ephesians 1:22; Philippians 2:10; 1 Peter 1:3. (Lockyer, p. 54)

So, is the Resurrection provable? Not entirely—no one alive today was actually there when it happened, though we have plenty of eyewitness accounts. Is the Resurrection disprovable? No one has been able to do it, so far; though many have tried and keep on trying. The Resurrection is the best-established fact in Bible history:

- ♦ It was the subject of prophecy—see Psalm 16:10,11; Acts 13:31-37;
- ♦ Christ repeatedly declared it—See Matthew 16:21; 17:9-23; Mark 8:31;
- ♦ John believed it when he saw the empty tomb—John 20:8;
- ♦ The women at the grave reported it—Luke 24:5-11; John 20:14-18;
- ♦ Peter reported Jesus appeared to him—Luke 24:34;
- ♦ Christ repeatedly appeared to His own—John 21; Acts 10:39-43;
- ♦ Christ was seen by Paul and hundreds of others—1 Corinthians 15:5-8.

Plus the verses above declaring the Resurrection of Christ from 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 is the oldest Christian creed in the New Testament. Scholars believe it comes from either several months after the crucifixion of Jesus to within 6-10 years after the Church was first established by the Apostles. On top of that, hundreds of the early Christ followers were executed because they believed in the Resurrection that proved to them the divinity of Jesus. You have to believe something very strongly as being true to be willing to die for it. On top of all of that and much more, the fact that so many people have been transformed by accepting Jesus as their Savior and Lord, and confessing that he was raised from the dead, and all the good they have contributed to the world since the Resurrection is further proof of the validity of this most basic doctrine of the Christian Church.

And this is why we have HOPE in JESUS. Praise God & Thank you Jesus!

**Wear criticism as a badge of honor** instead of fearing it. Calling Christians hypocrites, racists, and haters is really just a defense mechanism for those who don't want to see the truth. It's often Christians who serve as our moral compass to get us back on track. For example, when I talk about ungodly entertainment, I'm labeled a fundamentalist. When I talk about purity and abstinence, I'm labeled legalistic. When I talk about defending babies, I'm labeled as being against women. When I talk about marriage being between a man and a woman, I'm labeled a homophobe...And on and on it goes. Anytime you stand for truth, you will be labeled. Granted, the truth must come from a loving, gentle heart. The truth will offend, but our attitude should not.

—Shane Idleman, The Christian Post

## How do I hide God's word in my heart? Memorize it!

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

—John 11:25-26 NIV



## Special Giving

We gratefully acknowledge these special gifts received in *March*:

### In Memory of Bea Spencer by:

Ebenezer's UMW  
Larry & Alice Hill  
Freida Matthews  
Lindsey & BettyAnn Spencer

### In Memory of Lois Starnes by:

Ebenezer's UMW

### In Memory of Tom Harrison and his wonderful Bible study classes by:

Everette & Ann Gravelly

### In Honor of Bill Campbell's 84th birthday by:

Delores Campbell

### In Honor of Delores Campbell's 84th Birthday by:

Bill, Delores Campbell