



EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

April '22

Volume 18 Issue 4

Church's e-mail: ebenezerumc@yahoo.com

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Special Note

Thank You!

We raised \$673 to send to Finding Hope Ministries in Romania for their work with the Ukrainian refugees.



Sunday Services

- 9:00a Worship Service
- 10:15a Sunday School
- 6:00p Adult Choir Practice
- 7:00p Every FOURTH SUNDAY United Methodist Women

"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



This year I have been sharing the marks of a Methodist as written by John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement. Yet, this month is Easter and I suppose I should write an Easter message. When I reread the sixth mark of a Methodist, I realized that it is an Easter message. I share that with you in full:

He is therefore happy in God, yea, always happy, as having in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life," and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. "Perfect love" having now "cast out fear," he "rejoices evermore." He "rejoices in the Lord always," even "in God his Savior," and in the Father, "through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he hath now received the atonement." "Having" found "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of his sins," he cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks back on the horrible pit out of which he is delivered; when he sees "all his transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and his iniquities as a thick cloud." He cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks on the state wherein he now is; "being justified freely, and having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." For "he that believeth, hath the witness" of this "in himself;" being now the son of God by faith. "Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father!" And, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God." He rejoiceth also, whenever he looks forward, "in hope of the glory that shall be revealed;" yea, that his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again in living hope – of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me!"

Easter is the source of our happiness.
Easter is the source of our hope. May you have a blessed, happy, and hopeful Easter day! And may every day be Easter!

In God's grace,
Pastor Alan

Prayer Focus for April

As part of our period of prayer and discernment called "From Homecoming to Easter" we are engaging in focused prayer each week. Here's the April schedule:

- ◆ April 3-9 —The 11,000 unchurched people who live within 5 miles of Ebenezer
- ◆ April 10-16 —Fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

- 6:00p Praise Band Rehearsal
- 7:00p Bible Study—Children & Adults.



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon.—Friday: 8:30—1:00 p.m.
Phone: (828) 396-2214



Meetings, Events, etc.

Prayer Group

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. our weekly prayer group meets. You may call the office or email us prayer requests at ebenezerumc@yahoo.com.

Wesley Class Meetings

Classes meet on **Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.**

Food Ministry

The Lord's Supper Ministry will deliver their next meal on **Monday, April 18 at 5:00 p.m.**

Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, April 19 at 11:00 a.m.**

Church Council

Next Council meeting is on **Sunday, April 24 at 4:00 p.m.**

United Methodist Women

The UMW will meet on **Sunday, April 24 at 6:00 p.m.** All women of the church are invited to participate.

"It is not possible to be happy if you are not grateful."

—DENNIS PRAGER

Special Giving

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

In Memory of Mary Lewis by:
Delores, Bill, & Gary Paul Campbell

In Memory of Larry Hill by:
Delores, Bill, & Gary Paul Campbell

In Honor of Delores Campbell's 85th Birthday on June 26 by:
Billy Wayne, Gary Paul Campbell

In Honor of Bill Campbell's 85th Birthday on May 6 by:
Delores, Billy Wayne, Gary Paul Campbell

In Honor of Alice Hill by:
Delores, Bill, & Gary Paul Campbell

Something to Pray About

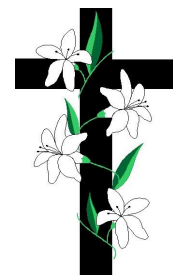
by Cindy Sears

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... —1 Cor. 15:3 NIV

EARLY CHRISTIAN CREEDS

References: Romans 1:3, 4; 4:25; 10:9; 1 Corinthians 11; 15:3-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Hebrews 1:3.

Following are the early Christian creedal statements found in the New Testament. Some Bible scholars now believe that these come from around 1-2 years (or sooner) after Jesus was crucified on the cross. Some non-believing scholars have claimed in the past that Jesus's deity and resurrection were late concepts within the Christian Church, but these creeds show that is not the case. The Godhood of Jesus and his resurrection were very early beliefs of the new Christian sect.



Romans 1:1-4: "Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord."

Notice here that Paul claims that Jesus is both human ("his human nature") and God ("declared with power to be the Son of God"), and that Jesus rose from the dead ("by his resurrection from the dead"). There is no ambivalence here about the humanity and divinity of Jesus, nor about his actual resurrection from the dead.

Romans 4:25: "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification." Obviously, Christ death and resurrection are restated here, plus the doctrine that his death was for our sins, so that we who believe can avoid God's just wrath; and Christ resurrection affirms that our sins are washed away, and we become righteous in God's eyes.

Romans 10:8c-10: "...that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

No question here. To be saved you must believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that "Jesus is Lord" and that Jesus was resurrected.

1 Corinthians 11: "I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you." In this chapter,

(Continued on page 5)



Special Events

Art & Crafts Show

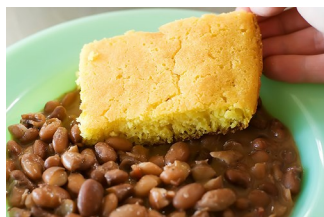
**Saturday
April 9
4-7 PM**



Eat a good meal and find an original artwork or craft for yourself or as a unique gift to someone else.

Artists and craftsmen can display and sell their work for free. Please let us know how many tables you will need to show your wares. A small donation from your sales to Ebenezer Church will be welcome, but is not required.

Our Poor Man's Supper of pinto beans, slaw, fried taters and onions, and cornbread with dessert and beverage is offered to everyone for a donation. (The UMW ask that our members help by preparing some desserts for this event. Thank you.)



Funds raised will go toward paying off the roofing repairs loan we acquired last year.

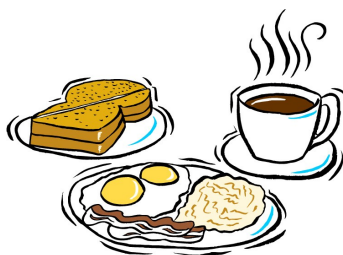
We thank you for your support.

Note: we raised \$177 to send to UMCOR which, with matching funds from the Conference, was sent to the District Superintendent of Ukraine. They were able to send \$18,000 total with our help. Thank you for your generosity.

Easter Sunrise Service

**Sunday, April 17
7 AM
& Breakfast**

Get up early and join us for our annual Easter Sunrise Service as we remember what Jesus did for us on the cross, and celebrate his resurrection on the third day—a sign of his promise that we too will one day be resurrected when we accept his gift of justification and salvation by confessing Jesus as Lord and believing in him.



A free hot breakfast will be served in the Christian Life Center after the worship service. We invite you to stay and eat and fellowship with one another on this most joyous day of the Christian year.



April Celebrations



- 1st—Brian Sears
- 11th—McCall Creaseman
- 12th—Tammy Adams
- 12th—Samantha Stone
- 12th—Sonya Crouse
- 19th—Nancy Sears
- 21st—Emily Haas
- 23rd—Annette Burson
- 24th—Celeste Creaseman
- 25th—Alexandrea Lingle
- 27th—Wyll Baker
- 28th—Cinda McRary
- 30th—Sarah McCrary
- 30th—Rex Teague

Happy Anniversary!

- 12th—Jerry & Loretta Helton
- 12th—Russ & JoAnn Knepp
- 23rd—Buck & Margaret Spencer

Our Military

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



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

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

[Jesus] was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Romans 4:25 NIV



Church Council Minutes for March 27, 2022

Attendees: Rev. Alan Gaylord, Marsha McCrary (Council Chair), Irene Austin (Financial Secretary), Ricky Baker, Becky Clark, Kim Ellis, Barbara Ferguson, Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader), Monte Hollar (Trustees), JoAnn Knepp, Judy McCrary, Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears.

Marsha McCrary opened the meeting with prayer and a scripture reading from 1 John 4:7-21. John speaks of how we should love as Christ loved us. His love should abide in us, and that “he who loves God must love his brother.”

February Council minutes were read and approved: 1st by Monte Hollar; 2nd by Linda Moretz.

Finance Report

Irene Austin: After looking over the report, it was noted again that we are spending more money than we are taking in. We are not in immediate danger, but we do need to find ways to encourage our members to give more to the operation of the church, as well as, to mission-type funds (to which we have always been generous in giving). Irene offered to prepare a talk and deliver it to the church body about supporting Ebenezer monetarily.

It was brought up again about preparing a “thermometer” to illustrate how much we owe on the roof repairs, and show us paying it off. Billy Wayne will be asked to do this.

Trustees Report

Monte Hollar: Announced that the keys have been changed to all the church door locks. Keys have been given to people in the church who really need to have them, and all the keys are numbered. We will keep a list of who has a key.

There was a \$30 increase recently in our water bill. Cindy Sears noted that she has found the water left running in the women’s restroom in the lobby area on occasion. Please make sure that the spigots are completely turned off

before exiting the restrooms. Thank you.

Next, Monte discussed about the guidelines about using the Christian Life Center by members and outside groups. He stressed that small groups of users (25 or less) should be encouraged to use the old Fellowship Hall area to save on electricity and heat/air costs. Some of our tables have been damaged. If you borrow these items use them at a party, please be careful with them; and clean them after use.

Because cost of electricity, etc. are going up, Monte made a motion that we raise the rental fee from \$100 to \$200. He also presented a liability waiver that needs to be signed by all participants involved in a sports or sports-like activity at the church. Council members were asked to review the CLC guidelines and let him know of any proposed changes.

Old Business: None

New Business

Next, we discussed sprucing the church up for Easter, which is on April 17th. We set aside Saturday, April 16th, starting at 9:00 a.m. to do that. Please help us by volunteering on that day. Thank you.

Kim Ellis is asking our members to help provide desserts on April 9th at the Art and Crafts Show with Poor Man’s Supper, too. Thank you.

Cindy Sears brought forward a request from the Caldwell County Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #83 to help provide an Easter meal with ham, and one week’s groceries for Senior Citizens and Veterans in our area who are hurting from higher prices on everything. Monte made a motion to use \$200 of our Thank Bank funds to purchase enough for 10 Seniors/Veterans. Ricky Baker, seconded. Motion passed.

It was verified that we will be having an Easter morning breakfast after the 7:00 a.m. worship service

Pastor’s Report

Pastor Alan went over the prayer focus for the last two weeks in Lent (found elsewhere in this newsletter). Then there was some discussion of the postponement of the General Conference again until 2024. He explained that this was not a unanimous vote by the board that oversees this. They voted to postpone, because of concerns related to the out-of-country representatives’ difficulties in obtaining visas. The Global Methodist Church has announced that they will delay no longer in beginning their denomination, which will officially begin on May 1, 2022.

There was general discussion on these events, and on the disaffiliation process as it now stands. Marsha called for deep, constant prayers about this in the coming months. It was also brought forward that we need to begin preparing our members for a vote on what to do once the disaffiliation process is finalized. We have a special Discovery Team set up now to look into all aspects of this. We will review the GMC Transitional Book of Discipline, and

April Worship Information

We will finish exploring the 23rd Psalm in Lent before heading into Holy Week and Easter.

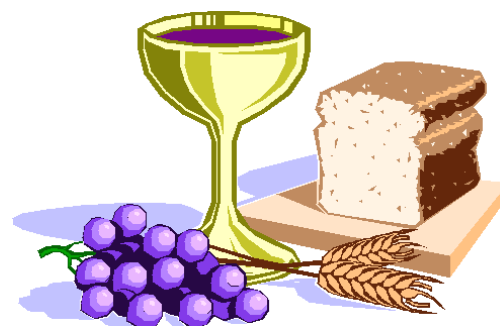
- *April 3rd—Ps. 23* “This Is How We Fight Our Battles” (Communion)
- *April 10th—Ps. 23* “All the Days of My Life and Forever”
- *April 14th—7 PM* Maundy Thursday Service (Communion)
- *April 15th—7 PM* Good Friday Service in the Cemetery (Bring Chair; weather permitting)
- *April 17th—7 AM:* Luke 24:1-12 Breakfast After Service; no Sunday School
- *April 24th—9 AM* (Bleaka Hollar will preach)



Something to Pray About, cont'd

Paul touches on several doctrinal issues and beliefs; some of them controversial today. But, in verses 23-31, Paul delivers up the Lord's Supper, and the proper way to do it, and the proper attitude one ought to have when partaking of this meal wherein we directly commune with Jesus our Lord. "For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me (verses 23-25).'"

Also, let us not neglect the warning given here by the Apostle Paul: "Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep (verses 27-30)." This is not just a ritual, but a vital part of our religious faith. Be prepared for the Communion service through prayer and repentance, and you will be blessed.



1 Corinthians 15:3-7: "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." Paul goes on to list more eye witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus. At the time this was written, many of these people were still living witnesses. Paul's reference to Scriptures and citing that Jesus rose on the third day is significant. He must be referring to the earliest written accounts of Christ life (Mark, for instance), and calling them Scripture.

Philippians 2:6-11: "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness...Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (vv. 6, 7, 9, 10a, 11a)..."

This is the longest early creed in the New Testament, and it covers the important stuff. Jesus was God; Jesus became human, but still remained God; Jesus died on the cross (vs. 8); and Jesus is now exalted above all others ("in heaven and on earth and under the earth"); and one day everyone will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, "to the glory of God the Father (vs. 11b)." Yes, even the unsaved, the unbelievers will have to admit that Jesus is Lord; though that admission will come too late, and not save them from the wrath of God. No one can be coerced into salvation. It is a gift that must be accepted freely to be justifying.

Hebrews 1:3: "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." Jesus showed us the essence of God in his life, and prepared the only way for us to be able to stand before God's throne without being burned up by God's radiance. Jesus is the One who is sustaining all things until it is time for his return. He is God.

Submit to God, accept the precious gift from Jesus paid for by his death on the cross, and be raised with Jesus your Lord into everlasting life. This has always been the gospel message from the earliest days, and remains the message today. Praise be to God!





Special Announcements

General Conference Postponed Again

The Commission on the General Conference has voted to postpone General Conference until 2024. The primary issue was over obtaining visas for those traveling from overseas. The decision was not unanimous and has led the people organizing the Global Methodist Church (GMC) to announce that they will officially launch this new denomination on May 1, 2022. The GMC is stating that it believes in traditional understandings of marriage and sexuality.

There are still many questions to answer in regard to these events. As those things become known you will be informed.

Safe Sanctuary Training & Procedures

We had a training/review session for our Safe Sanctuaries Policy in March. This policy provides guidance as to how we will ensure the safety of children, youth, and vulnerable adults within our church. We are in the process of updating Ebenezer's policy. Also, we need to update our information on those working with the children and youth, so we will be requesting our teachers and volunteers to fill out information sheets and submit to a new background check. We welcome more volunteers. See Cindy Sears or the Pastor to let us know of your interest, and to get the forms that need to be filled in. Thank you.



**On Thursdays
June 9, 16, 23, 30
&
July 7, 14, 21, 28**

A schedule of activities and times will be posted in May. Get your ideas and wish list in now.

Possible Activities include:

**Church Clean Up
Bike Ride on Greenway
Volunteer Work at SCCM
Carowinds Trip
Yard Work for Community
Members
Swimming
Volunteer Work at
Yokefellow
Hike at Lakeside Park
Help at Finding Hope
Ministries Store
Sunrise on the Parkway**

We welcome your ideas! Contact Pastor Alan if you are interested in helping.

Council Minutes, cont'd

raise questions about what is being proposed.

The Pastor told us that he is still finalizing his plans for the Youth Summer Program. He announced that we had a Safe Sanctuary's training/review session on March 19th. It appears that we need to update the background checks of everyone working with the children and youth in our church. We will have volunteer information sheets for all workers to fill out, and give us permission to do the background checks.

We know of two graduates from our church for this year: Savanna Creaseman and Eathen Morrow. If you know of any others, please let us know. May 22nd has been set for Graduation Sunday. We will need pictures and further study information from these graduates by the end of April, please.

The Pastor's April Worship Information is in this newsletter. Pastor Alan will be on vacation April 18th to 24th, and at a Sermon Retreat May 5-7.

April 24th at 4:00 p.m. will be the next Council Meeting.

Monte Hollar brought up one more suggestion of have a meal at the church to celebrate all our Veterans one day this year. We will be considering this.

Council adjourned.

Minutes by Cindy Sears.



Kindergarten Screenings Thursday, April 14th

Register at
www.caldwellschools.com/dses and
click on *Kindergarten Enrollment*.
**Pre-registration is required for
screening; no walk-ins.**
Questions? Call 828-396-3457.