



EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

February '22

Volume 18 Issue 2

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

Inside this issue:

Meetings, Events, etc.	2
Special Giving	2
Something to Pray About	2
Website Additions Samples	3
Hid In My Heart	3
February Prayer Focus List	3
February Celebrations	3
Our Military List	3
February Worship Information	3
Council Meeting Minutes, 013022	4

Special Note

We are requesting donations of Christian themed DVDs and books for children for our library. We thank you for your generosity.



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



Last month I lifted up a writing by John Wesley called “The Character of a Methodist.” His first point was that Methodists are not characterized by their “opinions.”

This month I want to lift up 3 more points that he shares about the character of the people called “Methodists.” These points are really about what we are not.

1. Methodists are not characterized by how we speak. We do not have a peculiar language or set of expressions. “We never, therefore, willingly or designedly, deviate from the most usual way of speaking; unless when we express scripture truths in scripture words, which, we presume, no Christian will condemn.”
2. We are not distinguished “by actions, customs, or usages, of an indifferent nature. Our religion does not lie in doing what God has not enjoined or abstaining from what he hath not forbidden.” We are not separated by what we wear or covering our heads. We do not abstain from marriage or from any food. We look like the people around us.
3. “Nor, lastly, is he distinguished by laying the whole stress of religion on any single part of it.” We do not have to take a vow of poverty, abstain from marriage, speak in tongues or any other such thing to prove ourselves Christians. We trust that we “are saved by faith alone.” That is what makes us a Christian.

We sound pretty ordinary. What makes us extraordinary is Christ and Christ alone.

In God’s grace, Pastor Alan

Thank You’s:

- * To all who gave blood at the Red Cross blood drive. 22 units were given.
- * To all who participated in and bought food at the Undergrace Class’s Cornhole/ Hot Wings fundraiser.
- * To all who gave to the food ministry at CCC & TI. They were very thankful.
- * To all who gave generously to Ebenezer at the end of 2021. You have provided a good end of 2021 and a good start for 2022.

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.**

Finance Meeting

The **Finance Committee** will meet on **Wednesday, February 9 at 7:00 p.m.**

Food Ministry

The **Lord's Supper Ministry** will deliver their next meal on **Monday, February 21 at 5:00 p.m.**

Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, February 22nd at 11:00 a.m.** (Unconfirmed)

Church Council

Next Council meeting is on **Sunday, February 27 at 4:00 p.m.**

United Methodist Women

The UMW will meet on **Sunday, February 27 at 6:00 p.m.** This is their annual membership drive meeting. The current members will provide a potluck meal to women who come to check-out the UMW and what ministries they do in our church and community.

Special Giving

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

In Memory of Kelly McCary by:
Garry & Phyllis Minton

In Memory of Larry Hill by:
Judy McCrary

In Memory of Lillie Johnson by:
Ebenezer's UMW

Something to Pray About

by **Cindy Sears**

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.

—Psalm 119:97-100 NIV



There have been changes afoot at our website: www.ebenezerum-church.org. We now have a website that can adjust to different screen sizes (though the top slide show is hidden at the smaller screen sizes). Older articles on the website from previous newsletters, and the newsletter remain in pdf format, so they remain a little more difficult to read.

New items have been added to the home web page, and some items have been rearranged. Directions to our church can be accessed by scrolling to the bottom of the page, and clicking on the Google Maps icon. If you like to shop online, consider using the "Igive.com" icon at the bottom of the page. You can generate donations to our church when you sign-up, choose Ebenezer as your charity, and shop online at the many stores listed (the donation is made by the company; it is not added to your costs for the items). Downloading and installing the special app makes the giving easier. The Facebook icon links to our public Facebook page, so you can access the Sunday worship service, and other postings on your phone or computer easily.

The other icon is called "Mini-Bible Lessons." This links to a webpage where we store the older articles of one of the newest features on our home page: mini-Bible study lessons. Usually, these lessons will be posted first on the home page on Wednesdays, and are based on your webmaster's daily Bible study readings.

In the main section of the home page, the week's prayer focus is at the top of the column; in case you forget what was mentioned on Sunday. Further down, you can find a short saying, quote or Bible verse under the heading "For Meditation." This will be posted on Fridays most of the time. On Mondays or Tuesdays, a quote will be posted under "Quotes to Ponder." Just a little something to think about.

News related to fundraisers and events will continue to be posted on the home page. In the side column, the sermon title and scriptures for each Sunday worship service are listed, along with the liturgical readings for each Sunday. Consider reading through these before the services to prepare for the preacher's message, and worship on Sunday.

Please help your webmaster (Cindy Sears) by letting her know of any problems related to accessing pages on the website. We want our church website to be accessible and useful to you as you participate in our services and ministries, and serve the Lord at Ebenezer UMC.

See some samples of a few of these additions on page 3.



Samples of Website Additions—Check Them Out!

February Celebrations

Quotes to Ponder

"I don't let compliments go to my head, or let insults go to my heart." Dennis Prager

For Meditation

Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 8, p. 442 "grace is nothing else than love in action, and the supreme message of the Gospel is that God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Mini-Bible Lesson 2: Christian Saltiness

Salt is an important substance today, and, before the era of refrigeration, it was even more important. Salt preserved food and seasoned it to make it taste better. Often, because it was so valuable, it was heavily taxed. So, sellers of salt would adulterate it with cheaper substances; then sell at high prices to insure a bigger profit.

Jesus says in Luke 14:34-35: "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out." Another way to translate (and probably follows the meaning more closely) is that it can neither be used for seasoning (of food) or fertilizer (for the soil). When Jesus says that the salt has lost its savor or taste, he is referring to the adulterated or cheaply made salt, which is less useful or no good at all.

In this passage on discipleship, Jesus is telling us that a Christian or disciple who has become "adulterated" or compromised by the culture and the things of this world is not able to season the world to be a better place or to keep it from spoiling and becoming more evil or dark. We are here to lead people to the Savior through the spreading of the Good News about Jesus, and to season the world with goodness and righteousness. Be as pure a "salt" as you can be in Christ Jesus everywhere you go and in everything you do; or the darkness and decay caused by evil will spoil the world for you and everyone else.

At www.ebenezerum-church.org.

How do I hide God's word in my heart? Memorize it! The path of righteousness is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. Proverbs 4:18 NIV

Prayer Focus for February

As part of our period of prayer and discernment called "From Homecoming to Easter" we are engaging in focused prayer each week. Below is the schedule for February.

- January 30-February 5: Safe Harbor (for homeless women)
February 6-12: Red Cross
February 13-19: Senior Group ministry
February 20-26: Lord's Supper ministry
February 27-March 5: Sunday School



- 12th—Chris Ellis
14th—Brian Knepp
19th—Judy Smith
20th—Dylan Baker
20th—Lucas Teague
22nd—Jesse Barber
26th—Robert Mullinax
29th—Jacob Jenkins

Happy Anniversary!
14th—Will & Arlene McRary

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear.

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.

February Worship Information

Sermon Scriptures for February:

- February 6: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Communion)
February 13: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
February 20: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
February 27: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50



Church Council Minutes for January 30, 2022

Attendees: Rev. Alan I. Gaylord, Marsha McRary (Council Chair), Irene Austin (Financial Secretary), Ricky Baker, Becky Clark, Kim Ellis, Roy Hamby (SPPRC Chair), Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader), Monte Hollar (Trustees Chair), JoAnn Knepp, Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears, and Kenny Silver.

Marsh McRary, called the meeting to order, and read from Isaiah 1:4 & 17-20. The words spoke of a sinful nation that had turned its back on God; Isaiah called for the nation to stop doing wrong and to do right, so that their sins, which were red like scarlet, could be washed white as snow. And the nation would experience prosperity again. As Marsha said, the United States is becoming “godless.” Our community has problems related to a lack of belief in God, and his precepts. Church attendance is down all over the U. S. There are many unchurched in our area. We need to step up and do something about it by being better witnesses and helpers in our community. Opening prayer was given by Marsha.

The minutes from the special called December Council meeting were read and approved.

Finance Report by Irene Austin

We are back to where we started out last year at this time, thanks to a very generous contribution from a member of our church. For January, we are about \$1,000 ahead of expenses.

Trustee Report by Monte Hollar

Monte Hollar has been voted as the Chairman of the Trustees for another year. He reported that the stove and oven in the CLC kitchen has been thoroughly cleaned. The Trustees are looking in to the possible addition of a columbarium for the placement of cremation urns. At Marsha’s request he will be looking at a leak problem, too.

SPPRC Committee Report by Roy Hamby

The committee has gone over the pianist contract, and recommended that a raise be given to Mary Pennell, our pianist. She has not had a raise in a long time, and she is experiencing higher cost for sheet music, and working more times a week, since she now plays with the praise band, as well as, the adult choir. The recommendation from the committee was to raise her pay from \$125 to \$175 per week, and that she be given her vacation pay from 2021 in one lump sum of \$500. Monte made a motion to accept; seconded by Kenny; motion approved.

Old Business: Heat in the Heavenly Sonlighters classroom is better. The website problems have been resolved. Bulk mailing of the monthly newsletter has stopped; it is only mailed to shut-ins and those not residing in our area. Bleak Hollar reported that we have good help in the kitchen during the winter blood drive, and the Red Cross collected 23 products (7 short of the goal). Pastor Alan encourages those who missed giving this time to check around and go to another blood drive, because blood is in short supply at this time. Our next blood drive is set for June 27th.

No New Business was presented, but Marsha McRary requests that anyone with children’s books or DVDs (Christian related) consider giving them to our library.

Pastor Alan reported that the Boy Scouts of America settlement ballot was filled out by him. Please be in prayer for our conference as they continue to deal with this issue.

Pastor’s Report

There is no new guidance from the conference concerning Covid-19.

Pastor Alan has visited with all the adult Sunday school classes, and now has a clearer idea of what

transpired after Rev. Lane left. In his next meetings, he will be talking about where we need to go from here.

We will continue with our time of directed prayer, with the prayer concern for each week placed in the week’s bulletin, on our website home page, and the full list for February in the newsletter.

The pastor then presented another list of 20 names for the membership audit. The Council requested that one name be removed from the list, but all others were approved to receive the audit letter.

Pastor Alan gave us copies of some simplified organization structure ideas, and ask the Council members to read them, and see what they think about them. We may need to consider some changes, especially after the breakup of the UMC.

Safe Sanctuaries Training is set for March 19th at 9:00 a.m.

Anyone who works with our children and youth needs to be present at this training. Wednesday night Bible study is schedule to resume on March 16th, which will be after the time change; so everyone should be able to get here and back before night falls.

The worship schedule for February will be in the newsletter. Ash Wednesday is on March 2nd. Pastor Alan will be doing a service, but has not finished planning for it, yet.

Pastor Alan closed the meeting with prayer. **Next Council meeting is scheduled for February 27 at 4:00 p.m.**

Minutes by Cindy Sears



It is better to suffer for speaking the truth than that the truth should suffer for want of speaking it.