



# EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

# Feb '23

Volume 19 Issue 2

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

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### Special Note

## BBQ Feb 4!

See p. 3 for more information.

Proceeds go toward the roof loan pay off.

### 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



In the opening episode of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, Commander Benjamin Sisko is assigned to command the space station known as Deep Space Nine. It orbits a planet known as Bajor, which has recently come out victorious over the Cardassians after a long occupation. Near Bajor is a worm hole that is a portal to another area of space. In this worm hole live “The Prophets.” Sisko is captured by them when he attempts to travel through the worm hole.

What ensues is a wonderful explanation of time. In particular, linear time. The Prophets have no understanding of the concept. Time is more fluid to them. Sisko uses the metaphor of baseball to explain it. He talks about how with each pitch and at bat the game takes shape until someone wins. With each pitch and at bat, the game changes and forms in a straight line. There is a beginning and an end.

The Prophets then show Sisko a scene from his life. It is when his wife died in a horrible attack on the starship Sisko served on. The Prophets ask him, “If time is linear, then why do you live here?” Using our language today, Sisko experienced a trauma, which has trapped him. He lives in linear time, but his heart, head, and soul are stuck in that event. It has affected him as an officer, a father, and a human being.

A little over 5 years ago Ebenezer went through a trauma. That trauma has informed who you are today. For some of you, the pain of that time is as real today as it was then. I will not tell you to “get over it.” It is now a part of your story. Because of other events, (Covid, possible disaffiliation) you have not had a lot of opportunity to process all that happened. The reality of that trauma also makes itself known in large and small ways to this day.

What I can say is that I believe that no matter what battles or trauma we have experienced or are experiencing, that, as the buttons say, “God’s Got This.” We, the church of Christ, are always a “future oriented” and hopeful people. God is leading us like the children of Israel to a new and promised land. There will be challenges and troubles on the way. We may whine and complain. Yet, if we remain faithful to the one God, one Savior, and one Spirit, Ebenezer will get there with a great story to tell.

In God’s grace, Pastor Alan

### WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

- 6:00p Praise Band Rehearsal
- 7:00p Bible Study – Adults.



### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

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



## Meetings, 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](mailto:ebenezerumc@yahoo.com).

### Wesley Class Meeting

Class meets on **Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.**

### Food Ministry

Next meal will be on **Monday, February 20** at 5:00 p.m. Drivers need to arrive by 4:30 p.m. Cook's helpers, see Ricky Baker for when to arrive.

### Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, February 21 at 11:00 a.m.** Meal will be provided by the church. Bring a dessert to share if you can.

### Church Council

The Council will meet on Sunday, **February 26 at 4:00 p.m.**

### UMW Meeting

The Women will have their annual membership drive meeting on **Sunday, February 26 at 6:00 p.m.** Current members will provide a pot-luck meal for the group.



## *A Gracious Reminder*

When you wish to have a former pastor to return to conduct a funeral or wedding, please contact Pastor Alan first. It is his responsibility to extend the invitation to them as per the protocols of the UMC. The same holds true for other pastors regardless of their denomination. This avoids opportunities for miscommunication. Thank you!

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us. But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing. — 1 John 1:8-9 GNT



References: John 13:6-11; Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 8, p. 682

"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." --John 13:9-10, NIV

Jesus tells Peter that he cannot be a part of Jesus' kingdom if he refuses to let Jesus wash his feet. We need daily washing by Jesus. When we accept him as Lord and Savior, we are cleansed all-over from sin. Yet, in our daily walk in this world, we will pick up the dirt of the world, which we should take to Jesus and request that he wash our feet (minds, hearts) clean again. Daily repentance is necessary as we walk with Jesus in this world.

In verses six and seven, Jesus tells Peter that he will understand what Jesus is doing afterwards. As Christians we are often blindsided by events or circumstances and wonder why our Lord is allowing such bad or even horrible things to occur in our lives. We forget that God is trustworthy in that he wants what is best for us. The best thing for us is to be changed into the image of his Son, Jesus. The trials and tribulations we face are bringing us closer to that image and, if not, we are in rebellion against our Lord, or more concerned with the material world than our sanctification.

"At first, however, and often for long enough we are apt to be slow to believe all that. For what has befallen us, or what is asked of us, seems to us monstrous, unreasonable, impossible...If the gospel, if our fellowship with Christ and our faith in him, if our glib professions of allegiance, our prayers and religious exercises, are not cleansing our characters from what soils them and healing our natures from what maims them: if we drift from day to day much what we have always been, and not markedly different with Christ from what we would have been without him: then for us the gospel has failed. We have missed the point and end of the whole business and are not really Christ's at all. So Christ himself told his best friend." (I.B. p. 683)

Jesus says in verse 10, "He who has bathed does not need to wash..." Because of this we can rejoice in the fact that in Christ, we are clean. All our past, present, and future sins are washed clean, "except for the dust gathered in the day's traveling and marketing and bustling to and fro. And that too Christ will cleanse away if with seemly humility we allow him to work out his generous purpose toward us." (I.B. pp. 683-4)

Humbly ask Jesus to wash your feet daily, and you will be clean all over again.



## February Events

### BBQ Fundraiser

**Saturday, Feb. 4**

**4:00—7:00 PM**

Warm up your winter day with a hot plate of pork barbecue with sauce, sweet potatoes, slaw, and homemade dessert with beverage.

\$10 adult plate

\$4 child plate

Eat-in or take-out. Proceeds go to finish paying off our roof loan.

We thank you for your support.



### Ash Wednesday

**Wednesday, February 22**

**7:00 p.m.**

Join us for our annual Ash Wednesday Service as we enter the season of Lent. This is a time for deep reflection upon our relationship with our Lord, and the direction of our lives. Open yourself to God's guidance, and be encouraged that the Good News of Jesus is the only Door to true Freedom in the Truth and Light of Jesus by what he has done for us on the Cross.



### Feb. Worship Information

- *Feb 5:* 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (Communion)
- *Feb 12:* 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
- *Feb 19:* Matthew 17:1-9
- *Feb 22:* Ash Wednesday
- *Feb 26:* Matthew 4:1-11 (Lent begins)

**NOTE:** We are collecting used Christmas/greeting cards to send to St Jude's. Please place in the box in the old fellowship hall. Thank you.

### You're Welcome!

**From Dylan & Vicky Baker:**

"We wanted to take the time to say a big thank you to Bleaka & Monte for making sure Maggie had safe candy at the Trunk R Treat. We also want to give a big thanks to each "trunk" who participated in giving her a treat bag. Never did we expect y'all to go the extra mile for her. It really touched my heart. Thank you so much for including her and thinking of her. We appreciated it so very much! Much love, the Bakers."

(from card Received in November 2022)

**South Caldwell Christian Ministries** sent a card thanking us for 95.5 lbs. of food donated by our Ebenezer members to them in December 2022.

"God bless you with a prosperous New Year! Sincerely, Monica Ferguson, Food Coordinator, and Deborah Thomas, Director.

## February Celebrations



- 14th—Brian Knepp
- 19th—Judy Smith
- 20th—Dylan Baker
- 29th—Jacob Jenkins

### Our Military

**Ricky Garland  
Shane McRary  
Jamie Mullinax**



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

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

*Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God, who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment.  
—1 Timothy 6:17 GNT*

### Council, cont'd

*(Continued from page 4)*

He then provided the sermon scriptures and worship information for January 29 to February 26. See p 3. Note: We will have an Ash Wednesday service.

After the Pastor's Report, Bleaka Hollar asked if she could have the rickety old pulpit that has been in storage here for some time for Monte to use the wood for boxes and other woodworking items. Cindy made a motion to give it to them for free, Ricky Baker seconded. Motion passed.

Marsha adjourned the meeting and closed with prayer.

Minutes by Cindy Sears.





**Church Council—January 22, 2023**

Attendees: Rev. Alan Gaylord, Irene Austin, Rosanna Bachman, Ricky Baker, Becky Clark, Kim Ellis, Bleaka Hollar, JoAnn Knepp, Judy McCrary, Marsha McRary, Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears and Ted Daniel, Tammy Adams.

Marsha opened the meeting reading from 1 Corinthians 1: 9-10, reminding us that God is faithful, and we should strive to be of one mind in Christ Jesus. She gave the opening prayer.

Reading of the December 2022 minutes: Accepted as written, first by Irene, 2nd by Linda. Passed.

After thanking our new members volunteering to join the Council, and welcoming back the returning members, Marsha turned the meeting over to Alan. He presented a page that gave a brief accounting of the overall organization of the UMC, explaining each Conference from the General to the local Charge Conferences.

**Finance Report – Irene Austin**

Irene gladly reported that the roof loan amount still owed is down to \$1,323.67. We hope to get that paid off very soon. The February fundraiser profits will be used to help pay it off. There was general discussion of other budget items. We are now using the 2023 budget amounts. A couple of the accounts are over budget, because we did not set aside enough for them, but only by small amounts.

**Trustees Report – Ricky Baker**

The new Trustees Chairman, Ricky, told us that the Alarm in the CLC problems are being worked on (it goes off on a regular basis for no reason). All, but one outside light has been replaced. The one at the barbecue area should be fixed soon. Cindy Sears has ordered a new computer for the office. There is a need for a new stove at the parsonage. The Trustees will clean up around the cemetery edges later

when the weather improves.

**Sunday School Superintendent – Marsha McRary**

Marsh thanked all the teachers who were present on the Council for their work in 2022, and encouraged them to carry on. Bible study classes are very important to us and our children. She also suggested that each individual class to consider doing a small fundraiser to help support the church or some specific fund in the church.

**New Business**

A fundraiser is planned for Saturday, February 4th 4-7:00 p.m. Barbecue, sweet potatoes, slaw, and dessert is on the menu. The price will be \$10 a plate. We are asking our members to help supply the desserts for this event. Funds raised will go toward the roof loan.

**Pastor’s Report**

Pastor Alan asked the Council members “What makes Ebenezer, Ebenezer? Some answers presented included: We are a “community helper” for those who fall through the cracks of governmental programs for the needy. Our name says it, Ebenezer means “stone of help.” We are also “prayer warriors.” We have a welcoming and loving atmosphere. We emphasize the reading and study of God’s Word; therefore, we are biblically based and sound.

This gives us some idea of what our ministry is and should consist of in our community. How do we continue to achieve and expand upon these foundations for our work in God’s kingdom?

Pastor Alan next talked again about the disaffiliation process. Irene told us that she has set aside a special fund, and placing 1% of our contributions (when able) into this fund to help with the legal, physical, etc. costs of leaving the UMC and moving into another organization. Our members and friends can

contribute to this fund, too. Mark your envelopes in the “Other” section for Action-MISC to do so.

Marsha McRary volunteered to find out what archival material the WNCC needs before we disaffiliate. Irene Austin will look into the state and federal tax ID and tax-exempt status process (which we now have through the UMC). Pastor Alan said that he intends to send a letter to the Bishop and request again for specific information on the amount of unfunded pension funds we would owe when we leave the UMC.

We confirmed the election of Becky Clark to Nominations Committee, and JoAnn Knepp to the SPPR Committee, since we did not have their names at the time of the 2022 Charge Conference.

Concerning a Bible Retirement ceremony. There is no specific ceremony available, so we would have to produce our own. Pastor Alan suggested a waterproof, sealed container; but members of the Council suggested a “bio-degradable” box would be better. We decided to go that route. It was suggested that Monte Hollar could build us a wooden box once we know how many Bibles we will need to bury. We will get the word out in the Newsletter and on our website to offer the chance for people to bring us Bibles that are falling apart and no longer useful for reading of study.

Membership: After the death of Jack Davis, the Pastor has our membership down to 172. Ricky Baker said that we could take Wyll Baker off the roll, which brings the Pastor’s count down to 171. That is one more less than in Cindy’s records. The Pastor gave us a short list of people he wants to send membership audit letters to next.

CCC&TI is asking us to provide simple, microwaveable or ready to eat items for their food court in April. We will provide a box for that soon.

*(Continued on page 3)*