



# EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

# Jan '23

Volume 19 Issue 1

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

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### Special Note

**Happy New Year!**  
**Church office will be closed Monday, Jan. 2, and reopen on Tuesday, Jan. 3.**

### 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



I did not grow up United Methodist. The first time I attended a United Methodist church was when I was 19. It was the Trinity United Methodist Church in DeLand, FL. I do not remember who the preacher was or anything about the sermon. I do not remember what hymns were sung or what the choir did. I do remember reciting the Apostles' Creed for the first time. I also remember the feeling that I had come home. I did not return because my girlfriend at the time did not want to return.

Through a series of events that I can only call God directed, I became involved with the United Methodist Campus ministry at Stetson University. It was there I found a supportive community. It was also there where I answered my call to ministry, entered seminary, and began the process of becoming an ordained minister.

As the denomination has travel the path towards churches leaving and forming a new denomination, I have prayerfully considered where I belong in my ministry. I have heard God telling me to remain with the UMC. God reminded me of that feeling of home I felt in the beginning. God reminded me of the community I found. That does not mean I agree with everything that is happening. That does not mean I agree with all the decisions leadership has made. For better or worse the United Methodist Church is my spiritual home, and it is where God wishes for me to remain.

That call was affirmed to me during the presentation by our District Superintendent, Lory Beth Huffman. There will be congregations that will define themselves as “compatibilists.” They will need pastors, especially as we travel the days ahead. Wherever God leads in this time, I am confident in my decision.

While we wait to see what General Conference will do in 2024 in regard to disaffiliation, it will be my privilege to continue to be your pastor. There are plans to be made here at Ebenezer so that your ministry will continue into the years to come. I look forward to working with you in this wherever our paths may lead. God did great things in 2022. In 2023, may we continue to see God's mighty hand at work here!

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). **Will not meet on Jan. 3rd.**

### Wesley Class Meeting

Class meets on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. **No meeting on Jan. 3rd.**

### SPPRC Meeting

The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee will meet on Sunday, **January 8 at 3:00 p.m.** New members need to attend this meeting.

### Trustees Meeting

The Trustees will meet on Monday, **January 9 at 7:00 p.m.** New members need to attend this meeting.

### Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, December 17 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, **January 22 at 4:00 p.m.** New members need to attend this meeting.

### Food Ministry

Next meal will be on **Monday, January 16** at 5:00 p.m. Drivers need to arrive by 4:30 p.m. Cook's helpers, see Ricky Baker for when to arrive.

### UMW Holiday Meeting

The Women will have their holiday meeting on **Sunday, January 1st at 5:30 p.m.** at Kim Ellis's home. Please finger foods to share. No gifts will be exchanged this year.

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

—John 3:16 NIV



References: Judges 2:18-23; Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 2, pp. 704-705

So the Lord allowed these nations to remain in the land; he did not give Joshua victory over them, nor did he drive them out soon after Joshua's death. —Judges 2:23 GNT

The Lord would help Israel by sending them leaders to help overcome oppression from the indigenous people in the promised land, but Israel would remain faithful only during the lifetime of that leader (vv. 18-19). So, the Lord decided that he would leave some of the peoples in the land as a constant thorn in the Israelites' side, to test their faithfulness to God. He used these remaining peoples as a way to test and refine the Israelites' faith in him.

"With the pagan alternative always at hand, her (Israel) own faith stood out in its true beauty and value. This was a dangerous expedient. Yet how important it is for maturing, either of a nation or of an individual. The life from which all opposition has been kept, which has been carefully protected and defended, often becomes weak and ineffective. The life permitted to face experience in all its aspects, with its hurts as well as its healing, often grows in strength. There is no guarantee that this will be the case; it is a risk—but a calculated risk taken by wise parents as they rear their children and taken by a wise God as he nurtures his people" (I.B. pp. 704-705).

Would it not also be wise of the church and its teachers to introduce challenges to the faith within the church setting, and provide answers to hard questions that will be asked by the people that our children encounter in the world? What are we doing to counteract the lies in our culture that eventually lead so many young people to leave the faith once they enter college or the job market? Do we only point to scripture to counteract the lies and deceptions, when logic and rationality and observation of how things work in the natural world can also be used to show that God is Truth, and that he is our Creator and deserves to be our Lord? Do we tell our children about the evidences for the truth of God's Word, the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus, the truth of the Creation of the world by God? Do we assume that their faith is strong enough to keep them in Christ once they leave here for the wider world? Should we be sending our children or the young in faith of any age out into the world without weapons of logic, as well as, scripture to combat the insinuations of the devil in today's culture?

If we want to make disciples for Jesus, and keep them, we need to spend more effort in speaking out against the devil's lies and deceptions. Point out

*(Continued on page 5)*



## January Events

### Jan. Worship Information

- *January 1:* Psalm 8:1-9 (No Sun. School); Roy Hamby preaches
- *January 8:* Matthew 3:13-17 (Communion)
- *January 15:* 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
- *January 22:* 1 Corinthians 1:10-18
- *January 29:* Bleaka Hollar preaches

### Prayer for the New Year

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

-Francis of Assisi

### Winter Blood Drive

**Monday, January 23**

**2:30—7:00 PM**

Our annual winter blood drive is coming soon. Soup and sandwiches will be served to our donors, workers, and volunteers for free. Snacks, sweets, and beverages will be provided, too.

Please visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: Ebenezer UMC to schedule an appointment.

You can streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](http://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

If you give blood between Jan. 1-31, you will be automatically entered for a chance to win a trip for two to Super Bowl LVII in Phoenix! Includes travel, hotel, \$500 gift card, pre-game activities and more. Visit [RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl](http://RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl) for more information.

**Volunteers are needed in the kitchen and elsewhere. See Irene Austin or Bleaka Hollar for more information.**

## January Celebrations



- 1st—Barbara Shelton
- 1st—Mary Teague
- 4th—Rhyan Stone
- 5th—Jason Collins
- 10th—Cole McCrary
- 14th—Neal Haas
- 14th—Garry Minton
- 16th—Rosalind Kelley
- 18th—Chuck Adams
- 20th—Barbara Ferguson
- 20th—Kennedy Behmer
- 23rd—Tyler Ellis
- 27th—Amanda Simmons
- 28th—Dwight Kelley
- 30th—Kevin Sears

### 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!

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.

-1 John 5:1-2 NIV

## Methodist Groups Reports

We have listened to all the organizations that we invited to talk to our congregation and church council as possibilities for us to join when we disaffiliate from the UMC. You may access a summary of each presentation on our website under the About Us tab, History\_2022.

Check the Church Council minutes from the December 2022 meeting to see what decisions have been made about this process, and the timeline for disaffiliation. Please continue to pray about this issue, and that the UMC will return to Biblically and doctrinally correct behavior and leadership.



**Church Council—December 18, 2022**

Attendees: Pastor Alan Gaylord, Irene Austin, Becky Clark, Kim Ellis, Barbara Ferguson, Roy Hamby, Bleaka Hollar, Monte Hollar, John McCrary, Judy McCrary, Marsha McCrary, Cindy Satterwhite, Cindy Sears, Kenny Silver, Kim Knepp, Tasha Haas, Rosalind Kelley, Billy Wayne Campbell.

Minutes of November meeting were read and approved. There was no old or new business to bring up before getting to the main reason for our meeting.

Irene Austin gave us her finance report. Our roof loan is now down to \$3,403, and should be paid off in the next 6 months or sooner. She reported that our UMC Apportionments have been paid in full for 2022.

With no further business, Marsha passed the meeting over to Pastor Alan to report on his proposal for what to consider concerning disaffiliation from the UMC. He asserts that the UMC will be going a more “progressive” way. Eventually, same-sex marriages will be allowed or encouraged; and “gay” pastors will be ordained. The question before us is: Can we be compatibilists? Can we live within an organization that affirms homosexuality, and other things against God’s word with the promise that they will not appoint a pastor to our church that agrees with the “progressive” bent of the church? If we can’t, then disaffiliation is the way to go. So, the next question is do we disaffiliate now or wait until after the 2024 General Conference to see if a better or more fair process is developed for churches that wish to leave the denomination? It was also stated that there is a lack of transparency from the District about the potential costs of leaving now.

Discussion. There was a general agreement that we cannot be “compatibilists.” After more discussion, two proposals were put

forward: 1) wait to the 2024 General Conference before disaffiliating, or 2) begin the process to disaffiliate now. The majority voted to wait until 2024. There was one vote against waiting.

In the meantime, the Council will begin the process of gathering information on the legal fees, costs, etc. Determine everything that will need to be changed, such as the steeple, signage, website design, etc. After disaffiliation, we will not be able to use the UMC name or cross and flame symbol. It was decided to begin a new account to begin setting aside funds now to fund the process. Meeting adjourned. Pastor Alan gave the closing prayer.

Minutes by Cindy Sears. 📄

SUMMARY: We will revisit disaffiliation after the UMC General Conference in 2024. In the meantime, we will set aside funds, and gather information on the costs associated with disaffiliating from the UMC, such as legal fees, signage changes, website changes, name change, etc. Please continue to pray for Ebenezer as we move forward with God and his Word as our guide.

**Recycle Your Cards**

We are now collecting used Christmas cards and other types of greeting cards to send to St Jude’s. Please place in the box in the old fellowship hall.

Thank you.



**Special Giving**

We gratefully acknowledge the following special gifts received in December:

**In Memory of Bob Jenkins by Peggy Jenkins**

**In Memory of Clem Hutchinson & Alice Deal by: Ebenezer’s UMW**

**In Memory of Wade Austin by: Ezma Austin**

**In Memory of Kelly Minton McCrary by: Garry and Phyllis Minton**

**In Memory of Larry Hill by: Alice Hill**

**In Honor of Delores, Gary Paul, and Billy Wayne Campbell by: Roy Hamby**



*John Wesley Said:*

**"Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not whether they be clergymen or laymen, they alone will shake the gates of Hell and set up the kingdom of Heaven upon Earth."  
~ John Wesley**



## Committee Members for 2023

### Changes to the Voting Members of the Church Council include the following:

We have a Youth Representative this year: Emily Haas. Becky Yount will be our 2nd Representative to the SCCM. Irene Austin is our Alternate to the Annual Conference. Rosanna Bachman has been added as a Member at Large to the Church Council.

### Other Committee Members with New Members Listed first in bold type:

Our Trustees are: **Billy Long, Phyllis Minton, Ricky Baker** and Wayne Ellis, Kirk Austin, Jerry Helton, Sarah McCrary, Randy McCrary, and Ted Daniel with Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader).

Nominations and Personnel Committee: **Becky Clark, Kim Knepp** and Cindy Satterwhite, Chuck Adams, Linda Moretz, Judy McCrary, Phyllis Minton, Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader) and Pastor Alan Gaylord (Chair).

Staff-Pastor-Parish-Relations Committee members are: **Tammy Adams, JoAnn Knepp** and Kenny Silver, Jimmy Stone, Tasha Haas, Billy Long, Celeste Creaseman, Roy Hamby (Chair), Kim Ellis, and Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader).

The Audit Committee members: Kim Knepp, Marsha McCrary, Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader), JoAnn Knepp, and Cindy Sears.

The Finance Committee members are: Irene Austin (Chair/Financial Secretary); JoAnn Knepp (Assistant Financial Secretary), Pastor Alan Gaylord, Cindy Sears (Church Treasurer), Bleaka Hollar (Lay Leader), Marsha McCrary (Chair of Church Council), TBD (Chair of Trustees), Roy Hamby (Chair of SPPRC), Kim Ellis (Nurture Chairperson).

Copies of the Committees and Church Council listings will be made available after the Trustees choose a new Chairperson.

## Something to Pray About, cont'd

*(Continued from page 2)*

worldviews being presented on tv and in the movies and in books, etc. that are untrue and unchristian. Do not let emotionalism win over rationality. The insane actions and points of view being espoused in our world today are proof of God's assertion in his Word: "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good." (See Psalm 14:1 NIV)

There are now books and websites and organizations combatting the lies within our culture that help to turn people away from faith in God and in His Son, Jesus. Here is a short list to get you started on finding the evidence you need to combat Satan's lies:

- ◆ I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist by Norman L. Geisler, Frank Turek, et.al.
- ◆ Cold-Case Christianity by J. Warner Wallace
- ◆ Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions by Gregory Koukl
- ◆ Believing Is Seeing: A Physicist Explains How Science Shattered His Atheism and Revealed the Necessity of Faith by Michael Guillen
- ◆ Another Gospel?: A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity by Alisa Childers (also has youtube videos)
- ◆ Answers In Genesis (answersingenesis.org): Website associated with Ken Ham and the Noah's Ark (website: arkencounter.com) in Kentucky.
- ◆ The Becket Cook Show: youtube show by a man who formerly lived as a homosexual, now a Christian, who battles the lies related to homosexuality and lesbianism lifestyles.
- ◆ Dangerous Affirmation: The Threat of "Gay Christianity" by M. D. Perkins (I have a copy of this book available to current attendees of Ebenezer.)
- ◆ Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design by Stephen C. Meyer. †