



EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

SEPTEMBER '21

Volume 17 Issue 9

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

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Special Note

New District Phone Number

Our Appalachian District Office phone number has changed to: **1-336-844-4090**.
Katie Hutton's number is: **1-336-566-3458**.



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



One of the gems of the United Methodist Church is UMCOR. UMCOR stands for United Methodist Committee on Relief. It is the relief agency of our denomination. It works around the globe to provide help during natural disasters. It is often the last agency to leave an area affected by natural disaster. UMCOR also works with other agencies to enhance its services and to stretch its resources as far as they can go.

Currently it is working in Texas following the winter storms of this year. It is helping those who survived the Surfside condo collapse. It is in western North Carolina, middle Tennessee and New England to aid those affected by flooding. It is assisting those affected by the wildfires in the west.

Overseas it is Haiti (earthquake), Mozambique (Cyclone Eloise), Democratic Republic of Congo (volcano) and Indonesia (flood, earthquake and volcano).

Please know that the United Methodist Church is a global church and our relief agency is helping around the globe. If you want to learn more please go to their website at www.umcmmission.org.

During September our Thank Bank offerings will be directed towards this valuable and life changing ministry. Please know that the administrative costs for UMCOR come from our apportionments and the apportionments of thousands of other United Methodist churches. All donations given go directly to helping those in need. Please consider a gift to this ministry during September.

In God's grace,
Pastor Alan

Covid-19 Updates

With the recent surge of the delta variant of Covid-19 there have been renewed concerns related to gatherings. Currently, the Western North Carolina Annual Conference "strongly recommends" the wearing of masks during indoor activities such as worship and Sunday School. If we have an active exposure within the congregation, we may need to return to parking lot worship during the quarantine period. Now that school has restarted, and with the uncertainty of how that will impact our community, we will hold off on resuming Wednesday night activities at this time. Thank you for your understanding in this.

NOTE: Worship returns to the Christian Life Center on September 5th. See Council meeting notes for more information.

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

These class sessions will be held on **Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.** Contact Pastor Alan if you wish to attend, but have not signed up for the group yet.

Food Ministry

The Lord's Supper Ministry will deliver their next meals to shut-ins and others in need of special care again on **Monday, September 20th 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.

United Methodist Women

The UMW will meet on **Sunday, September 26 at 7:00 p.m.** All women of the church are invited to attend.

Church Council

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

Seniors Gathering

Ebenezer's next monthly gathering with a free meal for our Senior Citizens is:

**Tuesday
September 21
11:00 AM**

Our Senior Citizens will meet at Ebenezer this time.

Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

“Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”
—Luke 18:25 NIV

THE PERIL IN POSSESSIONS

Make certain that you do not forget the LORD your God; do not fail to obey any of his laws that I am giving you today. When you have all you want to eat and have built good houses to live in and when your cattle and sheep, your silver and gold, and all your other possessions have increased, be sure that you do not become proud and forget the LORD your God who rescued you...So then you must never think that you have made yourselves wealthy by your own power and strength. Remember that it is the LORD you God who gives you the power to become rich. He does that because he is still faithful today to the covenant that he made with your ancestors. Never forget the LORD your God or turn to other gods to worship and serve them. If you do, then I warn you today that you will certainly be destroyed. If you do not obey the LORD, then you will be destroyed just like those nations that he is going to destroy as you advance. —Deuteronomy 8:11-14a, 17-20 GNT

“Affluence brings spiritual dangers. The temptation to say “My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth” is universal (Interpreter’s Bible, vol. 11, p. 388).

The Christian Church and the United States in general are in grave peril today. We have gotten too comfortable with our wealth—and I am not only talking about the super wealthy, the millionaires and billionaires and above. Most Americans are used to a lifestyle that is way above that of 85-90% of the people living in the world today. We live in the wealthiest nation on earth. Most of us live a life made easier by machines and technology that would seem to be magic to bygone eras, or to many people living in other countries. Even some of the poorest among us have much more than many of the kings of past eras.

Many of our Christian churches have grand buildings with lots of technological innovations, and comfortable additions unheard of in previous generations. The Christian Church in the U. S. has been the biggest giver of charity here and abroad; and the largest supplier of missionaries, but that is changing. Today, the majority of Christians give less than 2% of their incomes to the Lord’s work. So, much of that wealth is no longer being used to help spread the Good News (gospel) message, or provide for the needy. We Christians have shifted much of our charitable work onto the shoulders of the government (often forced to do so by government, but we haven’t fought too hard against it either).

(Continued on page 4)



Barbecue Fundraiser Returns!

Saturday, September 25
11:00 a.m. to 7:00
p.m.
It's back!



Great pork barbecue cooked and prepared at Ebenezer UMC by our great cooks.

Eat-in or Take-out

Barbecue with sauce served with slaw, baked beans, roll and beverage (eat-in only for drinks)

Adult plate—\$9

Child's plate—\$4

Under 3—FREE

Stop at the outside tent to pick up to-go orders. (Please call ahead for large orders.)

Funds raised will go toward Ebenezer's current ministries.

Teacher's Closet

We will be accepting items to add to the **Teacher's Closet** throughout the school year. Below is a list of some items requested:

Paper towels, tissues, Clorox wipes, Sharpies, dry markers, highlighters, black pens, blue pens, colored pencils, glue sticks, composition books and notebook paper, crayons, scissors, index cards, file folders, white out, paper clips, markers, staples, construction paper, rulers, etc.

Place the donations in the Teacher's Closet box in the old fellowship hall. We thank you for helping to support our schools.

Ministry Opportunities

Counters Wanted

We are looking for at least 2 more volunteers to count the contributions on Sunday mornings. One person of the pair will need to deposit the proceeds at First Citizens Bank in Granite Falls. Each counters group counts for one month. See Cindy Sears to volunteer, and for training.

Sound Booth Help

We continue to search for a volunteer to help Randy in the sound booth, and replace him whenever necessary. Please contact the Pastor if you are interested.

Worship Service Helpers

We have a form on the table in the lobby area for people to sign-up to help with worship service activities, such as, children's time, reading of scripture, to provide altar flowers, serve as acolyte (all ages welcome) or communion assistants (once a month). We can use some alternate ushers and security people, and greeters, too.

UMCOR Special Offering

We will take up a special offering on **Sunday, September 19th for UMCOR**. Also, the Thank Bank through September will go to UMCOR. See Pastor Alan's article for more information.

We are also taking donations to the Western NC and Haiti Relief projects at this time. Please mark envelopes in "other" to designate to one or the other. We thank you for your generosity.

"Suffering is having what you don't want, or not having what you do want." —Elizabeth Elliot

"The point of having children is to raise them, not house them while we pursue other areas of interest." — Dr. Laura Schlessinger

September Celebrations



- 4th—Heather Stone
- 11th—Will McRary
- 11th—Daniel Simmons
- 16th—Chris Haas
- 17th—Tasha Haas
- 18th—Aubree McCrary
- 18th—Kenny Silver
- 19th—Billy Wayne Campbell
- 21st—Flaxen Brookshire-Reid
- 24th—Louise Teague
- 25th—Debbie Gaylord
- 30th—Russ Knepp

Happy Anniversary!



- 3rd—Paul & Linda Moretz
- 7th—Bill & Delores Campbell
- 10th—Chuck & Tammy Adams
- 13th—Kevin & Teresa Simmons
- 25th—Paul & Annette Burson
- 26th—Wayne & Kim Ellis

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.



Something to Pray About, cont'd

(Continued from page 2)

We have so much to spend on ourselves—and we do. Buying and enjoying good things is not a sin in and of itself. But our attitude toward our possessions can be perilous to our spiritual and physical well-being. Have our possessions become our new god? Is our own comfort and enjoyment more important than winning people to Christ?

And what is your attitude toward your possessions? How often do you thank the Lord for your possessions? We work hard to earn money to buy those possessions, and it is easy to believe that we did it all ourselves. But did we? If God did not provide the air you breathe, would you be able to work? If God did not provide the sunshine and rain, would we be able to grow crops, or raise farm animals for eating? Could we live without water or sunshine?

Pride is the root of all sin leading to envy and coveting, and then to lawlessness, corruption, and chaos. Gratitude is the root of all goodness, happiness, and peace. If you are grateful for the sun and rain, for the food on the table, for the clothes you have, the people you know and live, work, and play with, and all good things in your life; you are much less inclined to be grouchy, worried, petty, selfish, and hateful to other people—or to become a thief. Yet, most importantly, an attitude of gratitude keeps your mind set upon the Great Giver, our Lord and our God; because He is the ultimate giver of all good things in this world.

Do not let possessions harden your heart against God or other people. Do not depend upon money or things. You can lose both in a heartbeat—often through no fault of your own. Learn to be content with what you have now. Be willing to give anything and everything up if God calls you to do so. We possess things and money here and now, but we are only stewards of these things. God blesses us materially, so that we have the means to help others in greater need. Can you do that if you are desperately hanging on to your possessions to assert your power over others, or as a measure of your worth? God measures the worth of a person much more directly. He hung upon the cross to show how precious each person is. Can anything you own measure up to that kind of “worth”?

Wealth has become a god to many people in the U. S. and in the Church. As God did with the Israelites before, he will bring us into hardship if that is the only way to wake us up to his presence again. Each Christian, each church, and the nation stand at the mercy of the one true God. It is perilous to ignore him or his laws. Are we seeing God’s removal of his protective hand in real time now? Neither the United States nor the Church can stand without God. Think on that, and marvel that our God is so merciful and longsuffering.

“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and possessions.” –MOUNCE

“No one can serve two masters. The person will hate one master and love the other, or will follow one master and refuse to follow the other. You cannot serve both God and worldly riches.” –NCV ✝

“Hope is both the earliest and the most indispensable virtue inherent in the state of being alive...If life is to be sustained hope must remain, even where confidence is wounded, trust impaired.”

—Erik H. Erikson

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

“So don’t be all upset, always concerned about what you will eat and drink. (For the pagans of this world are always concerned about all these things.) Your Father knows that you need these things. Instead, be concerned with his Kingdom, and he will provide you with these things.” — Jesus

—Luke 12:29-31 GNT

Special Giving

We gratefully acknowledge these special gifts received in August:

In Memory of Hoke Clark’s August 9th Birthday by:
Becky Clark

In Honor of Ebenezer’s United Methodist Men and Their Works by:
Rex & Gwen Teague
Bill, Delores, Gary Paul Campbell

In Honor of Rex and Gwen Teague by:
Bill, Delores, & Gary Paul Campbell



Special Called Church Council Meeting, August 15th

Attendees: Pastor Alan, Irene Austin, Ted Daniel, Kim Ellis, Roy Hamby, Bleaka Hollar, Monte Hollar, Peggy Jenkins, Judy McCrary, Marsha McRary (Chairperson), Linda Moretz, Cindy Satterwhite, Cindy Sears, Kenny Silver, Becky Clark, Phyllis Minton, Ricky Baker.

Marsha McRary, Chairperson, called a special meeting of the Church Council on Sunday, August 15th after the worship service.

Bleaka Hollar for Monte Hollar, Chairman of the Trustees, brought up a roof leakage problem over the area of the lobby. Not only were that bad leaks, but the base of the roof has spongy places, that could signal structural problems, too. The Council voted to ask Monte to get three estimates for repairs, and get the problem fixed. A temporary repair has already been done.

Minutes by Cindy Sears. 📄

While I have seen this quote attributed to Tytler, or associated with other names, whoever first said it correctly summarized the cycle of the world's great civilizations:
"From bondage to spiritual faith; from spiritual faith to great courage; from courage to liberty; from liberty to abundance; from abundance to selfishness; from selfishness to apathy; from apathy to dependence; from dependence back into bondage."
—from Cal Thomas article in JWR, March 31, 2020.

Get Ready Now!
Homecoming will be on Sunday, October 10th! Our special guests will be Rev. Thomas Hunter and Patsy Hunter. We finally get to have their Farewell Dinner! We will honor them both for their service to our church and community.
Worship will start at 10:30 a.m. with dinner on the grounds afterward. (Sunday school classes will not meet.)
Pastor Appreciation Day is also on October 10th, but don't wait until then to thank our pastor for his service to our church and community. Send your cards and letters of appreciation now and throughout the month of October.

FY 2022 Committee Members Needed

We are beginning the process of finding and appointing committee members for the coming year. Please contact Pastor Alan (Chair of Nominations), Bleaka Hollar, or Cindy Sears if you are interested in a specific role in Ebenezer's governance for next year.
There are openings on the following committees: Trustees, Nominations and Personnel, Staff-Pastor-Parish-Relations, Audit, and the Members at Large on the Church Council. We can use one more Communion Steward, also.
Thank you for serving Ebenezer in every way you can.

September Worship Information

Sermon Scriptures for September:
5th: Mark 7.24-37 (Communion Sunday)
12th: Mark 8.27-38
19th: Mark 9.30-37
26th: Mark 9.38-50

"Christianity exists not to free man from the world of things, but to make the world of things a dwelling place of God." – Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 11, p.397

Missing Members List Help Us Find Them

We have members for whom we have no addresses. Please review the names and if you know their address, please contact the church office.

- Susan Chester
- Michael Crouse
- Sharon Hodges
- William McRary
- Erin Mejia
- Ellen Minton
- Michael Potts
- Sydney Richardson
- Allison Thompson
- Cody Thompson
- R.J. Thompson



Church Council Meeting, August 29th

Attendees: Pastor Alan, Irene Austin, Ted Daniel, Roy Hamby, Bleaka Hollar, Monte Hollar, Peggy Jenkins, JoAnn Knepp, Judy McCrary, Marsha McCrary (Chair), Linda Moretz, Cindy Satterwhite, Cindy Sears, Kenny Silver, and Becky Clark.

Scripture reading came from Hebrews 10:19-25. Marsha called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Devotional reading was from the Upper Room. Theme: Life Together. Spur one another on to love and care of each other. Do not give up meeting together. We have personal time with God, yet we need to meet together, too, with fellow believers. "Christian communities are precious gifts from God."

Marsha said the opening prayer. Reading of the minutes. Irene made a motion to accept. Passed as written.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Irene Austin

Down about \$6, 420.00 for the year (more spent than brought in). Irene mentioned the need for roof repairs, and said that we can borrow the needed funds if necessary. Monte Hollar made a motion to accept Irene's report; Kenny silver seconded. Report accepted as presented.

TRUSTEES REPORT – Monte Hollar

Monte Hollar: received two reports back for estimates on the roof repair. Piedmont has a 5 yr warranty on their work. Their estimate is \$19,700. Monte knows this man, and believes he does good work. He does top grade roofing. JCS Roofing gave an estimate between 17,500 and 18,500. Monte does not know this one. He is waiting on the Barger Ash bid for the job.

Marsha: "Does the whole section need to be done?" Monte: "Yes." Roy suggested we wait for Barger Ash to give us their bid. This is on hold for now, but we must decide soon. Suggestion: put in the bulletin that people can donate money specifically to this project. The BBQ money can be used for this also. Irene will contact the bank to determine loan terms.

Monte also reported that our church buildings have been sprayed for bugs.

OLD BUSINESS

Community Fun Day went well.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped. Kim's mission's fundraiser was a success, raising over \$500 for her trip to Romania.

Safe Sanctuary guidelines need to be followed better. We should lock the double doors to upstairs when having Sunday School. We have had people wander into the church during this time (strangers). Discussion. We will review Safe Sanctuary guidelines and decide what needs to be done. Monte will check into making all doors to outside to have panic bars, so they can be locked during Sunday school time.

The front door needs some repair. Monte is going to do this soon.

NEW BUSINESS

Copier: Difficult to find anyone leasing copiers now. Full service copier/printers are expensive. We could add more money into the loan for the new roof, if necessary. Discussion.

Cindy Sears reported that the Newsletter mailing is running out of names for bulk mailing. Maybe we can stop the bulk mailing, and send it out only to the homebound and those who really want it. Discussion.

Monte and Cindy will do some research and report at next meeting about a new copier/printer.

Linda Moretz reported that she will be on vacation Sept. 4-11. She will miss cleaning that week. She asked someone to check around and make sure garbage is removed and placed outside.

Irene Austin has volunteered to be our new blood drive coordinator. She will get with Ricky Baker and set a January date, and then schedule the drive with the American Red Cross.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Covid-19: Conference suggest Strongly that we wear masks inside during worship.

What will we do if we have an outbreak here? Parking lot or CLC worship with social distancing? Go back into CLC until something happens?

Roy Hamby made a motion to return to the CLC for worship for now. Pastor said that we should stop the passing of the peace, too. Masking is

highly recommended. Motion seconded by Monte. Passed. We will return to worship in the CLC beginning on Sunday, September 5.

The Pastor brought up his idea for a **Time of Prayer and Discernment**. He wants to begin times of directed prayer for each week (a week of praying for our former, living pastors, specific schools, the district superintendent, the Bishop, etc.) Everything will start on Homecoming and run to Easter Sunday next year. In that six-month period, he wants small groups of people to gather in people's homes for focused prayer groups two times. First meeting would concentrate on where Ebenezer has been. And what do we do now? He says this will be "grief work" to help us deal with the loss of members in the past few years. The second meeting (about 3 months later) will concentrate on asking God where he wants us to go now. These meetings and prayer activities will help us prepare for the upcoming split of the UMC organization.

The Church Council gave Pastor Alan a vote of confidence to proceed with this proposal.

We have had two responses from the first twenty letters sent out to members who have stopped attending Ebenezer. Pastor Alan gave us 19 more names. One name was removed by the Council. Letters will be sent to the remaining eighteen in September.

The Thank Bank through September will go to UMCOR. More information is in the September newsletter.

Cindy Sears said we need to start committee recruitment for 2022; and passed out forms to fill-out for the upcoming Charge Conference, which is set for October 24th at 4:00 p.m.

Pastor Alan reported that he has stopped the Renfro Trust grant process, because of complications in the paperwork. He will consider this at another time. The Both/And grant work is still in process.

Because of his schedule this fall to go to his daughter's wedding on November 6, All Saint's Sunday and Communion will be on October 31st, and Laity Sunday will be moved to November 7th (when he will be out of town.)

Next meeting – September 26 at 4 pm. -- Minutes by Cindy Sears