



# EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

# Apr '23

Volume 19 Issue 4

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

### Inside this issue:

Meetings, etc.	2
A Gracious Reminder	2
Something to Pray About	2
April Events	3
Holy Week Services	3
Easter Sunrise Service	3
April Worship Information	3
Safe Sanctuary Training	3
Other Dates to Know	3
April Celebrations	3
Our Military	3
Special Notice	3
Church Council – Mar. 26, 2023	4
Church Council, cont'd	5
John Wesley Said	5
Something, cont'd	5
Hid in My Heart	5
Ministry Opportunities	5
Special Giving	5

“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



We made it! Another Easter! No matter what we may be facing as a denomination or a congregation or as individuals, Easter is here! Our culture puts a lot of effort into Christmas, yet our big “holy-day” is Easter. Jesus has been born. He has gathered his disciples. He has taught them (and us!). He has ridden in triumph into Jerusalem. He has been arrested after having a last supper with his disciples. He has been crucified. Now Easter is here. We celebrate and party because Jesus is alive!

Since we proclaim that “Jesus is risen!”, we also proclaim that we have life and life eternal. We can have real life in this world as we wait with expectation for the life to come in the next. We can have life that is filled with hope, joy, and peace. We know that this life will still have its moments where that is tested. Yet, we know that those challenges will not last. That is our message to the least, the last, and the lost. Jesus Christ has come. He has died. He is risen! New life is possible through faith in Him.

Let us celebrate!

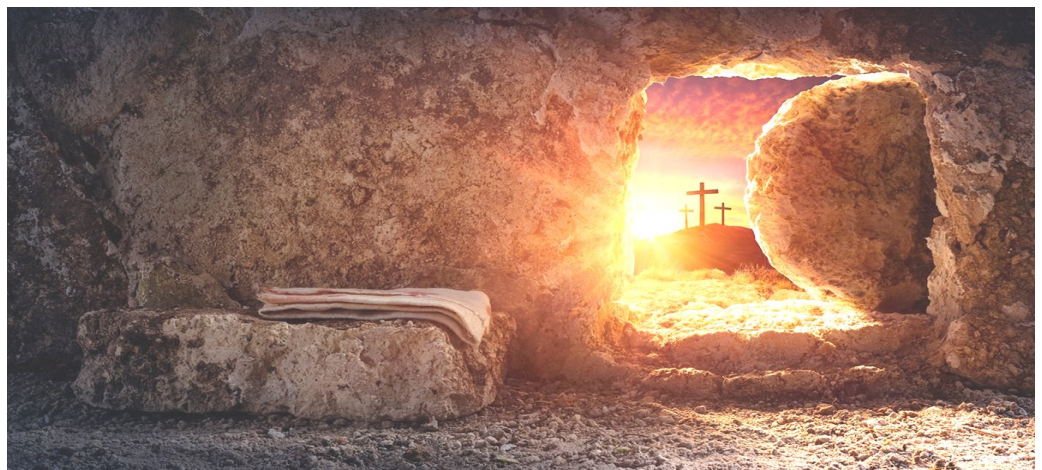
In God's grace,

Pastor Alan

### Easter Morn

7:00 AM

Breakfast in the  
CLC after  
worship in  
sanctuary.



### Sunday Services

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

### 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, April 17** 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, April 18 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, **April 23 at 4:00 p.m.**

### UMW Meeting

The Women will have their annual membership drive meeting on **Sunday, April 23 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

“And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.” — John 14:13-14 NIV



References: John 14:12; Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 8, pp. 705-706

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.” --John 14:12 NIV

This promise is amazing! But do we believe it? Has it happened at all?

Consider that Jesus Christ made very little impact on the world in which he lived while on earth. He is mentioned in passing in some historical writings (not counting the New Testament writings), mostly related to that small Jewish sect called The Way. There were rumors that those who followed him believed that he had been raised from the dead! Utter nonsense. Or that while alive, he had done miraculous works. Illusions. Wishful thinking? Yet, for some reason his followers were willing to die for their belief. Poor, crazy souls.

So, to begin with, the Christians were a small sect with few members. They were persecuted unmercifully by the Jewish leaders and the pagan Roman rulers. Despite all, they continued to witness for Jesus, and the faith spread. And everywhere it spread great and wondrous things occurred; and life became better for those who chose to believe, and for those around them.

From a small group of ordinary men and women, Christianity has spread around the world, and the world is a better place because of this faith and its followers. Wherever the faith has been strong, slaves have been set free, great art has been produced, and useful scientific discoveries have abounded. Benevolent governments have been born, the sick and weak have been cared for—not perfectly, but way better than before Christ came, and education/literacy have increased.

And the work carries on. Some heroes of the faith are well-known, some are obscure. Some have impacted masses of people; some have only impacted their own family members or a few friends.

And isn't perseverance in the faith as great a work as a crusade? When many of the people around you mock your faith or treat you badly because of your faith—and yet you stand firm—that is a great work. When tragedy or disease or disaster strikes and you remain a faithful believer, that is a great work, too. And every Christian knows that he does not stand or walk or run or do great or small things for the Kingdom of God by himself—but by the power of Christ that dwells within him.

*(Continued on page 5)*

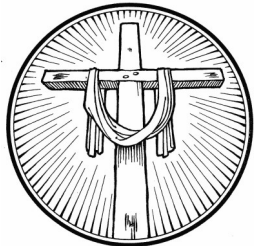


### April Events

#### Holy Week Services

Please join us for 2 special services between Palm Sunday and Easter.

On **Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 p.m.**, we will gather in the sanctuary to celebrate Maundy Thursday with scripture, song and communion.



On **Friday, April 7th at 7:00 p.m.**, we will remember Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday. We will hear

the story as we gather in the cemetery. Please bring a chair. If there is rain we will move to the sanctuary.

#### Easter Sunrise Service with Breakfast

**Sunday, April 9th**

**7:00 AM -**

Come early on this joyful Easter morning to celebrate our risen Lord! We will begin worship at 7:00 a.m., and finish with a free breakfast for all at the end of the worship service.

Sunday school classes will not meet, but resume with our regular schedule next Sunday.

Happy Easter to all!



#### April Worship Information

- *April 2nd* – Matthew 21:1-11 (Communion Sunday/Palm Sunday)
- *April 9th* – Matthew 28:1-10 (Service is at 7 a.m./Easter Sunday)
- *April 16th* – 1 Peter 1:3-9
- *April 23rd* – 1 Peter 1:17-23
- *April 30th* – 1 Peter 2:19-25 (Anointing will be available)

#### Safe Sanctuary Training

If you work with children or youth at Ebenezer (or would like to) there will be a review of our Safe Sanctuaries policies on **Saturday, April 22, 2023 starting at 9 a.m.** in the Heavenly Sonlighters classroom.

#### Other Dates to Know

- ◆ Caldwell Spring Break, *April 10-14*
- ◆ Ashton's graduation, *May 5th*
- ◆ On-line Annual Conference session, *May 6th* (about disaffiliation)
- ◆ Pastor's Vacation, *May 25-30*
- ◆ Annual Conference, *June 15-18*

&

*Dudley Shoals Elementary*

*Kindergarten Screenings*

*Friday, April 18th.*

*Register at*

*Www.caldwellschools.com/dses and click on Kindergarten Enrollment.*

*Pre-registration required—No walk-ins.*

*Question's call: 828-396-3457*

### April Celebrations



- **1st**—Brian Sears
- **5th**—Billy Long
- **9th**—Sandy Miller
- **11th**—McCall Creaseman
- **12th**—Tammy Adams
- **12th**—Samantha Stone
- **19th**—Nancy Sears
- **21st**—Emily Haas
- **23rd**—Annette Burson
- **24th**—Celeste Creaseman
- **25th**—Alexandrea Lingle
- **27th**—Wyll Baker
- **28th**—Cinda McRary
- **30th**—Rex Teague
- **30th**—Sarah McCrary

#### Happy Anniversary

- **12th**—Jerry & Loretta Helton
- **12th**—Russ & JoAnn Knepp
- **14th**—Garry & Phyllis Minton

#### Our Military

Ricky Garland  
Shane McRary  
Jamie Mullinax



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

#### Special Notice

We have a medical equipment closet at our church with walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, potty chairs, and crutches and canes. These are available for loan to those in need—no charge. If you have such equipment at home that you no longer need, you can donate them to the closet.



**Church Council—March 26, 2023**

Attendees: Pastor Alan Gaylord, Irene Austin, Rosanna Bachman, Ricky Baker, Becky Clark, Kim Ellis, Roy Hamby, Bleaka Hollar, John McCrary, Judy McCrary, Marsha McRary, Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears, Ted Daniel, Gerry Daniel, Kim Knepp, Kenny Silver.

Marsha opened the meeting with prayer, then read from 2 Timothy 4:1-5 in which the Apostle Paul charges Pastor Timothy to preach the Word, and to “be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear (vv. 2-3, NIV).” We must stand fast in this season in the Word of God as a church body, and do what is necessary to continue delivering the truth of God to everyone.

Minutes of the February meeting were read and approved.

**Financial Report – Irene Austin**

This year, so far, we have received \$33,330 for our General Fund, but we have spent \$36,101.11. So, we spent \$2,771.11 more than we took in. We cannot continue to do this without having to raid some designated funds, such as, the Cemetery or Capital Improvements, or other funds to be able to pay our bills. We know that times are difficult, with inflation, etc.; but we ask that our members and attendees, and anyone touched by our ministries in this community, to reach down deep and give a little more to help keep us afloat. We prefer not to incur debt unless necessary. Irene has had to hold off paying the apportionments again, which will need to be paid in full, plus another year of the same, before we can disaffiliate. Please bear this

in mind when determining what to give, and which funds to contribute to. (See further down in this report for updated news about disaffiliation for our church.)

**Trustees Report – Ricky Baker**

Each Trustee member has been assigned a certain area to police and report any problems or issues back to the Chairperson, Ricky. There have been no new issues raised that have not been resolved. We received a bill for a recent mowing, and the price has increased by \$15. Our annual building insurance bill has come, and it is up by \$913 over last year. Ricky will call the company and see if we can pay quarterly or by the month to help ease the financial burden we are experiencing now.

Marsha told Ricky that the squeak in the CLC from the heat/air equipment is still there. Ricky will check that again. He is holding off on the alarm problem until will have more free cash to get it fixed.

**MISC.**

The Poor Man’s Supper and Craft Fair brought in approximately \$1,460. (Corrected figure after contributions counted on Sunday: \$1,589 to the Action-MISC fund for disaffiliation needs.) Bleaka reported that we will more fundraisers for the Action Fund, but none in April.

**Pastor’s Report**

Re: Mission and Vision. Pastor Alan explained that our mission is the same as for every Christian church in the world: Go, make disciples, baptizing, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Related to our vision, we need to set goals and actions that will help us to carry out that mission in our community and

around the world. What does God want us to do here?

Re: Disaffiliation. The Pastor found a letter on the Facebook page from Bishop Carter that calls for a Special Session of the WNC Annual Conference for Fall 2023. We had previously been told that there would be no extra conference, which is one of the reasons we decided to hold off on the disaffiliation process for Ebenezer.

Because of this added session, which will be held on Saturday, November 4 as “virtual meetings,” **the deadlines have been extended for when the paperwork and other items related to disaffiliation must be in (from April 1 to July 1). Our church conference to vote for disaffiliation would have to be held by September 15th. Finalization of the process and payment of all monies due would need to be completed by December 31, 2023.**

The Council members voiced some concerns about Pastor Alan (who will not disaffiliate from the UMC), and whether or not he would be allowed to finish out his year of service here once we disaffiliate (not leaving until June 0f 2024), or if he would be moved immediately. More discussion ensued. No vote was taken at this time, but several members of the Council will continue to deal with and research aspects of the process that need to be completed by July 1. Irene Austin offered to check into the possibilities for financial and legal help with the disaffiliation requirements.

Our church membership stands at 171. There will be more letters and follow up letters soon. The Pastor needs phone numbers for Patsy Fowler and Amber Moore, and an updated address for Rick Lyda.

Safe Sanctuaries’ Training is set for Saturday, April 22 at 9:00 a.m. In



**Council Minutes, cont'd**

*(Continued from page 4)*


April, we will be collecting food items for CCC&TI. See p. 3 for April worship information, and other dates related to the Pastor's vacation, et. al.

**New Business**

Cindy brought a request from the Caldwell County Fraternal Order of the Police for help in providing Easter meals and groceries for Veterans and Senior Citizens in the county in need. The UMW offered to take care of giving something to this effort.



Marsha asked us to be in deep prayer about the disaffiliation process. Bleaka said the closing prayer.

Minutes by Cindy Sears. 



**John Wesley Said:**

“Do you not know that God entrusted you with that money (all above what buys necessities for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless; and, indeed, as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind? How can you, how dare you, defraud the Lord, by applying it to any other purpose?”

**Something, cont'd**

*(Continued from page 2)*

Jesus was preparing his followers for his imminent death on the cross, so that they would not be discouraged, but carry on. And so should you and I carry on, believing his promise that we will do greater works than he did.

“Things are not collapsing, so Christ told them boldly. But, together, you and I will see this through. And remember there are two of us; that you will never be sent out or left alone; that always it will be you—and I; and together what can we not accomplish—you and I?” (I. B., p. 706)

No faithful work will be wasted, whether small or great. The faithful have done great and wondrous things throughout history and the world, and greater things than what Jesus did while on earth (not counting his death and resurrection). We have access to great power. Accept it and use it for his glory and the spreading of his great kingdom around the world, and in your little community and family. †

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

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. —2 Timothy 3:14-15 NIV

**Ministry Opportunities**

**CCC & TI Food Ministry**

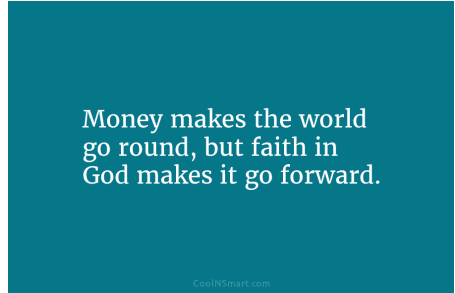
In April we have been asked to collect single serving size foods for the food ministry at CCC & TI. This can include microwavable macaroni and cheese, ramen, crackers, granola bars, pop tarts, cereal bowls, etc... This is a ministry supported by our Missional Network which is made up of all the United Methodist churches of Caldwell County.

**SCCM Food Pantry**

We collect canned and boxed foods for South Caldwell Christian Ministries Food Pantry throughout the year. Please place on the bench in the old fellowship hall.

**Ebenezer UMC's General Fund**

Don't forget that your church needs your monetary support, too! Our contributions are not keeping up with our spending on essentials, such as electricity, repairs, water, apportionments, insurance, etc. Please remember to give. God will bless you and us for your generosity. Thank you.



**Special Giving**

We gratefully acknowledge the following special gifts:

**In honor of Gary Paul's 46th birthday** by Delores & Billy Wayne Campbell;

**In memory of Bill Campbell** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell.