



EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

August '23

Volume 19 Issue 8

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

Inside this issue:

Meetings, etc.	2
John Wesley Said	
Something to Pray About	2
August Events	3
Community Day	3
Military Prayer List	3
August Celebrations	3
Town Hall Report	3
Blood Drive Report	3
Church Council — July 23, 2023	4
August Worship Information	5
Other Dates to Know	5
Pastor's Note, cont'd	5
Volunteer Opportunity	5
Ministry Opportunity	5
Special Giving	5
Hid In My Heart	5
Council Minutes, cont'd	6
Missing Members List	6

**August 19th—
Community Day is coming!** Invite your neighbors and coworkers and their kids. All food & fun is free. See p. 3 for more information.

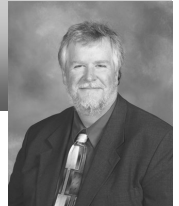
Sunday Services

- 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



“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” *Genesis 1.27 NIV*

I am going to wade into the deep waters called gender. With the current climate about transgender and identity I wanted a deeper understanding of what we are actually talking about. I will share with you what I found out.

There are currently two primary views related to gender identity. The first is biological. From this we understand that at the level of our chromosomes we are born male or female. This comes from our biological parents. Each provides a chromosome the causes us to be born male or female. A female is born with XX chromosomes. A male is born with XY chromosomes.

This sounds pretty straightforward. However there can be some persons born differently. A female can be born with XY chromosomes (this is called Swyer syndrome). A male can be born with XYY chromosomes. Another condition is called Ambiguous Genitalia syndrome. This is when a child is born with both sets of reproductive organs. These are rare syndromes, but they do happen. It takes place when the wiring for our chromosomes is being created.

Also, in our biological understanding of gender two hormones are involved. They are estrogen and testosterone. Both male and female have these hormones. Traditionally, males have more testosterone and females have more estrogen. These hormones vary in each individual. At this time there is a South African Olympic athlete named Caster Semenya. She is a biological female, yet her body produces too much testosterone and is in violation of the rules of her sport. That governing body wants her to take estrogen or testosterone blockers in order for her to participate in her sport.

That is the biological side of gender. The other is cultural which is reflected in the dictionary definition. It states that gender is “the male or female sex, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones, or one of a range of other identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male or female.” By this definition gender is a cultural creation and not a biological one. People can choose their identity.

These two definitions are in conflict with each other. I haven't even brought up

(Continued on page 5)

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.
NOTE: Group will not meet Aug. 8th or 15th.

Wesley Class Meeting

Class meets on **Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.** (NOTE: class will not meet on August 8th or 15th.)

Food Ministry

Next meal will be on **Monday, August 21st** (12-6:00 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, August 22nd 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, **August 27th at 4:00 p.m.**

UMW Meeting

The Women will have their next meeting on **Sunday, August 27th at 6:00 p.m.**

John Wesley Said:

"I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship, and the whole world for my mission field."

Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

When I said, "My foot is slipping," your love, O LORD, supported me. When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul. Psalm 94:18-19 NIV

TOO MANY

References: Judges 7:1-8; Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 2, pp. 737-739.

The Lord said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, 'My own hand has delivered me.'" –Judges 7:2

Gideon gathered an army of 32,000 to fight the Midianites who were wreaking havoc in Israel; yet, God said, "That's too many!" The LORD then instructs Gideon to do some tests to winnow down the group of warriors to only 300 men!

Since 2016, it seems that God has been whittling down the congregation at Ebenezer Church. Many of us have been greatly concerned about the decline in our membership numbers and attendance numbers and contributions. Have we stopped to wonder why God may be cutting us down to move us into greater service and glory for him?

Gideon's army went from a big force of 32,000 warriors down to 300. This remaining number of warriors were the bravest and most alert of the 32,000 men. God wanted them to understand that their coming victory over the enemies of Israel was because of the power and strategies that God provided them. Their victory would be in God's hands, not in their hands or by their cleverness.

When things are going well, when we have plenty of money coming in, when we have many hands to do the work that needs to be done, we humans can become "cocky" and assume that our successes are because of ourselves and our own efforts and cleverness, instead of because of God's mercies and blessings.

Ebenezer Methodist Church is facing a mountain of difficulty in our desire and determination to stand true to God's Word and long-standing Christian doctrine, and not give into the mandates of an evil culture. Yes, I said evil. Satan is the father of lies. He comes to kill and destroy. Look around: abortion = killing; easy divorce, easy "love", the welfare state, same-sex marriage = destruction of the family; transgenderism (transvestites) = deceitfulness; pretending to be something they are not and can never truly be.

We will stand. We will survive. Not because of our own efforts or power, but because of the power God gives our efforts to succeed. In his will, he provides to us all that we need to remain true to him for his glory.

By the way, Gideon and his 300 men win the battle with the "sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" (7:20b)

(Mini-Bible Lesson #70 on Ebenezer's website home page.)

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Community Fun Day

Saturday
August 19
10 AM—1 PM



Fun, Food, Fellowship

You are invited!



Everything is FREE, and open to the public.

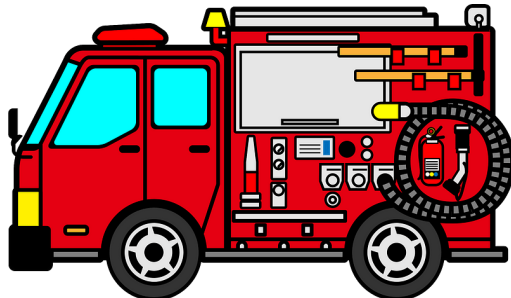
We will have a waterslide, petting zoo, and reptile zoo. Grace Chapel Fire Department will bring their fire truck to show off.

Food includes, hot dogs, fruit popsicles, and cookies with beverages.

There will be music and other surprise activities.



Special Note: children who want to play on the water slide need to wear appropriate swimming attire and bring a towel. All children must be accompanied by an adult.



Our Military

Ricky Garland
Shane McRary
Jamie Mullinax



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

Sunny spirits make even the darkest skies shine.

August Celebrations



- 6th—Tyler Baker
- 10th—Alan Gaylord
- 11th—Becky C. Silver
- 11th—Ariel Carlisle
- 13th—Trey Hefner
- 18th—Kinley Starbuck
- 23rd—Braylen Helton
- 23rd—Monte Hollar
- 24th—Candace Collins
- 24th—Casey Collins
- 24th—Cooper Behmer

Happy Anniversary

- 4th—Lyle & Angie Miller
- 18th—Ricky & Shawn Baker
- 25th—Brian & Kim Knepp

Town Hall Report

Thank you to everyone who attended our Town Hall Meeting. We had a good crowd of people, and we hope that we answered your questions about our reasons for leaving the UMC, and about the process. Please continue to pray for us and support our fundraising efforts. Thank you.

Blood Drive—Report

According to the report sheet, the Red Cross collected 8 Power Red Products, and 21 whole blood products for a **total of 29**.

We thank everyone who helped prepare and serve food, and gave blood.

Great going everyone! May God bless you for your generosity.



Church Council—July 23, 2023

Attendees: Rev. Alan Gaylord, Irene Austin, Rosanna Bachman, Kim Ellis, Barbara Ferguson, Emily Haas, Bleaka Hollar, John McCrary, Judy McCrary, Marsha McCrary, Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears, Becky Silver, Kenny Silver, Ted & Gerry Daniel, & Jeff Yount (Guest).

Marsha McCrary opened the meeting with a reading from Psalm 92:12-15:

“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, ‘The LORD is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.’”

We are in a mess now as we prepare to disaffiliate from the UMC, yet God remains with us. He is making a way for us. At the end of it all, we will give glory to God. When we stand in righteousness with our God, He stands with us, and blesses us with the strength to continue to stand. Marsha gave the opening prayer.

Reading of the minutes of the June meeting: motion to accept as written by Rosanna; seconded by Irene. Passed unanimously.

New Business

Marsha recognized our special guest, Jeff Yount, who brought forth a proposal to conduct a large barbecue fundraising event. He (his business) will prepare the food and help conduct the fundraiser. All profits above the cost of food, plates, etc. will go to Ebenezer. He estimates that we could raise over \$8,000. There was more discussion of how the event would work, his need for volunteers from our church to help with preparing the plates, delivering the plates, and getting up orders. Prices were discussed and set

at \$13 per plate, \$40 for a whole butt, \$13 for 1 lb. bag of chopped barbecue. This would be a three-day event, Thursday evening through Saturday at lunchtime. We will need about 15 people to help on Friday morning (beginning at 8:30 a.m.) (at his business location), and on Saturday at Ebenezer. His people will help with promotion, also.

Motion was made by Kim Ellis to proceed with the fundraiser; seconded by Rosanna. Passed unanimously. Date set for September 21-23.

Jeff suggested that our people could help now by buying 20 lb. bags of charcoal if they find some on sale. Let him know if you hear of any pork butts on sale for .99 per lb. Other items we could pre-buy are Showboat beans, or large jars of mayonnaise. You can donate these items, or he will reimburse you for them. The Council thanked Jeff for his willingness to do this fundraiser.

Financial Report - Irene Austin

We now have a positive balance in our General Fund, but we still need money to keep coming in. She said that she had not made a payment to apportionments, yet, because she was waiting to find out the cost of repair to the air conditioner fan for the sanctuary. She will now make a payment.

Ted Daniel asked if people who missed church on one Sunday made up for their giving for that missed Sunday when they returned the next week. Cindy, who enters the contributions, said she knows of some people who appear to do so, but not everyone and she doesn't know about those people who do not fill out an envelope. He also asked if there was any evidence that the people who watch our services online give to Ebenezer. She said

that we get a few contributions in the mail, but not many; certainly not 20-30, which is the number of people who view online normally on a Sunday.

There was general discussion that we are a community of believers, therefore people need to be in church IF possible. And giving is a part of what we do as members of Ebenezer and as believers. We need regular contributions to keep the lights on, and to be able to post our services online. We need money to continue our various other ministries, too. God does not call us to be “lone rangers,” but to be in community where we can support one another and worship God together.

Irene Austin made a proposition that we can disaffiliate without having to take out a loan, she will cut off her ponytail.

Motion to accept Finance Report by Kim Ellis, seconded by Becky Silver. Motion passed.

Trustees Report - Ricky Baker

Presented by Marsha McCrary: The air conditioner fan has been repaired with a cost of \$1300. Ricky is still working on the Insurance paperwork we need to satisfy some of the disaffiliation paperwork. It appears that we have turned in all the other information requested by the District Superintendent. Rev. Gaylord reported that the air conditioning problem in the parsonage is an electrical problem that he hopes will be resolved soon. (The air is currently working.)

Pastor's Report

Report on membership: Pastor Alan announced that he now has a count of 169 members. Kim Ellis says that she has 170. (We will attempt to find the discrepancy.)

(Continued on page 6)



Aug. Worship Information

- *Aug 6th* – Luke 14:16-24 (Come Sinners to the Gospel Feast) (Communion Sunday)
- *Aug 13th* — Roy Hamby Preaches
- *Aug 20th* – Matthew 28:1-10 (Christ the Lord Is Risen Today)
- *Aug 27th* — Psalm 145 (And Can It Be?)

Three Sunday sermons are based on Charles Wesley hymns.

Other Dates to Know

- ◆ Pastor’s vacation, *Aug 7-15*
- ◆ *Community Day, Aug 19th*
- ◆ *Caldwell County schools start, Aug 28th.*

Pastor’s note, cont’d

(Continued from page 1)

sexual orientation at all which is a whole other can of worms in our culture. I do agree that culture does set certain gender expectations. What does it mean to be a man? What does it mean to be a woman? We have a lot of derogatory words for boys who are too “girly.” We have a lot of expressions for girls who are too “tom boyish.”

What I am attempting to express is that the Bible tells us that each of us is created in the image of God. Even a child born with a “syndrome” is a reflection of the Creator. Also, the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ died for us all. I do not have all of the answers when it comes to gender issues in our culture. What I do know is that while we can disagree on these things the person with whom we disagree is still a creation of God and reflects the image of the Creator. I may not understand why someone believes what they believe. I can believe Christ died for them as Christ died for me.

In God’s grace, Pastor Alan

Volunteer Opportunity

SCCM needs some volunteers to drive the box truck on Tuesdays from about 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Thursdays from 9:30 a. m. to 1:00 p.m. to pick up food store

Ministry Opportunity

SCCM School Supplies

We are now collecting school supplies for SCCM’s annual give-away to help parents and their children. You can find the full lists of items by age groups on our website. Here is a non-graded list: Scissors, pencils, glue, glue sticks, crayons, colored pencils, highlighters, notebooks and paper, dividers with tabs, spiral notebooks, tissues, wipes, calculators, folders with pockets, erasers, black, blue and red pens, ear buds.

Deadline date this year is: August 11th.

Thank you for your support. NOTE: We received a thank you note from SCCM for 87 lbs. of food donated on July 11, 2023. Keep up the good work, Ebenezer members!



Special Giving

We gratefully acknowledge the following special gifts in July:

- **In memory of Margie Spencer Austin** by Joan Pennell (from June).
- **In memory of Spencer, Stafford, Campbell, Hardy, and Grandparents Day** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell.
- **In memory of Addie Sears** by Ebenezer’s Women’s Group.
- **In memory of James (Bill) Campbell** by Billy Wayne Campbell.
- **In honor of the Sonlighters Class** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell.
- **In honor of our cooks, helpers and drivers for the Food Ministry** by Delores & Gary Paul Cambbell.



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

I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws.

I hold fast to your statutes, O LORD; do not let me be put to shame.

I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

—Psalm 119:30-32 NIV



donations from our local grocery stores. They also need someone to takeover the mobile food pantry every 3rd Saturday from 10-10:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church, Rhodhiss. **Call McPherson at 828-396-4000 for info or to volunteer.**



Council Minutes, cont'd

We have received the following responses to the latest audit responses: Jason and Angela Vetter, requested removal; Greg Petrea, requested removal; Dawn Yount, requested removal. Trey and Kelly Hefner joined by profession of faith on July 23rd; and Hayden Boone was baptized and added to the Preparatory List on July 16th.

The next Youth event is a pool party on July 26th at the Haas'.

Pastor Alan asked about collecting school supplies. We currently collect for the Teacher's Closet (for Gateway and Dudley Shoals Schools). SCCM is asking that each church provide two backpacks or loose school supplies. The list of requested items will be on the website page.

Homecoming for 2023: October 8th, 10:30 a.m. with pot-luck lunch afterwards. The following names of former pastors were given to Pastor Alan to ask to speak at Homecoming: Mitch Wilson, Frank Gordon, Gary Camp. He will let us know who agrees to come. Trunk 'R Treat is set for Saturday, October 28th, 5-7 p.m.

Our apportionments set for 2024: \$15, 856. (This will be part of our cost of disaffiliation.)

Personal information: Pastor Alan will be on vacation August 7-15. Community Day will be held on August 19th. Irene reported that we have a petting zoo, the reptile display, and water slide, and a fire department truck will also be there. Caldwell County schools begin on August 28th.

Old Business

The retirement of the Bibles will be done late in the year when it cools off some, and Monte Hollar can finish building the box. The Town Hall went well and was well attended.

More New Business

Linda Moretz mentioned that a commode in the girl's restroom is not working. Monte said that it will need to be replaced, but it has been worked on several times and continues to have problems.

On Community Day we will need cookies to give out to our guests.

Kim Ellis mentioned a proposal to have a time of prayer before the day of voting on disaffiliation. A date and time will be set once we have the date for the vote.

Kim Ellis then told us about the Golf Tournament that will be held on September 30th at the Granada Golf Course. She asked for someone to volunteer to oversee finding hole sponsors (#100 per hole). Rosanna Bachman volunteered. Begin talking up this now. We will need door prizes. If you know of a business that might be willing to donate items, please ask them and let us know of any positive responses. The cost to enter the tournament will be \$65-70 per person. The shot-gun start is at 1:00 p.m.

Pastor Alan reminded us that we will have to notify our members 10 days prior to the charge conference vote, and the reason for the conference (to vote on disaffiliation). Members must be present to vote.

Irene Austin told us that an elderly person wanted to thank our church for continuing our ministries during all this turmoil and working on leaving the UMC.

Judy McCrary gave the closing prayer. Minutes recorded by Cindy Sears.



Missing Members

If you know of a way for us to contact the people listed here, please let Cindy in the church office or Pastor Alan know as soon as possible. Thank you.

We are still looking for addresses/phone numbers of the following members:

- Beverly Laws
- Ricky Lyda
- Amber McCrary
- Joshua Yount

