



# EBENEZER

Methodist Church Dudley Shoals

# August '24

Volume 20 Issue 8

www.ebenzerm-church.com

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“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 Corner



Dear Church Family,

It is amazing how time flies past so quickly as I realize that it is now a month since I began as your new pastor at Ebenezer Methodist Church. I want to let you know that my family, Eunice, Rumbidzai Sarah, and I are very excited and feel blessed to be part of what God is doing here at Ebenezer and in this community.

I came worn out and wounded by the process of contending for my faith after serving the United Methodist Church for twenty years in the Louisiana Annual Conference. I received instructions from my then bishop not to say anything to my congregation regarding Christian sexual ethics nor disaffiliation or face unspecified consequences. Who could have envisaged persecution from other Christians today? I also suffered isolation and covert rejection because of my beliefs in a denomination that I had been part of since birth.

Your warm welcome and hospitality quickly brought healing and wellness to our woundedness. I give God all the glory and honor for leading me to this congregation and community. I will therefore minister healing from the sensitivity of woundedness. I look forward to participating in the many events that make the presence of God manifest in this community. Meeting committed leaders and disciples of Jesus Christ in this church and observing them in action has brought me much joy and happiness. I am therefore proud to say that Ebenezer Methodist Church is my home and the people have accepted me as part of the family.

I invite you to continue praying for me and our leaders as we join with what the Holy Spirit is doing in and around us. My vision is to ensure that each and every member of this great church is in ministry as God has gifted each of us, and that we will get outside the walls of the church and invite all people to become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Faithfully,

Pastor Simon



**Community Day**  
is  
**August 10th.**  
See p. 3.



### Sunday Services

- 9:00am *Worship Service*
- 10:15am *Sunday School*
- 5:00pm *Adult Choir* / 4:00 pm *Praise Band Practice*
- 6:00pm *Every FOURTH SUNDAY Ebenezer Methodist Women*

### WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

- 7:00p *Bible Study — Adults.*



### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

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



## Meetings, etc.

### Food Ministry

The next meal will be served on **Monday, August 19th**. Please contact Ricky Baker for details.

### Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, August 20th at 11:00 a.m.** Details to be announced later.

### Church Council

The Church Council will meet on **Sunday, August 25th at 4:00 p.m.**

### EMW Meeting

The Women will have their next meeting on **Sunday, August 25th at 6:00 p.m.** All the women of the church are invited to attend.

*How many of us have missed a blessing because we stayed away from a worship service?*

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

So then, my friends, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer.

--Romans 12:1 GNT

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade... --1 Peter 1:3-4 NIV

**SKEPTICAL  
BUT HOPEFUL**

References: John 20:24-29; Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 8; NIV Application Commentary: John by Gary M. Burge

*Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

*But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."*

Much has been written about "Doubting Thomas." His skepticism when the other disciples came to him asserting that a resurrected Jesus had appeared to them in the flesh has caused his name to become a byword and example of unwillingness to believe—not only in a Christian perspective, but in secular instances, too. But was Thomas a doubter or a realistic person who needed solid proof before he would commit himself to something so wondrous, something he wanted with all his heart; yet feared another grave disappointment if found to be untrue? Jesus has suffered a grievous death. Thomas was afraid that, as a follower of Jesus, he might suffer the same fate. Under such dire circumstances, Thomas feared the worst, and had no hope of anything better.

We aren't told why Thomas was not at the first appearance of Jesus in the closed room. He missed a wonderful blessing. How many of us have missed a blessing because we have stayed away from a worship service for whatever reason—frivolous or important; voluntarily or involuntarily. There is a reason we are told not to abandon corporate worship (Hebrews 10:25). Worship with fellow believers offers comfort, encouragement, teaching, and helps to bind us into a community. Thomas can never recapture that first moment when a community of fearful people became a community of joyous believers. He will always be the one who arrived late to the party. Let's work on being "expectant" when we worship together for God's Holy Spirit is present and may choose that day to do something wondrous. (I. B., p. 798)

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## Council, cont'd

*(Continued from page 5)*

seconded the motion for the \$250 amount. Motion passed.

Kim Ellis announced plans for a "Meet and Greet" party for Simon and his family. The date chosen is September 8<sup>th</sup> from 3-5:00 p.m. This will be a "floating" party. Sweets and snacks will be served to our guests. We will announce it to the local churches and the Caldwell County GMC churches and in the newspaper.

Kim Ellis then reported on the condition of the parsonage when the Gaylords finally moved out. To put it bluntly, it was a dirty mess. She requested that the board send a letter to the Gaylords requesting an apology and some enumeration for the cleaning costs. Discussion.

Pastor Simon suggested that first the head of the Trustees should talk to Rev. Alan Gaylord. If there was not a good response, then we ought to contact the WNCC of the UMC and let them know how much the parsonage was abused during the Gaylords tenancy. The Board agreed to these suggestions.

Pastor Simon gave the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned. Minutes recorded by Cindy Sears.



## August Event

### Community Fun Day!

**Saturday August 10**  
**10-2 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.



## August Celebrations



- 6th—Tyler Baker
- 11th—Becky Silver
- 11th—Ariel Carlisle
- 13th—Trey Hefner
- 13th—Simon Chigumira
- 23rd—Braelyn 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



## Our Military

Ricky Garland  
Shane McRary  
Jamie Mullinax  
Hunter Tolbert



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

## *John Wesley Said:*

“There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit.”

“Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.”



## Something, cont'd

Back to Thomas. Notice that Thomas was not so skeptical that he refused to gather with the disciples again. He had to wait 7 days though before Jesus appeared again and confronted Thomas about his doubts. Thomas quickly changed his time, explaining “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28), “a confession of Thomas’ heartfelt belief in Jesus” (Burge, p. 563).

Thomas believes because he has seen (as have the other disciples). Jesus here offers a blessing to those to come who will believe though they have not seen—that’s us! “Thomas’ faith is not necessarily blemished because of his need for sight; it is simply privileged, for few would ever have the gift of what these disciples experienced (Burge, p. 563). Still, many of us do have the privilege of centuries full of believers and the good fruit that belief has borne in the world and continues to bear for all who have “ears to hear and eyes to see.” Be open to the gospel message and see what wondrous things God has done and continues to do through belief in His Son, Jesus. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for these blessings.



## Church Council Minutes—July 28, 2024

Attendees: Tammy Adams, Irene Austin, Ricky Baker, Pastor Simon Chigumirs, Ted Daniel, Kim Ellis, Bleaka Hollar, JoAnn Knepp, Judy McCrary, Marsha McCrary (Chair), Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears, Kim Knepp and Trey Hefner.

Scripture reading: Psalm 18:44-48; Psalm 19:7-14. God is alive and working in history, in the world today. God’s laws are perfect and are a best guide in how to live well.

Reading of the Minutes from the May 26 and June 16 meetings. Accepted.

### Financial Report by Irene Austin

Irene was all smiles because we finally received more money in contributions than we spent. Keep up the good giving.

Irene reported that she has paid our Connectional Funding amounts to the GMC. The Board agreed that she can make the payments each month, instead of paying the remainder for the year now.

### Trustees Report by Ricky Baker

Ricky reported that the parsonage cleaning and repairs and update of appliances has been completed. Irene also reported that everything has been paid for.

Pastor Simon has requested that a Pastor’s Study be set-up in the church. The current Counters room will be moved elsewhere.

There was an incident in the kitchen last month with a small fire and lots of smoke filling the CLC area. The Grace Chapel Fire Department helped clean out the smoke. The griddle our people were trying to fix will need to be repaired by pros. Ricky has found a company to do this.

The playground will be closed for now, so that some rotten wood can be removed and replaced, and holes filled in. This will be done before Community Day on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August. The wasps and bees have been destroyed.

*(Continued on page 5)*



## Church Council Minutes, cont'd

*(Continued from page 4)*

### **Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee by Tammy Adams**

Pastor Simon has requested an office to be set up in the church for him because he will be better able to communicate with Cindy and get caught up on what is going on in our church. He will also have a place to meet people for counseling purposes. He will need a desk and shelves. Marsha said that he could use the shelf donated a while back from the library upstairs because it has not been used, yet. There is also a desk (very old) upstairs that may be used unless someone donates a more modern desk.

### **North Carolina Global Methodist Conference by Kim Ellis**

Our conference delegate, Kim Ellis, reported on her trip to the conference held in Winston-Salem in June. The theme of the meeting was “Press On!” based on Philippians 3:14. They want to stir up and excite a passion for God, connect with one another, and move forward in presenting the gospel message to the world.

The NC GMC now has 400 churches. Our church is in the Boone District, which currently has 11 churches. Caldwell County has 5 GMC churches (including Ebenezer). The Elder for our district is Rev. Philip Hefner (of Grace Chapel). GMC churches in Caldwell County are Ebenezer, Trinity, Haper’s Chapel, Grace Chapel, and Gamewell. Our Bishop is Mark Webb.

Kim showed us the one-page budget for the GMC in NC and the Organizational Construct of our Conference Structure. She pointed out that the bishop is on the bottom of the chart, and “we the people” of the individual churches is on the top of the chart.

At the conference, Kim said the whole atmosphere felt very different from what she had experienced in the old UMC conferences—and it was a good feeling!

### **Old Business**

We have a volunteer to help keep the defibrillator equipment up to date, Matthew Shook. Ricky Baker agreed to check the first aid kit and keep it up to date.

Ricky said that there is some landscaping work needed at the parsonage that they will work on this fall.

August 10<sup>th</sup> is our annual Community Day. Everything is free! Tell all your friends and co-workers.

The Red Cross Blood Drive we hosted in July went well. They collected 21 products. Thank you to everyone who helped and gave blood.

Kim’s dates for her trip to Romania has been changed to October 7<sup>th</sup> to October 28<sup>th</sup>, so she will miss Homecoming for the first time in over 50 years. She will try to get everything set up before she leaves for Romania.

### **New Business**

Trey Hefner brought us proposal for a new camera and I-pad set up for broadcasting our worship services. The two-camera system would cost \$1300+, and a three-camera system would cost \$1600+. Discussion. Kim Ellis reported that our Women’s group is willing to help pay part of the expense. Motion made to go with the three-camera version. Irene made the first motion to accept; Judy McCrary seconded. Motion passed.

Cindy Sears brought forward the motion to give money to the Caldwell County Fraternal Order of the Police Christmas program. We gave \$200 last year, but the price to take care of one child is now \$250. Discussion. JoAnn Knepp

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