



# EBENEZER

United Methodist Church

www.ebenezerum-church.org

# July '23

Volume 19 Issue 7

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

### Inside this issue:

Meetings, etc.	2
John Wesley Said	
Something to Pray About	2
July Events	3
Community Townhall	3
Red Cross Blood Drive	3
July Worship Information	3
Other Dates to Know	3
Youth Summer Work/Fun	3
July Celebrations	3
Military Prayer List	3
Hid In My Heart	3
Church Council – June 25, 2023	4
Council Minutes, cont'd	5
Ministry Opportunities	5
Pastor's Note, cont'd	5
Thank You Note	5
Special Giving	5
Something, cont'd	6-7
A Bit of Fun	7

## Happy 4th of July

Church office will be closed July 3-4 (Mon.-Tues.) for the holiday.

### 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 have made mention of the founder of the Methodist Movement, John Wesley, many times. The person who I have failed to mention is his brother, Charles Wesley. He worked alongside his brother in the early days of Methodism. In some ways his work is more familiar to us as he was a great hymn writer and several of his hymns are still sung by us today.

Charles was born in 1707 to Samuel and Susanna Wesley. He was born in Epworth where his father was the parish priest of the Anglican Church. He was born 3 years after John and was his parents 18th child. (Let that sink in for a moment.) He attended Oxford University where he helped found the “Holy Club.” John joined later and became its leader. The Holy Club was where people were first called “Methodists” because they were so methodical in their spiritual life. Another early member was George Whitfield who encouraged John to take up field preaching when he was not allowed to preach in Anglican churches anymore.

Charles became an Anglican priest. He went with John to the colony of Georgia. He only stayed 6 months. He had a conversion experience on May 21, 1738. John had his conversion experience where he felt his “heart strangely warmed” on May 24, 1738 at Aldersgate. We remember that as Aldersgate Day. Charles worked with John in spreading the gospel throughout England and helped found several Methodist Societies. He married in 1749 to Sarah “Sally” Gwynne. They had 8 children, but only 3 lived to adulthood. He eventually settled in Bristol and then London. He did not agree with his brother’s decision to ordain Francis Asbury as the first Methodist Bishop and send him to America. Charles was a leader of the “Church Methodists” who disagreed with separating from the Anglican Church. As a side note, the British Methodist Church does not have bishops.

Charles’ greatest contribution was in his hymn writing. He took the themes of Methodist Christianity, put them to popular music of the day and taught them to the people in the societies. It is estimated that he wrote at least 6,500 hymns and may have written up to 10,000. Several are in our hymnal and are familiar to us and many others throughout the Christian faith.

In July and August, I will be using his hymns as the basis for the sermons. We will explore our theology in his music. The schedule is as follows:

*(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: will not meet on July 4.)

### Wesley Class Meeting

Class meets on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. (NOTE: class will not meet on July 4.)

### Food Ministry

Next meal will be on Monday, July 17 (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, July 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, July 23 at 4:00 p.m.

### UMW Meeting

The Women will have their next meeting on Sunday, July 23 at 6:00 p.m.

## John Wesley Said:

"I have never known more than fifteen minutes of anxiety or fear. Whenever I feel fearful emotions overtaking me, I just close my eyes and thank God that He is still on the throne reigning over everything and I take comfort in His control over the affairs of my life."

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears



I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world... Romans 12:1-2a NRSV

*For they speak bombastic nonsense, and with licentious desires of the flesh they entice people who have just escaped from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for people are slaves to whatever masters them. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them. — 2 Peter 2:18-21 NRSVA*

*In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully. —2 Timothy 4:1-5 NRSV*

Why leave?

The following things have been/are happening more and more within the United Methodist Church (mostly in the U. S. and Europe):

- ⇒ Increasing acceptance of and push for recognition of same sex marriages;
- ⇒ Increasing acceptance of and push for allowing practicing homosexuals in church/pastoral offices;
- ⇒ Bishops and other church leaders refusal to censure churches who support and pastors who perform same-sex marriages or churches who support practicing homosexuals as pastors/church officers and teachers; and, therefore refusing to enforce the Book of Discipline guidelines concerning these practices;
- ⇒ Transgender events are now beginning to gain a foothold in some UMC churches with little or no pushback from the Bishops;

(Continued on page 6)



### July Events

#### Community Townhall

**Sunday, July 16**

**4:00 PM**

We invite all members of our church and the surrounding community to come to a Townhall meeting where we will explain why we are leaving the United Methodist Church organization, and the issues surrounding that separation, and why it is costing us so much to do it.

Questions will be taken from the attendees, and the leaders of Ebenezer will attempt to answer your questions about this process.

**We thank you for your prayers!**

#### American Red Cross Summer Blood Drive

**Monday, July 24**

**2:30—7 PM**

**Give blood to save lives, and enjoy a delicious spaghetti meal.** Light snacks will also be available for donors and workers.

Make your appointment online at [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org). Enter Ebenezer UMC to schedule your appointment. On the day of your appointment, you can also go to [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](http://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions to save time before coming in.

You can also contact the church office to schedule an appointment. Call 828-396-2214.

**We thank you for your support and generosity.**

#### July Worship Information

- *July 2nd* – Matthew 26:17-20 (Communion Sunday)
- *July 9th* — Finding Hope Kids conduct the service
- *July 16th* – Psalm 35:28 (O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing)
- *July 23rd* – Haggai 2:7 (Come Thou Long Expected Jesus)
- *July 30th* — Luke 2:14 (Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)

Last three Sunday sermons based on

#### Other Dates to Know

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

#### Youth Summer Work/Fun

##### Wednesdays in July

- July 5th — no event
- July 12th — Cookout and hike at Lakeside Park (11 to 2 p.m.)
- July 19th — Help at Finding Hope Ministries Thrift Shop (meet at church at 9:30 a.m. & bring money for lunch at Village Inn Pizza)
- July 26th — Pool party at the Haas' (5579 Lizzard Lane, 2-5:00 p.m.)

Each youth will need a permission form completed by a parent or guardian. Please contact the church office or the pastor for the form.

Work  
Play  
Eat

### July Celebrations



- 3rd—Freida Farr
- 10th—Arlene McRary
- 10th—Cameron Collins
- 13th—Alice Hill
- 13th—Phyllis Minton
- 14th—Matt Shook
- 14th—Marilyn Kohnle
- 19th—Thomas Johnson
- 20th—Casey M. Chapman
- 22nd—Kay Gilbert
- 30th—Rebecca Hirt
- 31st—Jerry Parson, Jr.

#### Happy Anniversary

- 1st—Matthew & Amanda Coffey
- 3rd—Randy & Marsha McRary
- 10th—Wyll & Joellyn Baker
- 13th—Steven & Cheryl Vosdingh

#### 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!

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body.

—Proverbs 3:5-8 NRSV



**Church Council—May 28, 2023**

Attendees: : Rev. Alan Gaylord, Irene Austin, Ricky Baker, Becky Silver, Kim Ellis, Barbara Ferguson, Roy Hamby, Bleaka Hollar, JoAnn Knepp, John McCrary, Judy McCrary, Marsha McCrary, Linda Moretz, Cindy Sears, Kenny Silver, Peggy Jenkins, Billy W. Campbell.

Marsha opened the meeting with a devotional reading from an older Upper Room booklet on Psalm 19:14 about the Power of Words. We should concentrate on words of hope, faith, and life found in the Good News of Christ.

Reading of the Minutes from May; motion to accept as written by Bleaka Hollar, second by Judy McCrary; passed.

After asking Pastor Alan to leave the room, Marsha asked us to be more careful when speaking of the Pastor during the disaffiliation process, because he is stressed by the uncertainty of his position by these events, since he is staying with the UMC. Be careful about joking, teasing, etc.

**Financial Report – Irene Austin**

Since Ricky Baker’s challenge to give more to Ebenezer, there has been a marked improvement in our financial state. From being \$16,000 behind on meeting our budget, we have whittled it down to around \$6,000 behind. (**Update note:** as of June 25, we have basically caught up with this Sunday’s giving and the proceeds from the BBQ Chicken fundraiser!)

Irene reported that she had contacted the organization that is offering to loan monies for the disaffiliation process, but they quoted a high interest rate (9%) and only a 3 yr. term. She checked with First Citizens and found a lower interest rate (6.445%) with a longer term (15 yrs.). Once we get to the

point that we will need the funds, we will probably apply for a loan at First Citizens. The more money we raise now, the less we will need to borrow. Please keep giving. We especially need to keep our apportionments paid, and our regular budget up to date.

Motion to accept financial report by Linda Moretz, seconded by John McCrary; passed unanimously.

**Trustees Report – Ricky Baker**

There are some things that need to be done at the parsonage, and the parking lot needs to be sprayed to kill the weeds growing up in the cracks. He and his committee members will be working on these things.

**Pastor’s Report**

Report on membership: Pastor Alan reported that 2 people want to join our church, and Hayden wants to be baptized. The last audit letters are ready to be mailed. We will include a list of those people that we do not have addresses for in the July newsletter.

Youth summer events have been scheduled through July. There will be no activity on July 5th (the week of July 4th). The last event will be on July 26th.

The Pastor informed us that he will be on vacation on August 7-15. Our community day will be on August 19th from 10-2:00 p.m. It looks like we will have the water slide, the “lizard” display, and a petting zoo this time. Caldwell County schools start up again on August 28th.

**Old Business**

At the meeting with the District Superintendent, she wanted an explanation of why we want to leave

the UMC. We need to study up on the issues within the UMC and be prepared to speak the truth about the unorthodox actions going on in the organization.

Marsha went over a list of things the D. S. requires us to provide. Our paperwork needs to be in by August 15th. D. s. Huffman will then send us a template for a ballot with the specific wording they require. We then send the ballot template back to the D. S. She must approve the ballot to be used. We provide the number of ballots we expect to need for the vote.

All current members of Ebenezer can vote, but they must be at the called charge conference to be able to vote. Shut-ins will need to be hooked up to the meeting over the phone or a computer to be able to vote. Votes will be counted that day. At least 2/3rds of our members attending the meeting must vote for disaffiliation for it to pass.

If the vote to disaffiliation is affirmative, we will then begin the process of acquiring a new tax id, incorporate under a new name, and remove UMC logos from the church property, docs, etc. Once the Special Called Annual Conference affirms the disaffiliation, the monies are due that will ensure we receive our deeds back from the Conference. These monies are due and payable by December 31, 2023.

**New Business**

We plan to have a Townhall meeting on July 16th at 4:00 p.m. open to all members, friends, attendees, and open also to other churches members and community members. We will provide a summary of why we are leaving the UMC, why it is costly to do so, etc., and give people a chance to ask questions.

*(Continued on page 5)*






### Council Minutes, cont'd

*(Continued from page 4)*

Kim Ellis announced that she wants everyone to wear red, white, and/or blue on July 2nd for the Independence Day celebration. On July 9th, the Finding Hope Ministries group will be in charge of the worship service. After Sunday school, the kids and our youth are invited to a pool party with burgers and hot dogs at Annette Burson's house. It was discussed and approved that we use the Thank Bank on this Sunday as a Love Offering for the Finding Hope Ministries. Please be prepared to be generous.

Roy Hamby brought to our attention that we need to recruit and encourage new people to participate in our committees and church duties/activities and ministries. Working together will help us be more attuned to each other's needs and bring new blood into our church's ministries.

Barbara Ferguson gave the closing prayer. Minutes recorded by Cindy Sears. 

### Pastor's note, cont'd

*(Continued from page 1)*

- July 16th – O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing (Psalm 35.28)
- July 23rd – Come Thou Long Expected Jesus (Haggai 2.7)
- July 30th – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Luke 2.14)
- August 6th – Come, Sinners, To The Gospel Feast (Luke 14.16-24)
- August 20th – Christ The Lord Is Risen Today (Matthew 28.1-10)
- August 27th – And Can It Be (Psalm 145)

I look forward to sharing this with you!

In God's grace, Pastor Alan

### Ministry Opportunities

#### Youth Helpers

Adults who wish to help Pastor Alan with the youth summer activities should contact Pastor Alan ASAP. A background check will be required.

#### 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.

#### Daniel Study

Pastor Alan will begin a study of the book of Daniel on Wednesday, July 5 at 7:00 p.m.

### Thank You Notes

We heartedly thank everyone who has answered Ricky Baker's call to give up to \$1,000 extra to Ebenezer' General Fund this year. After being down in the giving needed to meet our budgeted items by over \$16,000, we are now about even again because of the extra gifts and the recent fundraiser.

We especially thank the members of our community and the Dudley Shoals Baptist Church and its members for their prayers and support. May God bless us all as we continue to spread the Good News.

### Special Giving

We gratefully acknowledge the following special gifts in June:

- **In memory of Addie R. Sears & Gene W. Sears** by Cindy Sears.
- **In memory of Jack, Ranny, Zetta Mae, & Gerald Frye** by Barbara Frye.
- **In memory of Inez Spencer** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell.
- **In memory of Paul Spencer & James (Bill) Campbell** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell.
- **In honor & memory of Memorial Day** by Delores & Billy W. Campbell.
- **In honor of Children's Day, and BBQ Chicken Fundraiser** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell.
- **In honor of our Youth & Children** by Delores & Gary Paul Campbell



*(Continued from page 2)*

⇒ The appointment of a pastor to Ebenezer who was unorthodox on these issues, that led to a harmful breakup/ disruption in our church and its membership.

We see which way the wind is blowing, and, since we wish to remain true to God's Word and his natural revelation in his design of our bodies, we have decided to leave the United Methodist Church organization before things get even worse. Even though our area's Bishop has promised to only appoint "traditional" pastors to our church; he has also stated that if a "traditionalist" pastor is not available, a "progressive" pastor will be appointed, but instructed to keep his/her beliefs about these matters to him/herself. That is asking these pastors to be deceptive, and not possible anyway because people who follow these heterodox leanings cannot help but have them color their sermons and service in the church. Therefore, we wish to leave the UMC and move to an organization that will affirm and support orthodox Christian doctrine based on the Holy Bible and historical Christian doctrinal beliefs, especially as espoused by Methodism's founder John Wesley. We will remain a Methodist church whatever organization we join after our disaffiliation from the UMC.

What are the obstacles/costs related to leaving the UMC?

Because UMC is a connectional organization, each church is considered an integral part of the larger organization and under the governing rule of that organization. Disaffiliation must be approved by the governing body's local conference, and we must follow their guidelines for leaving the UMC. Also, we are being assessed monies they say are obligations to the connectional group and help support the pension funds for retired pastors. We must abide by their rules and regulations mainly because of what is called the Trust Clause.

What is The Trust Clause?

^ 2501. Requirement of the Trust Clause for All Property-1. All properties of United Methodist local churches and other United Methodist agencies and institutions are held, in trust, for the benefit of the entire denomination, and ownership and usage of church property is subject to the Discipline. This trust requirement is an essential element of the historic polity of The United Methodist Church or its predecessor denominations or communions and has been a part of the Discipline since 1797. It reflects the connectional structure of the Church by ensuring that the property will be used solely for purposes consonant with the mission of the entire denomination as set forth in the Discipline.

John Wesley first established a Trust Clause that "essentially gave the local church trustees the rights over the building, property, and appointment of preachers." Wesley's friend and fellow preacher, George Whitefield warned Wesley that this opened the door to a local church appointing their own pastors, and they could even stop John Wesley from preaching in the very church that he had established. The changes that Wesley made gave the denomination ownership of the "building, land, and pastoral appointments of all local United Methodist churches. However, Wesley made it clear that the chief reason for this very strict Trust Clause was to protect and preserve orthodoxy in the church. If a pastor failed 'in the exercise of their ministry' or in the 'proclamation of the gospel' then Wesley did not want his hands tied in removing that pastor from the pulpit of a Methodist church. The Trust Clause was very explicit that only authentic Methodist doctrine should be preached in Methodist pulpits...it is explicitly required that in order for a local congregation to retain control of the land and buildings, 'those appointed should preach no other doctrine than is contained in Mr. Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament and four volumes of sermons' (Works of John Wesley, vol. 9)."

The Trust Clause is meant to keep the local church orthodox in its practice and teaching. Now it is being used to pressure local churches to accept false doctrine on pain of losing their buildings and land.

After paperwork related to the disaffiliation process is completed, we will hold a "called charge conference." At this conference, the \*full members of Ebenezer who are present will vote for disaffiliation or against disaffiliation. For

*(Continued on page 7)*



disaffiliation to pass, 2/3rds of those present for the vote must vote yes. If the members vote to sever Ebenezer’s connection with the UMC, they will vote on which other organization to join, if any. (Not necessarily during this meeting.) In November, the Annual Conference of our district will meet (virtually online) and vote on the disaffiliation of the local churches that want to leave the UMC. At that point, Ebenezer would be officially severed from the UMC connection. Monies required for the process must be paid by December 31, 2023. We must also stop using the “cross and flame” logo of the UMC, incorporate under a new name, dropping the “United” part, and take care of other legal changes as required.

All of this will be expensive because of the financial obligations levied against Ebenezer from the UMC, and legal paperwork and physical changes to remove the “United Methodist Church” designation from everything (website, letterhead, church steeple, leases, bank accounts, contracts, etc.).

We ask for your prayers, support of our fundraising efforts, and any financial gifts you may wish to give to help us through this process as we stand with God’s Word and historical Christian doctrine. Thank you.

**References:** Marriage/sex: Genesis 1:27; 2:23-24; Mark 10:6-9; Leviticus 18:22-23; Romans 1:26-27. Trust Clause: The Methodist Book of Discipline; Rev. Walter Fenton blog article; <https://timothytennent.com/the-trust-clause-in-the-united-methodist-church>.

**\*Full Membership** = A person who has been baptized and confirmed at Ebenezer UMC; or a person who has joined Ebenezer from full membership in another church or joined Ebenezer by profession of faith. Once the date for the vote is set, members who wish to vote, but cannot attend the meeting in person must contact the church office to set up a live virtual session on their phone or computer to be able to vote.

## A Little Bit of Fun

