



# EBENEZER

Methodist Church Dudley Shoals

# Jul '25

Volume 21 Issue 6

www.ebenzerm-church.com

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## Red Cross Blood Drive

July 21

See p. 3 for more info!

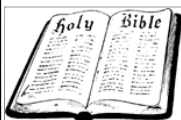
Blood type O needed!



## 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

"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 Pen



### Choosing Gratitude as a Spiritual Discipline

Today we find ourselves in a world that encourages us to focus on what we lack. In the process we tend to overlook the blessings we already have. I continue to be thankful for my ministry in the Global Methodist Church serving at Ebenezer Methodist where I have been warmly received and allowed to share my gifts and graces. Add to this my first attendance to a Holy Spirit filled Annual Conference, and you will find a truly blessed pastor. Each Sunday as we gather for worship we remember to enter the doors of the church with thanksgiving in our hearts. The reason is that our God is good, and his mercy endures forever. For us, gratitude isn't just an attitude, it is a spiritual practice and a profound acknowledgment of God's provision and sovereignty. The scriptures continually call us to be thankful, not just in moments of abundance but in all circumstances.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Paul writes, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." When we are thankful, we begin to align our will with God's will and this reminds us of His ultimate control over our lives. It is natural for us to focus on our unmet needs and wants. One could be worrying about the promotion that didn't come through, or the relationship that didn't work out, or the healing that hasn't yet arrived. But when we pause to reflect, we see God's faithfulness in the many areas of our lives as evidence of His goodness.

When we choose to be thankful, we shift our focus from what we don't have to what we do. Gratitude is a powerful antidote to dissatisfaction and envy. It helps us see life through the lens of abundance rather than scarcity. My question for you is, what are you thankful to God for as a family member, church member, or citizen? Taking time to acknowledge the goodness of God is a powerful tool in connecting us to the heart of God. Choosing gratitude helps us keep God's provision in view and fosters a spirit of contentment within our hearts.

Yes, thankfulness is a form of worship and gratitude brings us closer to God. James 1:17 reminds us, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down

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## WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

- 6:30p Prayer Meeting
- 7:00p Bible Study — Adults.



## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon.—Friday: 8:30—1:00 p.m.

Phone: (828) 396-2214



## Meetings, etc.

### July 4th Office Closure

The church office will be closed from **Friday, July 4 thru Monday, July 7th** and reopen on Tuesday, July 8th.

### Lord's Supper Ministry

The next meal will be served on **Monday, July 14th, 1-6:30 p.m.** Please contact Ricky Baker for details.

### Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, July 22nd at 11:00 a.m.** Details to be announced later.

### EWG Meeting

The Women will have their next meeting on **Sunday, July 27th at 6:00 p.m.** All women of the church are invited.

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

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

—Matthew 5:43-45 NIV

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

—Romans 12:17-18 NIV

### DEFECTION

References: Acts 1:15-20; NIV Application Commentary by Ajith Fernando, pp.78-84.

*In those days Peter stood among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—he was one of our number and shared in this ministry.* --Acts 1:15-17 NIV

Jesus felt the pain of betrayal and defection among his closest friends on earth. The Apostle "Paul expressed this pain when he said, 'Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me...' (2 Timothy 4:10)." "Such pain can leave us embittered and hinder our spiritual freedom and fruitfulness in ministry." Peter looked at Judas' betrayal as tied to God's sovereignty. We can look at defections as somehow a part of God's will—and learn to let our pain go to continue in our service to God and his kingdom.

Bitterness due to betrayal by fellow Christians and church members can hinder our fruitfulness in our ministries for Christ. We may wonder "what did I do wrong?" or "how did I fail to cause that person to leave or betray me or the church?" Even Jesus was betrayed by one of his own. We know that the disciples, or some of them, knew before that night of betrayal that Judas was a thief (see John 12:4-6). When someone betrays a trust, we feel humiliation (thinking, "how could I have been so blind or stupid?"), and humiliation for the Church and Christ (it makes both look bad, hypocritical, or ineffective). There is the loss of friendship or fellowship, too. We can and must grieve at that loss but not hang on to it or let it turn into bitterness or resentment. Forgive one another! Forgive yourself for not being able to stop it. Turn them and the whole situation over to God. God is our defender. God is the one who "repays." (See Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19) We do not. Be comforted in knowing that even Jesus had to deal with these types of situations. Lean on Jesus for comfort, strength, and the power to forgive and to carry on in the faith.

As we read in Romans 8:28 God works all things out for the good of those who love him. God is sovereign. He will redeem every sorrow, betrayal, and loss in your life. He will restore the years the locust have

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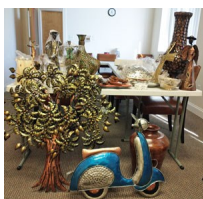


## July Events & Fundraisers

### Breakfast & Home Décor Sale

**Saturday, July 19**  
**8 AM—12 PM**

Enjoy a hot pancake breakfast with bacon or sausage, and then shop for unique home décor items from India. This is your last chance to buy the Indian crafts from our donated collection. Make us an offer we can't refuse.



Proceeds go toward our budget and paying off our disaffiliation loan.

We thank you for your support!

### Red Cross Blood Drive

**Monday, July 21**  
**2:30-7 PM**

*Type O Blood Needed!*

Give Blood and Help Save Lives at our summer American Red Cross Blood Drive. Donors can enjoy a delicious plate of spaghetti with sauce, or settle for a sweet snack—all for FREE!

There is a desperate need for Type O donors who will receive a \$20 eGift card, or \$25 eGift card if they opt for Power Red. Fandango movie tickets will also be given to all donors (by email only).

We are asking our members to provide snacks, cookies, and spaghetti and sauce for this event. Thank you for helping. ➔

### Something, cont'd

eaten (Joel 2:25). God has a plan that we are not privy to—a good thing! Our growth in the faith depends on our ability to increase daily in our trust of God, and our obedience to him even when everything seems to be going wrong. He will wipe away every tear from our eyes one day (Revelation 7:17, 21:4). Rest in that promise and that hope.

Many people like to hold onto anger and grudges to show *those* people how much they hurt us. Do not ignore God's sovereignty and dwell in "the gloomy world of bitterness. The message to us is: Let 'the experience of pain that Christ had comfort us and let the knowledge of God's sovereignty enable us to look at the pain with gratitude and hope' (p. 84). †

### Upcoming Events & Ministry Opportunities

July 4-7 — Church Office Closed for Holiday/Vacation  
July 14 — Lord's Supper Ministry. 1-6:30 p.m.  
July 21 — Red Cross Blood Drive, 2:30-7:00 p.m.  
July 22 — Senior Citizens Gathering  
July 27 — Ebenezer Methodist Women, 6:00 p.m.  
August 23 — Community Day, 10-1:00 p.m.

### July Celebrations



- 13th—Alice Hill
- 13th—Phyllis Minton
- 14th—Marilyn Kohnle
- 19th—Thomas Johnson
- 22nd—Kay Gilbert

*Happy Anniversary*

- 1st—Matthew & Amanda Coffey
- 3rd—Randy & Marsha McRary
- 4th—Trey & Kelly Hefner
- 14th—Chris & Melissa Wilson

Sign up now at [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org).  
Sponsor Code "Ebenezer UMC."

### Our Military

Ricky Garland  
Shane McRary  
Jamie Mullinax  
Hunter Tolbert



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

*John Wesley Said:*

"One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And, since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbor; which he receives as if done to himself in person, standing visibly before us."



## Pastor's Pen, cont'd

*(Continued from page 1)*

from the Father of the heavenly lights." When we praise God for what we have, we deepen our relationship with Him, recognizing His hand in every aspect of our lives. Ebenezer is blessed in many ways and still has many victories to secure. How then should we cultivate thankful hearts? We need to start each day with gratitude, keep a gratitude journal, express gratitude to others and pray with thanksgiving always.

When we focus on the blessings God has already given us, we cultivate joy, peace, and a stronger faith. Remember that gratitude is more than a response to blessings—it's a declaration of trust in God's plan and His goodness. As you walk the journey of faith, remember that being thankful for what you have is not just an act of obedience but a source of profound spiritual strength. In gratitude, you will find joy, peace, and a closer connection to the God who loves you beyond measure. Let your thankfulness point others to the goodness of our Heavenly Father.

Shalom!

Simon

## Bake It!

**We need cookies, brownies, cupcakes, muffins, etc.**

For the following events, bring us lots of sweet goodies and we will put them in the church freezer to use at the upcoming activities:

**R. C. Blood Drive on July 21**

**Community Day on August 23**

**THANK YOU!**



HAVE A LITTLE FUN! COLOR ME!

