



# EBENEZER

Methodist Church Dudley Shoals

www.ebenzerm-church.com

# Mar '25

Volume 21 Issue 2

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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 Pen



I continue to be aware of a need for God's revival among His people. Revival is the restoration of God's presence among His people. I am reminded of Moses in Exodus 33, when God threatens to remove His presence from His people. Moses realizes that there is no life apart from the presence of God. Moses therefore pleads for God to return to His people saying, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here." Yes, God's presence is essential for a church to be the Church. We can hardly do life or church without His presence.

Many people would like to ask a question. Why do we need God's presence? Jesus was aware of the need of the disciples to receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit before they started doing God's work. They were instructed to remain in Jerusalem until they were fully revived and anointed by the Holy Spirit. When God is present, life is different. Apostle Peter in Acts 3:19 says, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Peter understood that the mighty presence of God alone could refresh and renew the hearts of His people.

I am persuaded that if we are ever going to recover a biblical sense of fear and awe towards our God, we need His manifest presence in our midst. When God is present, our lives are reoriented around Him and not ourselves. God is therefore the front and center of our lives, and we cease to lean not on our own understanding. The need to successfully wage war and do real battle with sin in our lives can never be underestimated. We become intensely aware of our own sinfulness in the presence of God. God's holiness does highlight all the impurities in our lives. Isaiah became aware of his unclean lips when he encountered the glory of God in the temple.

If ever we expect the shackles of division, poverty, racism or prejudice to be broken, we need a revival. If we need our land to be healed, we learn from 2 Chronicles 7:14 that God says that if His people are repentant, then He will "heal their land." We struggle with earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, fire, drugs, droughts, floods... from natural disasters to national debt. You may be asking this question, "Is God getting our attention"? I am reminded of the cry for revival in Psalm 85:6 when the Psalmist declares, "Will you not revive us again, that

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**Chicken & Dumplings Supper! See p. 3.**  
**March 22nd**

### 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

- 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.

### Called Council Meeting

The Church Council will have a short meeting after the worship service on **Sunday, March 2.**

### Worship Committee

The Worship Committee will meet on **Tuesday, March 4 at 6:00 p.m.**

### Food Ministry

The next meal will be served on **Monday, March 17, 12-6:30 p.m.** Please contact Ricky Baker for details.

### Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, March 18 at 11:00 a.m.** Details to be announced later.

### Church Council Meeting

The Council's next regular meeting is on **Sunday, March 23 at 4:00 p.m.**

### EWG Meeting

The Women will have their next meeting on **Sunday, March 23 at 6:00 p.m.** All women of the church are invited.

In our post-modern era, people don't mind speaking about religion. They do object to any one religion claiming absolute truth and authority of their faith.

## Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

**TRUTH OR FEELINGS**

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." Acts 17:32 NIV

References: Acts 1:1-8; NIV Application Commentary: Acts by Ajith Fernando, pp. 59-63.

After his suffering, [Jesus] showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3 NIV)

In our post-modern era, people don't mind speaking about religion. They do object to any one religion claiming absolute truth and authority of their faith. This is the main conflict between post-modernism and Christianity. Christians claim that we know the ultimate truth that applies to everyone. How dare we be so intolerant and arrogant!

"[N]o group should attempt to convert others to their side out of a belief that they possess absolute truth." But this is precisely what Christians do. We also did it during the New Testament times, and that led to Christians being mocked and persecuted and murdered, because they lived in a pluralistic religious era, too. People were allowed to follow their philosophical and religious beliefs, as long as, they were willing to "bow down to Caesar" and refer to him as a god.

Because of the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus, we can boldly claim the truth of the Gospel. The resurrection of Jesus is "the ultimate proof of [the gospel's] uniqueness" (Fernando, p. 59). (see also Acts 17:31)

Our era has lost trust in objective truth and lives by the dictum that there are no absolutes (which is expanded from Albert Einstein's scientific theory of relativity). People today even deny objective reality. They are more focused on feelings, personal experiences, and perceptions than rationalism, cause and effect, or facts—so no truth can be universally applied (Fernando, p. 60).

Even in the church today, instead of focusing on what the Bible says, we tend to focus on subjective and comforting feelings and our own experiences. So, whatever makes me feel good about God and myself is what I concentrate on—not on God's law and absolute truth and power claims. For instance, sexual behavior among Christians is nearly the same as among non-Christians. "...the Bible is no longer the primary factor in determining Christian behavior" (Fernando, p. 61). This type of "faith" cannot sustain us in the 'dark night of the soul'—something we all experience at one point or another.

People, even in the Church, are refusing to submit to the rule of a transcendent God, instead they indulge in a pantheistic religiosity or spirituality and look to themselves and in themselves for their own personal version of godhood.

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## March Events & Fundraisers

### Ash Wednesday

**Wednesday, March 5**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Rev. Eunice Chigumira will be conducting our Ash Wednesday service this year as we enter the season of Lent. This is a time for deep reflection upon your relationship with our Lord, and the direction of your life. Open yourself to God's guidance, and be encouraged that the Good News of Jesus is the only Door to true Freedom in the Truth and Light of Jesus by what he has done for you on the cross.



### Judy McCrary Birthday Celebration

**Saturday, March 8**  
**3:00 p.m.**

If you remembered to RSVP, you can come and enjoy the celebration of Judy's 80th birthday with family and friends.

Happy Birthday, Judy!

Judy, Ebenezer thanks you for your years of service to our church. May God bless you and us with many more years of life and service.

Have a very...



### Chicken & Dumplings

**Saturday, March 22**  
**4-7:00 p.m.**

It's time for some more award winning Chicken & Dumplings for supper with green beans, slaw, roll, and homemade dessert. Come and enjoy a stress free and delicious meal. We do the cooking and the cleaning. Eat in or take out for donations to our church.

Proceeds will go to paying off our disaffiliation loan balance. With your help we retired over 1/3rd of this debt last year! We thank you for your continued support.



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

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

—2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV

## March Celebrations



- 6th—Gary Paul Campbell
- 7th—Kim Knepp
- 8th—Judy McCrary
- 11th—Savanna Creaseman
- 12th—Margaret Smith
- 13th—Clair Gilbert
- 14th—Wayne Ellis
- 14th—Jerry Helton
- 16th—Sarah Christas
- 16th—Rachel Kersey
- 17th—Jimmy Stone
- 25th—Jordan Ellis
- 28th—Amanda Coffey
- 29th—Cindy Sears
- 30th—Shawn Baker

### Happy Anniversary

- 2nd—Kyle & Patty Toliver
- 24th—Dylan & Vicky Baker
- 28th—Margaret Smith

## John Wesley Said:

"One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love him is, to send them afflictions, with grace to bear them."

## Our Military

Ricky Garland  
Shane McCrary  
Jamie Mullinax  
Hunter Tolbert



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



### Something, cont'd

*(Continued from page 2)*

“In summary, the gospel clashes with the pluralism, the subjectivism, and the pantheism of our day.” [So] we have the pastoral responsibility of helping develop Christians who know how to study and apply the Scriptures to their daily lives—that is, people who practice their belief in the supreme authority of Scripture in a postmodern world” (Fernando, p. 63). Once we have accomplished that, a spiritual awakening can happen in the church and in the world’s modern culture, too. †

### Pastor’s Pen, cont’d

*(Continued from page 1)*

your people may rejoice in you.”

We all know about our dire need to recover the hearts of students and young adults. Our children have been raised by loving Christian families, but they are “graduating” from church at the same time they graduate from high school. Recently, Barna Research reported that almost 66 percent of young people aged 15 to 29 have left active involvement in a church. Only God’s presence can turn this ugly statistic around. If you are also hungry for God’s presence among us here at Ebenezer, won’t you join me in prayer wherever you are?

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Simon

### Thank You for Filling In, Rev. Eunice

Pastor Simon will be traveling back to Zimbabwe and be gone for one month. Rev. Eunice Chigumira has agreed to fill in for him, preaching and as our interim pastor until he returns. Please feel free to call on her for pastoral care while Pastor Simon is away. Her contact information is below. Parsonage telephone: 828-396-2017; Cell phone: 504-342-8001; Email address: chigumirae@yahoo.com.

Please keep Pastor Simon in your prayers as he travels, and Eunice as she fills in for him here at Ebenezer.

### Upcoming Events & Ministry Opportunities

- Mar 4—Apr 8 — Pastor Simon on vacation**
- Mar 5 — Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 p.m.**
- Mar 9—Daylight Savings Time Change, set clocks ahead 1 hour**
- Mar 10 — Red Cross Winter Blood Drive, 2:30-7:00 p.m.**
- Mar 22 — Chicken & Dumplings Supper Fundraiser, 4-7:00 p.m.**
- Mar 23—Church Council Meeting, 4:00 p.m.**
- Apr 8— Pastor Simon returns from trip**
- Apr 20—Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast, 7:00 a.m.**

### Just a Thought

"The majority of Americans know that compassion without strong standards is an America lost. The loving God without the judging God is no God at all. Americans let their thoughts about this be known in the landslide election. They demanded a return of the masculine, to standards. This they got in a Republican party chock full of standards - - and standards-oriented men like President Trump."

[www.americanthinker.com/articles/2024/11/compassion\\_and\\_standards.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2024/11/compassion_and_standards.html)

### Spring forward

Don't forget to set clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. Sunday.



AP

### Time Change

**March 9, 2025**

### SPRING FORWARD

Set your clocks ahead by one hour and get to bed earlier on Saturday, March 8th!

We'll see you at church, bright eyed and bushy-tailed for worship!

