

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- **UPCOMING SERMONS**
- A NOTE FROM PASTOR MARK
- **MISSION POSSIBLE**
- **UPCOMING EVENTS**
- **EMPTY NESTERS**
- **COMMUNION CLASS**

STAFFORD HOPE

On February 9, Ebenezer Church opens its doors for Stafford Hope, a series of classes, groups, and meetings to support people during the defining moments of their lives. Stafford Hope was born out of the Focus 2025 Vision to be a church that radiates Hope and Healing to our community.

Focus 2025

We see the dedication of one evening each week to hope and healing for persons and families touched by all forms of suffering especially that caused by the opioid addiction crisis. We recognize this is one of the greatest challenges facing our community and desire for Ebenezer to become synonymous with hope and healing in Stafford County.

Several people from the congregation met regularly throughout 2019 to discuss how to implement the goal and identify the first round of programs to stand-up. From those discussions a list of eight programs emerged, some that had been offered before and some new to our church, but all needed in the community. During a sermon in December, Pastor Rob called for more volunteers to join the team. More than 70 people raised their hand. Here are some reasons why people felt called to be a part of this. Maybe your story is similar. If so, we hope you come on February 9 to find your community.

Exceptional Family Member Support Group

This journey of being the parent of a child with special needs is extremely isolating at times. Knowing that we are not alone on this path and that there are others who have survived and thrived along the way will be a comfort to me, and hopefully, to all those involved. That's why I believe that it is so important that Ebenezer UMC chose to host a support group for those of us with exceptional family members. This support group allows families in the Stafford area to come together not only to share our struggles but also the joys we have experienced along this unique journey. – Anne

upcoming SERMON SERIES

ALL IN

This series sets the stage for the Lenten Journey. But it isn't a place holder. It's a gut check. Are we tired of living with anemic faith? The scripture calls this having a knowledge of God but denying the power therein. What if, over the course of these three weeks, we called ourselves to account and count the cost of being followers of Jesus and decide, "no matter the cost, the sacrifice, I will serve the God who saved me." I'm ALL IN!

GOOD NEWS

In our last series we talked about the importance of being all in for Christ. This new series is designed to help us turn that passion away from ourselves and toward the world, for that is the direction in which God is going. We are called to share the good news of Jesus with all the earth. In this series, we'll discuss the importance of sharing our faith, how to share it well, how not to share it, how to share it with those we know and love as well as how to build relationships for the purpose of sharing the good news that Jesus Christ wants to give you life.





a note from PASTOR MONICA

Hello, Ebenezer Family!

It is truly hard to believe that Lent is right around the corner. After all, our family, and perhaps your family too, just recently took down Christmas decorations. Even though we just celebrated the birth of our Lord and Savior, we will come together in just a few weeks and observe Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, and Lent marks the beginning of the end of Jesus' earthly ministry.

While Advent, the season leading up to Christmas, is more a joyful, expectant season, Lent tends to take on a more somber tone. It's not that we don't know how the story ends, because we do. It's not that we don't know that death doesn't get the last word, because it doesn't. Rather, Lent beckons us to reflect on the significance of Jesus' ministry and on the painful sacrifices God in Christ made for the world.

Lent calls us to journey with Jesus, from the wilderness to the cross; from being surrounded by his closest friends, to being left abandoned and alone, except for the women who stayed by his side. Lent asks us to place ourselves in the biblical story, and it also asks us to place the story upon our world today, as we attempt to locate Jesus in a world vastly different in some ways, and yet not different at all in others.

This Lent, we will be inviting all small groups to participate in a church-wide book and bible study. New groups will be forming for this six-week study as well. I hope you will consider being part of a group and pray that your Lenten journey draws you closer to the love and grace of our Triune God.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Monica



STAFFORD HOPE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Reboot Combat Recovery

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) effects every combat Veteran on some level. For many it is a life-long battle, for others they recover shortly after returning home. Unlike a physical wound which you can heal; PTSD is something that requires constant attention. I struggle with PTSD on a daily basis and if I can help others with what I have learned through my recovery and sharing my story then I am willing to do that. REBOOT Recovery is a Biblical approach to repairing the Soul and there aren't other programs that I know of that look at recovery from this angle. - Brian

Reboot Combat Recovery has helped me better understand some of my husband's underlying issues from combat. While I don't know all that he has encountered and endured, I have new tools to help me help him refocus if he gets

emotionally stuck on something. We feel strongly about helping others who have experienced combat trauma and other similar difficulties because someone first helped us through Reboot. With such a high contingency of military members and their families in Stafford we wanted to lead this course so that others could have hope and begin healing. - Anji

DivorceCare for Kids

We felt compelled to serve when the opportunity to lead DivorceCare For Kids appeared. We both lived through the divorce of our parents and it affected us deeply on a personal level. At times, we were grappled by fear, brokenness, anger, hurt, and isolation. Our hope is we can use our stories to encourage others. This program will give children the opportunity to share, engage, and equip themselves spiritually and emotionally through the waves of divorce. - Chad and Kim

Nar-Anon

My Dad, two of my four brothers (one of whom died as a result), and perhaps the most difficult, my adult son are all addicts. I've felt my whole world was focused on finding a cure, bailing them out, or cleaning up the mess they left. My relationships with my husband, daughter, family and friends were all neglected because of MY addiction to my addict! When my brother died, it was last straw and I cried out to God. After talking with Pastor Rob, we thought I could find purpose and help others by starting a NAR-ANON support group. This group provides emotional support and healing for anyone who has been directly affected by someone else's addiction. There is comfort knowing I am not alone. As a group, we work to refocus our lives. We can still love the person but not enable the addict. For me, this group has been a saving Grace! - Patrice



Support during the defining moments of your life.



Stafford Hope

People who need support during the defining moments of their life are encouraged to attend one of our Stafford Hope meetings. Groups begin meeting on February 9, but you can join at any time. All meetings are free and KidzCare is provided. Please share with your friends; meetings are open to the public.

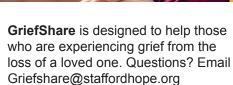
Celebrate Recovery creates space for women and men who wrestle with addiction to find strength, healing, accountability, and community. Questions? Email Recovery@staffordhope.org.

DivorceCare helps people heal from the hurt of separation and divorce. Questions? Email Divorcecare@staffordhope.org

DivorceCare for Kids provides a safe environment for children to share their own struggles and learn skills to help them cope with their family's changes. Questions? Email DC4K@staffordhope.org

Domestic Violence Awareness helps women and men recognize, and safely respond to, signs and symptoms of domestic violence. Questions? Email DVAwareness@staffordhope.org

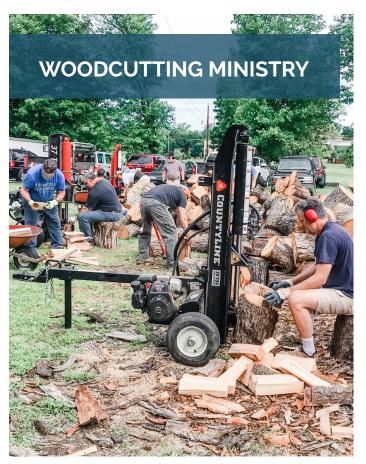
Exceptional Family Member Support Group is designed to foster support and care for the families of people with special needs by sharing resources, stories, and struggles. Questions? Email Exceptional@staffordhope.org



Nar-Anon helps family members heal from the hurt caused by the addicts in their lives. Questions? Email Naranon@staffordhope.org

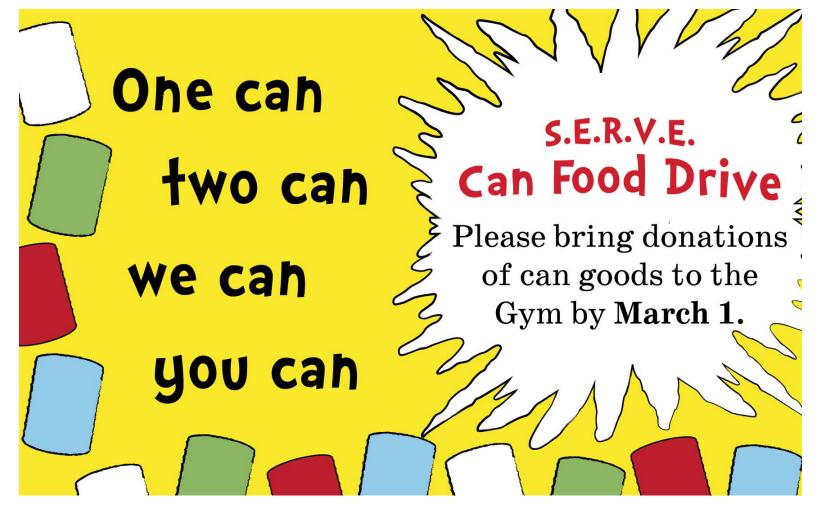
Reboot Combat Recovery is designed for military members and their families who have encountered Post-Traumatic Stress as a result of their service and sacrifice. Questions? Send an email to RebootMil@staffordhope.org







REGISTER FOR UPCOMING EVENTS AT ebenezerumc.org/events



MISSION POSSIBLE: S.E.R.V.E.





Ever wonder where the food goes that you donate each week? To S.E.R.V.E. you say, but what exactly is S.E.R.V.E?

It stands for Stafford Emergency Relief through Volunteer Efforts and was started in 1979 by a social worker and local churches to help people within the Stafford community who had emergency needs. Today, that involves providing monthly food boxes, help with utility payments, as well as referrals for prescription medication.

On Tuesdays, Ebenezer volunteers collect the food the congregation has donated and takes it to the S.E.R.V.E. warehouse. Once there, we sort food, check expiration dates (believe it or not, we've had donations that expired in 1999), make food boxes and snack bags, and help with whatever the staff needs done that week. For instance, right before Christmas my children and I helped move more than two freezers full of frozen turkeys so they could be given out with the holiday boxes.

S.E.R.V.E. helps about 250 families a month (family size ranging from 1-10 people).

At Thanksgiving they gave holiday boxes to 161 families and 192 families received food as well as gifts at Christmas.

If you are interested in volunteering but work during the week and can't commit to helping on Tuesdays, you can help with one of Ebenezer's large food drives in February and September. We can use help on Sundays distributing flyers and collecting food the congregation donates.

Over the summer, if you are looking for your children to get involved in a local ministry, children ages 14 and up can volunteer as well. (14 and 15 need a parent or guardian with them)

Items that are always needed (regular sizes, not super-size please):

- · Pasta sauce
- · Canned meat
- · Meal soups
- Single sized snack items for snack bags.

If you are interested in helping, please contact me at jtrcramos@yahoo.com.

- Tracy Ramos Volunteer Ministry Lead





EVENT REGISTRATION

To learn more about our upcoming events or to register to attend, please visit ebenezerumc.org/events

GROUPS & CLASSES

Share life together and grow in your faith.

- Small groups
- Short-term Classes
- Recreation Groups
- Support Groups
- Special Interest Group
- Kids & Student Groups

Free KidzCare is available for all groups who meet on campus.

Visit ebenezerumc.org/groups then click Groups/Classes to learn more.

FIND US ONLINE

FOLLOW | LIKE | SUBSCRIBE



@EUMCStafford



@EUMCStafford



@ebenezer.umc



@ebenezer.umc



@ebenezerumc

S.E.R.V.E. FOOD DRIVE ALL MONTH - DROP OFF IN GYM

- CONFIRMATION DAY RETREAT
 CHILI COOK-OFF EMPTY NESTERS
- 7-8 IF:GATHERING
- EARLY BIRD PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR CHURCH MEMBERS
- 11 MILITARY WIVES CONNECT
- 14-16 AXIS WINTER RETREAT
- 18 PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION OPEN
- WELLNESS WORKSHOP: DEPRESSION
- FUNLAND TRIP FOR PRETEENS
 GREASE AT THE RIVERSIDE EMPTY NESTERS
- 26 ASH WEDNESDAY, LENT BEGINS PANCAKE SUPPER
- 29 COMMUNION CLASS

WEEKLY & MONTHLY RECURRING EVENTS

Basketball -

Sundays, 7:00 PM

Exercise Classes -

Mondays - Fridays, 9:15 AM

Indoor Hockey -

Mondays, 7:00 PM

Active Older Adult Exercise Group -

Tuesdays & Fridays, 10:30 AM

Family Yoga -

Fridays, 7:00 PM



7 DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE

GAME DAY - EMPTY NESTERS

9 COMEDY SOCIAL - EMPTY NESTERS

25 WELLNESS WORKSHOP: FORGIVENESS

27-29 CONFIRMATION RETREAT

29 KAIROS COOKIES DUE

Community Meals - Feb. 1, Mar. 7, 9:00 AM

4th Saturday Meals -

Feb. 22, Mar. 28 1:00 PM & 3:15 PM

Gaming Club - Feb. 15, March 21 12:00 PM

Brisben Center Meals -

Feb. 8, Mar. 14 3:30 & 5:45 PM

Cold Weather Shelter -Feb. 1, 8, & Mar. 7, 14

SERVICE TIMES

Traditional | 8:15 AM Contemporary | 9:45 AM, 11:15 AM, 6:00 PM

Church Online | 9:45 & 11:15 AM

Watch at live.ebenezerumc.org

KIDZCARE

Available for infants and toddlers during Sunday Services and for infants, toddlers, and school age children during most events and studies.

Check-in at the KidzRock Kiosk.

Please note, during the week, KidzCare is closed when Stafford County

Schools are closed.

KIDZROCK SUNDAY SCHOOL

Available during all Sunday Services for children age 3 through 5th Grade.

Check-in at the KidzRock Kiosk and classes in the Ministry Center.

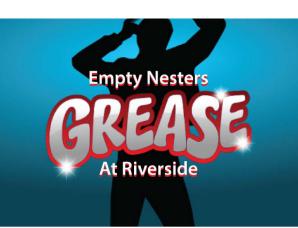
TNT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Sunday | 9:45 -11:00 AM *Meet in Room B01*

AXIS HIGH SCHOOL

Wednesday | 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Specific Studies **Sunday** | 9:45 -11:00 AM *Meet in Room 216*



February 22 5:30 - 10:00 PM

Cost: \$66 | Registration Deadline: February 15 Learn more at ebenezerumc.org/events

REGISTER FOR UPCOMING EVENTS AT ebenezerumc.org/events

WELLNESS WORKSHOPS STRESS, JANUARY 29 DEPRESSION, FEBRUARY 19 FORGIVENESS, MARCH 25 7:30 - 8:45 PM | ROOM 101 | FREE CHILDCARE EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS

THE DEFINING DISEASE OF A GENERATION

The Alzheimer's Association Generation Alzheimer's report calls Alzheimer's the defining disease of the baby boomer generation. It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, ranking higher than breast and prostate cancers combined.

Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia and is the only disease in the top 10 causes of death in the US without a way to prevent, cure, or slow its progression. According to the report, an estimated 10 million baby boomers will either die with or from Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's disease is no respecter of income, race, ethnicity, or gender. The Alzheimer's Association has a full range of programs designed to provide information, education, care support, and social engagement for persons with an Alzheimer's or other dementia diagnosis.

Please visit their website at www.alz.org or call 1-800-272-3900.

At Ebenezer Church, several staff members and volunteers are trained as Dementia Friends. The Dementia Friends training program familiarizes people to with the challenges of living with dementia and helps create dementia friendly communities.

The training is important for our visitation team who visit individuals who may be living with dementia or may have some early signs of dementia. Ebenezer's visitation team also has volunteers that visit Marian Manor, a Stafford assisted living facility specializing in dementia and memory care. If you have a family member or friend battling the disease, below are some tips that can help you continue to communicate with them.

> - Lori Myers, Regional Director Fredericksburg Office, Alzheimer's Association, Greater Richmond Chapter



2019 included Dementia Friends training

Ten Tips for Communicating with a **Person with Dementia**

We aren't born knowing how to communicate with a person with dementia-but we can learn.

- 1. Set a positive mood for interaction. Your attitude and body language communicate your feelings and thoughts stronger than your words.
- 2. Get the person's attention. Limit distractions and noise. Before speaking, make sure you have her attention; address her by name, identify yourself by name and relation. and use nonverbal cues and touch to help keep her focused.
- 3. State your message clearly. Use simple words and sentences. Speak slowly, distinctly and in a reassuring tone. Use the names of people and places instead of pronouns or abbreviations.

- 4. Ask simple, answerable questions. Ask one question at a time; those with yes or no answers work best. Refrain from asking openended questions or giving too many choices.
- 5. Listen with your ears, eyes and heart. Be patient in waiting for your loved one's reply. Always strive to listen for the meaning and feelings that underlie the words.
- 6. Break down activities into a series of steps. This makes many tasks much more manageable. Gently remind him of steps he tends to forget and assist with steps he's no longer able to accomplish on his own.
- 7. When the going gets tough, distract and redirect. When your loved one becomes upset. try changing the subject or the environment. It is important to connect with the person on a emotional level, before you redirect.

You might say, "I see you're feeling sad—I'm sorry you're upset. Let's go get something to eat."

- 8. Respond with affection and reassurance. People with dementia get reality confused and may recall things that never occurred. Avoid trying to convince them they are wrong. Stay focused on their feelings and respond with comfort, support, and reassurance.
- 9. Remember the good old days. Remembering the past is often a soothing and affirming activity. Many people with dementia may not remember what happened 45 minutes ago, but they can clearly recall their lives 45 years earlier.
- 10. Maintain your sense of humor. Use humor whenever possible, though not at the person's expense. People with dementia tend to retain their social skills and are usually delighted to laugh along with you.

© 2004 Family Caregiver Alliance. All rights reserved. FS-CGTU20050610. http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/print friendly.jsp?nodeid=391

COMMUNION CLASS

Parents, have your kids asked about Communion, but you wonder if you have all the right answers? Even if they've taken Communion, have you had a chance to celebrate with them? We've designed our Communion Class specifically for 2nd - 5th graders and their parents to answer all your questions and to celebrate the sacrament.

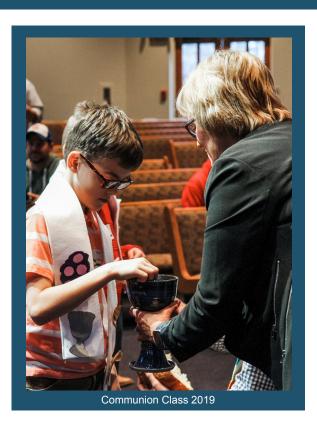
Communion class is held once a year, near Easter. This year, Communion class is Saturday, February 29, for an hour and a half, 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM in Room 101. Pastor Monica and Shari Parsons, our Director of Children's Ministries, will talk with the kids about the meaning of the sacrament of Holy Communion and what the elements represent. There will be instruction books and fun activities for the students.

We'll also create keepsake photos to commemorate this faith milestone. We will culminate our morning by taking communion together in the Sanctuary.

Registration is required. You can register January 15 - February 22 at ebenezerumc.org/events. Childcare is provided for younger siblings and the event is free!

For more info, email Shari at sparsons@ebenezerumc.org or 540-628-7175.

- Shari Parsons
Director of Children's Ministries







REGISTER FOR UPCOMING EVENTS AT ebenezerumc.org/events

MILITARY WWW CONNECT



REGISTER FOR THIS FREE EVENT AT EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS



161 Embrey Mill Road Stafford, Virginia 22554

Change of address service requested

Non-Profit Organization U.S. POSTAGE PAID Stafford, VA Permit #16

