

STONEMAKER

Newsletter of Ebenezer Church



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A NOTE FROM PASTOR EMILY

Grace and peace to you in the name of Christ as the calendar turns toward Christmas. We will soon decorate the church and our homes. Boxes will come out of attics and closets. Ornaments will remind us of stories and people. We will set up Nativity scenes and retell God's story of love. I cannot wait to celebrate my first Advent and Christmas with you. As we prepare our homes, may we also prepare our hearts for Christ to be born in the midst. We will share an Advent Activity Calendar in worship each week with ideas for prayer, study, mission, and more. Come, Christ Jesus, come!

2021 has been another year of challenge and opportunity. As such, Christmas will look a bit different. We realize many have unique schedules and concerns regarding health and distancing, so we are offering a variety of Christmas worship experiences to help meet those needs. We begin with traditional Lessons and Carols on December 19. On December 21, we will have a Blue Christmas service for those who have lost loved ones this year or may be having a difficult time. A lively outdoor Living Nativity will take place December 22. Christmas Eve services will be at both 4:00 and 7:00 PM. Though much in our lives has changed, the Unbreakable Gifts of God we will open this Christmas are unchanging and timeless. Let us receive that divine hope, peace, joy, and love as we eagerly receive the greatest gift in Jesus.

In January, we will tell our story and share a vision for 2022. We will revisit our core values and mission, and I will share a "State of the Church" address on January 22. Our Focus 2025 steering group is learning more about the needs in our community and how we can make a difference. We will share next steps and God's good future for Ebenezer. God is up to something incredible here.

What a joy and privilege to serve Christ beside you and in this community.

Preparing for the birth of Jesus with you,

Emily
Pastor Emily



UNBREAKABLE GIFTS

Making Christmas lists yet? Decorating at home? Looking for the perfect gift? Look no further. God draws our attention toward gifts that are enduring, life-giving, and grounding. Unwrap the gifts of hope, love, joy, and peace this Christmas as we look toward receiving the greatest gift of the Christ child, Jesus. These gifts are with us always. May we open our arms and hearts as we open the Unbreakable Gifts of God this Advent season.

NOW WHAT?

Change has been the norm over the last two years. On what can we count? When we are uncertain, we reexamine what matters most. Let us do so as individuals and as a church. We will begin 2022 in faith, telling our story, and starting with what matters: God, relationship, discipleship, and living faith in the community. Join us in a new sermon series as we embrace core values and mission and look ahead together.



A NOTE FROM PASTOR JEFF

Beautiful and Beloved People of God,

The season of Advent is upon us. This season is both a time of preparation and an Adventure. Year after year, we prepare to welcome God’s son, Jesus, into the world to be Emmanuel - God with us in human flesh. Every year, we prepare our homes, our church, and most importantly, our hearts to celebrate what happened some 2,000 years ago and what it means for us today.

Anyone who has ever traveled knows how much time is spent preparing, from packing clothes for every kind of weather to making sure you have that special pillow or candle. One of the most important items on our family’s packing list is a white noise machine for Xavier. However, as Alacia, Xavier, and I were traveling last year...yes, you guessed it...I left it at home, right on the counter with fresh batteries. We plan and plan, and still things go awry.

How has your year been? Did you make plans this year only to have everything fall apart? Did you get down on yourself when plans changed? The past 20 months have truly kept us on our toes. Each day is a constant reminder that things are always changing, whether we are ready or not. There are just some things we cannot prepare for. But that too is much like our journey as followers of Christ.

The weeks and months leading up to the first Christmas have much in common with the past 20 months. Things may have started out normally, like January and February of 2020, but they quickly turned chaotic. Mary and Joseph were dating, betrothed, and planning to wed (Plan A), but then things took a strange turn: Mary became pregnant, and the baby was not Joseph's! Joseph planned to call off the wedding and quietly dismiss Mary (Plan B), because he knew that if he exposed her, she would be disowned by her family and possibly even stoned.

But an angel appeared to Joseph and told him to reconsider and go forward with the wedding (Plan C). Then a census was called, and Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem before the baby was born (Plan D). Mary realized that her time had come as she was riding on the back of a donkey (or a colt, depending on your Scripture translation), so they searched for an inn (Plan E), but to no avail. With no room at the inn, Mary and Joseph had to settle for giving birth in a stable with “clean” straw and warmth from a few animals. (Plan F).

If you tend to get down on yourself when plans go awry, take heart! Think about Mary and Joseph, who went from Plan A to Plan F in the days before the first Christmas. None of those changes fouled up God’s plan to bring salvation to all the earth, and none of those changes upended God’s plan to bring hope to all humankind and healing to all nations. God’s plan to send his Son into our world was not foiled at all. Instead, the angels sang, the shepherds saw and heard, and a child was born into this world with all its suffering. Good news of great joy for all people.

Plans may change, but God’s plan for each of us remains the same: for us to know God, trust God, let ourselves be loved and forgiven by God, and in turn, let that love and forgiveness be seen in us. So, whether or not your Christmas plans work out this year, let there be room in your heart for God’s Christmas plan: joy to the world, peace on earth, and good will to all.

God Bless You!

And remember, “The best of all is, God is with us!” - John Wesley

Pastor Jeff



CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH EBENEZER CHURCH

Ebenezer is offering many different ways to celebrate the birth of Christ this year! Please look over the schedule below and make plans to participate in the service(s) that will be most meaningful for you and your family. Everyone is welcome, so be sure to invite your friends and neighbors, using the invitation cards on the back cover. For more information about Christmas with Ebenezer Church, please contact the church office at 540-659-1349 or email Chrissy at crichardson@ebenezerumc.org

ADVENT ACTIVITY CALENDAR

As we prepare for Christmas, we're offering an Advent Activity Calendar with suggestions to help you find and share Hope, Love, Joy, Peace, and most importantly, Christ throughout the holidays. Download your calendar at ebenezerumc.org/christmas or pick one up at the Connection Desk.

LESSONS AND CAROLS – DECEMBER 19, 7:00 PM, SANCTUARY

Usher in the joy of the season at our service of Lessons and Carols, featuring the Ebenezer Choir. The Christmas story will come to life through the reading of Scripture passages along with performances of sacred music. Reflect on the meaning of the Word, sing along to your favorite carols, and enjoy seasonal arrangements by the choir at this very special start to Christmas week. Lessons and Carols will conclude with communion and singing Silent Night by candlelight. Nursery will be available for children ages 0-3.

BLUE CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 21, 7:00 PM, SANCTUARY

Not everyone feels merry at Christmastime. In fact, the holiday season can be especially painful for those who are experiencing challenges or loss. Our Blue Christmas service is an opportunity for those facing difficult situations to come together, acknowledge their struggles, and find hope and healing from the Word and each other. This evening of quiet, contemplative worship will end with communion and the opportunity to light a candle in memory of a loved one. If you or someone you know is seeking comfort, please join us for Blue Christmas. Nursery will be available for children ages 0-3.

LIVING NATIVITY – DECEMBER 22, 7:00 PM, BACK PARKING LOT

Bundle up, bring your lawn chair, and get ready to travel back in time to the very first Christmas. The Nativity will come to life as you've never seen it before, with firsthand accounts from Elizabeth, Mary, Joseph, the Innkeeper, a Wiseman, and a Shepherd, accompanied by live barnyard animals. This is the story of Christmas without all the trimmings: no parties, no cards, no ornaments. Just the real story of the first Christmas. We'll end our evening at the manger by taking communion, lighting candles, and singing Silent Night. Afterward, you may warm up by the fire, visit the animals, and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate. In case of inclement weather, Living Nativity will be held in the Sanctuary with our animal friends under a canopy in the Courtyard.

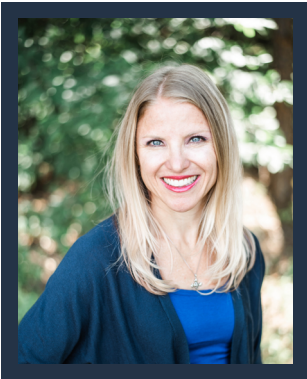
**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES – DECEMBER 24, 4:00 & 7:00 PM, SANCTUARY & GYM
LIVESTREAM AT LIVE.EBENEZERUMC.ORG**

Gather with us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior on Christmas Eve. Services will be held concurrently in the Sanctuary and Gym at 4:00 and 7:00 PM. The Ebenezer Choir will provide traditional music in the Sanctuary, while the Praise Band provides modern worship music in the Gym. Our pastors will move between the two spaces to lead both services. Everyone will take part in communion and singing Silent Night by candlelight. The Sanctuary services will be live-streamed at live.ebenezerumc.org. Nursery will be available for children ages 0-3.

HOLIDAY WORSHIP MESSAGE – DECEMBER 26, ON-DEMAND AT LIVE.EBENEZERUMC.ORG

At the end of a busy week, we'd like to give our staff and volunteers the gift of time at home with their families. There will be no in-person worship services on Sunday, December 26. Instead, we will share a special pre-recorded Christmas worship service on our Church Online platform. Visit live.ebenezerumc.org anytime on December 26 to hear scripture reading, words from our pastors, and music. We will resume our normal worship schedule on Sunday, January 2.

*For the safety of all in attendance, masks are required for all indoor services, regardless of vaccination status. Social distancing will be practiced at all services.



A NOTE FROM PASTOR MONICA

What is The Love Your Neighbor Network? Now that our fledgling network of small expressions of church has a few months under its belt, I thought it might be helpful to explain who we are and why we exist, and also invite you to consider how you might be called to Love Your Neighbor this Advent season and beyond.

Who are we? We are disciples of Jesus Christ who have felt called to love our actual neighbors in tangible ways. By taking everyday activities that we love, such as sewing, walking, playing soccer, or gaming, and simply incorporating one or more faith practices into those regular meetings, we are learning to stretch ourselves and put our faith into action where life is already happening.

For example, a group of people walking together could also involve a time of prayer or scripture meditation. Several people sewing together may also take time to pray over their creations and those who will receive them. A group of folks who regularly gather for basketball or soccer may also start each gathering by checking in with one another and asking how things are going. The gathering may end in prayer and with an invitation to attend our monthly outdoor evening of worship, which is less formal than worship in the Sanctuary and allows room for dialogue and discussion.

Why do we exist? We exist because our call as the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We do this by committing to love our neighbors in the places and spaces where life is already happening. This is important because our call does not change, even in the face of trends and statistics that tell the story of a western population that is less and less familiar with even the basic tenets of Christianity. When many of our neighbors are not coming to church, we must figure out how to be the church where they already are.

What about you? As we move into the Advent season, what are some ways God might be inviting you to love your actual neighbors? Could it be a dinner gathering? A game night? Christmas caroling in your neighborhood? Offering to run errands with or for a neighbor unable to complete the task solo? If you feel called to love your neighbor this Advent season or beyond, please connect with me. I'd love to pray with, encourage, and support you in any way I can.

With Advent Hope and Expectation,

Monica
Pastor Monica

STATE OF THE CHURCH

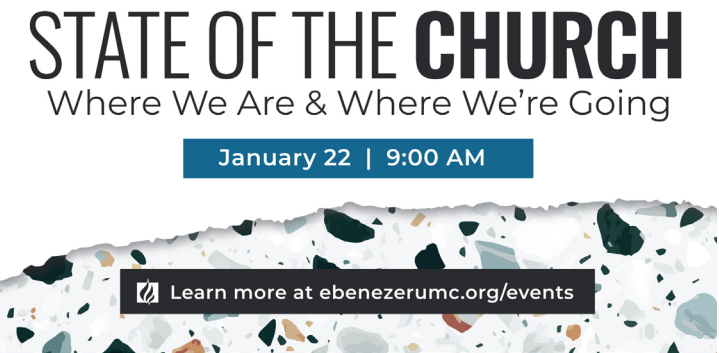
You are invited to come in person to the State of the Church gathering on January 22 at 9:00 AM. All are welcome. COVID has shifted many ways we do ministry, and I want you to have a chance to hear about our dreams and vision for our church. God is up to something good here at Ebenezer, and I cannot wait to tell you more about it. At our gathering, I will share information regarding the updated vision of Focus 2025, our current financial status, and denominational developments surrounding the General Conference.

Several of you have asked questions about General Conference, and I want you to feel informed. Therefore, in the coming weeks, you will receive a series of four e-notes detailing our denominational structure, timeline and history of current questions, the status of those concerns, pertinent resources, and next steps for Ebenezer. Please know there are no immediate decisions or changes regarding General Conference issues at this time. The next General Conference is currently scheduled to meet in the fall of 2022, although it may be postponed to 2024 due to global COVID complications.

I look forward to sharing the future of Ebenezer with you. God is moving in our midst and in our community, and we have the privilege of following Christ in that together. Let us be in prayer together. Let us be faithful. Let us grow more deeply in our love for God and in our love for others as we make disciples through Jesus Christ and work to connect, heal, and bring hope to the world.

Serving Christ with you,

Pastor Emily



MISSIONS & OUTREACH

ANGEL TREE

You can make a difference in the lives of children and seniors during the holidays by donating a gift and a box of food through our Angel Tree program. Ebenezer is supporting the needs of many large families through Social Services as well as children at 12 Stafford County schools this year, more than ever before! All donations are due December 12, but there is still plenty of time to sign up to purchase a gift or food box through our convenient online system. Interested in lending a hand? Consider volunteering to shop, pack, and help distribute gifts and food boxes. For more information, visit ebenezerumc.org/angel-tree or contact Amy Miller at amiller@ebenezerumc.org

GO FOR BO

We had a perfect fall morning and a wonderful turnout for our **11th Annual Go For Bo 5K, 1-Mile Fun Run and Tot Dash on October 9**. A total of 328 runners signed up to run either in person or virtually. Over 50 volunteers from Ebenezer and many area schools came out to support the race and make sure our new course was safe and fun for all. Our generous sponsors donated \$50,000 to Helping Children Worldwide (HCW), our mission partner in Sierra Leone. These funds will enable HCW to expand the reach of the work being done in the villages surrounding Bo, providing safe drinking water and expanded infrastructure to allow for a sustainable economy. Your generous contributions will help keep families together and healthy.



COLD WEATHER SHELTER

This winter, Ebenezer will help staff Micah Ministries' Hospitality House in downtown Fredericksburg. Neighbors seeking shelter from cold weather check in while arrangements are made to place them at local motels. Our volunteers provide a warm welcome and offer snacks during the two-hour intake window. Drivers are also needed to transport individuals from the Hospitality House to their shelter for the night using the Ebenezer bus. Specific dates will be available soon. For more information, please visit ebenezerumc.org/volunteer-in-the-community or contact Amy Miller at amiller@ebenezerumc.org

WE ARE FOR YOU

In an effort to get out in the community and use our resources to support local needs, we have been privileged to participate in many grassroots efforts to improve the lives of our neighbors.

Ebenezer donated and participated in Operation Warm, an effort by Stafford County Public Schools to provide new coats to students in need. Thousands of coats have been purchased, sorted, and distributed to our schools by volunteers from churches and civic organizations throughout the county.

Ebenezer expressed gratitude to more than 350 Stafford County Public School bus drivers with gift bags containing thermal mugs and snacks. Thanks to our dedicated office volunteers and middle and high school students, each gift was accompanied by a handwritten note to show these essential workers that they are known and appreciated by the community.

Ebenezer helped sponsor Band Together to Fight Hunger, an annual event organized by Stafford County high school marching bands to support the Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank. Students, parents, and community members came together for an evening of music and generosity, resulting in many tons of food collected and funds donated as we approach the holiday season.

Sunday Worship

In Person | 8:15 AM (Traditional)
9:45 AM & 11:15 AM (Modern)

Livestream | 9:45 AM & 11:15 AM
or anytime at live.ebenezerumc.org

Event Registration

To learn more about our upcoming events or to register to attend, scan the QR code below or visit ebenezerumc.org/events



ebenezerumc.org/events

Find Us Online
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www.ebenezerumc.org

December Events

- 2

VIRTUAL CONFIRMATION INFO MEETING
7:00 PM
- 11

UMM MEETING
9:00-10:30 AM

YOUNG ADULT CHRISTMAS GATHERING
1:00 PM
- 12

ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE
- 14

EMPTY NESTER GAME CLUB
1:00-3:00 PM
- 15

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS
RIVERSIDE CENTER – 12:45 PM
- 18

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 19-24

CHRISTMAS WEEK OF WORSHIP EXPERIENCES
SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- 25

4TH SATURDAY MEAL
FREDERICKSBURG UMC – 2:30-5:30 PM
- 26

NO WORSHIP SERVICES
RECORDED CHRISTMAS MESSAGE AVAILABLE, [LIVE.EBENEZERUMC.ORG](https://live.ebenezerumc.org)

Recurring Events

- Men's Basketball

Sundays, 7:30–9:30 PM
- TOPS

Mondays, 9:00–11:30 AM
- Exercise Group

Mondays & Thursdays, 9:15–10:15 AM (Free Child Care)
- Active Older Adult Exercise

Tuesdays & Fridays, 9:15–10:15 AM
- MOPS

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 AM
- Nar-Anon

Every other Wednesday, 6:30 PM
- Spirituality in Nature Group

Thursdays, 1:00 PM

January Events

- 2

KIDZROCK BIBLE HERO/SUPERHERO DAY
9:45 & 11:15 AM
- 8

UMM MEETING
9:00-10:30 AM
- 9

EXPLORE EBENEZER
5:00 PM
- 11

EMPTY NESTER GAME CLUB
1:00-3:00 PM
- 15

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 18

EMPTY NEST LUNCH AND LEARN
THE MICROCHURCH EXPLAINED - 12:00 PM
- 22

STATE OF THE CHURCH
9:00-10:30 AM

4TH SATURDAY MEAL
FREDERICKSBURG UMC – 2:30-5:30 PM
- 25

EMPTY NESTER GAME CLUB
1:00-3:00 PM
- 31

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT BEGINS
FOR CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS AND THEIR SIBLINGS

Looking Ahead to February

- 15

EMPTY NEST LUNCH AND LEARN: SELF DEFENSE
- 18-20

HIGH SCHOOL WINTER RETREAT

Looking Ahead to March

- 4-5

IF: GATHERING
- 5

CHILDREN'S COMMUNION CLASS

Kidzcare Nursery

Available for ages 0-3 during Sunday Worship Services and for infants, toddlers, and school age children during on-campus group meetings.

Please note that on weekdays, KidzCare Nursery is closed when Stafford County Schools are closed.

Kidzrock Sunday School

Available during Sunday Worship Services at 9:45 AM & 11:15 AM for children age 3 through 5th grade.

Find virtual Sunday School resources at ebenezerumc.org/bulletin

TNT Middle School
Weekly Gathering

Sundays, 5:00-6:30 PM, Room B01

AXIS High School
Weekly Gathering

Sundays, 7:00-9:00 PM, Room B01

Connect With Us:


To receive text updates
about our ministries:

Parents of middle school students, text TNTParent to **84576**


Parents of high school students, text AxisParent to **84576**

High school students, text AXIS to **84576**

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@axis.eumc



@eumc_axis

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EMPTY NESTERS

The weather may be getting colder, but you'll always find a warm welcome at Ebenezer Empty Nesters! We're staying active throughout the winter months with indoor and outdoor activities. Join us for fun, fitness, and more.

LUNCH AND LEARN: THE MICROCHURCH, EXPLAINED – JANUARY 18, 12:00 PM

Pastor Monica Reynolds sheds light on these smaller expressions of church that meet outside traditional church buildings. Lunch is provided. Cost: \$5.00.

GAME CLUB – SECOND & FOURTH TUESDAYS OF THE MONTH, 1:00-3:00 PM

Stay warm indoors with Game Club. Board games, card games...we play them all! Join us for some friendly competition.

SPIRITUALITY IN NATURE GROUP – THURSDAYS, 1:00 PM

Bundle up and venture outdoors with SING. Each week, we explore a different local park or trail and appreciate the beauty of God's creation.

ACTIVE OLDER ADULT EXERCISE – TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS, 9:15-10:15 AM

Keep moving with low impact calisthenics, strength work, and gentle stretching. Our free classes offer a great overall workout for adults of all ages.

Connect With Us:
To learn more about Empty Nest socials, events, and fitness groups:



Follow | Like
@EmptyNestOlderAdults



ebenezerumc.org/empty-nesters



MONTHLY MEETING
Second Saturday of the Month
9:00-10:30 AM

All men are invited to attend UMM monthly meetings!
For more information, contact Bob Skewes at skewcrew1@outlook.com

CONNECTIONS

LET'S GROW TOGETHER IN THE NEW YEAR!

WHY JOIN A SMALL GROUP?

Large group worship services aren't designed for personal interaction but for intentional time to learn and be close to God with other believers. It can be difficult to develop close personal relationships if that is your only connection to Christian community. That's why small groups can be so valuable in growing your faith and an important part of your discipleship. It is a time when you are gathered in circles with a small group of other believers to study God's word, share a meal, be in prayer for one another, and do life together. The people in your small group become family.

At Ebenezer Church, we have many small groups for you to be a part of and grow deeper in faith with others. Find a group by checking out our Small Groups page at ebenezerumc.org/small-groups or contact Chrissy Richardson at crichardson@ebenezerumc.org

LEAD A SMALL GROUP? ME?

Yes, you! You could even start your own small group by using the resources we have available. All it takes is a few friends who want to grow. Think about how you came to follow Jesus and how you have grown in your faith. You are who you are today because someone knew you by name and invested in you. Whether it was your parents, friends, or perhaps a pastor or small group leader, God has used one or more people to make a tremendous difference in your life.

God has an amazing way of using a variety of people to accomplish His goals. We often think it takes a certain type of person to be a great teacher or dynamic leader, but as you trust Him to work through you, He will move in your life and the lives of others. Your honesty about the fact that you don't know everything encourages vulnerability and communicates to others that they don't have to have all the answers to be obedient to what God is calling them to do.

Leading a small group gives you the opportunity to invest — and perhaps make the same sort of impact - in someone else's life! For more information, contact Pastor Jeff at pastorjeff@ebenezerumc.org



explore
EBENEZER

GET TO KNOW OUR CHURCH AND PASTORS
JANUARY 9 | 5:00 PM
REGISTER AT EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS

THE PRAISE BAND IS BACK!

The Ebenezer Praise Band returned this fall with a new leader. Preston Hardage became Ebenezer's Director of Worship in September, bringing a lifelong love of music and a commitment to spirit-filled worship to the Sanctuary stage.

"I want there to be a dialogue between the people up there playing music and the congregation," Preston said. "The band is there to create an atmosphere for the Spirit to work in people. The rhythm, harmonies, and lyrics all speak to people in different ways."

Preston's roots in the United Methodist Church date back to his childhood in St. Louis, Missouri. "It was never an option to not go to church," he recalled. He taught himself to play guitar and embarked on a musical path that included leading worship

in his youth group, forming a band with friends, and serving as a trombonist in "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band.

Along the way, he was invited to join the worship band at Christ Crossman UMC in Falls Church and later became its worship leader. He also struck up a friendship with Ebenezer's former Director of Worship Allan Paquette, which eventually led him to apply for his current position.

"This was a God thing that had been in motion for a while and I didn't realize it," he said. "A door was opening. I just had to get the message."

Preston is excited to invite new members to join the praise band team. Auditions are now open for vocalists and electric and acoustic instrumentalists; even instruments not normally associated with the praise band are welcome.

Praise Band Auditions

Deadline: January 31
ebenezerumc.org/events

"It's definitely a team effort. One of my philosophies is to delegate and give each person - especially those with a microphone in hand - a voice," he explained. "What I look for in volunteers are people who want to contribute and have a heart for service and a heart for worship music. My job is to lead and to teach and help people grow."

Ready to audition? Contact Preston at phardage@ebenezerumc.org to set up an initial consultation. More information about the audition process is available at ebenezerumc.org/praise-band-auditions.



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE WITH THE EBENEZER CHOIR

Do you enjoy singing? Have you ever thought about joining the choir but always put it off? The choir could become your musical small group!

The Ebenezer Choir returned to the Sanctuary in September, not a moment too soon for Choir Director Dwayne Miller. "It feels so good to be together again after such a long separation," he said. "There

is nothing like making music together with people LIVE."

Dwayne and his wife Amy began singing with the choir in 2003. Dwayne became director in 2015 and now encourages others to join.

"We welcome anyone who likes to sing, and as with many music groups, men are most especially welcome. We sing a wide range of traditional music - sometimes a cappella - including hymn arrangements, classical music, spirituals and more," he explained.

While reading music and previous choir experience might be helpful, they are not required, and auditions aren't necessary. The choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:00 PM and warms up on Sunday mornings at 7:45 AM in preparation for the 8:15 AM traditional service.

"Come give us a test drive! You could jump in the deep end with us Wednesdays and Sundays, or just attend rehearsals for a few weeks until you feel comfortable enough to give Sunday a go," Dwayne said.

The choir is currently devoting the last 20 minutes of its weekly rehearsal to preparing for its Lessons and Carols service on December 19. Dwayne invites those who may be interested in a shorter-term commitment to consider joining for the Advent season and being part of this event.

"Please reach out to me for more information or just to start the conversation, and we can make a joyful noise together."

For more information, contact Dwayne at dmiller@ebenezerumc.org

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

KIDZ ROCK WRAPS UP BIRTHDAY DROPS

When children couldn't gather for birthday parties, Kidz Rock brought the party to them, with Kidz Rock Birthday Drops. Children's Ministries Director Shari Parsons launched the program in the fall of 2020 and, along with a team of volunteers, kept it going for a full year. From October 2020 through October 2021, 18 Kidz Rock volunteers delivered birthday greetings, goody bags, and yard signs to a total of 370 children!

"After a full year of dropping off goody bags and yard signs to our Kid Rock students, we have completed our Birthday Drops. This was a fun way to stay connected to our students during Covid and to let them know we were thinking of them," Shari said. "We were able to do these birthday celebrations because of our wonderful volunteer team who enjoyed surprising the kids at their homes," she added.



Kidz Rock volunteers went out into the neighborhoods twice each month to make sure that children received their birthday treats on time. Their reward? Plenty of smiles, lots of excitement, and occasional jumps for joy.

"We received lots of pictures of happy children who enjoyed being celebrated, especially during a year of social distancing and not being able to have birthday parties," Shari said.

Thanks to KidzRock for delivering a year of happy birthdays!

SUNDAY SCHOOL BIBLE HERO/SUPERHERO DAY

On Sunday, January 2, we're ringing in the New Year by dressing up as our favorite heroes! Parents, bring your children to Sunday School at 9:45 AM or 11:15 AM dressed as their favorite Bible hero or superhero. We can't wait to find out which hero they will choose and why, and we know they'll be excited to share. It's all for fun, and our leaders will be dressed up, too! Start planning now – we're looking forward to seeing all the heroes in our Sunday School classrooms.



STUDENT MINISTRIES

CONFIRMATION BEGINS IN FEBRUARY! Confirmation is a chance for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders to say YES to their faith! During confirmation, we cover the foundations of being a Christian, the church, and what it means to fully live for Him. We also go deeper into what it means to be baptized and be part of the church. At the end, students can decide if they would like to join the church.

At Ebenezer, we normally offer confirmation for 7th and 8th graders. Because we were unable to have confirmation in 2021, 9th graders are invited for 2022. Our confirmation experience will take place on Wednesday evenings from February 2- March 30 (we will not meet during Spring Break). In addition, we will have a day-long retreat at Ebenezer on Saturday, February 5. The confirmation experience culminates with a local



retreat April 1-2. Due to the high level of commitment necessary, we ask that parents/guardians attend one of our informational meetings:

Tuesday, November 30 at 7:00pm in person in Room B01 OR Thursday, December 2 at 7:00pm virtually

For more information, contact Pastor Jeff at pastorjeff@ebenezerumc.org

CONFIRMATION MENTORS NEEDED Confirmation is an incredible time in the faith walk of a student. We are looking for adults to walk alongside them during the confirmation experience and be willing to support, lead, and grow with the students. The time commitment is Feb 2-April 2. If you are interested in mentoring, please contact Michelle Paquette at mpaquette@ebenezerumc.org

HIGH SCHOOL WINTER RETREAT A weekend away!! High school students, join us February 18-20 for a retreat to Rhodes Grove Retreat Center in Chambersburg, PA. The weekend is full of incredible worship, amazing small groups, fun games, and lots of awesome memories! Find more information and register at www.ebenezerumc.org/events

SPONSOR A STUDENT ON THE MISSION TRIP Students going on the Axis Summer Mission Trip in June 2022 are seeking sponsors! Each student is responsible for the cost of their trip, and your support will help them get there. Sponsors don't have to know students personally, and any amount helps greatly. We are heading to Harrisburg, PA to serve the needs of the community there. In preparation for the trip, students commit to being in small groups and doing various service opportunities. We would love for your support not only financially but also in prayer over the next few months. For more information, visit ebenezerumc.org/events



Young adults, join us December 11 at 1:00 PM for an Outdoor Christmas Gathering! We're celebrating the season with a bonfire, food, and yard games. In case of inclement weather, we will move indoors. For more information, contact Wes at wesarichardson@gmail.com.

KIDZ ROCK SUNDAY SCHOOL

We're thrilled to welcome children age 3 through 5th grade to In-Person Sunday School at 9:45 AM and 11:15 AM each Sunday. We do ask that all children wear a mask when attending In-Person Sunday School.

Our Virtual Sunday School is great if you're out of town or can't get to church for any reason. Just click ebenezerumc.org/kidzrock to get the video lessons and parent discussion guides. It's easy and fun for the entire family!

Kidz Rock Facebook Page

Stay in touch and find out what's happening in Kidz Rock by following our Facebook page @EUMCKidzRock

Coming Soon...
March 5 Communion Class (grades 2 – 5)
April 9 & 10 Neighborhood Easter Eggsplotions
June 6 – 10 Vacation Bible School



Ebenezer Preschool celebrated Halloween with costume parades! The students and teachers are looking forward to Pajama Parties in December and Christmas Break December 20-January 3. Enrollment for the 2022-23 school year will begin January 31 for currently enrolled students and their siblings.

Please Scan QR Code to find out more



ebenezerumc.org/christmas

Please Scan QR Code to find out more



ebenezerumc.org/christmas



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**You're invited to
Christmas with Ebenezer Church**

Lessons and Carols
December 19, 7:00 PM

Blue Christmas
December 21, 7:00 PM

Living Nativity
December 22, 7:00 PM

Christmas Eve Worship
December 24, 4:00 & 7:00 PM

Learn more: ebenezerumc.org/christmas

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