

VBS

FAMILY EDITION



Summer 2022

STONEMAKER

Newsletter of Ebenezer Church

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A NOTE FROM PASTOR EMILY

Grace and peace to each of you.

This summer let's dive into swimming pools and into our relationship with God. Add one of the Gospels to your summer reading list. Spend time with the Word and soak in it, as you linger in the water or the sun. Spend time reading and rereading the stories of Jesus as you sip iced tea and lemonade on porches and in backyards. Linger longer...and let God speak to you through the story that gives us life. We have some new sermon series coming this summer. Check them out on Page 2.

We are in a pastoral transition. We thank Pastor Monica Reynolds on June 5 for three wonderful years of ministry together. She is moving to Front Royal, VA to be the new chaplain at Randolph-Macon Academy where her three youngest children will be enrolled. We then welcome Pastor Donovan Archie on July 3. You'll find a letter from him on Page 5. He comes to us from The Vine in Dunn Loring, VA with his wife and two young children. He will lead our community-based Love Your Neighbor Network and has many gifts in meeting people in faith wherever they are. We look forward to growing with him.

Summer is the time of year for Vacation Bible School: Family Edition, Axis Summer Mission Trip, Tuesdays at the Park in Autumn Ridge, and serving others in many ways. Our Sunday morning coffee café will return with a new name: The Bridge. We'll also welcome the return of Hawaiian bread for our sacrament of Holy Communion. Don't miss chances to nurture relationships with God, the community, and each other as days grow longer and faith grows deeper.

We are putting our Focus 2025 long range vision into actionable ministry. Find out more as we put faith in action and follow the call of Christ...to love God and love our neighbors while we transform lives through Jesus Christ as we connect, heal, and bring hope to the world.

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


Pastor Emily



Current & Upcoming
Sermon Series

Stories Worth
Repeating
(through June 26)

Tell it to me one more time. We love to hear the best stories of our lives again and again. We have favorite movies and books, the words of which we have often memorized. The stories we treasure in many ways define who we are. In this series, we will hear the stories Jesus crafted for those who follow him. They are meant to poke, prod, and move us to live out faith. We will step into the stories to find out what Jesus treasures in stories that define who we are.

Questions Jesus Asks
(July 17-31)

Jesus asks a lot of questions. He answers questions with questions. We'll explore some of those questions in worship in July. How would we answer them? How do his questions push us deeper in faith? What does Jesus ask each of us? Let's explore these questions and find answers together in July.

Unfiltered
(August 7-28)

We post the best on social media. What's going on behind that perfect image? Everyone has a messy story. Everyone, including the folks in the Bible. Let's look at some of those stories and read how God led them through and was with them in those messy times. God gets into the messiness with us – unfiltered and real.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR JEFF

Beautiful and Beloved People of Ebenezer,

Recently, I ordered some seeds and supplies for my garden, and thanks to having Amazon Prime, I was guaranteed “next day” shipping. However, the “next day” came and went, and around 9:00 PM, I received a shipping update saying my package was delayed. Needless to say, my patience was tested, and I realized that the phrase “patience is a virtue” has been all but lost within our culture. Patience is no longer seen as a desirable trait, because we have been conditioned for instant gratification. “When do we want it? NOW!”

This lack of patience has trickled into our faith as well. Whether we admit it or not, we often desire a God that is like a magician or superhero who comes to the rescue at lightning speed. But that's not how life works. Nor is that how God works. The deficiency of our wants, wills, and desires compared to the reality of life and of God can often become a stumbling block.

In reality, quick fixes never really solve anything. They're either a Band-Aid or they fail to address the true source of the problem. While we are quick to change the circumstances within our control, like our environments or situations, our focus should be on changing ourselves.

Changing ourselves is at the very heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24) Time and time again, Jesus invited his disciples to change their lives and reorient their hearts to be more in line with the very heart and Kingdom of God. However, the human condition gets in the way. It is only by the grace of God that even though we fail, God still calls and claims us as his own. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is a gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8)

Sometimes this journey truly is a process. We often do not get the outcomes we expect or want, and our “virtue” of patience wears thin. We don't like being told to “wait” whether it is for a package or for someone to call us back, but it is in waiting that we find hope. The Apostle Paul told the church in Rome to “Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor... Rejoice in hope, be patient in seasons of tribulation, and persevere in prayer.” (Romans 12:9-12)

As we patiently wait for the harvest to come, may we all press forward together in the love and hope we find in Christ Jesus.

Grateful to journey with and alongside you!


Pastor Jeff



Our Easter sunrise service was a beautiful way to start a very special day! Thanks to all who joined us to celebrate Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

NEW DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONS



Hello Ebenezer! My name is Crissy Sharon and I am super excited about being the new Director of Connections. I have been working at Ebenezer for 4 ½ years as the Kidzcare Director, so many of you may already know me. I have been married to Chris Sharon for almost 16 years. We have six kids and one grandson. We have been attending Ebenezer for 12 years, and our family has served in Children's Ministries, as small group leaders, in Student Ministries, in Missions and Outreach, and in other ministry areas. We love this church family and all the ways we have been able to serve our community alongside so many of you.

In 1 Peter 4:10, God tells us, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.” When I first heard that scripture, it really hit me hard, and it motivated me to try volunteering. So, I started helping in the nursery on Sunday mornings...and the rest is history. We are called to serve in our church and our community. I am hoping to get you connected in a ministry to help you grow and serve. As we come back into the building, we will need your help getting things back up and running. If you feel like God is calling you (or even nudging you) to serve or lead, please feel free to contact me directly so I can get you connected. csharon@ebenezerumc.org



NEW DIRECTOR OF KIDZCARE

We're excited to welcome Briton Cartner as our new Director of KidzCare! Briton has been a member of our KidzCare team since 2018. She and her husband Jonathan live in Stafford and have three children.



GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
SUMMIT

The 2022 Global Leadership Summit brings world-class leadership training back to Ebenezer August 4-5. Whether at home, at work, or in the community, your leadership matters, and right now it's more important than ever to discover new hope and energy to rejuvenate those around us.

This year's GLS focus is Voice Your Vision, and the faculty includes Life.Church Founder Craig Groeschel, North Point Ministries Founder Andy Stanley, former Walt Disney CEO Bob Iger, In-N-Out Burger Owner Lynsi Snyder, and more. We invite you to take this opportunity to absorb a wealth of leadership insight and discover how to voice your vision for a better future.

Join us for GLS in the Sanctuary or virtually from your home or office to discover a unique blend of vision, inspiration, and skills you can immediately apply in your personal and professional life. As a member of our congregation, you will receive a discounted rate of \$139. There is also a special rate of \$99 for active-duty military, teachers, first responders, and students. For more information, visit ebenezerumc.org/events



Counselor's Corner



The interaction between Peter and Jesus in Matthew's narrative of Jesus walking on the water is inspiring (Matthew 14:22-33). When Peter saw Jesus on the water, not certain if it was Jesus or a ghost, he said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus replied, "Come." Peter stepped out of the boat. Peter's obedience to respond when called and his faith in Christ allowed him to become the second man to walk on water! But something changed the moment Peter took in his environment, observed the wind, and began to doubt. He lost focus on Jesus and realized he was walking on water; he was overcome with fear and began to sink. He cried out to Jesus and Jesus saved him. But then Jesus said something profound: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

I think in this moment Jesus taught Peter a lesson that is invaluable for all of us. It is not wrong to doubt; notice Jesus asked, "Why did you doubt?" When you experience doubt, take the time to discover the source of your doubt. This could lead to an opportunity for Jesus to strengthen your faith by overcoming your own doubt and fear.

We are called into uncomfortable circumstances and situations. Parenting, job requirements, broken trust, or other challenges can lead us to a place where we doubt. If we take time to identify where that doubt is rooted, we can name it and begin to work through it with the aid of the Spirit, friends, and family. Doubt handled this way can become a source of hope and lead to a deeper relationship with Jesus. This deeper relationship can inspire hope and encourage others to address doubt they are dealing with as well. It could lead to a place where getting out of the boat is not as terrifying as it once was.

Keith Priest is Ebenezer Church's Christian Counselor. He offers Biblically-based counseling free of charge to our community. For more information, please visit ebenezerumc.org/counseling

A NOTE FROM PASTOR MONICA

This will be my final newsletter article as one of your pastors at Ebenezer.

It has been a joy and privilege to love and serve Jesus together over the past three years. We have navigated a global pandemic, national unrest, political divisiveness, and continue to navigate a world where foundations are shaky and will likely continue to shake.

The one foundation we have continued to rely on is our foundation in Jesus Christ. That foundation will never fail us and, if we allow, can serve as our guide and rule in uncertain times.

The Love Your Neighbor Network was birthed specifically to address a world with shaky foundations. In such a world the church must claim and cling to our simple mission and purpose: Love God and Love Neighbor.

This is not a sentimental or bumper sticker type of love.

This is a love that shows up and shows Jesus' love through whatever means we have at our disposal. A cup of coffee with a heartbroken friend, a shared meal with neighbors, prayer time with coworkers, playing our favorite sport with people who may never step inside a church, incorporating our love of Jesus into daily walks through our neighborhood, or just simple but intentional gestures of love, mercy, and advocacy for our everyday actual neighbors.

If the only place our faith shows is inside the church building, we are likely not following where Jesus is leading. Research and statistics are clear: fewer and fewer people and families are coming through church doors in America.

So, we must continue to go to them, to be church and actively show the love of Jesus where people are already doing life.

I trust God will continue to love, lead, and light the path in the years ahead. Pastor Donovan will be a blessing to many. It will be a joy to hear the stories of how God blessed some scattered seeds, allowed disciples to water them, and out of their risky faithfulness grew new and beautiful fruit.

In a world where foundations are shaky, put your faith in the unshakable truth and faithfulness of Jesus' perfect love.

Thank you for allowing me to serve with you!

Monica

Pastor Monica



Ebenezer teamed up with Micah's Ice Cream Truck for a sweet ending to Teacher Appreciation Week at Hampton Oaks Elementary. We Are For Teachers!

A NOTE FROM PASTOR DONOVAN

Ebenezer,

Our time together is coming soon, and I can't wait!

I'm looking forward to leading the Love Your Neighbor Network (LYNN) and uncovering all the creative and innovative ways God can show up and help us do impactful work in Stafford. God proves time and time again that His everlasting Spirit goes before us and is in our midst. God's Spirit is leading us and helping us take the next faithful step even when it means doing something new—and believe me, God is doing something new.

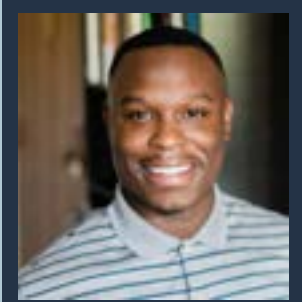
LYNN, microchurches, and fresh expressions are all examples of the Holy Spirit on a mission to further Jesus's reach and reign in this world. They are the evidence of God's unstoppable kingdom unfolding before our very eyes, and you and I get to help implement this unbelievable work.

As we anticipate this transition, a huge shoutout and fistbump go to Pastor Monica, who has been a powerhouse vision crier, assessing the spiritual needs within Stafford, then ideating ways the church can boldly serve as the best hope of God's grace. By creating new expressions and platforms of worship and community, the body of Christ takes on a new attitude in being the visible presence of Christ in an evolving world. What a radical movement!

I sense Ebenezer will become an influence for innovation, boldness, and witness: reaching, connecting, and growing with people whom God has placed in its orbit. In the meantime, I will come emptied to be filled with laughter, stories, casseroles, and coffee dates. Until then, stay present and encouraged, my friends.

Your new friend and Pastor in Christ,

Pastor D



MISSIONS & OUTREACH

There are a lot of quotes about hunger, but I think this one from Bishop Desmond Tutu stands out, because of the simple message from Jesus that it conveys: "When people were hungry, Jesus didn't say, 'Now is that political or social?' He said, 'I feed you.' Because the good news to a hungry person is bread."

kNOw Hunger 2022 was filled with good news being spread by volunteers who gave selflessly of their time and prepared hundreds of meals, bags, boxes, and pantries full of food. We gathered to cook, fellowship, distribute, and connect with those in need. Food was our good news indeed!

My heartfelt thanks to those who made it down to the Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank during the week to package online orders for pickup. The FRFB Mobile Pop-Up Food Pantry at Ebenezer saw 80+ families drive through and receive boxes of food, milk, and fresh produce.

Stafford Food Security received 200 backpack meals packed by Ebenezer that go directly to students via guidance counselors daily. Ebenezer also sponsored the SFS Food Truck on two different evenings during our kNOw Hunger event. S.E.R.V.E. hosted a bag pack and distribution that went out into a local neighborhood and connected Ebenezer to a community in need.

Many also gave in support of Helping Children Worldwide and their baby food initiative. We raised \$1,500 to go toward this life-giving mission.

These local and international organizations are doing the hard work every day. Ebenezer is committed to supporting these non-profits through your generous giving. Please consider volunteering to feed people on a regular basis if you are able through our Community Meals program, 4th Saturday Meals, or Brisben Meals. More connection opportunities are available at ebenezerumc.org/volunteer.

In humble gratitude for your service during kNOw Hunger and beyond,

Amy Miller
Director, Missions and Outreach



Sunday Worship

In Person | 8:15 AM (Traditional)
9:45 AM & 11:15 AM (Modern)
Join us at The Bridge Café between
services in the Gym.

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



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www.ebenezerumc.org

June Events

- 14, 21, 28

TUESDAYS AT THE PARK
9:00-11:00 AM, AUTUMN RIDGE PARK, SEE PAGE 11 FOR INFO
- 5

FAREWELL RECEPTIONS FOR PASTOR MONICA
BETWEEN WORSHIP SERVICES
- 9-11

VBS: FAMILY EDITION
6:00-8:30 PM
- 11

UNITED METHODIST MEN MEETING
9:00 AM
- 18

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 23

FORGIVENESS BOOK STUDY BEGINS
7:00-8:30 PM, SEE PAGE 8 FOR INFO
- 25

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

July Events

- 12, 19, 26

TUESDAYS AT THE PARK
9:00-11:00 AM, AUTUMN RIDGE PARK, SEE PAGE X FOR INFO
- 3

WELCOME RECEPTIONS FOR PASTOR DONOVAN
BETWEEN WORSHIP SERVICES
- 10

EXPLORE EBENEZER
5:00 PM
- 14

UNITED METHODIST MEN MEETING
9:00 AM
- 16

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 23

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

TNT MIDDLE SCHOOL TUBING

August Events

- 4-5

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
- 13

UNITED METHODIST MEN MEETING
9:00 AM
- 20

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 27

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

STUDENT MINISTRIES LASER TAG KICK-OFF
- TBA

AXIS & TNT WEEKLY GATHERINGS RESUME

Looking Ahead to September

- TBA

GO FOR BO

Looking Ahead to October

- TBA

PUMPKIN PATCH
- 29

FALL FESTIVAL

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)
- Caregiver Support Group

3rd Monday, 1:00 PM
- Active Older Adult Exercise

Tuesdays & Fridays, 9:15–10:15 AM
- Empty Nester Game Club

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 1:00 PM
- MOPS

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 AM
(September-May)
- Nar-Anon

Every other Wednesday, 6:30 PM
- Cancer Support Group

1st Wednesday, 7:00 PM
- Spirituality in Nature Group

Thursdays, 10:00 AM
- Futsal (Indoor Soccer)

Saturdays, 6:00 PM

Kidzcare

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

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

Will resume in August.
Enjoy your summer!
Sundays, 5:00-6:30 PM, Room B01

AXIS High School
Weekly Gathering

Tuesdays, 7:00 PM, June 28-Aug 2,
Stan & Linda's Farm

Sunday meetings will resume in
August, 7:00-9:00 PM, Room B01

Connect With Us:
To receive text updates
about our ministries:

Parents of children age 3-5th grade,
text KIDZROCK to **84576**

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

Follow | Like



@axis.eumc



@eumc_axis

ADULT MINISTRIES

Come exploring with our Empty Nest Spirituality in Nature Group (SING) this summer! We will meet in local parks on Thursdays at 10:00 AM. Find our complete schedule at ebenezerumc.org/events

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

 Follow | Like
@EmptyNestOlderAdults

 ebenezerumc.org/empty-nesters



STUDENT MINISTRIES CONFIRMATION

One of our greatest desires is to see students come to own their faith. As we grow, it is easy for us to take on the belief of our parents or guardians without really thinking through what it means and whether we believe it for ourselves. We do Confirmation Class to help students wrestle with their questions and understand the foundations of our faith so that they can decide if they want to confirm their faith and declare that they do indeed believe.

Each confirmand is paired with a mentor who goes through confirmation with them. Mentors are the lifeline of Confirmation, praying for their confirmand, being there for the questions, and encouraging them in their faith walk. We are excited to say that we welcomed 33 confirmands in April and May! May this serve as a reminder for all of us to truly own our faith and walk in the steps of Jesus.



MISSION SERVICE DAY

In April, our group of students and adults going on the summer mission trip gathered to serve all around our community. We partnered with ChildHelp, Compassion Restoration's Transportation Ministry, Culpeper Hub, and loved ones from our church community to serve and see God in action.



Upcoming Events

Keep an eye on the website for upcoming Student Ministries opportunities this summer:

- TNT Tubing in July
- Axis July Gatherings
- Laser Tag Kick-Off in August


SUMMER BOOK STUDY

Are you stuck in a cycle of unresolved pain due to someone else's actions? Discover what the Bible really says about forgiveness and how to find the peace that comes from embracing it. Join Christian Counselor Keith Priest for a six-week study based on Lysa TerKeurst's best-selling book *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*. The class is open to all adults and will meet on Thursday evenings from 7:00-8:30 PM from June 23-July 28. Through video lessons, discussion, and journaling, you'll learn how to let go of resentment, make peace with painful memories, and reclaim your future. Sign up at ebenezerumc.org/events

Summer Book Study

with Christian Counselor Keith Priest

Thursdays, 7:00 - 8:30 PM
June 23 - July 28



Learn more at ebenezerumc.org/events

Congratulations!

CLASS OF 2022

We are so proud of you! You persevered through the pandemic and you made it! We can't wait to see what God does next as you follow Him!

High School Students

SUMMERTUESDAYS

June 28-Aug 2 | 7:00 PM | ebenezerumc.org/events



EASTER EGGSPLSION

Thanks to everyone who hosted Easter Eggsplosion events this Spring! Ebenezer provided Starter Kits with Easter eggs, prizes, and bubble wands, and you took it from there. Thank you for reaching out to your friends and neighbors and for bringing the joy of Easter outside the church and into our community.

TUESDAYS AT THE PARK

Autumn Ridge Park is the place to be on Tuesday mornings this summer! Join us from 9:00-11:00 AM at 900 Eustace Road as we move, create, explore, and splash together. Each session will include a Bible story, special themed activity, and plenty of free time to make new friends, climb on the play structure, run around in the grassy field, or take a break under the pavilion. Tuesdays at the Park is appropriate for kids and parents/caregivers of all ages. Activities are free of charge and no registration is necessary. Visit ebenezerumc.org/events for more information.



June 14 - Let's Get Moving

June 21 - Chalk Day

June 28 - Bubble Day

****July 5 - No Meeting****

July 12 - Science Day

July 19 - Water Day

July 26 - Yard Games and Ice Cream

Stay in the know!

Text KIDZROCK to 84576 to receive text updates about Ebenezer Children's Ministries.

Sunday School Preschool - 5th Grade

In Person
9:45 AM & 11:15 AM

Virtual Lesson Videos
& Parent Guides



ebenezerumc.org/kidzrock

Important Dates:

August 22	Preschool Office Opens
August 23	Paperwork Drop Off-9:00 AM-12:00 PM
August 24	Paperwork Drop Off-11:00 AM-2:00 PM
Sept. 6	Preschool Orientation
Sept. 7/Sept. 8	First Days of Preschool



Thanks to Ebenezer Preschool families for blessing us with your children this year! We especially enjoyed our field trip to Braehead Farm; Thanksgiving gatherings with performances in the Sanctuary; Christmas pajama parties with songs and a visit from Santa; Spring Flings with dancing, singing, and artwork; and Graduation. The Preschool Office will be closed for the summer. You may reach Preschool Director Donna Kenkel at dkenkel@ebenezerumc.org



MOPS

"Two are better than one..." (Ecclesiastes 9:12) Join Ebenezer Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) and don't mom alone! Registration is now open for the 2022-23 season of MOPS, for mothers of children from birth to kindergarten, and MOMSnext, which includes moms with kids through fifth grade. Both programs offer the opportunity to meet, build friendships, and grow with other moms in the community. Mothers of older children are also invited to join as Mentor Moms and share their valuable experience.

Meetings begin in September and will be held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month from 9:30-11:30 AM. Register by June 15 for \$62 (childcare included) or for \$72 after June 15. For more information, visit ebenezerumc.org/events



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Vacation Bible School is back – and this year, it's not just for kids!

Your entire family is invited to join us for Monumental VBS: Family Edition. For three nights - June 9-11, from 6:00-8:30 PM – you'll be part of a VBS crew along with other families. Together, you'll go on a Monumental adventure to discover the greatness of God's love. Each night will include our favorite VBS activities like KidVid Cinema, Imagination Station, Bible Adventures, and Games, not to mention all the fun we'll have in the Sanctuary with Michelle Paquette and the Professor! By exploring God's awesomeness, families will form a rock-solid faith for the road ahead.

Parents, this is an incredible opportunity for you to experience VBS along with your children and make memories together as a family. There are also lots of opportunities to get involved as a VBS volunteer. Register and find out more at ebenezerumc.org/vbs



Did You Know?

**The Stonemaker is
ONLINE**

**Check out our interactive
digital version today.
Opt out of receiving
newsletters by mail to
save resources.**

EBENEZERUMC.ORG/NEWSLETTER

