

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

## STONEMAKER

Winter 2022 - 2023

Newsletter of Ebenezer Church

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### A NOTE FROM PASTOR EMILY

Christmas is coming!


Thank you, God. Mangers, Nativity sets, Christmas trees, the Angel Tree, candles, carols, and Silent Night are coming! Thank you, God. Jesus is coming! I cannot wait. Jesus moves into our lives this Christmas to be with us forever. Let us receive and share this gift of Jesus with all in our community. Join us for Christmas Eve services at 4:00 and 7:00 PM. We will have several additional services: Blue Christmas (for those having a difficult time this year) on December 4, Lessons and Carols on December 18 and Living Nativity outdoors on December 20. I look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus with you – and following that same Jesus into the New Year. Let us follow wherever Jesus leads in 2023. Thank you, God.

As we put up new calendars, we recognize that the same faithful God is doing a new thing here. Let us hear God's dreams for our church and community. In 2022, we celebrated over 67 new members and over 37 baptisms. How will God move in 2023? We will soon be determining next steps in the vision of a three-pronged Ebenezer: onsite at the

main campus, offsite in the Love Your Neighbor Network, and online. Focus 2025 continues to make steady progress toward goals. God is building the Body of Christ for the present and the future as we continue sharing and living out the Gospel with those who do not yet know about God's great love.

Let us love God and love others this Christmas season as we fulfill our mission to transform lives through Jesus Christ as we connect, heal, and bring hope to the world.

Can't wait to see you this Christmas – and in the New Year! What a joy and privilege to serve Christ with you,

  
Pastor Emily  
pastoremily@  
ebenezerumc.org



### FOCUS 2025

Focus 2025 is the long-range vision that guides us as we live into our mission. Our Mental Health Engagement Team is one of four focus teams charged with developing initiatives to help us *transform lives through Jesus Christ as we connect, heal, and bring hope to the world*. Look inside to see how this team is taking action to support our community this quarter. Learn more at [ebenezerumc.org/focus-2025](http://ebenezerumc.org/focus-2025).

- Blue Christmas Worship Service (Dec 4) and GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays (Dec 8) - To help those experiencing grief find comfort and hope
- Forgiving What You Can't Forget Book Study – Second session begins Jan 12
- Wellness Workshop: Understanding Anxiety, Stress, and Depression (Jan 21) – For ages 12 and up.



Upcoming  
Sermon Series

What's in a Name?  
(Advent series: Nov 27-Dec 18)

What's in a name? Much, as it turns out. A name is how we come to know ourselves and how we are known to others. What do the names given to Jesus tell us about who he is? Jesus is Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, Messiah, Word, Light of the World. It's hard to put all that on a birth certificate, and yet it's easy to put all that on our hearts.

New Year, Same God  
(Jan 1-Jan 22)

God was, is, and will be. Amidst all that happens, God is present. In the Old Testament, God shows up in a field of sheep, on a mountaintop, and by a river. In the New Testament, God shows up at a well, in the synagogue, and on a road to Damascus. In 2023, God will show up at the grocery store, on the soccer field, and in the living room. It's a new year, and the same God will lead us through it.

Different Words  
(Jan 29-Feb 19)

There is always a silver lining. Time heals all wounds. God doesn't give you more than you can handle. Someone has probably said those words to you, or you've said them to someone else. However, what if we could offer something more meaningful? How does God invite us to offer different words of hope, comfort, and promise?

This is Jesus  
(Lent & Easter - Feb 26-Apr 9)

Who do you say Jesus is? Jesus gives us the answer in the Gospel of John. He states repeatedly, I am...giving us different ways to think about who he is and how he relates to us. Many of our small groups will study Matt Rawle's book *Jesus Revealed: The I Am Sayings* during this series.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR JEFF

Beautiful and Beloved People of Ebenezer!

During a recent optometry appointment, I read a pamphlet which stated that the human eye can see a candlelight flame in the dark of night thirty miles away. That is a long way! God created us in such a way that our eyes are drawn to light. Our eyes and our souls seek light amidst darkness.

When I was in college, my former youth pastor called to tell me that his newborn son, Caleb, had developed RSV, a serious illness for infants. Twice while I was visiting the family at the hospital, the crash cart was wheeled into Caleb's room in the neonatal intensive care unit. Later, when Caleb was out of the hospital and on the mend, I received a card from my youth pastor which said, "At one of the darkest moments, you stopped by. You offered prayer. I don't remember the words. I don't remember the phrases. I just remember the warmth, the light, the presence. Thank you for being a light in the darkness."

Friends, God has called us to be Children of Light. If we open our eyes, the Spirit will show us points of light all around: when we share our resources with ministry partners from Stafford to Sierra Leone or when friendship goes deeper than skin or history. Light warms. Light gives vision. Light is God's gift to the world. As Christians, we are God's gift of Light.

As winter approaches, the days get shorter, the nights get longer, and the morning chill bites at our noses. In worship, we focus on our need for a Savior and our need for light amidst the darkness. Singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen, best known for his song "Hallelujah" once said, "Pay attention to the cracks, because that's where the light gets in." As disciples, we look for the cracks. We look for the places when God's heavenly light is bursting into the earthly dark. As followers of Jesus, we acknowledge the darkness, but only because it enables us to see the light.



When disaster, death, and darkness come, look for the light. We are called to see the goodness and greatness of God's glory as the Kingdom light breaks forth into this realm.

May we live into and reflect the light of Christ together!

Pastor Jeff  
pastorjeff@ebenezerumc.org



Our 12th Annual Go For Bo 5K, 1-Mile Fun Run and Tot Dash reached new heights September 17! 400 runners raced the runway at Stafford Regional Airport and \$50,000 was raised for Helping Children Worldwide. Thanks to all of our runners, sponsors, and volunteers!



CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH EBENEZER CHURCH

We're excited to celebrate the birth of Christ, and everyone is welcome! Be sure to invite your friends and neighbors using the invitation cards on the back cover. For more information, visit [ebenezerumc.org/christmas](http://ebenezerumc.org/christmas).

BLUE CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 4, 7:00 PM, SANCTUARY

Blue Christmas is an opportunity for those facing difficult situations to 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. Nursery available for children ages 0-3.

LESSONS & CAROLS – DECEMBER 18, 8:15 AM, SANCTUARY

Usher in the joy of the season at our service of Lessons and Carols during the 8:15 AM Traditional Worship Service. The Christmas story will come to life through the reading of Scripture passages along with performances of sacred music by the Ebenezer Choir. Nursery available for children ages 0-3.

LIVING NATIVITY – DECEMBER 20, 7:00 PM, BACK PARKING LOT

It's the night of Jesus' birth, and one special star has been given the task of leading everyone to the manger. Our interactive Nativity presentation invites the whole family to be part of the Christmas story. Sing along to Silent Night, visit the barnyard animals, and enjoy hot cocoa. Please bring your own lawn chair. Rain date: December 21.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES – DECEMBER 24, 4:00 & 7:00 PM, SANCTUARY (OVERFLOW IN ROOM 101), LIVESTREAM AT LIVE.EBENEZERUMC.ORG

Gather with us in the Sanctuary as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, with a Traditional Service at 4:00 PM featuring the Ebenezer Choir, and a Modern Service at 7:00 PM featuring the Ebenezer Band. Both services will end with communion and singing Silent Night by candlelight. Nursery available for children ages 0-3. Worship online at [live.ebenezerumc.org](http://live.ebenezerumc.org)

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP MESSAGE – DECEMBER 25, ON-DEMAND AT LIVE.EBENEZERUMC.ORG

To give our staff and volunteers the gift of time at home with family, we will not have in-person worship services on Sunday, December 25. Instead, we will share a special pre-recorded Christmas worship service on our Church Online platform. Visit [live.ebenezerumc.org](http://live.ebenezerumc.org) anytime on December 25 to hear scripture, a message from our pastors, and music. Our normal worship schedule will resume January 1.

WORSHIP

Music and Worship. For Worship Director Preston Hardage, the two are one and the same. "Music is an expression of the senses that God has given us," he said. "We feel music and spoken words in different ways. Our ears and eyes are receptors for what music can do." Ready to lend your gifts to music and worship at Ebenezer?



BAND AUDITIONS OPEN

Musicians and vocalists are invited to audition for the Ebenezer Band through January 31. We are particularly interested in electric and bass guitar players and male vocalists. The Band plays at the 9:45 & 11:15 AM Modern worship services, and Band members should expect to play one Sunday per month. Rehearsals are on Tuesdays from 7:00-9:00 PM. For more information, contact Preston Hardage at [phardage@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:phardage@ebenezerumc.org)

NEW CHOIR MEMBERS WELCOME

The Ebenezer Choir is always open to new members. Reading music is helpful but not required, and all are welcome. The Choir sings at the 8:15 AM Traditional service, and rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 7:00-8:00 PM. For more information, contact Dwayne Miller at [dmiller@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:dmiller@ebenezerumc.org)





Counselor's Corner



Johnny Cash is credited with saying, “Close the door on the past. You don’t try to forget the mistakes, but you don’t dwell on it. You don’t let it have any of your energy, or any of your time, or any of your space.”

It’s common to struggle with allowing our past actions, hurts, or experiences to define our future. I wish I could reclaim the hours I’ve spent wondering what would have been different if I had said this or done that. I am guilty, as many of us are, of allowing my past to have far too much of my energy. I need reminders, such as the Johnny Cash quote, or maybe the cast of Frozen singing “Let it Go” to help me realize our heavenly Father loves us too much to leave us in the wreckage of our past.

Paul captures this sentiment in Philippians 3:12-16. I am drawn to verses 13 and 14: “Brothers I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” This message is inspirational and so accurate about what it means to follow Jesus. Our faith is not designed to be sedentary; we are a people of action, a people defined by our willingness to strain forward. We are called to action in community, in prayer, in the study of Scripture as well as our service to others. These actions should cause us to experience a healthy growth from where we currently are to where Jesus is leading us.

If you are not experiencing this growth because of past actions, or maybe you have grown content with where you are in your faith, please contact me. I would be honored to see if we can partner with the Spirit and grow through these circumstances.

Keith Priest, Christian Counselor  
kpriest@ebenezerumc.org  
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A NOTE FROM PASTOR DONOVAN

Ebenezer Church,

It's hard to imagine that this year is almost gone and that we will soon usher in a brand-new one. I enjoy this season of fresh starts very much. In fact, I anticipate it. As we get closer to Advent and the new year, I am reminded that God is always inviting us into new environments. These moments enable us to pay closer attention to what God is doing, the reality of our lives, and the steps that we must take to move forward in faith.

In November, I had the pleasure of visiting the Tampa Underground, a network of microchurches in Florida that aims to authentically represent Christ in the world. They hold that Christians are the Church when they operate together in earnest worship and true community to accomplish God's mission.

I firmly feel that God is beckoning each of us to these mysterious yet potent environments. What role are we meant to play in the world as Christ's hands and feet? To what demographic has God asked us to minister? To whom has God given us a desire to reach out? This is an appeal to take the Church into the world, and I am sure that each of us is being called there by God: to think of a population that we can reach, to go meet them, and to engage in spiritual activity with them. We transform into the Church when we accomplish this.

The mission of the Love Your Neighbor Network is to help people find those to whom they are called and ways to do life and serve alongside them. Are you feeling the nudge of God? Perhaps God is calling you to step out and do something new or live out your faith differently. Let’s unpack that together, because your heart for others is the first step in transforming our world. If you want to understand more or lead a neighborhood church, I would love to explore that with you.

Stay Missional,

Pastor Donovan  
pastordonovan@ebenezerumc.org

Donovan



DENOMINATIONAL UPDATE

As our United Methodist denomination prepares for the next worldwide General Conference in 2024, we will continue sharing updates. We recently hosted a Town Hall with about 80 in attendance to provide information. We also held four Listening Sessions to invite further feedback and conversation; 28 people participated in these, facilitated by Governing Board members and pastors. We are always open to questions through [ebenezerinfo@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:ebenezerinfo@ebenezerumc.org). We would love to hear from you.

Ebenezer is part of the Virginia Conference which is within the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ). This covers a geographical region from Virginia to Florida. The SEJ held a conference November 2-4 at which a new bishop was named for Virginia. Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson begins serving on January 1, 2023. Our current Bishop Sharma Lewis will move to the Mississippi Conference at the end of 2022. Visit [vaumc.org](http://vaumc.org) to learn more.

A special called Virginia Annual Conference was held October 29, 2022. This conference ratified the closure of three churches and the disaffiliation of ten churches, out of more than 1,100 United Methodist churches in Virginia. More information is available at [vaumc.org](http://vaumc.org).

FINANCE UPDATE

On October 21, the Finance Committee received the proposed 2023 budget, which projects a \$500,000 shortfall with expected giving of \$1,750,000. Just as we pay attention to our family’s budget, our church must do the same.

For several years, excluding government assistance, Ebenezer has experienced deficit spending. The various government programs, coupled with COVID program assistance received by the Ebenezer Preschool and passed along to the church, have been very helpful to the tune of \$850,000, but that will no longer be available going forward. To restore financial stability, we must step up our giving if we want Ebenezer Church to continue to offer support to our members, the local community, and those throughout the world.

It’s time to consider the blessings we as individuals receive and remember that God has provided all we have. In return, God asks us to tithe or give 10% of the annual blessing He has provided. November 13 was designated as Stewardship Sunday. You should have received a packet in the mail from Ebenezer that included an Estimate of Giving card and detailed information about how you can help Ebenezer return to a financially stable position.

If you did not receive a packet, it's not too late to make your stewardship commitment for 2023. Estimate of Giving Cards are available at the Connection Desk. A digital version is also available at [ebenezerumc.org/treasures](http://ebenezerumc.org/treasures).

Every gift impacts ministry! Thank you in advance for your gift and your decision to give.

Tom Jackson  
Chairman of the Finance Committee  
[ebenezerinfo@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:ebenezerinfo@ebenezerumc.org)

**WELLNESS WORKSHOP**  
UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION & STRESS  
JANUARY 21  
9:00 AM - 1:30 PM  
CHILDCARE & LUNCH INCLUDED  
COST: \$10  
[EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS)

**Winter Book Study**  
with Christian Counselor Keith Priest  
Thursdays, 7:00 - 8:30 PM  
January 12 - February 16  
Learn more at [ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events)

Did you know that everyone in our church has FREE access to more than 20,000 Bible study videos through RightNow Media? This incredible resource includes studies on Books of the Bible, Marriage and Parenting, Mental Health, and so much more. There are also interactive devotions and videos for children. Sign up for your FREE account by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/join/ebenezerumcva>

**rightnow MEDIA**  
The gift that keeps on giving (really!)  
Text 'Ebenezer' to 49775 or scan the QR code to create your free account

**Systems of Self Defense**  
for women ages 12 and up  
**January 7 & 14**  
**9:00 AM-1:00 PM**  
**Cost: \$10**  
Register at [ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events)

A two-session self-defense course just for women is coming to Ebenezer in January! In partnership with the Stafford County Sheriff's Office, Ebenezer will offer Systems of Self Defense for women ages 12 and up on Saturday, January 7 and Saturday, January 14 from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM. The course aims to increase awareness and overall safety through lecture, discussion, and training in realistic self-defense techniques. The cost is \$10. Learn more and register at [ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events) or contact Dana Czzowitz at [dczzowitz@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:dczzowitz@ebenezerumc.org).



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](https://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](https://ebenezerumc.org/events)



[ebenezerumc.org/events](https://ebenezerumc.org/events)

Connect With Us:

To learn more about  
Empty Nest events:

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[www.ebenezerumc.org](https://www.ebenezerumc.org)

[@ebenezerumc](https://twitter.com/ebenezerumc)

December Events

3

UMM FAMILY MANGER BUILD

9:00-11:00 AM

3&10

COLD WEATHER SHELTER

5:30-8:00 PM

4

BLUE CHRISTMAS

7:00 PM – SEE PAGE 3 FOR INFO.

7

VIRTUAL CONFIRMATION PARENT MEETING

7:00 PM

8

GRIEFSHARE: SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

7:00 PM

11

ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE

EXPLORE EBENEZER

11:15 AM

14

RIVERSIDE CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

11:30 AM-4:00 PM

17

ADVENTURERS' GUILD

12:00-4:00 PM

17

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL

4:00-7:00 PM

18

LESSONS AND CAROLS

8:15 AM - SEE PAGE 3 FOR INFO.

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4TH SATURDAY MEAL

FREDERICKBURG UMC, 2:30-5:30 PM

24

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

4:00 & 7:00 PM – SEE PAGE 3 FOR INFO.

25

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP MESSAGE

ON-DEMAND AT [LIVE.EBENEZERUMC.ORG](https://live.ebenezerumc.org) – SEE PAGE 3 FOR INFO.

January Events

7&14

COLD WEATHER SHELTER

5:30-8:00 PM

8

PARENTS VS. TEENS MINUTE TO WIN IT

6:00-8:00 PM

12

WINTER BOOK STUDY: FORGIVING WHAT YOU CAN'T FORGET

6-WEEK STUDY BEGINS 7:00-8:30 PM

15

EXPLORE EBENEZER

11:15 AM

21

WELLNESS WORKSHOP: UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION & STRESS

9:00 AM-1:30 PM

21

ADVENTURERS' GUILD

12:00-4:00 PM

21

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL

4:00-7:00 PM

28

4TH SATURDAY MEAL

FREDERICKSBURG UMC – 2:30-5:30 PM

February Events

4&11

COLD WEATHER SHELTER

5:30-8:00 PM

6

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION SESSION

6:30 PM

17-19

AXIS HIGH SCHOOL WINTER RETREAT

18

ADVENTURERS' GUILD

12:00-4:00 PM

18

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL

4:00-7:00 PM

18

STEP PRETEEN GATHERING

(SUPER TERRIFIC EBENEZER PRETEENS) 6:00-7:30 PM

22

PANCAKE SUPPER

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

25

4TH SATURDAY MEAL

FREDERICKSBURG UMC – 2:30-5:30 PM

Looking Ahead to March

3

NIGHT OF WORSHIP

7:00 PM

4

CHILDREN'S COMMUNION CLASS

9:30-11:00 AM

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

Nar-Anon

Every other Wednesday, 6:30 PM

Cancer Support Group

1st Wednesday, 7:00 PM

Spirituality in Nature Group

Thursdays, 1:00 PM

Futsal (Indoor Soccer)

Saturdays, 6:00 PM

United Methodist Men Meeting

2nd Saturday, 9:00 AM

Kidzcare Nursery

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 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Find virtual Sunday School resources at  
[ebenezerumc.org/bulletin](https://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 children age 3-5<sup>th</sup> 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**

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## ADULT MINISTRIES

In 2022, Ebenezer United Methodist Men (EUMM) reinstated monthly meetings, updated our constitution and bylaws, and expanded outreach efforts to raise awareness and increase membership. We worked closely with the Fuel for Men Bible Study and the Compassion Restoration Woodcutting Ministry to offer opportunities for men to serve and expand their faith. We also conducted two yard sales and managed soda machines to raise \$3,200 to support nine ministries, including S.E.R.V.E., Go For Bo, Micah Ministries, and the Ebenezer Church Imagination Library.

EUMM participated in several cleanup activities around the church and Cloe Field and conducted a Relief Kit Drive to support United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR) disaster response efforts. Many of our members and guests also enjoyed a Fredericksburg Nationals baseball game in September.

We invite all men at Ebenezer to join us in creating a ministry where we can grow together in faith. Our meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM in the Gym.

Bob Skewes, EUMM President  
skewcrew1@outlook.com



United Methodist Women is now United Women in Faith! UWIF is made up of women who are driven by God's love and united in sisterhood. UWIF offers women of all ages opportunities to put their talents to work, experience spiritual growth, and live out their faith. All women are welcome. Contact Dana at [dczzowitz@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:dczzowitz@ebenezerumc.org) to find out more about our meeting schedule and plans for the coming year.



## STUDENT MINISTRIES

### CONFIRMATION BEGINS IN JANUARY!

Confirmation is a chance for 7th and 8th graders to own 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.

Our confirmation experience will take place primarily on Wednesday evenings from January 25-March 22 (on the week of Ash Wednesday, class will be on Thursday, Feb 23, and we will not meet during Spring Break). We will also have a day retreat at Ebenezer on Saturday, January 28, and a weekend retreat March 24-26 at Concord Retreat Center in WV. During this final retreat, we will dive into what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus.

Due to the high level of commitment necessary, we ask that parents/guardians attend one of our Confirmation Parent Meetings in person on Tuesday, November 29 at 7:00 PM or virtually on Wednesday, December 7 at 7:00 PM. For more information, please contact Pastor Jeff at [pastorjeff@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:pastorjeff@ebenezerumc.org)

## CONFIRMATION MENTORS NEEDED

Confirmation is an incredible time in the faith journey of a student. We are looking for adults to walk alongside students during the confirmation experience and be willing to support, lead, and grow with the students. The time commitment is January 25-March 26. If you are interested in mentoring, please contact me.

Michelle Paquette  
Director of Student Ministries  
[mpaquette@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:mpaquette@ebenezerumc.org)

# Confirmation

7TH & 8TH GRADERS

DUE TO THE LEVEL OF COMMITMENT. PARENTS MUST ATTEND A MEETING:

IN PERSON: **NOVEMBER 29 7:00 PM**  
ROOM B01  
OR  
VIRTUAL: **DECEMBER 7 7:00 PM**

[EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS)

# explore EBENEZER

GET TO KNOW OUR CHURCH AND PASTORS  
**JANUARY 15 | 11:15 AM**  
REGISTER AT [EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS)



**Journey Through The Bible: Holy Land 2024**  
January 23-February 2, 2024  
[EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS)

Optional Post-Tour:  
Cairo & The Route Of The Exodus

All money raised supports the youth mission trip. Students will also be seeking sponsors to reach their individual fundraising goals.

# PANCAKE SUPPER

Wednesday, February 22

Visit [ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events)

STUDENT MINISTRIES

# MINUTE to WIN IT

PARENTS -VS- TEENS

**SUNDAY, JAN 8**  
**6:00-8:00 PM**  
[EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS)

## CONNECTIONS

Have you been wondering what the next step in your faith walk may be? Are you considering joining Ebenezer Church as an official member?

You already belong to the Church as a member of the Body of Christ, but just as baptism is an outward declaration of your faith, joining this congregation as a member is a statement of your desire to share your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness with the church and the world. As believers, we are called to active membership in the life of the Church. Becoming a member helps us develop a sense of ownership in pursuing the command of Christ to love God, love others, and to make disciples of all people.

If you'd like to learn more about what membership entails or what steps you need to take to join, I encourage you to sign up for the next Explore Ebenezer or email me.

Crissy Sharon, Director of Connections  
[csharon@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:csharon@ebenezerumc.org)



# MEMBERSHIP

CONNECT • SERVE • GROW

[EBENEZERUMC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP)

## SUMMER MISSION TRIP SPONSORS

Students going on the Axis Summer Mission Trip in June 2023 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 the students personally, and any amount helps greatly. We are heading to Wilmington, NC 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 as we prepare over the next few months. For more information, visit [ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events)

# HIGH SCHOOL WINTER RETREAT

**FEBRUARY 17-19**  
RHODES GROVE RETREAT CENTER  
CHAMBERSBURG, PA

REGISTER BY JANUARY 30 - \$110  
EARLY BIRD JANUARY 9 - \$90

REGISTER AT [EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS](http://EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS)

## AXIS WINTER RETREAT

The High School Winter Retreat is the perfect weekend to get away from your everyday chaos to connect with God and be renewed! Join us February 17-19 at Rhodes Grove Retreat Center in Chambersburg, PA. We have lessons and worship designed just for students and lots of fun mixed in! Register by January 9 for \$90 or by January 30 for \$110 at [ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events). For more information, contact Michelle Paquette at [mpaquette@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:mpaquette@ebenezerumc.org)



2nd-5th graders

Communion Class

Saturday, March 4  
9:30-11:00 AM

Registration Deadline: February 27  
ebenezerumc.org/events

The Sacrament of Communion is a special and holy time that reminds us of what Jesus did for us on the cross. To help our children learn why and how we receive Communion, we invite 2nd-5th graders to a Communion Class on March 4 from 9:30-11:00 AM. Parents are encouraged to join us.

## STEP RETURNS

In 2023, 4th and 5th graders (also known as Super Terrific Ebenezer Preteens) are invited to participate in quarterly gatherings to prepare them for the next steps in their faith journey. Each evening event will include snacks, activities, and lessons that encourage preteens to deepen their faith and develop friendships. The first STEP gathering will be February 20 from 6:00-7:30 PM.

## KIDZ R DISCIPLES!

KidzRock Sunday School students are learning how to be followers of Jesus, with a different discipleship focus each month.

In October, students learned about tithing by contributing to the offering bins in their classrooms. We recognize that everything we have comes from God, and the Bible teaches us that we can give God our best by giving Him our tithe with a cheerful attitude (2 Corinthians 9:7). As you bring in your own offering, please encourage your children to bring theirs in as well.

In November, students learned about serving by assembling 60 Christmas gift boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Students filled shoeboxes with small toys, hygiene items, and school supplies to be distributed around the world by Samaritan's Purse.

KidzRock Sunday School is offered for children in preschool through 5th grade each Sunday at 9:45 & 11:15 AM. Virtual Sunday School lessons are also available at [ebenezerumc.org/kidzrock](http://ebenezerumc.org/kidzrock). For more information, feel free to reach out.

Chrissy Richardson, Director of Children's Ministries  
[crichardson@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:crichardson@ebenezerumc.org)

## Preschool Information Night

February 6, 6:30 PM, Room 101

[ebenezerumc.org/events](http://ebenezerumc.org/events)

## PRESCHOOL

Learn more about registration for the 2023-24 school year at Preschool Information Night on Monday, February 6 at 6:30 PM. This is a great opportunity to learn about the curriculum, meet the teachers, and tour the preschool. Attendance is limited, so please sign up by February 3.

### Calendar of Events:

Dec 21-Jan 4	Christmas Break
Jan 30	2023-24 Enrollment begins for current students and siblings
Feb 13	2023-24 Enrollment begins for church and alumni families
Feb 27	2023-24 General enrollment begins



## KIDZCARE

If you love children, we'd love to welcome you to KidzCare! We're hiring staff members to provide childcare during worship services and other church events. We're also seeking volunteers, especially on Sunday and Wednesday mornings. All KidzCare staff and volunteers must pass a background check. For more information, visit [ebenezerumc.org/employment](http://ebenezerumc.org/employment) or contact KidzCare Director Briton Cartner at [bcartner@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:bcartner@ebenezerumc.org)

## ANGEL TREE

Angel Tree is a beloved Ebenezer Christmas tradition. It is a loving way to bring joy to those in need by providing gifts and making wishes come true for local children and seniors. Each family or senior also receives two to three boxes of food staples for holiday meals. Ebenezer works directly with Stafford County Social Services and Stafford County Public Schools to identify recipients. As we look for ways to spread the love of Jesus this season, Angel Tree is the perfect opportunity to involve the whole family in a spirit of generosity and service. There are many ways to help:

### DONATE A GIFT:

Select one or more Angels from our online SignUp Genius or pick up an Angel Tree card at the Connection Desk on Sunday mornings. Return your wrapped gifts to church no later than December 11.

### SPONSOR A FOOD BOX:

Provide a family or senior with holiday staples for one week (\$30) or two weeks (\$50). We'll do the shopping for you!

### VOLUNTEER

Help shop for food, assemble food boxes, receive gifts as they are brought to church, or distribute gifts and food boxes to representatives from local schools and social service agencies.

Please consider serving with Angel Tree this year; you will in turn experience the gifts of joy and peace we all seek during this hectic season. A complete list of volunteer opportunities is available at [ebenezerumc.org/angel-tree](http://ebenezerumc.org/angel-tree)

## COLD WEATHER SHELTER

This winter, Micah Ministries and a cohort of local churches will once again come together to host unhoused neighbors at the Cold Weather Shelter. The shelter is open nightly from mid-November through mid-March based on weather guidelines. It provides a safe place for homeless men and women who would otherwise be sleeping outside in freezing temperatures.

Clients are bused from Micah Ministries in Fredericksburg to the shelter, which is located at 750 Kings Highway in Stafford. The 3,000 square foot facility offers separate dorms for men and women, a handicapped sleeping space, three bathrooms, a small kitchen, and a gathering/intake area.

That's where you come in! Ebenezer will provide 4-5 adult volunteers on the first two Saturdays of each month from 5:00-8:00 PM. Volunteers help everyone get checked in for the evening by greeting clients, setting up cots, and providing light snacks and fellowship. It is a tangible way to serve those in need in your community and make meaningful connections over time. In fact, many of our Cold Weather Shelter volunteers have gone on to find other ways to help and advocate for the homeless in our region. Can you offer a warm welcome on a cold night? Contact me for more information.

Amy Miller, Director of Missions and Outreach  
[amiller@ebenezerumc.org](mailto:amiller@ebenezerumc.org)

Please cut to share

You're invited to

Christmas with Ebenezer Church

Blue Christmas  
December 4, 7:00 PM

Lessons and Carols  
December 18, 8:15 AM

Living Nativity  
December 20, 7:00 PM

Christmas Eve Worship  
4:00PM - Traditional Candlelight Service  
7:00 PM - Modern Candlelight Service

Special Christmas Message  
December 25 at [live.ebenezerumc.org](http://live.ebenezerumc.org)  
No services on December 25

Learn more: [ebenezerumc.org/christmas](http://ebenezerumc.org/christmas)

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