

STONEMAKER

Newsletter of Ebenezer Church

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A NOTE FROM PASTOR EMILY

Grace and peace to you.

It's that time of year for new life to make its impact. We see it in the seed-bearing pollen that coats our clothes. We see it in the bulbs breaking through the ground. We notice it in the buds on the trees. Nothing can hold back new life at this time of year as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Creation echoes the message of the empty tomb. We see it all around us. It is the season of new life! Alleluia! Christ is risen indeed!

Palm Sunday kicks off Holy Week on April 10. On Good Friday, we walk through the story of the passion and cross of Christ. Easter Sunday, we start early with a 6:30 AM service outdoors in the church's back yard. We will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at 8:15 AM, 9:45 AM, and 11:15 AM – and all day long!

We are amid a few more changes as a church. Pastor Monica Reynolds shared that she will be moving to Front Royal, VA this summer to be the chaplain at Randolph-Macon Academy where her youngest three children will be enrolled. Through the challenges of COVID, she has discerned a desire to focus more intentionally on her children and be with them. Pastor Donovan Archie will come on board to lead our Love Your Neighbor Network. He has many gifts in meeting people in faith wherever they are. Pastor Monica's last Sunday is June 5; we will thank her for her dedicated ministry then. On July 3, we will meet Pastor Donovan and his wife and children and welcome them to the Ebenezer family. Chrissy Richardson has stepped up as our new Director of Children's Ministries, and we know God will use her as a blessing to the children and families in Stafford and beyond. God's steadfast love endures forever, and God will hold us through these changes and move us toward new life.



Join us after Easter for a new sermon series, "Stories Worth Repeating," as we hear the shocking parables Jesus shared about what it is to be people of faith together. How will Jesus shape us in them?

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, love our neighbors, and transform lives through Jesus Christ as we connect, heal, and bring hope to the world.

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

Emily

Pastor Emily

Current & Upcoming
Sermon Series

Final Words

Final words often stay with us. During Lent, we will study each of Christ’s parting words from the cross. These seven statements are captured in the Gospels. Stand at the cross with us and listen.

Stories Worth Repeating

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.

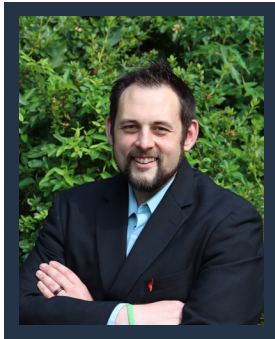
A NOTE FROM PASTOR JEFF

Beautiful and Beloved People of Ebenezer!

I suppose we can stop holding our breath, because winter is finally behind us. Last month, we had all four seasons in one week. I heard many say, “Welcome to Virginia!” Although, rest assured, Ohio has the same seasonal confusion.

For me, the great beauty of this time of year is the tree blossoms, be they ornamental or fruit bearing trees. They are signs of Resurrection and New Life. Even as this time of year brings the beauty of the blossoms, there is still work that needs to be done for the blossoms and fruit to be born. There is a season of dormancy, a season of being still, a season of pending potential.

Growing up on my family's apple farm, this dormant season was our second busiest behind harvesting in autumn. In this season, we focused on pruning. The main objective of pruning is to take away some growth, even new growth, if necessary. Every fruit tree has what are known as “suckers,” growth that goes straight up and quite literally sucks the nutrients and life out of the ground and branches. In caring for the overall health of the tree, if you do not prune the “suckers,” you will have small, bland fruit. And let’s be honest, nobody likes fruit that’s small and bland tasting.



We are like fruit trees in a multitude of ways—we grow, we bear fruit (by making disciples), we pollinate (by sharing, caring, and tending to the needs of one another), and we go through seasons of dormancy, where we focus on inner growth and prune away some outer growth.

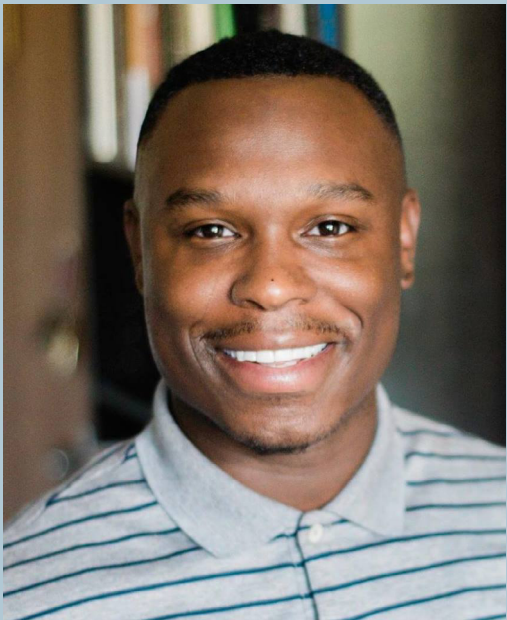
I had a horticulture professor who always said, “If you’re not changing, you’re not growing. Change is the cornerstone of growth and all great breakthroughs in life.” Change surrounds us. We are no longer the same person we were 50 years ago, 20 years ago, 5 years ago, 1 year ago, or even yesterday—thank God for that!

Friends, at Easter and in the season that follows, we don’t just celebrate our hope for life after death, we celebrate our hope for life now, for new life filled with the hope and love of heaven now. We celebrate our hope for change and transformation. At Easter we are surprised by hope, surprised by God’s insistence that nothing, not even death itself, can defeat our hope for newness and for glimpses of heaven here and now.

Where do you need some hope? What feels like a tomb in your life, like a tree in winter seemingly lifeless and asleep? We lift those places up to God with prayers that remember God’s faithfulness.

Where do you see hope? Where do you see signs of God’s newness, signs of love, signs of heaven here and now? We hold those places in our heart as we prepare for the cross, the empty tomb, and the New Life that is to come!


Pastor Jeff



WELCOME PASTOR DONOVAN

We’re excited to welcome Donovan Archie as our new Associate Pastor! Beginning in July, Pastor Donovan will lead the Love Your Neighbor Network and support our main campus and online ministries. Pastor Donovan is attentive to the emerging changes happening within and around the local church and recognizes the need for something infectious, fresh, and relevant to happen in how we reach others and build relationships. He believes the body of Christ, the church, can and will change lives in real and creative ways by using real and creative means.

A native of Detroit, Mich., Pastor Donovan moved to Alabama in his teens and graduated from Alabama State University with a BA in Communications and Multimedia. He worked in banking for four years before he felt God put it on his heart to become a pastor and graduated from Wesley Seminary in 2015. He has been married to Adreka for 6 years and they have two children: Aubrey (4), a Cocomelon and Pink Fong expert, and Daven (1 1/2), a “foodie” and snack lover. Their family adventures include exploring new cities and all things dinosaurs and science.

Pastor Donovan will begin serving at Ebenezer on June 29, as Pastor Monica departs to become the chaplain at Randolph-Macon Academy in Front Royal, Va.

EASTER WITH EBENEZER

You’re invited to celebrate Easter with Ebenezer Church! Please join us for worship on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Church Online is available at live.ebenezerumc.org. For more information, please visit ebenezerumc.org/easter

PALM SUNDAY SERVICES – APRIL 10 | IN PERSON: 8:15 AM | IN PERSON & ONLINE: 9:45 & 11:15 AM
Let’s start Holy Week together. We will hand out palm leaves during all in-person worship services. Nursery will be available for children ages 0-3 during all services. Sunday School will be available during the 9:45 & 11:15 AM services.

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE – APRIL 15 | IN PERSON & ONLINE: 7:00 PM
Tenebrae is a Latin word meaning “darkness”. During a Tenebrae service, the story of the Crucifixion from the Gospel of John is divided into 16 readings. After each reading, a candle is extinguished. Worshipers leave in silence to ponder the impact of Christ’s death and await the celebration of the upcoming Resurrection. Nursery will be available for ages 0-3.

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES – APRIL 17 | IN PERSON: 6:30 & 8:15 AM | IN PERSON & ONLINE: 9:45 & 11:15 AM
Christ’s resurrection gives us hope for the future, healing for right now, and a deep connection to God’s love and each other. Celebrate with us outdoors in the back parking lot at our Sunrise Service at 6:30 AM or in the Sanctuary at 8:15, 9:45 & 11:15 AM. Nursery will be available for ages 0-3 during all services. Sunday School will be available during the 9:45 & 11:15 AM services.

Staff Updates



CHRISSY RICHARDSON
DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES



MARY BURKE
OFFICE MANAGER

A very warm welcome to Mary Burke, who recently joined the staff as our new Office Manager, and congratulations to Chrissy Richardson, who is moving over from the Connection Desk to become our new Director of Children’s Ministries! Thank you both for sharing your gifts with our congregation.

WE ARE FOR YOU

Thanks a Latte

Ebenezer said Thanks a Latte to teachers and staff at Moncure Elementary with free coffee and bagels to start their day. We Are For Teachers!



A NOTE FROM PASTOR MONICA

The Love Your Neighbor Network, at its heart, is a push for Christians to embody the values and call of Jesus in our everyday lives. When Jesus commands us to love our neighbors, I believe he is encouraging us to love everyday people, in the places and spaces where we do life. Not just on Sunday. Not just in church.

Most of us truly do want to love God and love our neighbors. And yet, we get busy, stressed, have competing demands placed on our time and energy, and are easily distracted by the noise of the world. Before we know it, another year goes by and our habits remain unchanged.

Human beings are creatures of habit. Healthy habits are often difficult to form and unhealthy ones are difficult to break. That is why following Jesus requires us to examine our hourly and daily habits and rhythms. It is in those small details that transformation will or will not happen.

With that in mind, I want to offer you a model that can help you incorporate regular discipleship rhythms that when done individually and together as a church, will result in a deeper neighborly love.

Michael Frost, a missiologist from Australia, developed the BELLS model. This model brings our head knowledge together with our heart feelings to do a better job of following Jesus; it gives the head and the heart some hands and feet.

Bless: Each week, bless three people. Bless one person from within your community of faith. Bless one person from outside your community of faith. And use your wild card blessing however you'd like. The blessing could be running an errand, giving a compliment, showing up for a friend, etc. There isn't one way to bless another.

Eat: You will be hard pressed to find anyone who doesn't enjoy eating. Jesus spent a lot of time around tables. In fact, many covenants in the Bible were made around tables. The New Covenant was given and modeled around a shared meal. Using the same formula from "Bless", spend time each week eating with three people. It doesn't need to be elaborate or overly thought out. Just pull up a chair and break some bread.

Listen to God: To start, find one hour each week where you can be in complete silence; a place and space in your week where you can be open and able to just listen for God's Word. Eventually, look for ways to find daily quiet time.

Learn: First, commit to reading the Gospels daily. Over and over. At your own pace. Second, read a portion of other books in the Bible daily. And third, commit to reading other theological or discipleship related material. Replace smut content or binge watching with content that helps us to love God and love Jesus better.

Sent: Jesus sends us out into the world to continue his mission. In order to do this, we need to be reflective. Every day, spend 15-20 minutes asking and answering these two questions. (1) Where did I welcome Jesus today? (2) Where did I resist Jesus today? Spend this time being honest with yourself and with God, seeking forgiveness if needed, and asking God to help you in those places and spaces where you seek to grow.

That's it! The BELLS model. While it may seem like a lot, these are simple practices that can likely be incorporated into your daily rhythms and will allow you to grow deeper in relationship with God and others.

I encourage you to try it on and try it out. Let us know how it goes and how we can support you!

With Love,

Monica

Pastor Monica



kNOW HUNGER

Once you know, you can't say no.



APRIL 2022
KNOW-HUNGER.ORG

Each of the activities can be available to your family on an ongoing basis - a great way to strengthen our commitment to serve those in need. There is something for everyone, from preschoolers to high schoolers to families to seniors. Check out the list, find what works for you, and get connected. Hunger doesn't stop with one meal box packed or one event, but joining the fight against hunger starts with one action...start now!

For a complete list of kNOW Hunger opportunities, please visit know-hunger.org or contact Amy Miller at amiller@ebenezerumc.org

Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank Mobile Order Takeover – April 18-22 | 3:00-6:00 PM | FRFB
Pack and distribute meal boxes at FRFB. Kids can make cards to include in the boxes. A great family serving opportunity!

Stafford Food Security Food Truck Fun – April 19 & 21 | 5:30-8:00 PM
Help SFS provide hot meals for local communities. Ages 18+ can serve food; ages 10+ can run games & activities.

S.E.R.V.E. Meal Packing & Delivery – April 23 | 9:00 AM-12:00 PM | S.E.R.V.E.
Pack and deliver bags of food for community members in need.

Stafford Food Security Backpack Meal Packing – April 23 | 9:00-11:00 AM | Ebenezer
Fill backpacks with recipes and ingredients for two family meals; SCPS counselors will distribute them to students in need.

Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry – April 23 | 10:00 AM-1:00 PM | Ebenezer
Distribute meals from the FRFB Mobile Food Pantry in Ebenezer's parking lot.

Three Squares for S.E.R.V.E. Food Drive – April 10-24 | Ebenezer
Donate breakfast, lunch, and dinner items to S.E.R.V.E. on Sundays in April

Helping Children Worldwide Baby Formula Donation Campaign – April 1-30
In Sierra Leone, more than 30,000 children suffer from malnutrition. Donate to HCW and help provide this vital nutritional supplement. \$25 feeds one child for one month.

Afghan Family Support

Ebenezer is honored to join a local network of faith groups to provide assistance to Afghan refugee families who are resettling in Stafford County. Our volunteer team is headed up by retired Army Maj. Gen. Blake Ortner, who helped an Afghan colleague relocate to Stafford in 2014 and is familiar with the inherent hurdles of starting over in a new country.

The families have been vetted by the Department of Homeland Security and come to our community from local military camps. The interfaith group aims to come alongside to help them navigate daily challenges and enable them to be successful in their new home: finding employment, enrolling children in school, providing rides to appointments, and more. The expectation is one of encouragement and support, not reliance.

We feel strongly that the best way to help a family is to really get to know them, so we would like to take on a family of our own and wrap them in Ebenezer love. You can help by providing rides or donating used furniture or vehicles. If you are proficient in any Afghan languages, we would love to put your skills to work. For more information, please contact Amy Miller at amiller@ebenezerumc.org

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

KNOW HUNGER 2022

Our 6th annual kNOW Hunger event is just around the corner! After several years of doing giant meal packaging in our Gym and reaching outward into the community during COVID lockdowns, we are building back with some new partnerships and old friends. As you are finding your way back into springtime activities, we invite you to find your way back into serving others. We have a week full of hands-on serving opportunities, meal packing, and chances to financially support local and international organizations that are fighting hunger.

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

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www.ebenezerumc.org



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April Events

- 1-30

KNOW HUNGER 2022
SEE PAGE 5 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- 2

EASTER EGGSPLSION STARTER KIT PICK-UP
10:00 AM-12:00 PM
- 7

EMPTY NEST TRIP TO OLD PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE
10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- 9

UNITED METHODIST MEN MEETING
9:00 AM
- 10

PALM SUNDAY SERVICES
8:15 AM, 9:45 AM & 11:15 AM – SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- 15

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE
7:00 PM – SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- 16

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 17

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES
6:30 AM, 8:15 AM, 9:45 AM & 11:15 AM – SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- 18-22

KNOW HUNGER FRFB MOBILE ORDER TAKEOVER
SEE PAGE 5 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- 19

LUNCH AND LEARN: THE MICROCHURCH EXPLAINED
12:00 PM
- 23

KNOW HUNGER DAY
SEE PAGE 5 FOR MORE INFORMATION

4TH SATURDAY MEAL
FREDERICKSBURG UMC – 2:30-5:30 PM
- 24

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY
11:15 AM
- 30

MARRIAGE CONFERENCE
CENTERING YOUR RELATIONSHIP ON THE LOVE OF GOD – 9:00 AM-3:30 PM

May Events

- 14

UNITED METHODIST MEN MEETING
9:00-10:30 AM
- 15

EXPLORE EBENEZER
5:00 PM
- 21

ADVENTURERS' GUILD
12:00-4:00 PM

BRISBEN SHELTER MEAL
4:00-7:00 PM
- 28

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

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
- Empty Nester Game Club

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 1:00 PM
- 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
- Futsal (Indoor Soccer)

Saturdays, 6:00 PM

Looking Ahead to June

- TBA

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
- 14

TUESDAYS AT THE PARK BEGINS

Looking Ahead to August

- 4-5

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

KidzCare

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 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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Counselor's Corner



The final verse in Genesis 2 (before Adam ate the apple) states, “And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.” It can be easy to read the creation story and focus on the process of creation and not the emotions that should be felt, such as the incredible story of love, connection, and community. For a moment, imagine how Adam felt in the garden when he awoke and saw Eve. What do you think he felt as he gazed upon her the first time...the fascination, the wonderment, the joy of having the perfect helpmate? What do you think Adam thought of God in that moment? God took something that was good and made it even better as only God can.

By thinking in this manner, we can add the word “emotionally” to the verse: Adam and Eve were emotionally naked and were not ashamed. They experienced a truly connected marriage. They allowed themselves to see and know each other in their fullness, not withholding any thoughts, sharing in everything. This type of vulnerability is terrifying for many people. Past hurts and transgressions inflicted upon us by our spouses or others in our lives make us feel that it is not safe to be vulnerable. To protect ourselves, we hide just like Adam and Eve did in the garden after they ate the apple. In hiding, we never learn to heal.

If we could aspire to this type of vulnerability, God could work through our marriages, allowing them to become the means through which brokenness is healed. Rather than hiding from each other, we could use that energy to share our pain and grow together. Vulnerability allows us to experience a deep true connection with our spouse, a connection like Adam and Eve experienced before the fall.

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



Marriage Conference

Centering Your Relationship on the Love of God

April 30 9am - 3:30pm

Register by April 22
Couple: \$30/Individual: \$15

ebenezerumc.org/events

CENTERING YOUR RELATIONSHIP ON THE LOVE OF GOD

Married? Engaged? Thinking about taking your relationship to the next level? We invite you to join us on Saturday, April 30, for a one-day Marriage Conference focused on Centering Your Relationship on the Love of God. So often, marriages are challenged when partners seek their identity, peace, and security through things other than God. This conference aims to help couples understand that God intended marriage as a reflection of His love towards us through each other.

Our Keynote Speaker is Rev. Dennis Welch, a Pastoral Counselor with 15 years of experience in hosting marriage retreats. Breakout sessions will be hosted by Pastor Jeff, Christian Counselor Keith Priest, and other leaders on topics such as Communication Skills, Forgiveness, Stepfamilies, and more.

The Marriage Conference will take place from 9:00 AM-3:30 PM, and lunch and snacks will be provided. The cost is \$30 per couple, or \$15 per individual. Unfortunately, KidzCare is not available for this event. Please register by April 22 at ebenezerumc.org/events. For more information, contact B.J. Priest at bpriest@ebenezerumc.org

explore EBENEZER

GET TO KNOW OUR CHURCH AND PASTORS
MAY 15 | 5:00 PM
REGISTER AT EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS

ADULT MINISTRIES

EMPTY NESTERS

Ebenezer's Empty Nesters are enjoying food, faith, and fellowship both indoors and out! Lunch and Learn returned in March with a tour of our website and social media accounts, not to mention a delicious Irish meal provided by Edna Schaeffer. Join us April 19 to find out more about microchurches and fresh expressions with Pastor Monica. Spring has sprung, and there's no better way to enjoy the great outdoors than with our Spirituality In Nature Group. Join us every Thursday at 1:00 PM to explore local parks. We're also looking forward to visiting our friend Vicki Stones and learning about the history of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria on April 7. For more information about Empty Nest activities, please visit ebenezerumc.org/empty-nesters or email Dana Czzowitz at dczzowitz@ebenezerumc.org



Empty Nesters

Old Presbyterian Meeting House

April 7 10am-2pm
Register by April 5 • \$10

ebenezerumc.org/events

EMPTY NESTERS

THE MICROCHURCH EXPLAINED

LUNCH & LEARN WITH PASTOR MONICA REYNOLDS

APRIL 19 | 12:00 PM
EBENEZERUMC.ORG/EVENTS

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

THANK YOU, MRS. SHARI!

When Shari Parsons learned that Ebenezer was seeking a new Director of Children’s Ministries in the spring of 2001, she knew she had to apply. Her ministry experience at churches in Alabama and Idaho had convinced her that sharing the love of Jesus with children was her calling, and she was eager to take it up again.

Throughout 21 years of growth and change at Ebenezer, Shari’s commitment to this calling has remained constant. During that time, she has touched the lives of countless children and families in our church and community.

“She’s had a huge impact,” said Trey Leathers, who grew up in KidzRock before becoming a key volunteer. “Seeing it from the inside and then from the outside looking in, she gives 100 percent so kids can get the full experience of learning and growing in their faith.”

During Shari’s first few years on the job, she welcomed about 50 children to Sunday School each week. Students met in classrooms in the main building and then in makeshift classrooms in the Gym, which had to be set up and taken down each Sunday.

“When the Ministry Center opened in 2007, we thought, ‘How are we going to fill this place?’” Shari recalled.

Her question was quickly answered. Explosive growth in Stafford County brought weekly Sunday School attendance to a high of nearly 200 children before the 2020 pandemic. What did not change was Shari’s mission of sharing Jesus’ love with children, through an intentionally-selected curriculum designed to reach all types of learners.

“Our Orange curriculum partners with parents and volunteers to build a relationship to help children grow,” she explained. “I’ve seen an entire family come to know Jesus through their child. I’ve watched people read the Bible with their kids and their eyes were opened.”

Shari ensured that friends and neighbors were always welcome at Children’s Ministry events, regardless of their faith background. Nowhere was this more apparent than at Vacation Bible School, which at its height drew 550 children and more than 200 volunteers. Planning for such a large-scale annual event required a unique combination of spontaneity and structure, which Shari forged with her VBS “family” – Student Ministries Director Michelle Paquette and Darlene Armendariz (a.k.a. The Professor).

“Shari is the most organized person I’ve ever met in my life,” Darlene said. “It was such a joy working with her. She made it a beautiful experience for everybody. She was always very agreeable to our ideas, and we had some crazy ideas,” she added, recalling the year they removed several rows of pews to bring a full-size Jeep into the Sanctuary.

Shari also treasured the relatively quieter moments of ministry, particularly leading Ebenezer Preschool’s chapel time. “I really loved spending one-on-one time with the children during the week and having a chance to listen and hear what they had to say,” she said.

In retirement, Shari plans to do lots of traveling with her husband Steve, but she’ll continue sharing Jesus’ love with children as a grandmother and as a volunteer. On behalf of all the children and families she has blessed, “Thank you, Mrs. Shari!”



STUDENT MINISTRIES

WEEKLY GATHERINGS

Who am I? Where do I fit? What difference can I make? Students are constantly asking these questions, and they don't even know it. They are looking for identity, belonging, and purpose. The truth is, this search isn't just for students. We all need to know who we are, that we have a community to support us and do life with us, and that we have a purpose and are making a difference in this world. We find all this through being in the Word, connecting with one another, putting our gifts to use, and most importantly, being in a relationship with Jesus.

This is why we offer Student Ministries at Ebenezer - to have a place where students can gather with mentors who love Jesus, listen to them, ask engaging questions, and give them a place to ask their questions and grow together in their relationship with Jesus.

A couple of hours each week isn't going to answer those three core questions, but it gives students a safe place to hopefully feel comfortable being authentic and asking those questions. Our hope is that we are also in partnership with families, because you are the spiritual hub. You navigate these three questions every day with them. Good grades, success, achievements...those are one thing, but if they don't have those three core questions founded in Christ, well, the rest is sinking sand.



Being a teenager is hard. Parenting a teenager is hard. But it is also beautiful. It is a reminder that God is with us through this life, and we aren't meant to do it alone. Student Ministries offers large group teaching and consistent small groups with adults who love Jesus and love students. We want to walk through the Even If's together!

Middle Schoolers: Join us Sundays from 5:00 PM-6:30 PM in the Youth Room
High Schoolers: Join us Sundays from 7:00-9:00 PM in the Youth Room

EVEN IF

Earlier in the school year we did an activity where we talked about how God is always the same. He never changes and is with us always, even if it doesn't feel like it. We had students write down their “Even if's”- things that they wrestled with and needed to be reminded that God was still the same and is there through the trials.

Here is a glimpse of some of them:

- Even if I mess up and feel sad, God still loves me.
- Even if I do not have friends, God will be with me.
- Even if bad things happen to good people, God is still the same.
- Even if I feel broken, God is with me.
- Even if my relationship changes, God is constant.
- Even if nothing goes right, God never changes.
- Even if I become crippled, cracked, unable, and unwilling, God doesn't change.
- Even if I lose my mom, God is with me.
- Even if you don't know what's going on, God does.
- Even if I am having a bad time with people, I have God.
- Even If I move again, God will be with me every step of the way.

PRESCHOOL

Ebenezer preschoolers held their very own Winter Olympics in the Gym in February. For enrollment information for the 2022-23 school year, please visit ebenezerumc.org/preschool or email Donna Kenkel at dkenkel@ebenezerumc.org

Preschool Calendar of Events:

April 15 & 18	No School
May 2-6	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 18 & 20	Last Days of School
May 26-August 19	Preschool Office Closed





161 Embrey Mill Road
Stafford, Virginia 22554

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Permit #16

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday 8:15, 9:45 & 11:15 AM

Good Friday 7:00 PM

Easter Sunday 6:30, 8:15, 9:45 & 11:15 AM

ebenezerumc.org/easter