



Thus Far...

*Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying,
"Thus far the LORD has helped us." 1 Samuel 7:12 (NIV)*

Autumn 2018

In October, 2018, the Ebenezer United Methodist Church, Oldhams, Church Council decided to re-establish a newsletter to keep everyone informed about the way God is working with and through His children here at Ebenezer to fulfill the Great Commission: Go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:16).

This newsletter, **Thus Far...**, will be published quarterly, and everyone is invited to participate. Submit stories, news items, ideas, random thoughts, prayer requests and anything else the Lord places upon your heart to share with other EUMC members and friends in support of our mission, Sharing God's Love through Service.

Faith blossoms only when it is shared. It's our privilege to spread the word of God's love to those who may not yet know Him and to remind those who do that He has helped us thus far, and He will continue to help us as we are faithful to Him.

Thus Far... will include musings about special days in the church year, which in Autumn include All Saints Day, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. We'll include the activities of our Sunday School classes and our other ministries, including Missions, Food Bank, Music, UMM and UMW, and share some history of our church.

The Winter 2019 issue of **Thus Far...** will be sent out toward the end of January. Send in your ideas at any time to ThusFar.EUMC@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

District Celebration Planned for Charge Conferences

In response to suggestions concerning our annual Charge Conferences, this year the District will be putting more emphasis on worship and less on business when the Rappahannock River District churches (which include EUMC) meet for a District Celebration on **Sunday, November 4, 2018, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.** at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church in Montross, VA.

Each church will elect its own officers, prepare its own budget and complete any required paperwork; but the churches will join together for a time of worship and fellowship, and light refreshments. Our own Praise Band will be playing for the gathering. Everyone is invited to attend.

This will be Rev. Ted Smith's last year as our District Superintendent, so join the group on November 4th to praise and fellowship together and wish Rev. Ted well as he continues his ministry wherever the call takes him.

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Pastor's Ponderings

– from Pastor Rebecca Rumberg

When Bobbie Bauldock approached me to ask if there was anything I wanted to write to have included in “Thus Far...,” I responded with something to the tune of “like pastor’s ponderings!” It was then that this column was born.

I love that this newsletter has been given the title of “Thus Far...” In two simple words there is enormous fluidity. Thus far implies a past, present, and future at work. I am so very excited about what God has done thus far in and through the people, who are the church known to many as Ebenezer United Methodist Church!

As I type these words, we are quickly nearing the end of Ordinary Time, according to the Christian calendar year. We soon will find ourselves deep in the Seasons of Advent and Christmas. We will be preparing our church, our hearts and our minds to remember the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

All of our efforts and programs will serve a dual purpose. We will simultaneously be invited to make room for the Christchild in our lives and in the world, while intentionally preparing for our Savior’s promised return!

Please be sure to stay connected and up to date with all the mission and ministry opportunities taking place through Ebenezer UMC. Bookmark the church’s website,

www.eumcoldhams.org

and follow the church’s Facebook page (and take a minute, if you have not already, to “Like Us” on Facebook). You will recognize the page, as it is the only Ebenezer UMC with our vision statement anchored in Jesus Christ. You may even recognize a few people you know in the pictures, too!

As always, let’s join together each Sunday morning for Sunday School and Worship as we prepare the way for our Lord and Savior, together.

Plans are being made now for exciting ways to grow in Jesus Christ as we love Him, serve Him and share Him! We can only imagine what the Lord will do in

and through us in the days to come! In the Holy Spirit’s power, let us not forget the ways the Lord has helped us thus far and be assured that He’s not done yet!

UMW Bazaar – and Santa! – Coming December 8th

The United Methodist Women of Ebenezer will hold their biennial Bazaar on Saturday, December 8th, just in time for Christmas shopping! In addition to the traditional “white elephant” items for sale, this year’s bazaar will feature the Country Store, with home canned and baked items and other offerings from our wonderful EUMC cooks. A special “Men’s Table” will feature items of interest to the guys, all in one place for easy perusal.

Tables are also available for local vendors to sell their goods. The cost of a 10’x10’ table is \$25.00. Contact Liz Headley at (804) 366-3614 or ebheadley@gmail.com to reserve a table.

Doors will open at 7:00 a.m. and breakfast will be served for a donation. Lunch items will be available for purchase.

As a special surprise for the children, Santa Claus will be arriving at the Bazaar around 10 a.m. Come early, stay late, and join the fun. Treasures await!

Church is for Kids, Too!

Pastor Rebecca leads “Children’s Time” during the church service on Sunday morning, when she presents a message especially for our youngest congregants. Following Children’s Time, we offer both a nursery for little ones (infants to age 3) and Children’s Church for kids 3 to 7 years old.

Thus Far... is a quarterly publication of Ebenezer United Methodist Church, 144 Ebenezer Church Road, P.O. Box 70, Oldhams, VA 22529.
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BACKPACK BUDDIES Needs Your Support

It may be hard to believe in this day and age, but some children in Westmoreland County don't have enough to eat. Ebenezer is helping to address this urgent need through the Backpack Buddies Program, coordinated through Westmoreland County schools in conjunction with the Healthy Harvest Food Bank.

While the schools provide breakfast and lunch during the week, the weekends may mean some children will go to bed hungry. Backpack Buddies provides the ingredients for six meals for at-risk children to take home on Fridays, and on the last day before a school holiday, to keep them fed over the weekends.

Donations of specific foods are welcome, but financial support is critical. Donations may be given to Linda Fallin; checks should be made payable to EUMC and designated for the Backpack Program.

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Getting to Know You

The EUMC Directory lists our names and our "digits." The Northern Neck map, with push pins representing the EUMC families, shows where we live. Now we're initiating the **EUMC Birthday Book**, and you're invited to list your birthday. Wedding anniversaries are welcome, too!

The Birthday Book (a "special occasions" calendar courtesy of the World Wildlife Federation) will be on the table in the Gathering Room, along with copies of the directory and the map push pins.

If you would like others in your church family to know about and help celebrate your special day, enter your name on the calendar. See what happens!

Note: Participation in these projects is entirely voluntary. Information will be kept solely in paper form and not online.

Fellowship Hall Floor Renovation Planned

The floor of the Fellowship Hall has been damaged by water seeping up through the concrete in the 1953-built section of the Hall. The Trustees have been searching diligently to find a contractor who can address this issue. Merely replacing the flooring will not solve the problem; the concrete itself will have to be removed, a drainage system constructed, and new concrete poured. Otherwise, the water problem will ruin any new flooring we have installed.

The church has received a bid from a Fredericksburg contractor for this work. Removing the concrete will be a major effort and will require that the walls and ceiling of the Fellowship Hall be covered so that the dust and debris generated when the old concrete is removed will not damage the rest of the Hall.

When the Trustees and the contractor conclude their discussions, they will set a date (probably around mid-November) for the renovation, working around the dates of the various activities scheduled for the Fellowship Hall.

This stage of the renovation should take about two weeks. A second stage, installing the new floor, will occur later after the concrete work is completed.

Bill Taylor, Chair of the Trustees, is spear-heading this effort. We'll keep you informed through the church bulletins as decisions are made and work is scheduled.

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Fish Fry Fundraiser Postponed

The Missions Fish Fry Fundraiser scheduled for October has been postponed until January 2019 (because they couldn't find a fryer – friar?). Watch for the announcement of the new date in the church bulletin.

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Men's Breakfast

The United Methodist Men meet the second Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m. for a breakfast meeting. All men are welcome!

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Grace Notes



Praise Band in Demand

We are fortunate to have a Praise Band whose talents and enthusiasm are in demand across the Northern Neck

On October 14, 2018, our EUMC Praise Band went on the road to help Andrew Chapel UMC, Montross, VA, celebrate the 170th anniversary of its founding.

The Praise Band will also lead worship at the District Celebration on November 4, 2018, at Andrew Chapel UMC. (See article on page 1.)

The Praise Band certainly adds a contemporary spirit to our own worship services. The Praise Band, comprising eight musicians and vocalists, leads our services at EUMC on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.

Abundant Joy Prepares for Christmas

Advent begins this year on December 2nd. Our EUMC choir, Abundant Joy, has started preparing the Christmas cantata, "Images of Adoration: Reflections of Christ in the Symbols of the Season." The cantata will be presented on Sunday, December 16th, during the morning service. Appropriately, December 16th is the third Sunday in Advent, the "Joy" Sunday, when we light the pink candle.

This year's Christmas cantata focuses on the colors and symbols of the season: yellow candlelight, red Christmas flowers, evergreen trees, and the light of the star.

If you have a song for the Lord in your heart, come join us for the cantata. It's not too late to begin to learn this wonderful music! If singing is not your thing, sign up to be a narrator or an AV helper. There's a role for you in this Christmas celebration.

Come celebrate the Child!



Mark Your Calendars...

Sunday, November 18th: That Sunday has been designated "UMW Sunday," a time to recognize the contributions the United Methodist Women have made to Ebenezer's various ministries. UMW was recently awarded the Six Stars Certificate by the District for their outstanding missions support.

Sunday, November 18th, 4:00 pm: The Community Thanksgiving celebration will be held this year at Carmel UMC. Pastor Rebecca will deliver the message.

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Prayers & Squares



Prayer Quilt Ministry Needs Quilts!

When we are in sick or in pain, or any time we need comfort, we know that God is there to wrap His arms around us. A very tangible way to share this feeling is with a Prayer Quilt. Quilts, made by the members of EUMC, are available for anyone who needs prayer.

The ministry works this way: the quilt-giver who know of another's need for pray asks that person what his or her prayer would be. Then the giver shares that prayer with the congregation. Each member of the congregation is invited to tie a knot in one of the strings stitched through the quilt while they pray the receiver's prayer. Then the quilt is given to the receiver as a token of our – and God's – love.

Right now, **Ebenezer has only one quilt left.**

Therefore, we are asking for volunteers to sew tops (about a 3' by 3' square) which we can then finish into quilts. See Cindy Flickinger or Linda Fallin to help in this ministry of comfort.

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The History Corner

Second Mile Giving: Ingrained in Ebenezer's Culture

– by Ralph Fallin

Over fifteen years ago, Ebenezer's Church Council decided to invest in a ministry called "Second Mile Giving." Simply put, we decided to include funds in our annual budget for contributing to individuals and organizations in need of assistance.

"Second Mile Giving" is based on Matthew 5:41 – "Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two." Although the Church Council gave unanimous approval, there was some initial skepticism about deciding to give away money because Ebenezer was struggling to meet its other financial commitments. How could we give away money that we didn't have?

Probably more than any other decision ever made by the Council, the "Second Mile Giving" ministry totally reversed the direction of our Church. We stepped up in faith, stopped being limited by our inward focus and started our journey of focusing outside our Church. Then, guess what happened! Our entire Church expanded its ministry and outreach. We met all of our financial obligations while expanding our budget, and we completed and paid for a major addition to our Church.

Since beginning "Second Mile Giving," we have been constantly reminded by Jesus' words in Luke 17: 10 – "So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'" Jesus is clearly telling us that, as Christians, we need to go beyond our duty, and willingly and joyfully do more than asked or expected.

Through "Second Mile Giving," we have helped individuals, families, and organizations spiritually and financially. We have shown our love by contributing to charities and community organizations; helping victims of natural disasters; providing food, clothing and school supplies to

those in need; remembering those who are sick; supporting missions and paying attention to our children and young people.

While we take great pride in helping others, the real blessing has been to our Church family. Without a doubt, "Second Mile Giving" has been – and continues to be – instrumental in the excitement, love and caring at Ebenezer. If you want to experience real joy, attend our Church Council meetings where deciding how to give money away through "Second Mile Giving" is the highlight of our discussions.

EUMC T-Shirts Available

Have you seen our new T-shirts? The dark red shirts are emblazoned with an anchor logo representing our mission statement – Christ: Love Him, Share Him, Serve Him.

The design, created by Cindy Flickinger, also includes the church name and a reference to Micah 6:8 – "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

The T-shirts are available in the church office for \$15. Supplies in certain sizes are limited. Get yours soon!



SHARE HIS LOVE – SEND A CARD

Greeting cards are available in the Gathering Room of the church and in the Ladies of Grace room. Cards include birthday, get well, thinking of you, and others, as well as blank note cards for your own message. Send a card today to remind someone that God loves them ... and so do you!