

The Fellowship

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Ebensburg Presbyterian Church
November 2023

**Ebensburg
Presbyterian Church**
PO Box 327
200 N. Center Street
Ebensburg, PA 15931

Mission Statement:

*"Ebensburg Presbyterians are
Christians giving help and hope
to all by sharing God's love."*

Church Office Hours
9:am-1: pm

Monday-Thursday
ebgpresby@gmail.com
814-472-6920

Worship Service

Sunday Worship 11:00 AM

Church Staff

Pastor
Rev. Owar Ojulu
ojh3o@yahoo.com

Church Treasurer
Kristine Segear

Clerk of Session
Jim Stratton

Custodian
Don Buterbaugh

Organist
Melissa Douglas

Web page:

www.ebgpresby.org

Facebook page:

www.ebgpresby.org

"Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can't flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I'll die. Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small.

Let me flee to it—it is very small, isn't it? Then my life will be spared...*But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.*" Genesis 19:18-20, 26

God's favor always abounds through tragic experiences of our lives and the Lord guides us when disaster overtakes us, and we are afraid for our existence. And God provides and we are safe with him in the smallest portion of his shelter. As I reflect on the discussions and the change that we are anticipating in 2024, the story of Lot's family kept coming to my heart. This is because Lot's experience represents all our experiences. We relate to him and his wife both as individuals as well as a congregation. It's about change and how we accept and adapt to a change.

There is nothing in this world that produces anxiety more than the idea of change. The uncertainty of how things will be, will look like, will function, etc., tempts us to turn back, and urges us to abort our precious plans for progress.

Yet, even the scripture tells us that change is a natural thing and, in most cases, we do not have power over change, but conditions, context, and circumstances compel us to change. Jesus speaks of himself and the need for change to bring the fulfilment of God's promise. "Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds," Jesus said, John 12: 24. NOTHING multiplies or lives again unless it dies. Something MUST die to regenerate itself. It's only when a kernel of grain goes through the process of germination in the ground that it yields to multiplicity of more fruits.

Jesus promise that his death will produce many new wheat kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. Meaning, when we accept change and adapt to it, new ideas emerge. We renew our perception and realize God's presence. We feel the urge to approach God to guide us in the little things we see are helpful for our existence, like Lot. Though we might not achieve our higher goal, we will success in little things we ask of God as Lot did.

Yet unlike Lot's wife, we cannot continue looking back and becoming frozen in the far distant past. ***Though we can peek to our success, like looking in the rearview mirror, we need to know that we have the wide world before us through the windshield.*** The past, though a powerful resource, is also a wireless chain that can hold us back from embracing the new (Isa. 43:18-20).

Remember Peter. He was fine when he stepped out of the boat. He had his eyes fixed on Jesus. He was stable and walking fine. He had courage, confidence, and the assurance of being able to float. Yet, Peter saw the wind; He saw a different kind of wind threatening his new experience when he looked aside his goal—looking at Jesus. Like Lot's wife, Peter had a panic attack. He was demoralized. He was heavy-hearted; he was afraid and beginning to sink. (Matthew 14:29-30). Lot's wife froze as she looked back to the great city of Sodom and Gomorrah, but Lot and his daughters accept the change and pursue the little city of Zoar and were safe.

Therefore, the scripture invites us to embrace change, because change improves us, changes our perception, makes us flexible and helps us grow and flourish in any form God's will for us. What is important here is how to approach a change. What should we do, how do we need to adapt to the change, are the most important questions that help us counter the threat and anxiety of change.

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This story encourages us to accept God's provision and God's gifts, and whatever we ask of him. It's to be confident in the promises of God, take him seriously, and be thankful always for God's guidance and providence in our lives! It helps us fix our eyes on Jesus and focus on the task the Lord has set before us—Glorifying his name!

Happy Thanksgiving!
Pastor Owar



*Kids Potato Patch
Mini Golf
Ebensburg Potato
Fest
September 30, 2023*





| |
|----------------------------------|
| Kid's Potato Patch |
| Mini Golf |
| 2023 |
| \$5.00 / Person No. _____ |



We reused some of our favorite holes

- updated the Mario Brothers hole to Sky Level with a ball elevator
- updated the Music City hole with Dancing Flamingo
- Added a new Barbie Hole on the front portico with favorites from the Movie
- Added a new hole with Finnegan's Bubbly Car Wash.

170 Mini Golfers had fun navigating the course

What's Happening...

Look at the windows of our church. The storm windowsills have all been painted and some were replaced. Our project is complete, but donations are still welcome.

Colver Presbyterian Church has given notice of their decision to leave our joint pastor relationship because of their dire financial state. The date for dissolving the partnership is January 1, 2024. We are seeking guidance from the Lord and from the Presbytery on how to proceed. Please pray for both congregations.

The October 9th meeting of the Ebensburg Session began with prayer and a Bible reading of 1 Kings 17, about the widow of Zarephath. The Lord will provide. The Book of Order training was about how Christ calls and equips the church.

The agenda and minutes were approved, and the Treasurer's Report was received.

Reports from Committees included the following:

Budget, Finance and Stewardship- Our treasurer will prepare a draft budget for review in November and action in December.

Discipleship is planning an activity for the confirmands.

Family Life will purchase clothes for local needy students at Christmas.

Mission: Thanks to generous contributions to the Peace & Global Witness offering, a contribution of \$225 was sent to PCUSA Peace and Global Witness agency and \$ 75 to the Johnstown Women's Help Center for local peacemaking efforts.

Property Management reported that one storm windowsill needed to be replaced and approved the sum of \$570 to Elias Painting. This will complete the storm window project.

Worship - As Christmas Eve is on Sunday this year, it was decided to skip the morning service and have the evening worship.

In New Business, the Colver letter was discussed (see other article with more details)

Reverend Omar provided a written report detailing many in-person and phone visits and other activities which he participated in during the month.

Jim Stratton reported on the Presbytery meeting held September 26th in Latrobe.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 13th.

From the Session

The Session of the Ebensburg church received a written 90-day notice from the Colver Presbyterian Church in late September that due to financial constraints, they would be terminating our pastor sharing agreement effective January 1, 2024. After a lengthy discussion during our October 9th monthly meeting, the elders ultimately felt we needed additional information and guidance from the Presbytery of Redstone regarding our path forward.

The Session and Owar met with Executive Presbyter, Skip Noftzger, after services on Sunday, October 22nd. Skip provided the Session with various options. Long term the Ebensburg church could not pay for a full-time pastor alone, but the elders would like to keep our pulpit filled into 2024 as far as possible and also feel it is important to support Rev. Ojulu while he searches for a new pastoral call. A session committee was tasked with reviewing our financial position and making a recommendation considering the options presented by the Executive Presbyter. The Personnel Committee met with Rev. Ojulu on Saturday October 28th to review his expectations moving forward.

Session met after services on October 29th with Rev. Ojulu and a motion was made to endorse a tiered employment package in 2024. The plan our session is endorsing is to pay our current 60% share of his salary and benefits during the month of January while he travels to Africa on an already scheduled trip. We will pay him a full-time salary and benefit rate for the succeeding 4 months (February – May 2024) then pay him a 75% pay rate for the next 4 months (June-September 2024). The final three months of 2024 (October-December) we would go back to the 60% pay rate. These tiered payment of compensation during 2024 will hopefully continue to support Owar and his family while he searches for a new pastoral call.

The Session asks that you prayerfully continue to support the church financially during this time and into the future. The Session will be looking at our options moving forward to continue to provide the pastoral leadership desired by all members and friends of our Church.

From the Mission Committee:

We will collect donations this month for the Ebensburg St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry.
This will be for Thanksgiving and Christmas.
Please give generously to help your neighbors in need.



Christmas Poinsettias



Once again Poinsettias will be available to decorate our sanctuary. A listing will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin. The donation this year will be \$12.00 per plant. Please place order with payment in the offering plate or send to the church office no later than Sunday, November 26, 2023.

Plants may be in memory of an individual or couple, or "Loved Ones". They may also be in honor of some occasion such as a birthday or anniversary.

I would like to order a total of _____ Christmas Poinsettias.

Please list the information as follows:

In Loving Memory of _____

Or

In Honor of _____

Presented by _____

XX

In Loving Memory of _____

Or

In Honor of _____

Presented by _____

XX

In Loving Memory of _____

Or

In Honor of _____

Presented by _____

You may pick them up following the Christmas Eve Service or leave them to brighten the season for someone else. (Use back for additional orders)

HELP WANTED!

We are looking for a **part-time Office Manager/Church Secretary** to assist with general office tasks. The candidate must be a multi-tasker with verbal and written communication skills and positive presence in the office. Experience in computers and Microsoft office skills is required. Please call 814-472-6920 or email your resume to ebgpresby@gmail.com

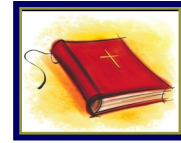


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|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Sally Tiracave | November 5th |
| David Feath | November 9th |
| Michelle Rice | November 22nd |
| William McKim | November 24th |

Special Dates

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| All Saints Day | Nov 1, 2023 |
| Standard time Begins | Nov. 5, 2023 |
| Veterans Day | Nov. 11, 2023 |
| Christ the King Sunday | Nov. 26, 2023 |
| Thanksgiving Day | Nov. 23, 2023 |

Sunday Scripture Readings



November 5, 2023

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost / Proper 26

Semicontinuous

Joshua 3:7–17 Joshua leads the people through the Jordan to the Promised Land.
Psalm 107:1–7, 33–37 Give thanks to the Lord, who delivered us from the wilderness.

Complementary

Micah 3:5–12 False prophets, priests, and rulers will be put to shame by God.
Psalm 43 Vindicate me, O God; deliver me from those who oppress me.
1 Thessalonians 2:9–13 We give thanks that you have received and believed God's word.
Matthew 23:1–12 The greatest will become servants; the humble will be exalted.

November 12, 2023

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost / Proper 27

Semicontinuous

Joshua 24:1–3a, 14–25 Choose this day whom you will serve; we will serve the Lord.
Psalm 78:1–7 Each generation will tell the next of the glorious deeds of the Lord.

Complementary

Amos 5:18–24 The day of the Lord is darkness; let justice roll down like waters.
Psalm 70 O Lord, make haste to help me, for I am poor and needy.
1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 The dead in Christ will rise first; then the living will meet the Lord.
Matthew 25:1–13 The parable of ten bridesmaids; keep awake, the Lord is coming.

November 19, 2023

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost / Proper 28

Semicontinuous

Judges 4:1–7 The Israelites cry to the Lord; God sends Deborah to deliver them.
Psalm 123 Have mercy on us, O Lord; we have had our fill of contempt.

Complementary

Zephaniah 1:7, 12–18 Beware, the day of the Lord is near; wealth will not save you.
Psalm 90:1–8 (9–11) 12 A thousand years are like a day to you; teach us to count our days.
1 Thessalonians 5:1–11 Be ready: the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
Matthew 25:14–30 The parable of talents; good and trustworthy servants are rewarded.

November 26, 2023

Reign of Christ / Christ the King

Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24 I will be the shepherd of my sheep, says the Lord; I will save them.
Psalm 100 Make a joyful noise to the Lord; we are the sheep of God's pasture.
or Psalm 95:1–7a The Lord is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture.
Ephesians 1:15–23 Christ is seated at God's right hand; all powers are under his feet.
Matthew 25:31–46 The king will judge: just as you did it to the least, you did it to me.

Presbytery of Redstone

Communicate the Word...

Carry on the Work...

Change the World...Together!

September Gathering Highlights

- In “On the Road with Redstone,” the Presbytery was graciously hosted by the Latrobe Presbyterian Church. With inspiring music and liturgy, we offered worship to our God and received the Word as proclaimed by Rev. Dr. Asa Lee, President of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.
- In recognition of Addiction Recovery month, we heard a personal testimony to the healing grace of Jesus Christ in on person’s ongoing journey of recovery. Redstone congregations responded and many boxes of supplies were received in a very successful “Hope in a Bag” project. For congregations still having collections, those can be received in the Presbytery Center.
- **We elected those called to serve in leadership within the Presbytery and the larger church for next year. Susan Keaney, (RE, Newlonsburg) was nominated to serve as Vice Moderator of the Presbytery. Additionally, Rev. Brian Kilbert, Rev. Andrew Wirt, Ruling Elders Robin Jennings, and Jackie Eckenrod were called to serve as GA commissioners. A great number of people within our congregations have also answered the call to serve in leadership roles within the Presbytery on standing committees.**
- Pine Springs Camp ministry shared their final progress report on the 2023 season of summer camp. Through resident and day camps, along with the “Mission Ex” experience, there were over 1000 campers this summer who had the opportunity to have their lives transformed by encountering Jesus Christ through this camping ministry.
- **Executive Presbyter Rev. Noftzger welcomed Lynn Mance and Rich Zoltak to service as commissioned pastors in Avonmore and New Hope/Redstone Highlands, respectively. Having been recently ordained and installed, Rev. Sara Sadler and Rev. Becka Abbott were invested with Redstone stoles as symbols of their joining us in the shared ministry of the Presbytery.**
- Both the Latrobe Presbyterian and Latrobe United Presbyterian shared some of their particular ministry and mission projects where the Lord has been at work in their midst. They included Presbyters were reminded of the opportunity to participate in the mission trip to St. Alban’s, WV in October.

If you need to contact Rev. Dr. Owar Ojulu for any pastoral needs below is his contact information:

Email: ojh3o@yahoo.com

Phone: 507-304-5958 (cell phone)

Ebensburg Presbyterian Church: 814-472-6920



EBENSBURG FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Year to Date as of September 30

Actual Operating Income: \$ 53,493.98

Actual Operating Expenses: \$ 60,073.71

Gain/Loss: (6,579.73)



2023 Per Capita

2023 Per Capita - Our Per Capita offering, which supports the work of the presbytery, synod and general assembly, has been set at **\$43.50**. We are a connectional church, and we encourage you to submit your per capita as soon as possible! Just mark your envelope or the memo line on your check. We are then responsible for sending this full amount to the Redstone Presbytery. Thank you!

Ebensburg Presbyterian Church

2023

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| | | | 1 All Saints Day Bible Study Program— 7pm | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> Communion Sunday <i>Standard Time</i> | 6 | 7 Point of Free- dom—6pm | 8 Bible Study Program— 7pm | 9 Happy Birth- day David Feath | 10 | 11 |
| 12 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> | 13 Session Meet- ing 7 pm | 14 Point of Free- dom—6pm | 15 Bible Study Program— 7pm | 16 | 17 | 18 <i>NA Business 9:45</i> |
| 19 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> <i>Happy Anniver- sary Roxanne & Dave Lamer</i> | 20 | 21 Point of Free- dom—6pm | 22 Bible Study Program— 7pm Happy Birthday Michelle Rice | 23  <i>Thanksgiving Day</i> | 24 Happy Birthday William McKim | 25 |
| 26 <i>Worship 11:00 AM & Facebook</i> <i>Christ the King/Reign of Christ</i> | 27 | 28 Point of Free- dom—6pm | 29 Bible Study Program— 7pm <i>Happy Anniver- sary Bill & Mary Lou Carlisle</i> | 30 | | |

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