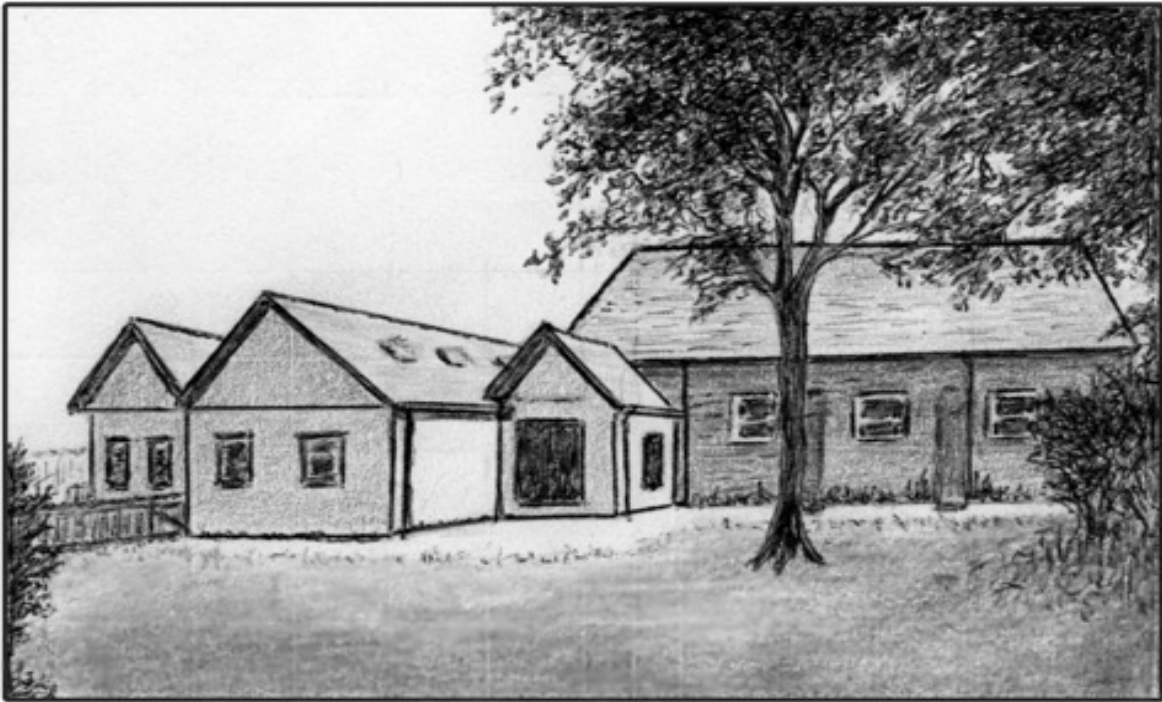


Grapevine

Newsletter of
Ebenezer Evangelical Church



“Christ died for our sins
according to the Scriptures”
1 Corinthians 15:3 (NIV)

April/May
2025

EBENEZER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Doctrinal Statement.

The church believes the fundamental truths of Christianity, as revealed in Holy Scripture, including the following:

- 1 The unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead.
- 2 The sovereignty of God in creation, providence, revelation, redemption and final judgment.
- 3 The divine inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy of Holy Scripture as originally given, and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- 4 The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- 5 The full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ the incarnate Son of God, His virgin birth and His real and sinless humanity; His death on the cross; His bodily resurrection; His ascension; His present reign in heaven and on earth; and His intercession on behalf of the church.
- 6 Redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial and atoning death, once and for all time, of our representative and substitute, Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man.
- 7 Justification as God's act of undeserved mercy, in which the sinner is pardoned all his sins and accepted as righteous in God's sight, only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, this justification being received by faith alone.
- 8 The need for the Holy Spirit to make the work of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ.
- 9 The church as the body of Christ, both locally and worldwide, its members consisting of those only to have been born again through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- 10 The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in all those thus regenerated, producing in them an increasing likeness to Christ in character and behaviour, and empowering them for their witness in the world.
- 11 The future personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge all men, executing God's final just condemnation on the impenitent and receiving the redeemed to eternal glory.

A further explanation of the things we believe is set out in the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith

A LETTER FROM THE MINISTER

Dear friends,

How many times have you asked or been asked the question: “When is Easter this year?” That is a common question for the simple reason that the timing of Easter varies from year to year. It does so because the Jewish calendar was lunar (based on the movement of the moon) and the historical events which we remember at Easter – the death and resurrection of Jesus - occurred at the time of the Jewish Passover and the timing of that first Easter was no coincidence.

It is in Exodus Ch 12 that we read of the Israelites being rescued from their bondage in Egypt. Each household was instructed by God to take a lamb, kill it and put its blood on the lintel and doorposts of their house. God said: “When I see the blood, I will **pass over** you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt” (v 13). Those lambs had died as a substitute and sheltering under the blood of those lambs the Israelite households were kept safe from the judgement of God that night.

The Israelites were told to commemorate that occasion in their history each year and that annual occasion became known in their calendar as the Passover. The reason why Jesus died at the time of the Passover was because he is the final and ultimate Passover Lamb that the lambs of Exodus 12 were symbolically pointing forward to. As John the Baptist said concerning Jesus: “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1 v 29).

Jesus is the One whom God has provided as a substitute for sinners of every generation and every nationality. In his death upon the cross, he was suffering the judgement of God in the place of sinners like you and me. And through trusting in his death, we can be confident that we will be rescued from the judgement of God.

And so as we approach another Easter, may each of us be able to say with Paul: “For Christ, **our Passover Lamb**, has been sacrificed” (1 Corinthians 5 v 7), because there is no other place or person that will provide us with shelter or safety come the day of God’s final judgement.

Happy Easter,
David

Amongst Ourselves

There was a real buzz about the church as our International Evening took place on Friday 14th March based on the theme 'Around the world in 80 steps'. Various nationalities were represented: Jamaica, England, USA, Scotland, Malaysia, Albania, Wales, India, China & Hong Kong, South Korea and Nigeria. This all goes to show that Ebenezer has become a truly international church reflecting a microcosm of the world-wide church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Refreshments were provided, prizes awarded for those who successfully completed the quiz where the answers could be discovered from visiting the various stalls and a brief epilogue was given. Thanks are due to all those who helped out in any way to make the evening such an enjoyable and worthwhile occasion.

Meanwhile David has completed his series on Philippians and has resumed his series on 1 Corinthians starting at chapter 13. He has also finished his short series on the Doctrine of Man covering such subjects as Common Grace, Saving Grace and Man in Redemption. We also welcomed Rev Andrew Lucas from Omagh, Northern Ireland to take our Sunday services. Our midweek Bible Study groups continue and are well attended. Recently, David was invited by the CU to take part in their 'Grill a Christian' event.

We welcomed back Emmanuel Durand (UFM) to take our missionary prayer meeting when he shared about his pastoral work and theological training in the French Alps. He also mentioned the spiritual needs of some of the villages in the nearby Alps. Sadly, we had to say good bye in January to Tim and Heather Matthews as they left for New South Wales for Tim to continue his work with AIM at their Australian Office in Gosford.

In recent weeks Sandra Parry has suffered several bereavements and Janet Williams has lost her father in law. We have also heard news that Rev Gary Patchen, a former student and CU leader has passed on to be with the Lord after a long battle with cancer. Let's remember his wife Susan who also was a former student and their son John. Steve Berry, a former student and elder, has had major heart surgery and is now recuperating at home.

John P Gough

Missionary Prayer Points Apr / May 2025

Sunday – Lydia - Zveš Slovenia

Pray for a clear vision to reach this generation, with the Gospel in their language. Praise God for growth of Slovene groups in Maribor and Ljubljana.

Monday – Tim and Heather Mathews AIM

Pray for wisdom to encourage missionaries that God will provide their needs for the Gospel and humanitarian ministry. Pray for a successful trip to Kenya and South Sudan and peace for the people.

Tuesday - North Africa. Our sister B1

Pray for her trip to the UK this summer. Praise God opportunities to read the Word with locals. Pray for people to see Jesus as their Saviour. Continue to pray for a new home for her and her co-worker.

Wednesday – Oversea Missions

Pray missionaries can proclaim the Gospel amid changed visa requirements. Pray God will bring people to know the all-surpassing value of Christ and persecuted believers.

Thursday - AEM - Albania

Praise God the outreach to the young receives a strong response. Ask God to protect them from Western culture influence. Praise God for the work of the Children's Day Centre in Libonik.

Friday - VBH - Slovakia

Pray for guidance to serve God effectively with students from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds to promote and maintain unity in teams across Europe and a new Student Worker.

Saturday - Johnny and Ann Mclean – Philippines

Pray for faith, wisdom, and creative ways of training people. Praise God for the Langham Preaching retreat for bringing together people from different islands and different languages.

Valerie B. Jones

Emmanuel's Visit to North Wales



We had the pleasure of a visit from pastor Emmanuel Durand from Cognin, a small village near to Chambery in the Western French Alps. He has been in Wales on deputation visits for a week and is one of our supported missionaries.

He is married to Esther who is from Bangor and has 4 children: Jean Baptiste



age 17, Maxime 15, Benjamin 13 and Clemence 11.

The church he leads along with another elder was established in 1992 and has 32 members and between 30 and 50 attend the Sunday service. He told us of both encouragements and challenges that he faces in his ministry in Cognin and in his teaching ministry in Brussels. He also helps another little church further into the mountains in a village called Bourgneuf.

Last year they had the privilege of Baptising two men; an African and also a Frenchman John, who was 82 years old. This gentleman has since been a pillar of the church since his baptism. Emmanuel is delighted to now see his wife come along with her husband. Please pray for both John and Nicole.

There are two more baptisms planned for the near future, his sons Jean Baptiste and Maxime and this is a delight for Emmanuel and Esther.

Encouragements include regular attendees for a 9.00am Saturday morning Bible study and growth in spiritual maturity of some of the members.

His teaching ministry in the Brussels Bible Institute has varied over the years from early church history to the cults to ecclesiology. He is expecting to start teaching at the Geneva Bible Institute in a year's time. Brussels is a six-hour journey on the TGV whereas Geneva will only be an hour away.

He has a burden for large tracts of the French Alps where there is no gospel witness and so asks for prayer that there may be opportunities to begin a small gospel work in some of these valleys. He asks for prayer that his preaching may be clear and bold and is grateful for our support.

Emmanuel does have a chronic health problem in that he has Leukaemia. This is currently in remission with the medication he takes. Please pray for his health so he can continue as a father, husband and pastor of the Lord's flock in this part of France.

Wyn Williams

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Died 9th April 1945 – 80 years ago)

In the 1930s, many Germans aligned with Hitler's antisemitic zeal, and this had very serious implications for Jews living in Germany. Some churches became so infected with antisemitism that they discriminated against the very ethnic group to which their Saviour - Jesus Christ - belonged. For example, the German Evangelical (Lutheran) Church decided to exclude Jews (who had converted to Christianity) from participating in their congregations, a measure they codified in an edict that became known as the "Aryan Paragraph."

But other Church leaders rejected this intrusion of Nazi ideology, including a young pastor and theologian named Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He and some of his ministry colleagues formed a parallel fellowship of churches that refused to submit to it. They became known as the "Confessing Church" because they "confessed" Christian orthodoxy, specifically its commitment to racial equality in the body of Christ.

Bonhoeffer's stand meant that he had to contend with enemies in both the Nazi regime and church leadership. The latter wanted him to cooperate with the government, as they thought that Hitler could bring about spiritual renewal in Germany. But Bonhoeffer saw through these church leaders' perversion of Christian doctrine. He insisted on conforming to God's eternal truths as revealed in holy scripture, rather than to the world around him. (Rom. 12:2)

Bonhoeffer's rejection of Nazi ideology also meant that he opposed the military aggression of the Nazis and their violence against minorities across Europe. He correctly understood that believers in Jesus had to resist such evil regimes. This conviction eventually cost Bonhoeffer his life. On April 9, 1945, only one month before the end of World War II, he was hanged by Nazi authorities.

The experience of Christians in Nazi Germany presents a lesson for today. It serves as a warning about the dangers of looking to a political "saviour" to redeem one's country. It also shows that when the church trades biblical beliefs for the latest societal trends – even those that are couched in noble terms – the results can be catastrophic.

Lyn Davies



International Evening

On the evening of Friday 14th March an international evening was held in the church. The exhibition had eleven stands representing some of the nations represented in the church's congregation. We thank all those who took part making it a

very enjoyable event. Afterwards there were refreshments in the church annexe and a brief gospel message from Paul Kusuma, originally from India, was given.



The USA Table



The China Table
Much tartan was on display on the Scotland table!



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REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAY	10.10am 10.30am 5.40pm 6.00pm	Prayer Meeting in Library. Morning Service. Junior Church (ages 4-10) during sermon. Prayer Meeting in Library. Evening Service The Lord's Supper 1 st Sun. evening & 3 rd Sun. morning.
TUESDAY	7.30pm	Prayer Meeting/ Bible Study Fellowship Groups*
THURSDAY	10am	Ladies Bible Study
FRIDAY	7.30pm	G.O.A.L Youth Club for ages 11-18.

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