

# EBENEZER



Ebenezer Church

My father, Dale Dentler, grew up on a farm in Juniata County, Pennsylvania. Some of Dad's family attended a little United Methodist Church named "Ebenezer." It is a charming rural church with white siding, situated in the midst of farm fields not far from the mountains. It has a simple steeple with a bell. And it is a simple one-room meeting house. Originally, it didn't even have a basement, but one dedicated member took on the challenge of digging out a basement. Shovel by shovel, he did just that until the little church could finish a fellowship room in the basement. Throughout the years, I have attended various family celebrations, including birthday parties, funeral receptions, and anniversary gatherings in that small basement. I even had the honor of preaching at Ebenezer. The name "Ebenezer" is familiar to us in the name of the star of Charles Dickens' classic tale, "A Christmas Carol." Ebenezer Scrooge has negatively impacted the reputation of the name "Ebenezer." He is known for being miserly and mean! However, the name "Ebenezer" comes from the Bible and is quite positive.

In 1 Samuel 7, we read that in the days of the Judges in Israel's history, the nation was experiencing a time of revival under the leadership of Judge Samuel. Under his leadership, the nation of Israel repents, destroys their idols, and turns their hearts back to God. Samuel led the Israelites in a time of worship and sacrifice. While they were in the midst of worship, the Philistines attacked. In the battle that followed, God interceded for them and gave the Israelites a supernatural victory. Samuel set up a stone to help them remember that amazing victory. He called the stone "Ebenezer," which means "stone of help."

*"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).*

As I write this devotional, it is just a few days before the first day of the year 2026. We've just celebrated Christmas 2025. We've just celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Covenant Brethren Church. At our last Executive Board Meeting, we welcomed a new congregation from what is now the 13th different country in which CBC is active. I personally began 2025 with a week in the hospital with heart-related issues and have been fine since. In 2026, I will celebrate my 75th birthday and am so thankful that on many Sundays, I am preaching at one church or another! I could go on and on setting up my Ebenezer Stone, remembering how the Lord has helped me and has helped us. Maybe you, too, should take a little time as the new year begins to remember and set up your own Ebenezer Stone, celebrating, ***“thus far the LORD has helped us!”***

And I've no doubt! None in the least that He will be our helper in 2026 as well! New Year's blessings, dear Sisters & Brothers!

**Larry M. Dentler - CBC Exec. Board**

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## **Weekly Prayer Point**

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) we read: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” Father, God, let this mind be in us that was also in our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. We choose to release all the old things from the past year that are not pleasing to You. We release all grudges, anger, hurts, and offences. We know, Father, as we choose to release those things that keep us from Your presence, they will fall as chains from our feet, and we will soar in the calling of Christ Jesus! We humble ourselves so we can see that every detail in our lives is both allowed by You and will be used for our spiritual good. Your ways, oh Lord, are high above our ways! We glory in every detail You have stored for us in the Spirit. Strengthen us to bear great fruit by Your Holy Spirit this new year!

### **Please pray for these congregations and pastors:**

- House of Miracles Congregation in Tanzania, Africa and Pastor Marco Edward Lusana
- Iglesia Christiano El Shaddai Congregation in Johnson City, TN and Pastor Paul Waroe

### **CBC Prayer Committee**