



Greetings my fellow Ebenezerites and Leaders!

God has wonderfully favored us to walk out of 2022 into the year 2023 with new mercies, new miracles, and a new mandate, but with the same message and mission. We are called as servants of Christ to know Him and to make Him known! We found out as we closed the previous year that it's all about Him! Jesus is both our mission and our message!

Prior to sharing Vision 2023, allow me to review some of the highlights of 2022. God blessed us with 25 new members, inclusive of those making first time decisions for Christ: To God be the glory! God continued to take care of us as we met during the unpredictable environment of the pandemic. We were able to feed the hungry through our partnership with Out of the Garden, assist in building houses through our partnership with Habitat for Humanity, and provide coats and backpacks to homeless and underprivileged children through our partnership with ABSS. We are able to assist families with their utility bills, rent, as well as to aid families that were in need of burial assistance. We also were able to engage in global missions giving through our partnership with So Send I You and other mission initiatives.

Throughout last year, we were able to provide consistent worshipping opportunities and we were blessed to bring back our choirs to support the Ministry of Music that was being furnished by our Praise Team. We went back to two services at the completion of the 20/20 and Beyond project, and we began to bring some of our supportive ministries back online.

2022 saw us raise the money necessary to complete our renovation project and dedicate our "For Those That Gave" wall of gratitude. Over \$300,000 was raised!

As we embrace the 2023 year of "REVAMP" and seize the opportunities and the open doors that God has allowed, let us go forward in the spirit of Nehemiah with a mind to work, and a spirit to build! This year we will intentionally focus on five basic ministry areas: evangelism, discipleship, youth ministry, first impressions ministry, and prayer ministry. We will continue to strengthen other ministries, such as the Christian Education/iLearn, Couples, and Young Adult ministries, but our general focus will be directed toward the five mentioned above. Every two to three months we will relaunch another ministry with definition, precision, purpose, and power. I praise and honor God for the addition to the staff of our Director of Ministries, Executive Pastor, Rev. Markez Mills. Through his leadership, our First Friends Ministry has relaunched, our First Steps Nursery Ministry is in the process of being revamped to be relaunched, our Media Ministry is being enhanced, there are plans to revamp and relaunch our Mime and Praise Dance Ministry, and in the interim he is leading our youth ministry as well as planning to oversee, along with his wife, our Young Married Couples Ministry.

God blessed Ebenezer to be the recipient of a \$500,000 grant that has enabled us to run Champions Academy, a free first class after school program led by Sis. Reisha Drumgold and Bro. Christian Scott. Presently, there are 48 students enrolled. Ebenezer was also the recipient of over \$200,000 in funds from the federal government as well as dollars from PPP funds because we stayed open, paid staff, and in some cases expanded services during the pandemic shutdown. These funds assisted us to do ministry, make extra payments, and invest as good stewards. During this past year and even into this year, we have enhanced our media equipment, purchased a new drum kit, and are set to purchase a new piano, a new van, and new youth and children's ministry curriculum.

As we continue to become the "R-rated" church that God desires, we will look for new opportunities to expand our ministry to other areas, create new partners, and to collaborate with agencies and institutions that are committed to both community enrichment as well as spiritual nurture.

I would love to see us transform our Jerusalem by purchasing properties, renovating them, and converting them into affordable housing for individuals and families who need decent and affordable shelter. I also envision Ebenezer establishing its own recording studio where young people can learn how to be creative, and also supporting our own podcast and other external communication efforts.

Prayerfully, it is my hope that this year we will be able to improve the sound and media systems in the ECCO at a cost of \$28,000. Another upgrade that needs to be made for the ECCO is the acquisition of a new gym floor mat that is less cumbersome and easier to maintain.

Regarding facilities and improvements, we plan to demolish 653 Elizabeth Ave, remove the playground, establish a community garden, pave at least one area, and through the CBG funding, renovate the Couch House.

Capital Campaign / Stewardship and Debt Reduction

We will sponsor within the third quarter of the year, the Bell Tower Campaign

We will continue making extra payments to the consolidated construction loan to liquidate the debt prior to the six year due date.

We will place a minimum of \$50,000 in a savings/reserve account

Deacon Family Ministry

We will ordain Bro. Willie and Sis. Cynthia Williams to the Deacon Family Ministry by the end of the calendar year based on him meeting all of the requirements.

Trustee Ministry

I recommend the addition of Mr. Jason Yarborough and Ms. Missouri Dalphine Crawley to the Trustee Ministry and Ms. Crawley to serve a two-year term on the Finance Committee.

We are looking forward to having a great year together as pastor and people. It is my prayer that the Lord will bless us with 50 additions this year and that we will move the church out of the building into the community through outreach, evangelistic gathering, assisting in birthing churches, and aiding existing ministries to fulfill their purpose!

EBENEZERITES, LET'S GET AMPED UP FOR THE REVAMP!

Rev. Dr. Larry E. Covington