



EBENEZER
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Board of Elders Meeting **October 9, 2017**

Opening & Prayer

Pastor Tim Gibson opened the meeting in prayer.

Roll Call

The following elders were **present**: Tim Gibson, Wayne Batten, Dick Bickings, Phil Norris, Swannie Griffin, Shawn Sommons, Byron Roth, Pat Barry, Dennis Flanagan, Chris Jones, and Mike Notary.

The following elders were **absent**: Kevin Hardy, Scott Holwick, and Jeremy Harkins

Devotional Time:

- The elders discussed chapter six in Steve Miller's book, C.H. Spurgeon on Spiritual Leadership - "A Willingness to Suffer"
 - Suffering identifies with Christ
 - "Great hearts can only be made by great troubles"
 - Benefits of suffering
 - Stronger faith
 - Spiritual growth
 - Great dependence on God
 - Greater compassion
 - Greater zeal
 - Greater service
 - Greater usefulness in ministry
 - Conclusion: Every affliction is temporary and won't follow us to heaven

Prayer Time:

- The elders split into twos to pray over their Shepherd's lists.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from September 11, 2017; it was seconded and passed unanimously.

Financial Report - September 2017 (Attachment 1) -

A motion was made to approve the September 2017 financial report; it was seconded and passed unanimously. Byron Roth gave the following highlights:

- Income: trending upward, 6% over budget
- Expenses: under budget

Discussion Items:

- 1) Nominees for Elder: Two potential elders were discussed
- 2) Pastor Appreciation Month
 - Elders voted to give the pastors a gift of appreciation
 - Pastors Tim, Jeremy, and Dick, \$750, and Pastor Mike \$350 (6 months on staff)
- 3) Mission Prayer Time during the service
 - Positive response
 - 2nd & 4th Sundays of each month
 - Possibly, one less song
- 4) Miracle Month
 - How will it be spent?
 - To be used for missionaries, as family encouragement gifts
 - Voted to proceed, seconded, and passed unanimously
- 5) Fellowship Time in Serving Room
 - Many children without parents
 - Some parents dropping off kids early to Sunday School
 - Some discussion on how the food is paid for; most likely a new line item in the budget.


Pat Barry adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Pastoral Reports

The pastors submitted their monthly reports:

- Tim Gibson, Senior Pastor (*Attachment 2*)
- Dick Bickings, Pastor of Discipleship (*Attachment 3*)
- Jeremy Harkins, Worship Pastor (*Attachment 4*)
- Mike Notary, Youth Pastor (*Attachment 5*)

Respectfully submitted,



Pastor Dick Bickings
Secretary to the Board of Elders

EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - SEPTEMBER YTD 2017 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Attachment #1

BALANCE SHEET REPORT / COMPARISON

ASSETS	30-Sep-17	31-Dec-16	\$ Change
<i>Assets - Checking/Savings</i>			
18000 · Checking (BB&T/KNBT)	454,251.19	541,631.79	-87,380.60
18002 · CDs (BB&T/KNBT)	67,770.97	67,714.56	56.41
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	93,014.45	92,952.54	61.91
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	5,375.67	5,375.67	0.00
Total Checking/Savings	620,412.28	707,674.56	-87,262.28

TOTAL ASSETS **620,412.28** **707,674.56** **-87,262.28**

LIABILITIES

<i>Current Liabilities</i>			
901 · Building Fund	68,169.70	104,543.44	-36,373.74
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	-69,760.47	0.00	-69,760.47
903 · Transportation Fund	268.00	268.00	0.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	3,555.00	2,607.50	947.50
905 · Faith Promise	12,567.75	33,123.24	-20,555.49
907 · Benevolence Fund	15,781.41	8,746.23	7,035.18
908 · Music Fund	374.20	274.20	100.00
911 · Year End Accruals	8,480.16	8,480.16	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	649.83	4,137.51	-3,487.68
914 · HRA	1,922.54	0.00	1,922.54
915 · Youth Summer Missions	-20.01	4,767.88	-4,787.89
100 · Payroll Liabilities	6,783.22	7,136.75	-353.53
Total Current Liabilities	48,771.33	174,084.91	-125,313.58

<i>Long Term Liabilities</i>			
810 · Mortgage	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	48,771.33	174,084.91	-125,313.58

<i>EQUITY</i>			
900 · Retained Earnings	941,468.45	921,501.55	19,966.90
Net Income	38,051.30	19,966.90	18,084.40
1000 · Opening Bal Equity	-407,878.80	-407,878.80	0.00
Total Equity	571,640.95	533,589.65	38,051.30
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	620,412.28	707,674.56	-87,262.28

Joe Meier

Treasurer

10/5/2017

Date

GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

Income	Sep YTD	Budget	Variance	%BGT YTD
1100 · Offerings / Gifts	758,841.44	715,828.61	43,012.83	106.0%
1400 · Interest	297.61	551.89	-254.28	53.9%
1700 · Memorials	840.00	0.00	840.00	N/A
1900 · BCS / Bldg Use	11,157.30	11,090.72	66.58	100.6%
Total Income	771,136.35	727,471.21	43,665.14	106.0%

<i>Expenses</i>				
2000 · General Finance	30,404.89	43,619.59	-13,214.70	69.7%
3000 · Discipleship	18,909.01	21,951.31	-3,042.30	86.1%
5000 · Evangelism	5,842.95	6,054.94	-211.99	96.5%
6000 · Missions	125,984.31	125,275.00	709.31	100.6%
7000 · Deacon	102,320.25	86,590.00	15,730.25	118.2%
8000 · Worship	7,178.50	7,410.00	-231.50	96.9%
9000 · Office/Admin	10,974.63	12,185.00	-1,210.37	90.1%
10000 · Congregational Care	1,548.77	2,219.94	-671.17	69.8%
11000 · Compensation	429,921.74	449,722.95	-19,801.21	95.6%
Total Expense	733,085.05	755,028.73	-21,943.68	97.1%

Net Ordinary Income **38,051.30** **-27,557.52** **65,608.82**

Net Transfers between Accts. 0.00 0.00 0.00

Net Income **38,051.30** **-27,557.52** **65,608.82**

DESIGNATED FUNDS

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
901 · Building Fund	4,625.00	40,998.74	-36,373.74
903 · Transportation Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	1,209.50	262.00	947.50
905 · Faith Promise	16,054.51	33,277.00	-17,222.49
907 · Benevolence Fund	18,432.07	11,396.89	7,035.18
908 · Music Fund	100.00	0.00	100.00

OTHER LIABILITY ACCOUNTS

902 · Capital Improvement Fund	0.00	69,760.47	-69,760.47
911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	0.00	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	12.32	3,500.00	-3,487.68
914 · HRA	5,509.00	3,577.46	1,931.54
915 · Youth Summer Missions	27,128.11	31,916.00	-4,787.89
Total Other Current Liabilities	73,070.51	194,688.56	-121,618.05

EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - SEPTEMBER 2017 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

BALANCE SHEET REPORT / COMPARISON

GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

	30-Sep-17	31-Aug-17 \$ Change		September	Budget	Variance	% BGT MTD
ASSETS							
<i>Assets - Checking/Savings</i>							
18000 · Checking (BB&T/KNBT)	454,251.19	463,607.75	-9,356.56	79,424.30	73,418.32	6,005.98	108%
18002 · CDs (BB&T/KNBT)	67,770.97	67,770.97	0.00	37.61	56.60	-18.99	66%
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	93,014.45	93,014.45	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	5,375.67	5,375.67	0.00	1,082.65	1,137.51	-54.86	95%
Total Checking/Savings	620,412.28	629,768.84	-9,356.56	80,594.56	74,612.43	5,982.13	108%
TOTAL ASSETS	620,412.28	629,768.84	-9,356.56				
LIABILITIES							
901 · Building Fund	68,169.70	67,690.70	479.00				
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	-69,760.47	-68,410.47	-1,350.00	557.28	1,787.51	-1,230.23	31%
903 · Transportation Fund	268.00	268.00	0.00	2,444.14	4,856.59	-2,412.45	50%
904 · Scholarship Fund	3,555.00	3,293.00	262.00	239.00	861.66	-622.66	28%
905 · Faith Promise	12,567.75	12,712.75	-145.00	21,762.50	21,825.00	-62.50	100%
907 · Benevolence Fund	15,781.41	14,995.37	786.04	18,394.47	5,220.00	13,174.47	352%
908 · Music Fund	374.20	374.20	0.00	4,307.94	200.00	4,107.94	2154%
911 · Year End Accruals	8,480.16	8,480.16	0.00	1,412.45	1,661.00	-248.55	85%
912 · Run For The Children	649.83	637.51	12.32	415.11	246.66	168.45	168%
914 · HRA	1,922.54	1,922.54	0.00	40,530.73	49,302.55	-8,771.82	82%
915 · Youth Summer Missions	-20.01	-20.01	0.00				
100 · Payroll Liabilities	6,783.22	6,694.65	88.57				
Total Current Liabilities	48,771.33	48,638.40	132.93	90,063.62	85,960.97	4,102.65	105%
Long Term Liabilities							
810 · Mortgage	0.00	0.00	0.00	-9,469.06	-11,348.54	1,879.48	
Total Long Term Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Liabilities	48,771.33	48,638.40	132.93	-9,469.06	-11,348.54	1,879.48	
EQUITY							
900 · Retained Earnings	941,468.45	941,468.45	0.00				
Net Income	38,051.30	47,540.79	-9,489.49				
1000 · Opening Bal Equity	-407,878.80	-407,878.80	0.00				
Total Equity	571,640.95	581,130.44	-9,489.49				
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	620,412.28	629,768.84	-9,356.56				

	Income	Expenses	Net
901 · Building Fund	479.00	0.00	479.00
903 · Transportation Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	262.00	0.00	262.00
905 · Faith Promise	855.00	1,000.00	-145.00
907 · Benevolence Fund	1,612.83	826.79	786.04
908 · Music Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
OTHER LIABILITY ACCOUNTS			
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	0.00	1,350.00	-1,350.00
911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	0.00	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	12.32	0.00	12.32
914 · HRA	0.00	0.00	0.00
915 · Youth Summer Missions	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	3,221.15	3,176.79	44.36
(Income/Expenses without transfers)	0.00	3,176.79	-3,176.79

Joe Meier

Treasurer

10/5/2017

Date

Pastor Tim's Ministry Report

October 9, 2017

Attachment #2

Studying & Preaching:

- I have been studying and preaching through the book of Genesis for the last several months. I began a series on Joseph's life and the Providence of God from chapter 37-50. I anticipate that we will complete the exposition of Genesis by the end of 2017.
- However, since October 31, 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the posting of Martin Luther's 95 Theses, I have decided to preach a series of sermons on the 5 Solas: Sola Scripture, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, Solus Christus, Sola Deo Gloria. My goal is to celebrate our heritage by expositing key passages that led the reformers to protest against the false teaching of the Catholic Church. My goal is to strengthen our doctrine, elevate the authority of Scripture and exalt the incredible Gospel that we have in Christ Jesus.
- I finished a 27+ week exposition through the book of 2 Chronicles on Wednesday night. It was an incredible case study of the Kings of Judah and the faithlessness of Judah, but the faithfulness of God. I am now leading a study through Ezra and Nehemiah, the logical follow-up. Attendance is increasing and I truly believe those in attendance are enjoying the comfortable setting, simple worship, intense study and corporate prayer together. Wednesday nights continues to be one of my favorite times of the week. Those who come have great fellowship together and wonderful prayer times.

Internship: I have been spending a great deal of time with Laszlo Onody, who is attending Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (online). Over the summer, I taught him basic procedures for putting together an expository message. He was able to teach 2 passages from the book of 1 John on Wednesday night. He did fabulous. Laszlo meets with me every week for prayer and encouragement. I am also allowing him to do some counseling. He is also now leading a Kinship Group, which I strongly encouraged him to do.

LEAD Class: I just finished our Leadership class that had 9 men attending. We covered soteriology, doctrines of grace, church health, ministry philosophy, eldership qualifications and responsibilities, & godly character. Ebenezer has a great upcoming group of men who will serve as great leaders in the future.

Shepherding/Ministry:

- Attended Church Extension Board Meeting
- 2 TLT meetings for Church plants in Naples & Forks
- Prison visitation every other week
- 3 funerals: Loretta Salabasky, Hilda Transue & Harold Kline
- Attended a football game of a young person in the church
- Visited Bright Hope Ministry in Bethlehem
- Golfed with 2 Church members
- Premarital Counseling for one couple for 2 weeks
- Breakfast with 2 members for fellowship and encouragement
- 3-4 Hospital visitations, 2 home visits, 2 counseling sessions
- Meeting with Carol Aversa, BCC principle to build a strong relationship with the school
- Attended the BFC ministerial convention – guest speaker Phil Johnson who spoke on the 5 Solas of the Reformation.
- Meet one on one with a man for discipleship every week for 1 hour. We have been going through Ephesians together.
- 4 membership interviews

I love what I do and I am so thankful for the grace of God which enables me to use my gifts to preach and teach and love people. I'm so thankful for Ebenezer and long to see her grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

This last month has been a difficult one for Julie and I as three of our oldest kids have left the house to go off to college and work. We now only have one in the house. This is a huge transition for us and we are clinging on to the Lord for His sustaining grace not only for us but for our kids. Our prayer is that our kids will continue in the truth, which they grew up hearing. We covet our church's prayers for their spiritual wellbeing.

Serving Christ,
Pastor Tim Gibson

Pastor of Discipleship Report, Sep/Oct 2017

In my continued trek through the NT, I recently read in the book of Acts, chapter 4, how that, Peter and John were preaching the word and healing, and as a result, the religious leaders warned them and threatened them to stop. However, instead of being intimidated, they prayed this prayer to God in response:

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness,” (Acts 4:29, ESV)

...to which God responded...

“And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31, ESV)

My takeaway from this passage is that even the apostles feared men but prayed for the power of God to fill them and allow them to continue on their God given assignment, to preach the word! This gives me the confidence to bring all my fears to the Lord and trust him to help me continue on the assignment that he has given me!

With that in mind, here are some of the ministry updates from September/October 2017:

Kids Crossing

- **Cross Time Sunday School (10:05 AM):** All Cross Time classes are studying the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ this month. We praise the Lord for this Christ honoring curriculum! Also, we currently have all the teacher spots filled, praise the Lord.
- **Early Childhood (2&3 year-olds):** Praise the Lord, he has brought us all the teachers and helpers, for all the services, and for both odd and even months!.
- **Children’s Church:** The Gospel Project curriculum worship segment continues to work well for Children’s Church. We continue to see around 7-9 students each week.
- **Wednesday Evening Programs:** The 2017/2018 Awana year began on September 13, with an average of 60 clubbers attending. We are blessed to have 30+ volunteer to help but could use more men in both the Sparks and T&T groups. Please pray that the Lord sends the necessary number of volunteers needed and that our kids are touched and transformed by the power of God’s word throughout this year.

Adult Ministry

- **Adult Electives:** The new 2017 fall session began on September 17, and here is the breakdown:
 - The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Part 2 - Scott Holwick/Matt Zmarzley
 - Daniel: Phil Norris
 - How to Study the Bible: Rich Mastronardo
 - Romans: Part 1 - Dick Bickings
- **Student Ministry:** See Pastor Mike Notary’s Report.
- **Senior Fellowship Ministry:** The new 2017/2018 Senior Fellowship officially began with a luncheon catered by the Women’s Ministry on September 28. It was well attended and a big thank you goes to the Women’s Ministry for their labor of love!
- **Men’s Ministry:**
 - **Bethel Series:** A new Bethel Series cycle taught by Dick Bickings on Saturday mornings from 9:00-11:00, began on October 7, 2017. Praise the Lord for providing 10 eager-to-learn students with which to learn the OT together this first year.

o **Men's Bible Studies/Prayer:**

- Thursday mornings from 6:15 AM – 7:30 AM, This early morning bible study group is currently studying "OT Couples".
- Thursday mornings from 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM, This Men's Bible Study is currently studying the book of Ephesians.
- Saturday mornings from 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM, This men's pray time is for men who are serious about going before the throne of grace together to cry out to God for their marriages, family, jobs, neighbors, country, etc.

• **Women's Ministry:** Here is an update from Laura...

"We are well into the fall and all the activity that comes with it. This has been a sweet time of renewal.

Bible Study: Tuesday morning we are currently studying 2Corinthians and we have about 15 ladies that participate in this study. Tuesday evenings we meet and we have just have 3 ladies in that group. Kelly Minter has proven to be an excellent teacher and the ladies seem to be challenged by this study.

Monday Evenings are going fantastic. Vicki Cowley is leading Monday night studying the Daniel Prayer. She has 25 women coming to this study. She also host a night of prayer on the off Monday's to put into practice what they are learning.

Wednesday Mornings are full to capacity at Debbie Flanagan's home. They have 18 ladies that come. Barb Tinker leads this study.

Tis So Sweet: We are so excited to have Linda Visco lead this coming year. We had 10 ladies there. We are currently reading through " Sister's on a Journey" a book on friendship.

MOPS: We had a kick off at Louise Moore Park and our first MOPS meeting was this past week. We had 42 moms out and it was a great day. So thankful for all the hard work that Suzi and Amy Hardy did and do to make that ministry run smoothly.

Welcome to The Well: We had our first gathering of the Fall at the home of Linda Visco's and we had over 20 ladies in attendance. This ministry is really growing and fostering great relationships.

The WM team along with Lisa Pyles attended the SHE LEADS conference on Saturday the 29th of September. We took away great information and challenges on how to be better leaders and implement women's ministry stronger. I had the privilege of speaking at one of the breakout sessions that day.

The Well hosted the Senior Fellowship luncheon this month as well. We had the privilege of making the lunch for them and serving them.

It is a privilege to serve here."

Discipleship Support

- **Kinship:** Praise the Lord for a great September 17 start for this year's 20 Kinship groups, and for Bob and Laurie Gill who have worked tirelessly to place people in these various groups. Please pray that the Lord will use these groups to disciple, grow, and meet the needs of our people who attend.

Other:

- Continued to visit and provide physical & Spiritual care for several people in our church.
- Facilitate the Men's Prayer Group each Saturday mornings.
- Led the singing for several funerals.

- Taught Romans and Bethel classes
- Continue with my Seminary Studies, taking a course on Church History as time permits.

Respectfully Submitted, Dick Bickings, Pastor of Discipleship

WORSHIP/COLLEGE MINISTRY UPDATE

Jeremy Harkins, Worship Pastor September-October

MUSIC

-Fall is kicking off! Our team continues to process through the SOLAS as we start October in the focus of: Scripture Alone, Faith Alone, Grace Alone, Christ Alone, to the Glory of God Alone. Our devotion time focuses on a passage that is tied into the music in light of the scriptural principles based on the reformation.

SOUND

-We had a lot of sound needs for the outdoor service on September 10th. Special thanks to: Kevin Gascho, Henri Darby, Jim Hans and others who volunteered their full day Saturday and Sunday to make sure that everything flowed smoothly with the sound for the outdoor service!

-I am so very thankful for the volunteers that are continuing to help improve the sound room needs. I continue to meet with the sound room volunteers as we continue to do all we can with excellence to the glory of God.

- We continue to work out the learning curves for the new lighting system as well as adjust to our new sound system in the gym. Thankful for the funds available to make these upgrades possible!

-

TEACHING & SHEPHERDING

- I meet regularly with a college age student to help build his leadership on Lafayette's campus and continuing to encourage him to get plugged in regularly to a solid church, since his visit to our church a couple months ago.
- I am meeting regularly with 4 college age students to disciple and read through the bible/pray together.
- I continue to meet with and disciple a couple of the members of the worship team.
- We kicked off our college fellowship last Sunday as we introduced how the foundations of the reformation apply to our culture today
- Blessed to teach the Sparks and TNTer's about the foundations of Bible
- We continue to unpack a passage of scripture as a challenge before our Sunday services at 8:15

Additional Areas

- Praise God for all the volunteers that made the outdoor service possible. We had wonderful time of fellowship and worship! All glory be to Christ!
- We started in being involved in a new kinship group hosted by Justen and Olivia Blackstone's home and continue to enjoy the fellowship as Nate Gore leads our new kinship.
- We had our 3rd annual worship thank you party, hosted by the Herics. This was a wonderful time to show our deep level of appreciation to all those involved in the music ministry at Ebenezer.

MERGE Ministry Update: Sept. and Oct. 2017

Upcoming Schedule:

- Oct. 20 - Illuminite
- Oct. 23 - Youth Leadership Team Dinner @ Mike and Jenn's
- Oct. 28 - Candy Carnival
- Nov. 11 - Run for the Children
- Nov. 17-19 – MS and HS Fall Retreat @ Three Springs Ministries

Update:

Current Study Series:

Our semester long study series, The Person of Jesus, is in full swing. We have begun to consider Jesus' humanity through studying "familiar" passages of Scripture. This study has been a tremendous blessing in that it has revealed many areas in Jesus' life that we could emulate. Rather than focusing on the miracles that often take place in these passages we are looking deeply at Jesus' character, his interactions with people, and His compassion displayed. These passages have been humbling as we begin to see that we fall so short of loving like Christ. However, we are grateful for the Holy Spirit's power to not only convict but to empower us to be the hands and feet of Christ.

Youth Staff Retreat:

Jenn and I were blessed to be able to take our Youth Staff to our family's cabin in Sullivan County, PA for our annual Youth Staff Retreat. Our intentions for this trip were to take some time away for our family to get to know our leaders in a more personal way. As we continue to grow in relationship with one another we knew that retreating with them would provide that opportunity. We had a wonderful time sharing bits of our story, spending time in personal and corporate devotions, and taking time to check in with growth group leaders. Our time was full of laughter, some tears, and great encouragement. We continue to marvel at how blessed our family has been by these wonderful leaders.

We spent some time reflecting on Mt. 16:24-28, Mk. 8:34-38, Isa. 40:9-31 and passages from Thomas a Kempis', *Imitation of Christ*. Our time in discussion was rich and challenging. It provided more time to get to know each other's struggles and pray for one another. I am thankful for a Youth Staff that are faithful in serving our youth and willing to follow my lead. Please continue to pray for us as we enter into some of our youth's struggles with the hope of the Gospel. While the Gospel is certainly good news it does not erase the struggles of sin in this world. Pray for youth to find their identity and hope in Christ alone.

Student Leadership:

Student Leadership began on Sept. 24 and Jenn and I are excited at the opportunity to challenge these youth to grow in their faith, care for other youth, and leading in their spiritual gifts. We currently have 13 High School youth who are committed to these times of study, fellowship, and growth. The program is designed to help youth grow both corporately and individually. We will be challenging them to grow in their biblical understanding, profession of faith, and service to their communities. We are asking that they commit to regular attendance, accountability, and mentoring of younger students. Our study time will be based on New Growth Press', *Gospel Growth*, "Becoming a Faith-Filled Person". The book consists of weekly study outlines and questions. We will ask youth to commit to completing these studies ahead of time and be using our time together to go over the Scripture passages and questions.

MERGE Fall Retreat:

We have begun preparations for our MERGE Fall Retreat at Three Springs Ministries in Morris, PA on Nov. 17-19. Our theme for the weekend will be, "The Cost of Following Christ." *Sacrifice, Servitude, Suffering, Selflessness, and Sanctification* will be the main focuses of our time together. Jenn and our kids are planning on attending and Jeremy Harkins and his family will also attend as Jeremy leads worship for our group. Our prayer is that the youth would get to know our family better as we spend time together in worship and His word. Of course we plan on having plenty of fun enjoying God's creation and getting messy! We are sure the kids will come home tired but having been tremendously blessed by our times together. Please pray that the weekend would unify our group, challenge our hearts, and propel us into the world with the hope of the Gospel.

MERGE T-Shirts:

Our MERGE T-shirts are being ordered this month as we continue to "brand" our youth ministry at EBFC. Again, our purpose in branding our group is to communicate our vision of youth embracing the church as essential to their life and the church embracing youth as an essential aspect of the church. Our theme verse for this endeavor is 1 Peter 2:9, "*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*".

Prayer Support:

- 1) We would ask that you faithfully pray that MERGE ministry would minister to the hearts of our youth, for Gospel growth, and grace as we grow in relationship with one another.
- 2) Please pray that Jenn and I would find an appropriate balance between ministry responsibilities and family time, especially me. As we reengage ministry we are very aware of the temptation to do the work of ministry with others while neglecting ministry to our family. Pray that I would begin with ministry to our family and then the church.