



ECCCM Renames to Represent Expanded Service Area

On February 3, 2024, the board of directors of Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry, Inc. (ECCCM) unanimously voted to change its name to Ashure Ministry. In August of 2023, the board shared the results of their strategic planning process. They faithfully wrestled with several new realities for the ministry, including their expanding service area. To acknowledge and address the community's growing needs and affirm their goal of serving more clients through high-quality crisis and food assistance, one of their strategic goals includes increasing the knowledge and understanding the community has for the mission and work of the ministry.

To accomplish this goal, the board recognized the need for a renaming and rebranding process for the ministry. First and foremost, ECCCM includes "Eastern Catawba" in the name. As their service areas expanded to all of Catawba County, it was important to establish a name that didn't cause potential clients to question their ability to access services. Clients come first. Other reasons for changing their name included some misconceptions revealed in the listening process for their Strategic Plan. A significant number of constituents and stakeholders either didn't know what ECCCM represented or confused them with another local nonprofit.

In August, a strong team of ECCCM supporters brought their creativity and passion for the ministry to the table as the renaming team. They took their role seriously and cautiously, knowing that something like a name change would create feelings of excitement and anxiety. Through a process of elimination, they

used three variables to go from 100+ name ideas to the final. Most importantly, these variables include the word's meaning and connection to the Christian faith. Secondly, the availability of URLs and social media accounts was considered. Finally, knowing that people would shorten the name, it was critical that it could stand alone without an acronym.

Ashure, known as Noah's pudding, is a grain pudding considered the first meal that Noah from the Old Testament in the Bible fed his family as they left the ark. It is considered a dessert or celebration dish. It is made from leftover grains. It symbolizes peace and harmony among all living creatures in God's creation. In principle, you eat only very little of the ashure you prepare. You share most of it with the poor, your neighbors, friends, and others. This act generates abundance and strengthens community bonds.

The renaming team valued the story of Noah and his family, who lived through struggle and crisis and whom God delivered from the ark. They felt the connection between crisis and struggle was significant. They also valued that the name Ashure represents a celebration, thanksgiving, and sacrifice. It is a shared dish among a community that genuinely cares for each other. It embodies hope for a new day and gives glory to God for bringing that new day. They chose to include the word Ministry in the name instead of the plural version, ministries. The new *mission to provide crisis assistance to the people of Catawba County* is holistic, and most clients qualify for multiple programs they offer. They are one ministry offering comprehensive programs or services.

The new ICON combines three essential elements. At the center is the cross that continues out into the world - a cross that directs and sends the ministry out into the world to serve all people in the name of Jesus. It features the people of God circled in community, reliant on each other for care and support. Each person reaches in and out as they are able at different times in their lives. This represents those who benefit from the services and those who support them. Finally, it features a color palette that reflects growth and new life. The colors are intentionally chosen to create calm and comfort.

Over the coming weeks, Ashure Ministry will begin transitioning all its social media accounts, emails, and website to the new name and branding. This change does not affect the types of programs and services they offer. The people of Catawba County may continue to apply for food and crisis assistance during the transition. "Our donors and supporting churches have stepped up to provide the additional financial resources necessary to continue growing our ability to serve more clients," said Kristal Manning, director. "I am proud of the team's work and look forward to living into this new chapter for the ministry."



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