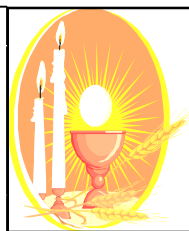


The Beacon



From The Heart Of Jon (the Methodist)

"After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves."
 Luke 10:1-3 (NIV)

I am always amazed at how easy it is for all of us to try to create a Jesus of our own designs – to use the biblical terms, "in our own image". What I am speaking of in particular is the notion that Jesus was some sort of spiritual drifter who traversed Palestine with no real plan, blown about by the changing winds. The only problem with this image of Jesus is that it is not congruent with the Jesus we encounter in the gospels. The text above is evidence, from the pen of Doctor Luke, that the Master had a Master-Plan.

Jesus – by intention – appointed seventy-two followers to go "ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go." This demonstrates Jesus' deep desire to engage in ministry through the creation of teams, and to be proactive more than reactive in his approach. Now this begs of us a significant, primary question: If Jesus organized his mission in this team-oriented, proactive way, are we organized and proactive in our mission?

This year, 2009, is a crossroads year for this community and our church. The second significant question for us is this: Where will this church's calling and giftedness intersect with the greater community – by intention – to address some of the specific hurts and hopes which are alive in the people who call this area their home??

We have clearly discerned the unique gifts and strengths of Benson Memorial UMC. They have been identified as: Corporate-Dynamic Worship, Significant Relational Groups, Specific - Concrete Missional Objectives, Strong Leadership Resources, and Adequate Space & Facilities. Our prayerful, shared, proactive, team-oriented discernment has caused us to take Jesus' example, in Luke, to heart as we embrace our primary Mission Goals for 2009. For a complete detailed version of these goals look on the table outside the Conference Room. The general focus areas are:

1. Corporate Dynamic Worship
2. Leadership Development
3. Adequate Space & Facilities

In Christ,
 JON (the Methodist)



MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN WAKE COUNTY

– Warmth for Wake is a volunteer organization within Wake County Human Services in which volunteers cut, split, and deliver firewood to those in need in Wake County. Over forty-eight homes were served last year and we hope to do the same or better this year. The work days will be the following Saturdays: February 14 and 28–March 14 and 28(if needed, will be clean-up day) at the Raleigh Yard Waste Facility, 900 New Hope Road and at Jimmy Everett's Tree Service, 10024 Baileywick Road. For more information about how to volunteer please contact the church office and details will be given. Thank You.

WAKE INTERFAITH DISASTER TEAM



Our church has affiliated with the Wake Interfaith Disaster Team (WIDT). WIDT is an interfaith organization with twenty-five affiliated congregations working together to promote preparedness and response to natural or man-made disasters in the Wake County area. WIDT's goal is to provide volunteers skilled in home rehabilitation, case management, chainsaw safety, victim advocacy, roof covering, and other area. WIDT will coordinate the efforts of Wake County congregations and act as a liaison to the civil authorities. We are offering a one-day class in Psychological First Aid. In the aftermath of a major disaster, after all the initial-response agencies have left, the stress of still being without a home, the overwhelming sense of loss at going daily past a mud-drench former home and seeing the unsalvageable former possessions can break the strongest among us. This class will teach how to comfort victims, to recognize when professional intervention is required, get it. The one-day class will be held Thursday, January 29 at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Cary. A \$15.00 fee is requested to cover lunch and snacks. Contact Mike McKinney for registration.



PRAYER CONCERNS :

Bill Beaton, Lois Branch, Betty Busacca, Becky Clegg, Beatrice Ennis, Fred Greger, "Marty" Martinez, Charles McAdams, Lizzie Mock, Kathleen Mujais, Paul Skinner, Mike Steger, Service men and women serving our country, Resa Webster.

For Prayer Concern Requests, please complete the Prayer Request Card available in the Sanctuary Pew Book Holders or contact the church office 787-0789. Drop the Prayer Request Cards in the Offering Plate during the Worship Service.

PRESENCE...

Worship Attendance:

- January 4 – 323
- January 11 – 329
- January 18 – 340
- January 25 – 355

Sunday School Attendance:

- January 4 – 186
- January 11 – 198
- January 18 – 211
- January 25 – 197

*"DID YOU KNOW"...*God has a plan for your life.

"He has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out when you have faith that God is speaking through you. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If your gift is to encourage others, do it! If you have money, share it generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and always be prayerful." (Romans 12:6-12, New Living Translation)

H. Eddie Fox and George E. Morris in their book "Faith Sharing" say, "Prayer is the beginning point for every attempt at faith sharing. The church's involvement and effectiveness in faith-sharing is in direct proportion to the church's prayer life. Likewise, a Christian's effectiveness in faith sharing is directly related to the sincerity of his or her prayer life."

Do you talk to God? Are you following His plan? As a Christian, are you using your God given abilities to share your faith with others?

CELEBRATE OUR FAITH, STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH,
SHARE OUR FAITH

Benson Book Club, April 6, 2009



The Benson Book Club will meet Monday, April 6, 2009, at 7PM. Please join us in reading and discussing *Blood Done Sign My Name* by Timothy Tyson.

"Daddy and Roger and 'em shot 'em a nigger." Those words, whispered to ten-year-old Tim Tyson by a playmate, heralded a firestorm that would forever transform the tobacco market town of Oxford, North Carolina.

On May 11, 1970, Henry Marrow, a twenty-three-year-old black veteran, walked into a crossroads store owned by Robert Teel and came out running. Teel and two of his sons chased and beat Marrow, then killed him in public as he pleaded for his life.

Like many small Southern towns, Oxford had barely been touched by the civil rights movement. But in the wake of the killing, young African Americans took to the streets. While lawyers battled in the courthouse, the Klan raged in the shadows and black Vietnam veterans torched the town's tobacco warehouses. Tyson's father, the pastor of Oxford's all-white Methodist church, urged the town to come to terms with its bloody racial history. In the end, however, the Tyson family was forced to move away.

Tim Tyson's riveting narrative of that fiery summer brings gritty blues truth, soaring gospel vision, and down-home humor to a shocking episode of our history. Like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Blood Done Sign My Name* is a classic portrait of an unforgettable time and place.

This Book Club is very informal. Any one is welcome at any time, and no long-term commitment is necessary. Read and discuss only the books that have interest for you. This club is open to anyone interested in reading and discussing good books.

Copies of this book are available through Wake County Public Libraries. For more information, please contact Carol Gosselin at 881-0504 or by email at j_c_gosselin@bellsouth.net.



FLOWER CALENDAR

The Flower Calendar is posted in the Administrative Building Hallway Bulletin Board. Please sign to provide Worship Service Altar Flowers.

THANK YOU MESSAGES

THANKS! Thanks to all performers in the Christmas Cantata: Choir Members, Mary Elizabeth Hearn, Jon Strother, and the woodwind players. Your dedicated work is much appreciated. Bob Petters

OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN OUR BENSON MEMORIAL WOMEN'S PRISON FELLOWSHIP TEAM

Benson Memorial has an active program which offers volunteers the opportunity to visit the Women's Prison Expectant Mothers' Unit four times a year. This Missions Outreach Program, brings joy, smiles, and "goodies" to the ladies by spending a few hours four evenings a year. This activity is very doable for both men and women in our church family. In order to volunteer, the NC Department of Correction, Division of Prisons, requires that each volunteer participate in a training workshop, which explains prison policies and expectations. There will be a New Volunteers Workshop on Saturday, February 21, 9:00 a.m. to noon at the Prison. New volunteers for the visitation team are most welcome. It is a very special, heartwarming way to serve and make a difference in these women's lives. There is a strict registration deadline for attending this training session. Please contact Pat Lee at 787-9406 or email: pat.leencsu2002@hotmail.com To learn more about this special opportunity.



BIBLE STUDY HELD EVERY TUESDAY MORNING will begin studying the book of Revelation Tuesday, February 10, 2009, 10:00 a.m., Conference Room, using Dr. Mickey Efrid's materials. Everyone is welcome.

STEP UP MINISTRY

Step Up helps persons who are struggling to find employment. The goal of the program is to help individuals from difficult backgrounds or circumstances become self-sufficient. The ministry provides job interview training and placement, and an intensive nine-month program for life skills such as developing and maintaining a budget. Each participant is paired for the entire nine months with a mentor in a 1-1 learning relationship. The number of people in the program is limited ONLY by the number of mentors. Currently, the program has over forty participants, but a capacity and funding for about eighty. There are many persons on their waiting list who could use the help of someone like you!! The commitment of a mentor is a training period, then meeting for about two hours every Tuesday for nine months. This program has an 80% success rate and has helped change literally hundreds of lives for the better.



Anyone interested in learning about this program first hand, is invited for a commitment-free Tuesday night dinner and tour of the program. Contact Ed Priestaf at epriestaf@bm-umc.org, or call the office to let us know your interested.

Feeling Called to Serve Internationally? Give 6 days and change lives!



As you have read in the bulletin and heard from the Jamaican Mission Team late last year, our friends in Jamaica need us. School children are no longer provided breakfast and families live in homes with leaky roofs and poor water supply. We believe God is calling us to help!

Our next Jamaica Mission Trip is being planned for March 26-31, and volunteers are needed to begin to address these needs as a Mission Team. Our goals for this trip are to help the Lethe School Administrators get the breakfast program restarted and to do home improvements on two local homes. For this trip, we will need people with good interpersonal and communication skills, and people possessing basic handyman and plumbing skills. We are looking for people who are compassionate, respectful, patient, flexible, and above all are feeling called to serve God by serving others.

Anyone interested in this exciting opportunity, please contact Bret Lehman (788-0033) or Mike McKinney (469-0196). The application deadline is February 15, 2009. If you feel called to help but can not participate in this particular trip, ask Mike or Bret about the many other ways to serve!

Acolyte Recognition

The acolyte assumes an important role in worship services. Lighting the candles on the altar is a reminder of Jesus' words in John 8:12: "I am the light of the world." When the flame is carried out it symbolizes the movement of faith back into the world. The acolyte also helps the minister during communion and baptisms. We welcome the following new acolytes: Wesley Dunn, Emily Guettler, Lauren Pinnix, and James Revels, and returning acolytes: Chip Cervi, Will Collins, Alex Johnson, Lindsay Lehman, Noah McKnight, Lily Revels, Megan Stevens, Ryan Stevens, and Meghan Stuchel. To the retiring acolytes: Jordan Allen and Eric Collins, BMUMC thanks you. To Susan Cooksy for coordinating the training and scheduling of the acolytes over the last few years and performing this service with deep gratitude.

A New Worship Service Targets "Young Cosmopolitans"

Over the past two years, members at Benson have been doing some dreaming. In 2007, a diverse group of people from Benson journeyed together through a long-range planning process called "12 Keys to an Effective Church". An outcome of that process was a long term vision to begin two new worship services by 2010, the first of which would begin in 2009. This vision was formalized at Benson's Charge Conference in October. Meanwhile, in the Spring of 2008, the Church Council voted to create a "New Worship Service Exploration Team". This team came together and worked through the summer and fall trying to prayerfully discern who in the community we might reach, and what a new worship service might look like. The team compared the demographics of Benson's congregation to those of the surrounding communities, and also looked at various styles of worship services that exist in the Raleigh area.

The team presented the results of its discernment to the December meeting of the Church Council, recommending that the new worship service target a demographic group referred to as "Young Cosmopolitans". These persons are mostly single, in their twenties, carving out careers in their first years out of college. While many of the area churches offer contemporary worship with loud music, big stages, and big auditoriums, these "Young Cosmopolitans" would thrive in more of a lounge or coffee house environment that might provide more opportunity for connection. The music would be eclectic and excellently done. A Worship Service would be offered Sunday night or a weeknight to fit the life-schedule of many of the persons that fit the demographic. The Council approved the creation of a Launch Team, which will further refine the vision and work out all of the many logistical details.

Please pray about this ministry, which is intended to reach not just those who are not yet at Benson Memorial, but those who have never heard the gospel presented in a language that resonates with their lives in a meaningful way. Please contact Ed Priestaf at epriestaf@bm-umc.org, or 919-787-0789 with questions or to become involved in the Launch Team.

Trustees Update - 2009



The Trustees have hit the ground running at the start of the new year meeting twice in the month of January. Here is some information we believe you will want to be aware of:

1. There are "Facilities Needs" clipboards outside the Church Office and by the back entrance to the Fellowship Hall for anyone to list facility needs (ie, light bulbs needing replacement, etc.) These clipboards will be checked regularly to see that needs are addressed.
2. The Trustees have just completed a walk-through of all our facilities and are currently compiling a list of building/facilities/grounds issues which will be addressed in priority order this year. (Note: One of the things we have discovered is the need to better organize all our storage/closets on campus)
3. Janitorial Service Schedule Change for 2009 – The trustees have asked our janitorial service to clean our facilities on Monday-Wednesday-and Friday this year, saving the church considerably in costs from last year's M-F schedule.
4. The Facilities Manager position continues to remain open while we monitor the current economic challenges to the church's financial posture. In the interim the Trustees ask for your cooperation in these specific ways:
 - a. Trash Removal – Groups that include food in their meetings should always be responsible for taking their trash to the dumpster immediately following their gathering. This helps us to prevent pest problems. The dumpster is located in the back parking lot by the storage building.
 - b. Set Up/Take Down - While every effort is being made to provide a clean and comfortable setting, S/S classes, small groups, etc. should take responsibility for setting your space as you need it prior to your gatherings.
5. Lastly, we are seeking to re-organize a team of volunteers in 2009 whose focus will be campus maintenance and repairs. This will enable members to use their gifts to serve the church, and for all of us to be good stewards of our financial Resources. If interested in working on this team, contact Rick Merrill – Trustees Chairperson

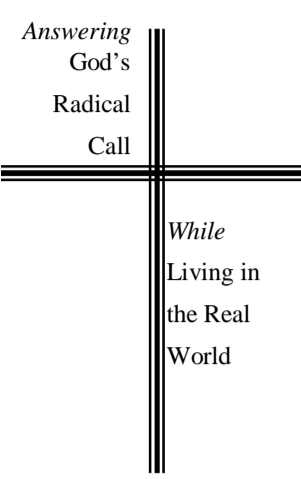
THE SUSANNA WESLEY CIRCLE will continue to meet regularly on the fourth Monday of each month, 1:00 p.m. in the Administrative Building, Conference Room. On February 17 a special meeting will be held at the NC Art Museum. Anyone wishing to meet for lunch please arrive at 11:30 a.m. To attend the tour only arrive at 1:00 p.m.

THE UMW MET at Louise Humphrey's house on Tuesday, January 6 for their first meeting of 2009. Plans for 2009 were discussed. The UMW will conduct a fund raising event to increase the scholarship fund. Please prayerfully consider making a pledge now. Checks may be sent to Ginny Wise, 4700 Twinwood Ct., Raleigh, NC 27613, and marked UMW Scholarship Fund.

Everyone is asked to continue the following:

1. Save Campbell's Soup Labels which are redeemed for cash that is donated to the Ronald McDonald House and to the United Methodist University in Fayetteville, NC.
2. Save Education Coupons which provide funding to York Elementary School.
3. Purchase Food Cards which make excellent gifts.

Please share these UMW fundraising ideas with your friends and neighbors. Anyone wishing to receive UMW information may contact ednacali@yahoo.com



Administrative Building
Bulletin Board...
Thank You From
...Ruth Watson
...Shelby Chapman
Becky Clegg

GIRL SCOUT TROOP 3246 – will sell cookies before and after church services February 15 and 22. The cookies will be available for sale outright and not pre-ordered.

Sympathy is extended to...

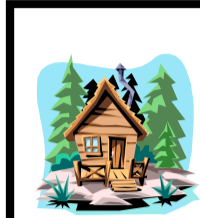
...Susan Daniels and her family for the death of Susan's mother, Lois Branch who passed away January 15, 2009.
...The family of Mike and Julie Gattis for the death of Julie's mother Faye Powell, who passed away Sunday, January 11, 2009. A Service of Death and Resurrection was celebrated on Wednesday, January 14.
...Doris and Al Page for the death of Doris's brother-in-law.

BEACON DEADLINE
DATE

The Newsletter Deadline
for the MARCH issue is
FEBRUARY 20.

The Beacon is published
monthly and mailed the
last week of each month.

Mary Honeycutt, Editor
919-787-0789
mhoneycutt@bm-umc.org



Women Retreaters... The "door is open" for registration! That means we can still accept registrations for the next few weeks for this year's special women's weekend together. The registration form is at the Visitor's Center in the narthex or outside the church office in the Administrative Building and needs to be returned to Cindy Hallman with your deposit as soon as possible.

We want every Benson woman who has the weekend free to consider spending it with us. It is such a wonderful opportunity to extend friendship groups and to deepen spiritual relationships. For a weekend that's full of smiles, join us at Avila. Blessings from your Retreat Planning Committee.

NOTE: Reverend Jon Strother's day off is Friday and Ed Priestaf, Associate Pastor is off on Monday. The church office closes at 1:00 p.m. on Fridays.