

The Beacon



From The Heart of Jon (the Methodist)

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 (NIV)

1964 was a very good year. In the life of our church it was a monumental year! So this month we will pause to celebrate a significant milestone in our forty-five year history. Sunday, March 22 is the forty-fifth anniversary of the day that 24 persons were received as "charter members" of Benson Memorial Methodist Church. You see back in 1964 we hadn't actually become United Methodists yet.

The founding pastor, Reverend Bill Sharpe recalls the experience.

One most important moment of history was made in the Skate Town Roller rink. On March 22, 1964, twenty-four persons were received in the church as the first charter members. The Reverend LaFon C. Vereen, Executive Secretary of The North Carolina Conference Board of Missions, preached, while District Superintendent Graham Eubank spoke the official words to declare the church organized....Since there were no schools, business meeting rooms or other community buildings, we (had) decided that our only hope was the rather unlikely metal structure which housed the Skate Town Roller Rink. When I approached co-owner Joe Hummel with the idea, he looked me straight in the eye and without one moment's hesitation exclaimed, "Parson, we got ourselves a church!"whenever Joe Hummel had the opportunity to introduce me, he always said, "The parson here takes care of the holy and I take care of the roller."

Having been a part of another congregation's birthing, Bill's story speaks in special ways to me. I ask you to pause and join me in giving thanks for the myriad ways through which God has been made visible in the people who have and continue to constitute the membership of Benson Memorial UMC. Try and imagine the hundreds of families whom we have been privileged to house and feed as our guests through the Wake Interfaith Hospitality Network. Imagine how many families have been changed, forever, because we welcomed their children into our preschool family and helped them develop a love for learning in an atmosphere of acceptance and encouragement. How about the hundreds of youth who have been welcomed to explore the meaning of faith in Jesus Christ in a safe atmosphere of trust, whose lives now represent his character and compassion? Through our shared-history we have intervened for Aids orphans in Africa and tutored local school children whose single parents needed partners in the great adventure of raising them. In short, Benson Memorial UMC is not our idea. WE are GOD'S IDEA! In postscript I would only add this: The best is yet to come!

In Christ,
Jon E. Strother

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 remaining work days will be the Saturdays, March 14 and 28. If the weather has improved the March 28 date will be a 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, chain saw safety, victim advocacy, roof covering, and other areas. WIDT will coordinate the efforts of Wake County congregations and act as a liaison to the civil authorities. Contact Mike McKinney 469-0196 for additional information.

CONFIRMATION will begin March 8, and will meet 3:30 p.m., Sunday afternoons. It's open to 6th grade and up. It will culminate with the actual confirmation ceremony during our Spiritfest celebration on May 31.



PRAYER CONCERNS :

Bill Beaton, Becky Clegg, Jeremy Friedlein, Fred Greger, "Marty" Martinez, Charles McAdams, Elaine McBride, Ashton Medina, Lizzie Mock, Kathleen Mujais, Bruce and Susan Panilaitis, Paul Skinner, June Stanley, Mike Steger, Service men and women serving our country.

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 or leave in the church office.

PRESENCE...

Worship Attendance:

February 1 – 381

February 8 – 364

February 15 – 374

February 22 – 315

Sunday School Attendance:

February 1 – 190

February 8 – 220

February 15 – 199

February 22 – 185

"DID YOU KNOW"...

...Witnessing is something we do everyday just by the way we live. Can others tell you are a Christian? In church, we often hear about the "Good News" and Christ's commission to share it with the world. However, when the subject of evangelism comes up, our response is generally one of unease: "Oh please Lord, not me. I just don't have enough confidence and don't really know the scripture well enough."

There is no time like the present to clarify what you believe and how you interpret this "Good News." When and why did you decide to follow Christ? What caused you to make the decision? Were you required to know about God and the history of God's people? How relevant was this information to your acceptance of God's love and forgiveness? When we affiliate ourselves with a church, we begin the process of learning; first, as children we are told Bible Stories; then, as we age and are capable of understanding, our lessons become more complex. As adults, we choose what and how to study. With today's many Bible translations and wonderful study guides, it is easy to have knowledge; however, what we need is the heart to tell others.

CELEBRATE OUR FAITH, STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH,
SHARE OUR FAITH

BENSON BOOK GROUP— The Benson Book Club will meet Monday, April 6, 2009, 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. Please join us in reading and discussing [Blood Done Sign my Name](#), by Timothy Tyson. The book is available through Wake County Libraries. This book club is very informal. Anyone is welcome at anytime, and no long term commitment is necessary. Read and discuss only the books that have interest for you. For more information, please contact Carol Gosselin at [881-0504](tel:881-0504) or by email at j.c.gosselin@bellsouth.net.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Charles and Elaine Motley joined—1/18/09
Celeste Whitt joined—1/18/09
Patrick and Jennifer Kanetzke joined —
1/25/09
Hakan and Janet Lynn Fransson joined—
2/1/09
Aaron and Deanna Guyton joined—2/15/09
Marshall and Cathy Poland—2/22/09
Courtney Poland—2/22/09
Leigh Ann Wilson 2/22/09
Evan Fransson will be placed on the church's Preparatory Roll
Bryce Poland will be placed on the church's Preparatory Roll
Nicco Kanetzke will be placed on the church's Preparatory Roll.
Matthew Sullivan will be placed on the church's Preparatory Roll and he will attend Confirmation Classes this spring. Matthew is the son of Leigh Ann Wilson.



FLOWER CALENDAR

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



BAPTISM...

...LUCCIO KANETZKE WAS
BAPTIZED JANUARY 25, 2009
...CALVIN FRANSSON WAS
BAPTIZED, FEBRUARY 8 2009

We welcome these children with love!

BENSON WILL HOST WIHN. APRIL 19-26, 2009

Lay Leader's Time Share

Are we reaching out in the community sharing God's word? Are we revealing the Love of Jesus Christ? Would you like to be a part of this ministry?

I pray the answer to each of these questions is "Yes". If not, with your prayers and support, it will be.

We have had three successful outreach ministries at "The Covington" on Duraleigh road in the past six weeks. We have opened our hearts and shared our love and joy in song and scripture with the residents. This is not enough! They want more!

Our next scheduled Worship Service is Sunday, March 22, 3:00 p.m. I am planning an after Easter Celebration. I am looking for someone to bake some cookies, someone to provide some soft drinks, someone to play the piano, someone to join me in delivering a brief message, and someone to lead the singing. See below for contact phone numbers.

Another opportunity to share in music. The Covington has a Grand Piano that sits in their hallway silently. It needs to make noise. If anyone has a little time to spare and can play the piano, I invite you to drop in at The Covington and play a few minutes for the residents. Just call me and let me know when you can drop by to share your God given talent. Contact Jimmy Ennis 787-5626 or call the church office 787-0789.

STEP UP MINISTRY

The goal of the ministry is to help individuals from difficult backgrounds or circumstances find employment and 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 it has a capacity and funding for about eighty. There are many persons on the 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 ministry first hand, is invited for a commitment-free dinner and tour of the program on Tuesdays. Contact Ed Priestaf at epriestaf@bm-umc.org, or call the office to let us know you are interested.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR NOTES
THE CHILDREN ARE BEGINNING TO PREPARE FOR CHILDREN'S DAY, APRIL 26. All children ages K-5TH GRADE are urged to come to Choir and chime Rehearsals on Sunday afternoons, when we practice skits, songs and Liturgical Dance for this special upcoming event.

Choir Rehearsals are:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 4:30 p.m. | Children's Chimes—Sanctuary—Grades 3rd-5th |
| 4:30 p.m. | Cherub Choir—Choir Room Below Sanctuary—Grades Kindergarten-2nd |
| 5:00 p.m. | Carol Choir—Choir Room Below Sanctuary-Grades 3rd-5th |
| 5:45 p.m. | Liturgical Dance—Sanctuary |



READING OUR PASTORS' BLOGS

Check out some of the musings of our pastors. As a reader, you can share your thoughts in response to the articles, or just read what is being posted. There are millions of blogs out there by famous, infamous, ordinary, and anonymous people. Our pastors definitely have something to add to the global conversation.

Try this link <http://jonthemethodist.blogspot.com> and you can travel through nano-space to the mysterious blog of Jon (the Methodist). Who knows, maybe one day I will know what I am doing.*

Ed Priestaf, Associate Pastor is trying his hand at blogging. Some of Ed's recent posts that you might find interesting include his journal entries from the Benson Mission Trip to Jamaica last October. Try this link: <http://priestaf.blogspot.com>

[THE CHURCH CALENDAR IS NOW ON-LINE FOR EVERYONE!](http://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=bensonmemorial%40gmail.com&ctz=America/New_York)
[http://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=bensonmemorial%40gmail.com&ctz=America/New_York.](http://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=bensonmemorial%40gmail.com&ctz=America/New_York)

UMW FOOD GIFT CARDS

UMW WILL BE SELLING FOOD GIFT CARDS BEGINNING SUNDAY, MARCH 1, IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING. UMW WILL GIVE 5% OF THE SALES TO THE JAMAICAN MISSION TEAM. PLEASE HELP THE MISSION TEAM BY PURCHASING GIFT CARDS.



Trustees Update - 2009



The Trustees have hit the ground running at the start of the new year, meeting twice in 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 everyone 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. There is a need to better organize all storage/closets on campus.
3. Janitorial Service Schedule Change for 2009 – The trustees have asked our janitorial service to clean facilities on Monday-Wednesday and Friday this year, saving the church considerably in costs compared to 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 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 and taking it down afterwards.
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 rmerrill@crenscentstatebank.com, 783-5815 (W) 606-1117 (M).

THE TRUSTEES are re-organizing a team of volunteers whose focus will be campus maintenance and repairs. This will enable members to use their talents to serve the church, and for all of us to be good stewards of our financial resources. Join us for an upcoming church work-day set for Saturday, March 14, 2009, 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. If interested in working on this team, contact Rick Merrill – Trustees Chairperson rmerrill@crenscentstatebank.com, 783-5815 (W) 606-1117 (M).

ADULT FELLOWSHIP

With a little bit of luck and whar-in' of green, the ADULT

FELLOWSHIP lads and lassies are invited to an Irish Celebration. Thar'll be feastin' (stuffed baked potatoes), dancing, bagpipes, and more.

The date on the calendar is Tuesday, March 12 at half pas' eleven in the Fellowship "Garten" (Hall). The tariff will be \$5, a blessing for shur'.

Best let the BASKETT'S know by ringing up 791-0179 or emailing gngbaskett@bellsouth.net.

"May the roads rise to meet you. May the wind be at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. The rain fall soft upon your fields, And, until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His hand."



The Joyful Noise Campaign



"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord....Enter God's gates with thanksgiving, and God's courts with praise.....For the Lord is good..." Psalm 100

Dear Benson Memorial UMC Family,

Over 30 years ago Benson Memorial UMC invested in an electronic organ which has served us well through countless Sunday services, weddings, funerals and cantatas celebrated in the sanctuary. When purchased, the organ reflected the current developments in the electronic/digital reproduction of organ music. Since then, time has taken its toll and repair costs to this instrument are increasing annually. Technicians and others evaluating the organ have noted the deterioration of the speakers and other issues. Many, including our music staff, have commented on the instrument's diminished performance.

Recognizing that time had come to consider replacement of the organ, our Church Council last year established an Organ Exploration Committee, which investigated the various digital organs currently available, their costs, warranties, and viability for our sanctuary. Members of the Committee traveled to at least two area churches to evaluate the sound of competing brands of electronic organs. Taking into account all factors, the Committee determined that the electronic/digital organ representing the best quality and value for Benson Memorial UMC is manufactured by the Johannes Organ Company of Holland.

This Johannes organ has excellent sound, both in quality and variety. It incorporates the extremely significant improvements in the digital reproduction of pipe organ sound developed over the last few decades. The Johannes company appears to have an excellent track record, as does its North Carolina representative firm. With a ten year parts and labor warranty, it should be essentially maintenance/cost free to Benson Memorial UMC for the foreseeable future.

As you recall, the Committee arranged for a Johannes organ to be placed in the sanctuary on a trial basis this past fall, at no cost to the church. Using this organ in our sanctuary worship services reaffirmed the Committee's decision that this Johannes organ model (Rembrandt) is the one best suited for us. Purchasing this organ will strengthen our worship life and music ministry. It should be more than adequate for many years, even if our sanctuary space is expanded. In January, the Church Council established the Organ Fund Campaign Committee to raise funds necessary to purchase and install the new Johannes organ. We are calling this the "Joyful Noise Campaign."

The cost of this organ is \$42,000.00. Excitement over the possibility of a new organ led members of the Organ Exploration Committee and the adult choir to pledge approximately \$16,000.00 toward the Campaign goal. We believe that the entire church family will support this effort and that it is in all of our best interest that we seek to fund this above and beyond our normal giving. Our second-mile gifts will make this dream a reality. We pledge to join you in continuing our rich history of supporting local and world-wide mission, while making a one-time sacrificial gift to secure this much needed instrument.

You will be receiving a letter and pledge card soon.

We cannot purchase the organ until the entire \$42,000.00 has been received. The pledge drive continues now through April 15. We ask that all pledges be paid in full by June 1, 2009. Please consider a gift in honor or memory of a family member or friend.

Thank you very much for your support.

Sincerely,
Tracy Maness, Chairman; Berry Petty, Nan Maples, Anne Jenkins, Cindy Hallman, Mary Elizabeth Hearn, Bob Petters, Ginger Friedlein

Answering
God's
Radical
Call

White
Living in
the Real
World

Administrative Building
Bulletin Board
Thank You From ...
...Sally Russell Jones



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.
...Jim and Anne Jenkins on the January 31 death of Anne's brother, Kenneth Haynes.



The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet Tuesday, March 17, 2:30 p.m. in the Thrillseekers Room. All new or seasoned knitters and crocheters are always welcome! For more information, contact Pam Williford at 846-3469 or pammyknits@yahoo.com.

THE UMW GENERAL MEETING WILL BE TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 7:00 P.M., IN THE YOUTH CENTER. DESSERTS WILL BE FURNISHED.

THE SUSANNA WESLEY CIRCLE WILL MEET MONDAY, MARCH 23, 1:00 P.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM.

**BEACON DEADLINE
DATE**

The Newsletter Deadline for the APRIL Issue is MARCH 20.

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

Mary Honeycutt, Editor
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Our Financial Giving

	Month January	Year - to - Date January
Budget Needs	\$60,714.68	\$60,714.68
Actual Receipts	\$55,997.08	\$55,997.08
Actual Expenses	\$59,703.87	\$59,703.87

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.