

Benson United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 72
Benson, NC 27504

Keeping in Prayer

Nancy Allen, Edwin Aparcio & Family, Scott Barnes, Bill Berryhill, Marguerite Clifton, Darla Hamm's daughter, Rachel, Altagracia Hernandez, Linda Jackson, Billy & Jan Johnson, Charlie Kuhn, Martha McLamb, Nancy Santamaria's granddaughter, Jennifer, Terri Sessoms' family, Lynn Stanfield's family, Jaylen Stanley, College Students, all who serve in our armed forces. Those in the Medical Profession; those in the Educational System; our Stay-at-home Saints & those who do not know the Lord.

THE BEACON
July ~ September 2022



Our Mission: Serving as a beacon for Jesus Christ by believing and sharing His Love.

“On Your Mark, Get Set...”

My last email was sent to you, prior to our Church Council voting on Sunday night, which I entitled, *The Finish Line, is the Starting Line*. The idea behind my title was that September 25, 2022, was both an end-goal as well as marking the beginning of a brand-new race. I wanted to write with an update about where we have been, as well as the pace I need your help to maintain, over the next few weeks.

Sunday night.

Part of the unavoidable dynamics of any majority vote is the built-in sense of winning or losing that it creates. My goal from the start has been for Benson UMC to be able to make an “informed decision” about the direction and future of our church, either to continue with or to depart from the United Methodist Church. What I could not have anticipated was the sudden surge of anxiety about the outcome of our evening’s Church Conference, which I believe most of you were probably aware of at some level.

I feel like our DS, Rev. Chris Brady, handled himself and our business session well. From mid-August, and September 25, he’d already presided over eighteen different church votes. In terms of the registration and the balloting, all went as he intended it to go, and I’m most appreciative of the volunteers who helped with the evening.



MINISTRY STAFF
Billy A. Olsen, Pastor
Marsha Turner, Children’s Ministry Director
Karen Hicks, Youth’s Ministry Director
Melanie Leslie, Director of Music
Dianne Butler, Treasurer
Judy Johnson, Administrative Assistant
Lindsey Whelittle, Nursery Coordinator

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Office: 206 E. Church St.
Mailing address: P.O. Box 72
Benson, NC 27504

Office Phone: 919-701-1408

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Find us on Facebook: Benson UMC

BIRTHDAYS

OCTOBER

10/1- Teresa Tippet
10/7- Donna Davis
10/8- John Wood, IV
10/9- Brenda Bonner
10/10- Greg Davis
10/11- Suzanne Cook
10/12- Krista Fowler
10/13- Tony Barefoot
10/13- Tony McLamb
10/19- Jeanelle McCain
10/20- Greg Davis
10/21- Teresa Stephenson
10/22- Scott McDaniel
10/22- Mary Ann Lee
10/22- Joseph Johnson
10/23- Linda Norris
10/24- Jesse Fife
10/24- Amanda Lee
10/26- Ethan Johnson
10/31- Clint Creed

NOVEMBER

11/2- Caroline Hockaday
11/3- Libbie Medlin
11/5- LuAnn Gregory
11/11- Mai Stephenson
11/12- J.T. Turner
11/16- Jonathan Butler
11/18- Blake Barefoot
11/18- Kaylee Davis
11/18- Tyler Davis
11/18- Jadon Olsen

BIRTHDAYS

NOVEMBER

11/21- Glenn Lee
11/27- Renna Johnson
11/27- Jean Hale
11/29- Mike Hale

DECEMBER

12/1- Winn Graham
12/1- Melissa Stephenson
12/8- Erasmo Santamaria (husband)
12/10- Katie Galindo
12/13- Jamie Butler
12/13- Ashley Butler
12/14- Maddox Sills
12/19- Erasmo Santamaria (son)
12/22- Angel Irving
12/24- Zachary McLamb
12/26- Weston Hockaday
12/26- Becky Lamm

ANNIVERSARIES

OCTOBER

10/7- Larry & Dixie Nunnery
10/15- Steve & Suzanne Cook
10/5- Austin & Krista Fowler

DECEMBER

12/5- Tom & Ann Parrish
12/5- Eric & Susan Raynor
12/17- Tony & Martha McLamb
12/18- Clint & Amy Creed

FLOWERS

FLOWERS FOR OCTOBER

10/2- Donna & Colon Davis
10/9- Johnny & Susie Allen
10/16- Jeanelle McCain
10/23- TBA
10/30- TBA

FLOWERS FOR NOVEMBER

11/6- All Saints Day
11/13- TBA
11/20- Ricky Harrison
11/27- Christmas

FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER

12/4- Christmas
12/11- Christmas
12/18- Christmas
12/25- Christmas

USHERS AND GREETERS

OCTOBER USHERS:

Jerry Medlin & Tony Barefoot

OCTOBER GREETERS:

Jerry and Tony & Cindy

NOVEMBER USHERS:

Jim Johnson & Johnny Allen

NOVEMBER GREETERS:

Jim & Tracie and Johnny & Susie Allen

DECEMBER USHERS:

TBD and Bob Tart

DECEMBER GREETERS:

TBD and Bob Tart

Our post-Church-Conference vote to join the Global Methodist Church was...awkward. There wasn't anything out-of-order with the Motion brought from the floor for us to join the GMC. Many other churches that are in this "process" have handled their business in exactly the same manner – first the vote to Disaffiliate; then the vote to Affiliate. But in our sanctuary, on Sunday night, I left feeling like the second vote might have been efficient but it was not pastoral. Would it have been better to have handled the second vote by a secret ballot? Probably, especially considering the vote to leave the UMC was emotional enough as a single event.

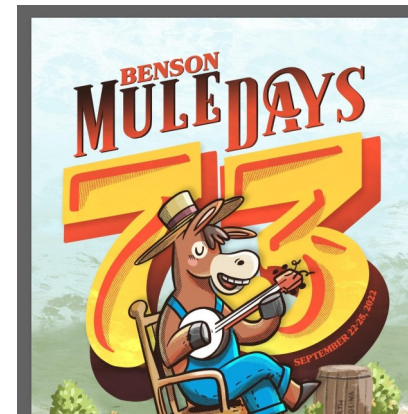
One of the things I was not prepared for was for our DS to ask me, publicly, if I would be following our church in leaving the UMC. He then asked me if I was prepared to make a public statement about my own career plans. Prior to Rev. Brady's question, I'd made up my mind, some time ago, that with or without our congregation, my days remaining with the UMC for longer than another year were numbered. What I have not been sure about has been how our Bishop or Annual Conference might feel about me professionally, as a UM pastor, at a UM church, who was ready to leave because of my own conscience. It was in that moment he gave me the mic so I could go "on the record" after our Disaffiliation vote.

The days leading up to Sunday's vote at our house, were consumed with the idea of how the church's vote could impact our family. Would we have to move away? To get our two currently commuting college students into on-campus housing? Find a new church to serve? A new job for Elaine? Would we be able to remain close enough to help care for our aging parents? Knowing the "risks" of ministry life doesn't always mean you handle them well. Twenty-four-years and I'm still learning.

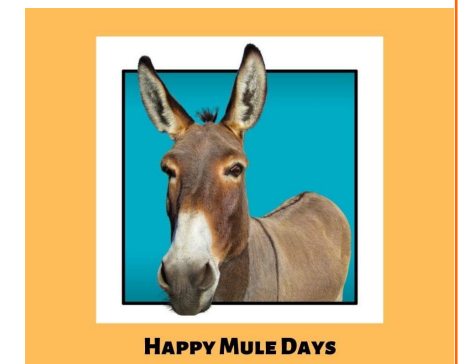
The language of running and athletic competition is a common theme in the New Testament. We want to start well. We want to finish well. The time between our starting and our finishing is where life is lived, and our conditioning, our commitment, and our endurance will be tested time and again. There is much to be done, which I'm going to outline with a few bullet points. Most of these things have to be accomplished during the month of October, and the first days of November.

What happens next?

- The vote Sunday night to leave the UMC via Disaffiliation includes several administrative tasks, which soon, will be addressed by scheduling meetings of our Church Council, and all of our other administrative committees/teams.
- There are submissions of our 9/25 voting which are now being processed by both the NC Conference of the UMC, and the Global Methodist Church. I also have to get myself on course, professionally, to have my UM ordination recognized by the GMC, so there is as seamless a transition as possible.
- I have to work out new health insurance coverage for myself and my family that remains within the bounds of our church's 2023 budget line. We are considering about six different plans available through the Global Methodist Church right now.
- We have to decide on a new name for our church. Currently, "Benson Methodist Church" seems to be the most popular alternative; other suggestions welcome.
- There will be some legal paperwork in the transition, but not nearly as much as if we were to become an "independent" church. By the end of this year, assuming we meet all the stipulations of the UMC, we will be granted a release from the UM Trust Clause, therefore owning and controlling all our own property. The GMC has no trust clause.
- We have to complete a duplication and submission of our church's historical records, to be submitted to the NC Conference Archives and History office.
- Individuals will have to decide if they want to remain members of our church in 2023. No one will be arbitrarily removed from the roll, but instead, as we begin something new, everyone we have contact information for on the current church roll will be given an opportunity to say "yes" or "no" going into the New Year.
- We are still "Benson UMC" until 12/31/2022.
- And I will have to have help to accomplish tasks and meet deadlines. Right now, I'm just trying to get things sorted out, so I can then seek out volunteers.



Pastor Billy, Amelia & Elaine Participating in Mule Days September, 2022



September 11, 2022

This was a day of remembrance but we also celebrated having the Choir and the Children's Sermon return for the first time since Covid!



The Choir continues to grow under the direction of our new Music Director, Melanie Leslie!



Finally, there will be all the other challenges that have yet to present themselves. I know many of you have questions. I know there are a whole range of emotions about our time together on 9/25. This is another invitation to come and talk to me about decision making, about direction, about the future of our church and whatever else you may want to ask. I'm no mind reader, but I am easy to find.

Obviously, Sundays come the same time every week, and I want to offer the church my best whenever we gather for worship. One of the things Elaine's dad, Pastor Chuck, was fond of saying, whenever he faced a new season in life: "The best is yet to be." The reason for his hope and confidence? It's like we say on Communion Sundays – "Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again." Or like they say at the start of a race, *On your mark, get set, GO!*

Love to all,

Pastor Billy A. Olsen

June 26, 2022

A Special Time of Congregational Prayer
for Jimmy Chavez

“A New Soldier’s Prayer”

O Lord of Hosts stretch forth we pray, your mighty arm to
strengthen and protect the soldiers of our country.

Support them in the day of battle and time of rest and training
and keep them safe from all evil.

Imbue them with courage and loyalty and grant that in all
things they may serve without reproach.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



Christian Connections

- **Every Monday at 10:00AM** is Monday Morning Sharing Group. This is a nondenominational group that meets in the Fellowship Hall. This group is led by Jeanelle McCain. They encourage one another with scripture and prayer.
- **1st Tuesday of the Month** the two Women’s Circles meet. The circles discuss current issues as they relate to the bible. Devotions and missions are actively studied and pursued.
 - *The Circle of Love meets in the morning and Janet Wilson is the contact person.
 - *The Circle of Faith meets in the evening and the contact people are Marsha Turner and Karen Hicks.
- **Every Tuesday at 4:30PM** Prayer Group meets in the Kitchen to pray over cards in the Prayer Box.
- **Every Wednesday**
 - *4:30-5:00-Bible Lessons for 4yrs-3rd grade with Karen & Marsha
 - *4:30-5:00-Music with Melanie for Jr. & Sr. Youth Groups - Sanctuary
 - *5:00-5:30-Music with Melanie & Lyndsay
 - *5:00-6:15- Bible discovery with Marsha & Karen- Sunday School Room
 - *6:15-7:30-Adult Bible Studies- Childcare available
 - *Ladies’ Bible Study- led by Elaine Olsen in the Fellowship Hall
 - *Co-Ed Bible Study- led by Pastor Billy in the Choir Room
- **Yearly Activities:**
 - *March- Women’s Prayer Breakfast
 - *November- 1st Saturday- Fall Festival

Christian Connections

How to get plugged into the plugged church family

- **1st & 3rd Sunday Breakfast** for Church Family at **8:45AM** in Fellowship Hall
- **Every Sunday** at **9:00-9:45AM**- Choir practice in Sanctuary
- **Every Sunday** at **9:45AM**:
 - ***Adult Sunday School Class (The Pilgrims)** meet in the church office. This class follows a quarterly curriculum and offers a discussion of scripture and life application. This class has a rotation of teachers
 - ***Adult Sunday School Class (The Word)** meet in the room off the Fellowship Hall. This class is for anyone who is interested in growing deeper in the basics of scripture. Books of the Bible are studied in depth. This class is taught by Jim Johnson with an occasional substitute.
 - ***Children's Sunday School Class K-5** taught in the first classroom off the Sanctuary. This class is led by Marsha Turner and several other teachers. The curriculum, Faith Weaver's Friend, is used to teach Biblical truths and application.
 - ***Youth Sunday School Class 6-12** is taught in the end classroom off the Sanctuary. The curriculum, Faith Weaver's Friend, is used to teach truths of the Bible. This class is led by Karen Hicks with several other adults serving as substitutes.
- **Every Sunday** during Worship Service at **11:00AM-12:00PM**:
 - ***Children's Sermons** are led during the Worship hour by Pastor Billy Olsen to help children engage in worship.
 - ***Children's Church** uses the curriculum, Simply Loved, which explores Old and New Testaments. Children journey through the Bible. and discover friendship with Jesus throughout God's story. Children's Church takes place after the Children's Sermon in the Fellowship Hall. Many volunteers help with Children's Church.

July 24, 2022

Reception of New Members



Susie Allen
Weston Hockaday
Jim Jackson



Welcome!