

INsight

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF BENTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MARCH 2018



Weekly Events

Sundays

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Worship | 8:15 AM |
| Sunday School | 9:15 AM |
| Worship | 10:30 AM |
| Bible Study @ Hearne Home..... | 6:00 PM |

Mondays

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Slushies & Scripture | 6:45 AM |
| Bodies On a Mission..... | 9:00 AM |

Tuesdays

| | |
|--|---------|
| Slushies & Scripture 6th & 7th Grade ... | 6:45 AM |
| Intercessory Prayer Team..... | 9:00 AM |
| Grief Support Group at Benton COA..... | 1:00 PM |
| Bodies On A Mission | 6:00 PM |
| First Place 4 Health | 6:00 PM |
| Men's Basketball | 7:00 PM |

Wednesdays

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Slushies & Scripture HS Boys..... | 6:45 AM |
| Bodies On a Mission..... | 9:00 AM |
| The Closet Workday | 11:30 AM |
| The Closet Distribution | 11:30 AM |
| WOW!..... | 5:30 PM |

Thursdays

| | |
|--|----------|
| Slushies & Scripture Middle School | 6:45 AM |
| Bible Study | 10:00 AM |
| Bodies On A Mission | 6:00 PM |
| Choir Practice..... | 6:00 PM |

Fridays

| | |
|---|---------|
| Slushies & Scripture 9th Grade Girls | 6:45 AM |
| Bodies On a Mission..... | 9:00 AM |

A Word From Pastor Brad

Church,

I came upon this Lenten parable recently and found it very intriguing. There's a universal message here that can speak to all of us. As we journey to the cross with Jesus what are you learning along the way in this season of your life? Pray about that. Enjoy this reflection from Seth Richardson.

There once was a woman who had come to know Jesus as a teenager. She genuinely experienced God's forgiveness through the cross of Christ. She turned her life completely over to God.

The immediate fruit of her conversion was evident. Her life was truly transformed from the way she once lived. And she continued to grow and mature as a follower of Jesus. God felt very near to her. She was full of energy and fervor for God's kingdom. The movements of the Spirit in her life were palpable. She prayed frequently – studied scripture – served her neighbors.

This was all genuine and good. She took her faith seriously. She was certainly not a “consumer Christian.”

But as the years went by, the sermons got more familiar – the podcasts from famous Christian preachers less stirring – God seemed more frequently and increasingly distant. Doubt occasionally crept into her heart. And while God had truly, radically changed her heart at her conversion, there were areas of her life – places of brokenness – that continued to persist despite her longing to experience change. Her once vibrant faith felt increasingly dry and lifeless.

Even more frustrating, she could not explain why this was happening. She did not know how to relate to the angst and fear nestled quietly in the depths of her soul – to the residual guilt and shame in the corners of her heart. She did not want to become resigned to this place of dryness like she had seen so many other Christians do – who, because of the burdens of life, find it easier to hit cruise control – to name the dryness as normal and paper-over it with a layer of religious niceness.

Continued on page 3...

Monthly & Special Events

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------|
| Thursday, March 1 | Safety Team Meeting | 6:00 PM |
| Saturday, March 3 | Group VBS Training..... | 8:00 AM |
| Sunday, March 4 | United Methodist Men Breakfast & Devotion | 7:00 AM |
| Monday, March 5 | Worship Team Meeting..... | 6:00 PM |
| Tuesday, March 6 | United Methodist Women General Meeting..... | 6:30 PM |
| Thursday, March 8 | Morning Glories | 9:30 AM |
| Friday, March 9 | Sew Crazy Ladies | 10:00 AM |
| Monday, March 12 | Mission Team Meeting | 6:30 PM |
| Tuesday, March 13 | Daycare Board Meeting | 5:30 PM |
| Friday, March 16 | Just a Bunch of Lit Wits @ Panera | 7:15 AM |
| Saturday, March 17 | United Methodist Women's Luncheon | 11:30 AM |
| Sunday, March 18 | United Methodist Men Breakfast & Devotion..... | 7:00 AM |
| | LifeShare Blood Drive | 7:45 AM |
| Tuesday, March 20 | NWLA Truck Unloading..... | 9:00 AM |
| | NWLA Food Bag Packing with Youth | 3:00 PM |
| | Finance Meeting | 6:00 PM |
| | Nightingales Circle Meeting..... | 6:30 PM |
| Wednesday, March 21 | The Closet @ Benton UMC | 11:30 AM |
| | The Closet @ A Cross Faith | 11:30 AM |
| | The Table Food Distribution..... | 12:30 PM |
| Friday, March 23 | Sew Crazy Ladies | 10:00 AM |
| Saturday, March 24 | 30 Hour Famine..... | 10:00 AM |
| Tuesday, March 27 | O.P.A.L.S. | 11:30 AM |
| Thursday, March 29 | Maundy Thursday..... | 6:00 PM |
| Friday, March 30 | Good Friday Luncheon..... | 11:00 AM |
| Saturday, March 31 | Souper Saturday..... | 7:30 AM |
| | Cypress Baptist Easter Fun Run..... | 7:45 AM |
| | Easter Egg Hunt | 2:00 PM |

For more information about these and other events, or to schedule use of a room at the church, please contact Linda Silas in the church office at (318) 965-2273. Regularly scheduled events are listed on page 1.

O.P.A.L.S.

(Older People with Active Life Styles)

**Tuesday, March 27 at 11:30 AM
in the Family Life Center
Cost: \$5.00**

The Older People with Active Life Styles will meet for their monthly gathering of fun, food and fellowship! We have a special speaker, Howard Hines, from the Louisiana United Methodist Children & Family Services, located in Ruston on the campus of what we know as the Methodist Children's Home. He will tell us how it has evolved and what the new facility is doing for the changing culture of our times. It is such good news and we're eager to share it – everyone is invited. Don't forget to bring a donation for the Common Ground pantry. They are our mission focus as we partner with them to provide food staples for needy families in the Cedar Grove neighborhood. This month we are collecting toiletries (deodorant, toothpaste, etc.) and diapers (sizes 3, 4 & 5).

**For reservations, please contact
Peggy Rumbaugh at (318) 349-1465**

BIBLE STUDY
Genesis
Begins Sunday, January 21, 2018
Sundays at 6:00 PM
at the Home of
Buddy & Reba Hearne
3408 Shirley Court, Benton, LA
(318) 965-0122

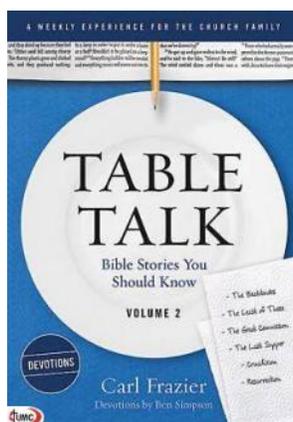


TABLE TALK

Wednesdays

**5:30 PM—Dinner and
6:00 PM—Study**

**For information or reservations,
contact: Linda Silas
(318) 965-2273 or
linda.silas@bentonumc.org**

Complementing Table Talk's Volume 1 programs, this selection of devotions brings the message home and allows participants to apply the session's message to their own lives.

Volume 2 presents the stories of The Beatitudes, The Least of These, The Great Commission, The Last Supper, Crucifixion, and Resurrection.

Materials needed: Notebook, pen, and a Bible.

A Word From Pastor Brad continued from page 1...

But one day a new world of spirituality was opened to her – the world of spiritual formation and discipleship – with a closet full of spiritual disciplines that have characterized the lives of the faithful for several millennia: contemplation, solitude, fasting, serving the poor, silence, simplicity, liturgy. New books to digest, concepts to master, prayers to pray, liturgical seasons to observe! A treasure trove of sacred practices that would surely take her deeper than she had ever been – that would surely breathe fresh life into what felt like dry, dead bones.

So she jumped-in headfirst.

Truly I tell you, although those spiritual disciplines and practices are good and necessary, they do not bring new life.

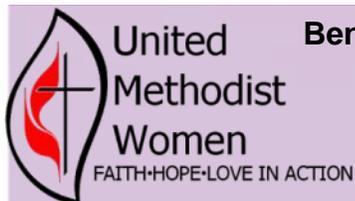
They do not, on their own, have the power to relieve the burden of spiritual dryness. When obedience becomes a technique to fix our anxiety and brokenness, it is nothing more than dependence on the self – not on Jesus. No matter how ancient, good, and helpful these practices can be, when we enter into them thinking *that they will fix us* and make us better Christians, they will only ever lead to moralism and spiritual death.

Too often we enter into Lenten disciplines having never learned to trust God with our brokenness, in the midst of the tension. This is a great danger. Lenten disciplines can actually be tools for avoiding the very places where I need God's grace the most: my guilt, failure and shame.

When I reach the place, as I often do, that this woman reached, I cannot continue to run from, avoid, or fix my dryness and brokenness, even if that running, avoiding and fixing comes in the "holiest" of packages. The best thing I can do this Lent is learn to embrace my dryness and brokenness as God's gift to me. I can do this trusting the good news that God wants to take me on a journey deeper into his love.

This Lent, God wants to take me down – as a wise man once told me – the most loving take-down I've ever had. Will I surrender to him today?

God Bless- Pastor Brad



**Benton United Methodist Women
President, Pat Mosher**

onthelake8@bellsouth.net

(318) 572-3447

Morning Glories*

Thursday, March 8, 2018 at 9:30 AM
Breakfast Club Sunday School Classroom

Nightingales*

Tuesday, March 20 at 6:30 PM
Breakfast Club Sunday School Classroom

*Catherine Long will be presenting
A Covenantal Community at both circles.

We would like to thank everyone for their participation in our Fund-Raising. We made over \$2,800 for missions through the UMM Auction, sweet Valentine Basket and yummy Cookie Stroll!

**Celebrate 150 Years
Saturday, March 3 at 10:00 AM
Alexandria First United Methodist Church**

UMW is 150 years old!! Louisiana Conference UMW is presenting *Celebrate 150 Years* at Alexandria First UMC. Proceeds will go to the *150 Anniversary Legacy Fund*. There will be speakers, games, music and lunch for only \$15. See Pat Mosher for information. Please try to come and carpool.



**General Meeting
Tuesday, March 6 at 6:30 PM**

Program will be presented by Kim Hauser about our Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston in the Family Life Center.

All are invited to hear about what our Children's Homes are doing for our Louisiana children.

United Methodist Women

Luncheon

Saturday, March 17th 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

We are having Shellie Rushing Tomlinson a Christian author, speaker and radio host, from Lake Providence, LA. Tickets are \$20, bring friends and family for a fun time and delicious lunch. Tickets are available from Patsy Burnes or ask any UMW member. We can reserve you a table. Tell all and attend this special luncheon instead of our usual style show.

Mark your calendars:

Circles: April 12, 17; May 10, 15

Executive Meeting: June 18 at 6:00 PM

UMW State "Mission u": July 25-28

Wesley Center - Woodworth, LA

UMW District "Mini Mission u": August 18
at Zwolle UMC – Tamales promised!!

It has already been a busy 2018 year. Our UMW was awesome this January and February and I'm so proud of you. Thank you for serving our church and missions while I was gone Down Under.

~Blessings to you all, Pat

**AARP Defensive Driving Course
Thursday, May 10, 2018
12:00-4:00 PM
Cypress Baptist Church**

An AARP Defensive Driving Course will be offered at Cypress Baptist Church. This course is designed especially for folks who are 55+ and will give you a discount on your auto insurance; but the certificate must be renewed every 3 years. There is a cost of \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members.

If you are interested in attending or if you have any questions, call Cindy Waldrop at 965-2296.

BENTON UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Luncheon

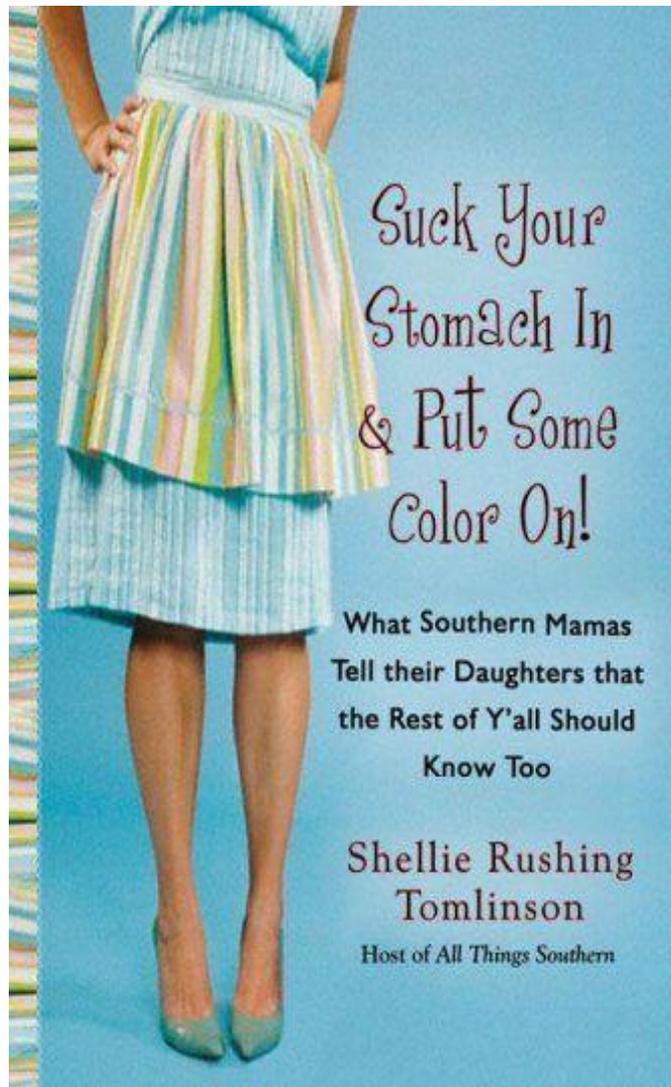
Saturday, March 17, 2018

Time: 11:30—1:00 PM

Tickets \$20.00

Contact:

**Patsy Burnes
(318) 658-5554**



Presenting
Shellie Rushing Tomlinson
Christian Comedian

Author, Speaker and Radio Host

She will have her BOOK's and
DVD's available for purchase!



*All proceeds go to support Benton United Methodist Women
supported missions and ministries.*

Holy Week 2018

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, March 29 at 6:00 PM



Maundy Thursday is the first of the three days of solemn remembrance of the events leading up to and immediately following the crucifixion of Jesus. The English word "Maundy" comes from the Latin *mandatum*, which means "commandment." As recorded in John's gospel, on his last night before his betrayal and arrest, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and then gave them a new commandment to love one another as he had loved them (John 13:34). This is why services on this night generally include the washing of feet or other acts of physical care as an integral part of the celebration.

Washing feet is not a part of our culture now, but what would be considered an act of "foot washing" today?

What physical acts of care are you practicing that would be obedient to this new commandment?

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter on which the crucifixion of Jesus is remembered. Good Friday services focus upon prayer and reflection on the death of Christ and penance and special devotion for the believer. It is a day that proclaims God's purpose of loving and redeeming the world through the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is a day that is good because God was drawing the world to God's self in Christ. As seen in John's gospel, particularly, God was in control. God was not making the best of a bad situation, but was working out God's intention for the world — winning salvation for all people. We call it "good" because we look backward at the crucifixion through the lens of Easter!



Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 31 at 2:00 PM

Bring your family and friends for a fun day of Easter egg hunting!

Need a workout before the candy avalanche?

Join Cypress Baptist Church for their Easter Fun Run!
Saturday, March 31 at 7:45 AM

Music, food, and inflatables!

For registration and information, visit: www.trinitysportsusa.com

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 31 at 2:00 PM



Easter Prayer:

When everything was dark
and it seemed that the sun would
never shine again,
your love broke through.

Your love was too strong,
too wide, too deep
for death to hold.

The sparks cast by your love
dance and spread and burst forth
with resurrection light.

Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life
made possible through Jesus.

We praise you for the light of
new life that shone on the first
witnesses of resurrection.

We praise you for the light of
new life that continues to shine
in our hearts today.

We pray that the Easter light of life,
hope and joy, will live in us each day;
and that we will be bearers of that
light into the lives of others.
Amen.

*This prayer was composed by the
Rev. Michaela Youngson,
the Methodist Church of Britain.*



*¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.
~ Philippians 3:10-11*

Mission Spotlight

Hootin' Hollerin' OWL Center & Salsa Adventure

Monday, February 26th, a group from Benton UMC went to the OWL Center to make 2 batches of salsa—Just a Tad Warm and Holy Cow it's Screaming Hot. What a day of fun, fellowship and work that was a blessing to those served by the OWL Center.

The Outdoor Wilderness Learning (OWL) Center is 800 acres of rolling hills, beautiful facilities, and programs designed to encourage teamwork, family bonds, character development, education, and fun! Originally designed to benefit the youth of the Louisiana Methodist Children's Home with therapeutic and recreational programs, the OWL Center also serves churches, schools, businesses, community groups, and families.

Dynamic activities, including team building, self-esteem skills, and family strengthening experiences help accomplish the overall mission of the OWL Center, which is building relationships.

The Outdoor Wilderness Learning Center is a ministry of Louisiana United Methodist Children & Family Services, Inc.

For more information on the OWL Center in Ruston, LA, please visit:

www.owlcenter.com



Getting to go to the OWL Center to make salsa was not only fun, but also an honor. As a retired teacher, children always pull at my heart strings, so I am thankful to have had the privilege to make the salsa to help raise money for the Methodist Children's Home. I thank God for the experience to meet and work with Wes and Lori who dedicate their lives to daily helping others. I definitely want to go back.

~Martha Grisso

The OWL salsa making opportunity is a worthwhile mission for a great cause. You get to take ownership of an effort that is fun, meaningful and connects us conference wide.

*~Brad Franklin
#tellingourstoryumc*

Serving Our Community



The Table Food Ministry

Tuesday, March 20
9:00 AM Truck Unloading
3:30 PM Youth Bag Packing

Wednesday, March 21
12:30 PM
Food Distribution

For more information on The Table, contact:
Kim Hauser kimdenise1996@gmail.com or Rachel
Stoneman rachel.stoneman@bentonumc.org

The Closet Clothes Ministry

We need your help at our bustling clothes closet at A Cross Faith Advocacy Center (1659 Palmetto Road in Benton) and at Benton UMC.

Hours at Benton UMC & A Cross Faith:

3rd Wednesdays 11:30 AM-4:00 PM

All Other Wednesdays..... 11:30 AM-1:30 PM

**A Cross Faith
Advocacy Center**

HOURS:
Wednesday, March 21
11:30 AM-4:00 PM

Benton United Methodist Church • Elizabeth Baptist Church • St. Jude Catholic Church

Transforming the community...

For more information on The Closet Clothes Ministry, please contact:

Sue Shadow
(318) 965-2496
shadow781@bellsouth.net



Souper Saturday Needs You!

We need people to ride along with drivers for deliveries, substitute drivers, soup cooks, and sandwich makers. We have very dedicated volunteers—a family of Christ's servants! We serve on the last Saturday of each month. Please join us to see if this is where you connect in service.

For more information on Souper Saturday, contact:

Katherine Kavanaugh
(318) 218-7730
katkavanaugh@bellsouth.net

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ~ 1 Peter 4:10



INVITING IN...
GROWING UP...
SENDING OUT...

Benton United Methodist Church
4615 Palmetto Road, Benton, Louisiana 71006
Office: (318) 965-2273 Fax: (318) 935-8516
Email: bentonumc@bellsouth.net
Website: www.bentonumc.org

Flood Relief Trip Lake Charles

**Sunday, April 8
Through Thursday, April 12**

For more information, contact:
Rachel Stoneman at (318) 469-9100
or rachel.stoneman@bentonumc.org

Please pray about serving in the Lake Charles flood relief effort in recovery and rebuilding. Our assignment is being constructed as we speak—if you are interested and cannot stay the whole week, we can accommodate shorter stays. If you have questions, please talk to anyone who has served - they have a story made for you to hear! Sign up early so they can prepare us room!

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Please e-mail all newsletter articles to:
rachel.stoneman@bentonumc.org

All articles are due by the 20th of each month for the next month's newsletter.

2018 HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday
Thursday, March 29 at 6:00 PM

Good Friday Service
Friday, March 30 at 11:00 AM

Easter Egg Hunt
Saturday, March 31 at 2:00 PM

Easter Sunrise & Worship Services
Sunday, April 1 at 6:10 & 10:30 AM

6:10 AM Easter Sunrise
at the home of Bob & Sue Shadow
Bring a lawn chair for your comfort.
(For directions, visit:
www.bentonumc.org/sunrise)
374 West Lakeshore Drive, Benton, LA

9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Worship

Stations of the Cross

Sunday, March 25-31
8:30 AM-4:00 PM

For centuries Christians have made pilgrimages along the Via Dolorosa, the Way of the Cross, stopping at 14 stations to remember and honor Christ's last agonizing passage to Calvary. The worship team is setting up the 14 "Stations of the Cross" during Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, March 25, and ending after the Good Friday luncheon, March 30. Everyone is encouraged to experience this very moving, visual, tactile, hands-on replica of Jesus' Journey to the Cross. It is to be done slowly, with reverence, reading the passage and doing the activity that is suggested. Begin with Station I; there will be a brochure there to guide you through your own "journey" and it is our hope you will be greatly blessed.