

BENTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MARCH 2010



THE LOVE LETTER

LYNN'S LINES . . . .



Psalm 51:7

Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

It doesn't make much sense to talk about Christmas during the Lenten season, but I came across an interesting little known fact doing some research the other day, and thought it rather appropriate to the point the Psalmist was making in Psalm 51. What is the little known fact?

One of the most beloved and well known Christmas songs is *White Christmas*, written by famed composer, Irving Berlin. The funny thing is Irving Berlin hated snow, and fled New York City every winter for the warmer climates of Florida. I wonder how many white Christmases Berlin actually ever saw?

So just what does this have to do with Lent? It's a matter of saying versus doing. Lent is a time to focus on the spiritual disciplines, and here, the Psalmist takes an opportunity to confess (a spiritual discipline, by the way) his sin. The Psalmist's prayer of confession was his acknowledgement that his words and his actions had not always matched—pretty much like Berlin's words in his famous song.

I wouldn't say Berlin's was a transgression rising to the level of sin, but I have to reflect in my own life to see if there ever was a time when what I said didn't match what I did, and if so, did it rise to the level of sin? I mean, really, I can say I love my neighbor, but then take actions to undermine that love. I can say I love God, but then not honor him as the One worthy of my worship.

I like to think I've discovered what the Psalmist knew--only my cry to God, and God's cleansing Spirit can cleanse me from the stain of my sin, and in God's eyes make me "whiter than snow." After all, the Bible says, "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong" (1 John 1:9 NLT).

Sometimes my confession can be as simple as a prayer: "God, I confess that my words and my actions are not always consistent. May Your Spirit wash me now, and renew my faith through Jesus Christ this Lenten season. Amen."

Why not pray that simple prayer and watch God work?

Until next time, keep looking up...



SUNDAY EVENTS

Sunday Worship  
8:30 & 10:50 am

Sunday School  
9:40 am

Children's Church  
Age 3 - Grade 3  
10:50 am

REGULAR EVENTS

3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY of each month  
**United Methodist Men**  
Breakfast 7:15 am

3<sup>rd</sup> TUESDAY at 6:30 p.m.  
3<sup>rd</sup> WEDNESDAY at 9:30 a.m.  
**United Methodist Women**

TUESDAYS  
**Prayer Time**  
9:00 am

4<sup>th</sup> TUESDAY of each month  
**OPALS**  
11:30 am

WEDNESDAYS  
**Wednesday 'Nite' Live**  
5:30 pm  
**REACTION**  
**Student Worship**

Last SATURDAY of each month  
**Souper Saturday**  
8:00 am

### ***WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES!***

Dear Friends, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the warm, loving reception that I have experienced in my first year on staff. We have made many changes over the past year and one of the best was to hire Rachel Stoneman as our full time administrative assistant. She is so talented in so many ways that it has made everyone's job easier.

The gift to have all new computers in the offices and to convert to the Shelby Church Software System has made a big difference in the way we handle our financial and membership records. This could not have been done without your generous gifts and a willingness to do things differently. Last year it took our auditor 14 days sitting across my desk to complete the financial audit of the church. This year we will be through in 2 days, so that by the time you get this newsletter, we can report that the church finances are once again in order.

I have visited all the adult Sunday school classes, except for Breakfast Club, and I will be there this Sunday. How blessed we are with such fine teachers! I have really enjoyed the good discussion of the Bible and the world view and how our own lives are affected as we try to live out our faith.

~Dianne

### ***NEW BABY IN THE FAMILY?***

We at Benton UMC would like to celebrate new babies born within our church family - child, grandchild, great grandchild. We want to announce the birth in our Sunday worship folder and honor this new life by placing a rosebud on the altar. Please notify the church office at 965-2273 if you have a new family member.



### ***THE EMERGING BUTTERFLY***



I have just returned from a three day retreat at the Conference Center for the Academy of Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Formation in the Church. Our assignment this time was to interview members of the congregation and let them tell their stories. This was such a fun and invigorating event that I would like to hear from more of you. I hope you will say yes when I call and ask you to come and visit me or welcome me if I come into your home.

The rest of the assignment was to write a report about our church and to name the "angel" of the church. I believe that the angel of Benton UMC is the "emerging butterfly." I once read if you want to soar like a butterfly you must first come out of the cocoon. I believe that we have shed our cocoon and are ready to soar. I want to help us in this by offering more spiritual formation events that focus on prayer. Prayer undergirds everything we do.

We are so fortunate to have the "Stations of the Cross" set up during this season of Lent that help us cross over into this introspective time of the sacrifice of Jesus so that we might experience our new life. Take advantage of this opportunity and invite others to walk with you.

Catherine Long and I will offer another opportunity for prayer and reflection to help you celebrate the Great 50 Days between Easter and Pentecost. These will be prayer stations set up for you to engage in as we pray for others and pray for ourselves.

#### **2010 February Financial Report**

February 7	\$ 8,175.46
February 14	12,792.34
February 21	4,928.81
Received YTD	\$ 152,602.74
Received YTD 2009	\$ 139,553.73

**UMM NEWS**

**UMM BBQ**

The United Methodist Men are cooking again! BBQ will be served on Burt Blvd. across from the courthouse on Wednesday, March 24th at 11 a.m. The UMM BBQ is award-winning, so make sure you get a plate. You can fax your orders to the church office at 965-5360 or call them in to 965-2273.

You can order a slab of ribs or a lunch plate. Ribs, chicken, sausage, and combination plates are available and they come with beans, coleslaw and a roll.

**Garage/Rummage Sale**

Rob Stinson will be hosting a monthly garage sale at his Cash Point storage facility next to the water tower on Benton Road (Hwy 3) on March 6 starting at 8 a.m. The UMM will be participating with items in one of the storage facilities. But we need your help. We need donations of large items like furniture, bedding, washers, dryers, refrigerators, etc.

If you have any of these items to donate, call Rob at 402-2437 to set up a time for you to deliver it or for us to pick it up. We must have all items in place and priced no later than Friday, March 5, 2010.

**UMW NEWS**



**Nightingales**

Tuesday, Mar 16, 2010 6:30 p.m.

**Morning Glories**

Wednesday, Mar 17, 2010 9:30 a.m.



Both circles will continue the spiritual growth study *Food and Faith* being presented by Betty Russell. Circle meetings are held in the Eva Smith Sunday School Classroom.

**UMW EASTER PROGRAM**



The UMW will meet on Tuesday, March 2nd at 6:30P.M. in the Family Life Center for an Easter Program presented by the Morning Glories Circle. All the women of the church are invited to attend.

**OPALS**

Those **O**lder **P**eople with **A**ctive **L**ife **S**tyles will welcome Rev. Hu Debo as their guest speaker this month. Hu is an ordained Deacon, on staff at FUMC Shreveport, and a neo-natal Nurse Practitioner for Lake Charles Memorial Hospital. He has had a passion for the people of Haiti for years and is currently involved with the orphanage that his church sponsors near Les Cayes. He was there when the earthquake rocked Haiti. He is coming to share with us the vision they have for the orphanage and how we can help. Everyone is invited to join us Tuesday, March 23, at 11:30 a.m. in the Family Life Center. Lunch is \$4, *chicken and spaghetti* is on the menu, and you will need to call Barbara Hays at 742-9537 to make your reservation. There is always such a good sense of fellowship when we gather, and we are eager to share that . . . even if you aren't 55+! Hope to see you there!!

*The Love of Christ  
Can Do Amazing Things*

The love of Christ can open your eyes and completely change your thinking about what really matters most in life.

The love of Christ can lift you above from everything.

The love of Christ can open your heart and may his love be the gift that fills your heart and a world that God has made beautiful.

Life is moving too fast-so enjoy your precious moments. Faith does not know what the future holds, but knowing who holds the future.

*~Lynda Lee*

**Donor Recognition Tree**

*Donor leaves are available for a minimum donation of \$100 in the church office in memory or in honor of your loved one .  
All donations go to the Building Fund.*

## Upcoming Events

### *Children's Ministry Meeting*

There will be a joint meeting of the Children's Ministry, Spring Thaw Planning and the Vacation Bible School Volunteers on Sunday, March 7, 2010 immediately following the 10:50 worship service. Please add this meeting to your calendar. We hope to see you there.

### *Souper Saturday Mission*

For the past several months, the children and Tweens groups have decorated cookies for *Souper Saturday*. This new, monthly event will be held on March 31 at Wednesday 'Nite' Live. They LOVE decorating cookies and then getting to eat the leftovers as well! I mean, who doesn't? Ms. Jeanne's cookies and icing are delicious! They also decorate brown paper bags that hold the cookies. This is a fun event for them and they learn about serving others.



### *Early Christian Awareness*



If you work with or like working with nursery age children, you might be interested in a new opportunity coming to Benton UMC. On March 27, 2010, Sandy Shepherd will be here at Benton UMC to

train parents, Directors of Christian Education, nursery workers, Sunday school teachers, and anyone interested in helping young children learn about God.

Sandy Shepherd has helped develop the Early Christian Awareness program. She has worked with this program for 37 years. She is very excited about ECA and its use for Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, pre-school and Mother's Day Out.

Please contact Ashley Stinson at 349-5913 if you have any questions.

## Days Gone By

### *Holidays with BUMC Kids*

During the Thanksgiving season, the children had lots of fun baking cookies, packaging them with handmade bags (very cute!), and delivering them to a handful of members at the church as a "thank you" for all the ways they serve in the church.

At Christmas, the children had a great time making Christmas cards for the military men and women overseas. They used rubber stamps, markers and stickers to create great decorations. The children wrote their own messages to the soldiers letting them know how thankful we are to them. This project was encouraging to the children as well as the soldiers and helped to instill the real meaning of Christmas. The cards were included in the ministry headed by Broadmoor UMC.

We have done lots of fun stuff, too, over the holidays, like bowling, going to the movies and to the Boardwalk. We have a fun Spring Break planned and Mary Jo is continuing with her monthly book club for the little and big kids.

## Contact Information

Mary Jo Duddy, Children's Minister

(318) 549-9273

[maryjo.duddy@bossierschools.org](mailto:maryjo.duddy@bossierschools.org)

Ashley Stinson, Children's Minister Assistant

(318) 349-5913

[patash1210@aol.com](mailto:patash1210@aol.com)

Margaret Febus, Tweens' Co-Director

(318) 965-1362

April Fleming, Tweens' Co-Director

(318) 965-2273

[Aafleming@bellsouth.net](mailto:Aafleming@bellsouth.net)

# SHELTER 491

*"Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty." -Psalm 91:1*

## Regularly Scheduled Events

1st & 3rd Sunday	6:00 p.m.	FUSION Small Groups
2nd Sunday	6:00 p.m.	UPWARD Prayer & Sonic
4th Sunday	6:00 p.m.	Sports
5th Sunday	TBA	Declaration
Sunday	4:00 p.m.	Band Practice
Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	REACTION Youth Service



On Wednesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> we kicked off our REACTION Student Worship services in our new student center (the old sanctuary). We had 47 students attend worship and had a great time!! It was "crazy hair" night and the student who came with the craziest hair won a prize. There was a method to the madness, however, as the message was tied to the theme. I spoke about living a radical life for Christ, a life that is extreme in its devotion to God.

The three attributes of a radical life are simple:

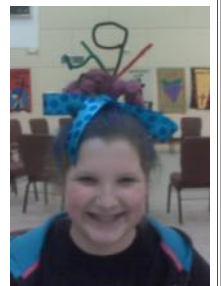
1. It will go against what the world says.
2. It will draw attention and deflect that attention to God.
3. It will encounter resistance.



Jesus calls us to nothing less than to follow Him with complete abandon. Every aspect of our life should be centered on Him. Romans 12:1 tells us to offer our everyday lives as a sacrifice of worship to God. This season of Lent, we are doing this as a church with our 40 projects in 40 days. Let's not let this fade away after Lent, but let this season jumpstart us to living this way all year.

In Christ,

Chris



## Contact Information

Chris Winterman, Student Minister

(318) 965-2273

(318) 465-1031

chriswinterman@bellsouth.net

www.myspace.com/bentonumshelter491

www.facebook.com\cwinterman



## ***SPRING THAW***

Remember Spring? It is on its way and we are ready. Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup> from 12-5 p.m. we will have a "Spring Thaw"



at Benton United Methodist Church. There will be activities for all ages including: face painting, bounce houses, live music, free food, sports, and contests. More details will come as we get closer to the day...you don't want to miss out on this!



*It's not too late to join in some of the excitement of 40 Projects in 40 Days. Please call the church office at 965-2273 for more information.*

## ***UPPER ROOM PRAYER MINISTRY***

Last November, our church participated in this special prayer ministry. Over a 4 hour period, calls were received on a toll-free prayer line from 16 different states. Our 8 volunteers provided words of encouragement and intercessory prayer for the 19 people who called with prayer requests for themselves and others. It was a powerful and heart warming experience to reach beyond the boundaries of our local community and offer prayers for such concerns as personal salvation, physical healing and pain relief, financial peace, finding a job, freedom from drug addiction, spiritual guidance, and comfort in the face of divorce and death.

We will be answering the phones again on Saturday, March 20th from 9 a.m.—1 p.m. If you are interested in becoming a prayer volunteer, or would just like more information, please call John Carter at 326-7349, or the church office at 965-2273.

## ***SPRING CLEANING DAY***

Let's make sure our buildings and grounds are ready for Spring. The more hands we have will make the job lighter. We will be doing some general maintenance and everyone can contribute. If you don't want to spoil your manicure, it's okay—we need snacks and drinks to be served throughout the day. If you have an area you want to spruce up, come and we will have cleaning supplies for you. Add March 20th to your calendar and contact Ron Jones at 965-1950 to let him know you want to participate.



## ***POOL OF SILOAM BREAKFAST***

The Pool of Siloam is a medical mission in west Shreveport. It provides free healthcare for the uninsured. Our project for Saturday, March 6 will be to provide breakfast items for the patients and to share the love of God with them by visitation. If you would like to join Dianne Wilkinson and Nancy Grant from 9:00 a.m. to Noon, please call Dianne at the church office 965-2273.

## ***FOOD BANK***

### ***BOWL PAINTING PARTY***

We will host a Bowl Painting Party for the Northwest Louisiana Food Bank on March 17th at 6 pm in the Benton UMC Family Life Center. The Food Bank will supply the bowls and the paints. **WE NEED YOU TO PAINT A BOWL!!**

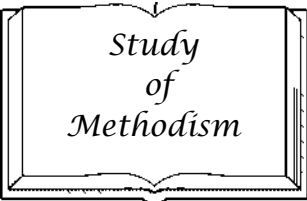
A "pot-luck" supper will be served before we paint. Bring a bowl of food and then paint a bowl for the Food Bank. The most attractive bowls will be auctioned at the **EMPTY BOWL SUPPER** in June. This event is a major fund raiser for the Food Bank. Everyone who attends the **EMPTY BOWL SUPPER** will receive a bowl. We can become partners in this event by painting a bowl.



## District Happenings & Other News

### **NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS**

Are you familiar with the life story of John Wesley? Have you wondered about the origin of some of the traditions we Methodists follow? Did you know Hark the Herald Angels was written by Charles Wesley? Or that the United Methodist Hymnal was written by him also? These are some of the topics covered in the newest Sunday School Class. If you are looking for a fellowship and study that is a little different, contact the church office for info on the new class headed by Joel Carter.



*Study  
of  
Methodism*

### **The Love Letter is YOU!**

Each month, Benton UMC publishes *The Love Letter*. Your ministry, group, accomplishments, and heart are to be shared with our Benton UMC family. If you have something you are excited about and are willing to share for the benefit of our congregation, please send an email to bentonumc@bellsouth.net or bring the article to the church office.

You don't have to be an author, make it simple and we will assist you in editing the information as needed. Give us the who, what, where, when and how and we can take care of the rest. Event pictures are a wonderful addition, but they need

### **LAITY-MISSIONS BANQUET**

The Laity-Missions Banquet & Shreveport District Conference will be held Sunday, March 28, 2010, 5:00 p.m. at Bossier First UMC. Tickets are \$12 each and may be obtained from your church's lay leader or the District Office. James Gillespie, Russian Initiative Chair of the Louisiana Conference Board of Global Ministries, will be our guest speaker. Churches meeting or exceeding their 2009 Thousand Club Fair Share goal will be recognized. The Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship offering will be received, and District officers will be elected.

### **CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CENTER FUNDRAISER DINNER**

The Christian Leadership Center of Centenary College will host their fourth annual fundraiser dinner on March 21, featuring keynote speaker Dr. Mouzon Biggs, Jr.

A Centenary alumnus, the Rev. Dr. Mouzon Biggs, Jr. also earned graduate degrees from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University and Texas Wesleyan University. He has served as Senior Minister at Boston Avenue Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, since September 1980.

Seating begins at 6 pm Sunday, March 21, 2010, at Noel Memorial United Methodist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana. Individual tickets can be purchased for \$35, or sponsor a table of 8 for \$250.

Contact Rev. Lynn Malone at 318-965-2273 or pastorlynnmalone@bellsouth.net if you are interested in attending. Or register online at [www.centenary.edu/clc/fundraiser](http://www.centenary.edu/clc/fundraiser).

### **CHRISTIAN MOTORCYCLIST ASSOC. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**



Christian Motorcyclist  
Association (CMA)  
Organizational Meeting  
Pentecostals of Bossier City  
Family Life Center  
Activity Room

March 23, 2010 at 6:30pm

CMA is an interdenominational Association. If you are interested in riding with a group of Christian Motorcyclists, please take a slip from the bottom of this flyer and attend the meeting. CMA welcomes everyone regardless of the brand of bike that is ridden. CMA welcomes anyone interested in bikers, even if you don't own a motorcycle.

Call 549-3165 or 820-1991 for information.

Official web site:  
[www.cmausa.org](http://www.cmausa.org)



BENTON UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH

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## PRAYER CONCERNS

### Births

Avery Jordan Teutsch

### Deaths

Jimmy Quillin  
Tom Hine  
Ralph Tyler  
Kim Schallert

### Military

Troops and Leaders  
Aaron Thompson  
Cory Campbell  
Derrick Albright  
Patricia Johnson  
Don Riley  
William Pluth  
Sean Gilder  
Eric Lee

### Requests

Jennifer Warner  
Jackson Kennedy  
Government Leaders  
Kami Chauncy  
Ron Gormanous  
Adam & Peggy Durant  
Mike Collier  
Mark Landrum  
John Pope  
Jim Farnam  
Jean Wright  
Venus Johnson  
Teri Kavanaugh  
Maury Rea  
Angelique Roberts  
Louise & John Carter  
Joy Porter  
Angelique Pormerleau  
Savannah Buonomo  
Michelle Kenney

Earl Redding  
Donna Stinnet  
Haiti Disaster Victims  
Haiti Relief Efforts  
Pete Sirman  
Jessica Stahl  
Eric Medvedev  
Joyce Swart  
Willie Gies  
Carolyn Luce  
Amy Knighton  
Arion Cromartie  
Marge Warlick  
Dan Leach  
Cromartie Family  
Jerry LaPlante  
Lee  
Anonymous Family  
Steve Barnette  
Ashley Oates  
Wilson Owens

George Horton  
Burt Neal  
Karen Johnson  
Camon Stohl  
Gail Pitts  
Darla Phillips  
Katherine Young  
Evelyn Futch  
Larry Moore  
Robert Berry  
Gene Sanders  
Dr. Darryl Graham  
Dontravius Wade  
John Bundy  
Carol Young  
Amy Prothro  
Chaning Barker  
Robbie Allgood  
Herb Greene