



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

Benton United Methodist Church
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INsight

February 2014 | Monthly Newsletter of Benton United Methodist Church



Clay & Nikki Toms and their children Conner, Anna Clare and Cason

January 26, 2014—The Toms family transferred their membership from Broadmoor Baptist Church. Clay has been employed for 11 years with Builders Supply and works in sales. He enjoys playing golf, hunting and fishing. Nikki has worked at the VA Medical Center as a Wound Ostomy Nurse for 9 1/2 years. She enjoys shopping, antiquing and reading. Conner is 14 years old and is a 9th grader at Benton High School and he enjoys baseball and hunting. Anna Clare is 12 and attends Benton Middle School in the 7th grade. She is a dance student at Vicki's School of Dance and enjoys shopping and being with her friends. Cason is 8 and is in the 3rd grade at Benton Elementary School. Cason enjoys baseball, football, basketball, hunting and fishing. The family has participated in Souper Saturday and Journey to Bethlehem. Conner and Anna Clare are attending the youth group. Clay and Nikki are attending the parent's Confirmation Class.



Austin Bednarke and Maegan Ross

January 12, 2014, Austin Bednarke joined the church. Austin has helped with projects around the church and we want to say thank you for all that he has done, and make special note of the work you did to assist with the updating the lighting in the Family Life Center. Austin also participated in Journey to Bethlehem not only playing a part but with the setup as well. He also helped with the Christmas decorations and has helped with the Food Distribution. If you ask him about the Food

Distribution he would probably tell you that he never wants to see a turkey again!! Thanks for all you have done and we look forward to doing more work together.

Maegan Ross also joined on January 12, 2014. Maegan is employed at Brookshire's in Benton. She also participated in Journey to Bethlehem. It is great to have her in our church family and look forward to the opportunity for her to get involved and find ways we can serve each other's needs.



Robert & Pat Moncrief

We had a few members join late last year that need special note. Robert and Pat Moncrief transferred their membership from Grace UMC in Ruston. Luckily no time was wasted getting Robert and Pat involved in church activities. They filled out the New Member Information Card which informed us of what ministries they were interested in and they became servants right away. Both of them have become instrumental with the Northwest Louisiana Food Bank preparation that happens on the third Tuesday of every month and the actual distribution that occurs on the third Wednesday of every month.

Robert is an active member of the United Methodist Men, the Joseph Ministry and was a priceless addition to helping set up and take down for the Journey to Bethlehem. Robert has been a pillar for the Community Garden. And let's just touch on the subject of the Muscadine's in the back of the church, that vineyard was out of hand until he tackled it and won! We can look forward to the Muscadine's producing much better than last season. He has almost solely pruned, piled and disposed of the clippings and it look fantastic. Pat is a servant in the church office and helps with anything we might need her to do. She has also attended UMW Circle meetings and becoming more indispensable in The Table Food Ministries.



Francis & Sylvia Edwards

In December, 2013, Francis and Sylvia Edwards transferred their membership from Believers Worship Center where Francis was the Sound Engineer for Believers Worship Center and Sylvia played the drums in their Praise Band. Francis has been employed with Goodwill for 14 years and is the Accounting Clerk at the main office. Francis writes Articles for ezinearticles.com. Francis is also the sound engineer for Messiah Now a Messianic Shul in Shreveport, where he also records the services on Saturday. It is interesting to note that Francis is from a Jewish heritage.

Francis and Sylvia have been attending Benton UMC since September, 2013 but were married at Benton United Methodist Church on April 21, 2001. The couple is also attending the adult confirmation class to learn more about the United Methodist Church. Sylvia is now playing the drums in the Praise Band and is currently studying Internet Marketing. She self employed and gives online lessons for guitar. Francis is the backup teacher for the Grumpy Old Men's Sunday School Class. The pair "knows their stuff" when it comes to the Bible and it is good to have them as a part of a class to share that knowledge.

These members also joined in 2013 and they will be highlighted in next month's newsletter:

John, Megan, Morgan & Lavonne Hearn, Jeremy & Lori Moore, John Carter, Jennifer Richardson, Chris, Teresa Sessions, Charles House, Josh Greer, Lynnse & Mackenzie Terhune, Josh Odom, Jarod Dehner, Elisha Texeira, Deann Mangham, Matt & Jen Boone, Elizabeth DeBusk, Haley Neal, Carrie Bamburg, Joyce Hansen and Jacob Husser

We welcome each one of you to the Benton United Methodist family!!!

Please help us to "activate" you into a ministry of the church. If you have not found your place in service or need to know what your spiritual gifts do not hesitate to call the office at 318-965-2273 and let someone know how we can better nurture to your needs on your journey as you become more familiar with the congregation and what the church has to offer.

Pastor Danny will be giving a Spiritual Gifts Assessment class in the near future—find out what your gifts are!



From the Pastor

Grace and peace to you in the Name and Spirit of Jesus Christ!

This past fall when we decided to introduce The Daniel Plan to the congregation, I had no idea what I or we were getting into. The book, The Daniel Plan, was not released to sell until December 22. All I knew is that if The Daniel Plan did half of what it promised, my life would be transformed. I was 273 pounds and waist was 10 inches larger than my pant size. My blood pressure was borderline high and in 2013 I had a major surgery on my wrist (proximal row carpectomy) and two minor surgical procedures to remove pre-cancerous skin growth. I want to be able to enjoy my life well into the future, but if I don't take care of the only body that I have my future is pretty bleak. God has given the wisdom to use The Daniel Plan to rethink, retool, and reclaim my life so that I may glorify God with what I say, do, think, eat, and how I not only treat my body and soul but also how I treat other's bodies and souls. The Daniel Plan is teaching that I was created by God and uniquely gifted to serve and love in Jesus' Name and that HOW I live my life is just as important as WHAT I do with my life.

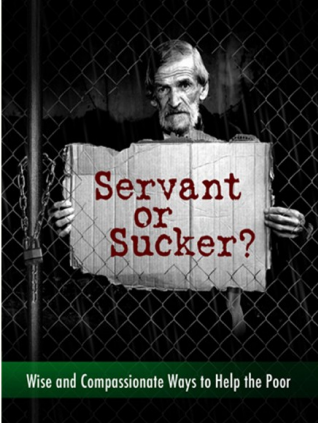
Mark Your Calendar

	2.5	
Prayer Shawl		1:00 p.m.
Youth Knitting		3:30 p.m.
	2.18	
Truck Unloading		9:00 a.m.
Food Bag Packing		2:00 p.m.
	2.19	
St. Luke's Medical		11:30 a.m.
Food Distribution		12:30 p.m.
Clothes Closet		12:30 p.m.
	2.20	
Nightingales		6:30 p.m.
	2.16	
Men's Breakfast		7:15 a.m.
	2.26	
Morning Glories		9:30 a.m.
Prayer Shawl		1:00 p.m.
Youth Knitting		3:30 p.m.
	2.26	
Knitting Class		3:30 p.m.
	2.22	
Souper Saturday		7:00 a.m.
	2.25	
OPALS		11:30 a.m.

What The Daniel Plan is teaching me:

- My relationships with God, my neighbors, and my family are still the most important relationships and I need to focus my attention and time with them.
- I am reminded that God created my body and blessed it! Jesus paid the price for my body and saved it! The Holy Spirit sustains my body through God's infinite love!
- All things in moderation!
- If God created it for food, eat it.
- Food was created by God to energize my body so that I may be able to serve God and neighbor and that I may be able to glorify God with how I live my life.
- By making proper choices to: spend time with God and in His Word; eat healthy, balanced meals; get moving with motion and devotion; and allowing my friends to encourage and support me in life's journey *The Daniel Plan* can help me live the abundant life that Jesus gives me.
- That processed sugar is the culprit for the large majority of obesity related diseases.
- I am addicted to processed sugar!
- Processed sugar is in almost every food that is processed. Here are some of its names: Agave, barley malt, brown rice syrup, coconut sugar, evaporated or dehydrated cane juice, honey, juice concentrate, maple syrup, molasses, and palm sugar. And here are some hidden sugars: dextrose, dextrin, disaccharides, fructose, high fructose corn syrup (or any corn sugar or syrup), hydrogenated starch, glucose, lactose, maltodextrin, maltose, monosaccharides, sorghum, sucrose, and xylose.
- Stay away from anything made with: high fructose corn syrup, trans fats (hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils), and MSG (monosodium glutamate). Good luck finding something on the grocery store shelves not made with these!

Wednesday Night Live New Class Opportunity



Servant or Sucker? Wednesdays at 6:15 p.m. Begins February 12

We've all been there. Someone who is obviously homeless or poor asks you for money. What do you do? Do you give it knowing there's a chance it will be used on drugs or alcohol or do you say "no" or even ignore the person as you walk by? No one wants to be a sucker, but at the same time Jesus' call to help the poor echoes in our hearts and minds.

Servant or Sucker? Is a five week study that will help us discern appropriate, Christ-centered actions when it comes to addressing poverty on a personal or organizational level. It includes the realities of poverty such as the concepts of time, relationships, money and values; a "poverty tour"; interviews with those who are homeless or poor; interviews with those who have helped and/or have been suckered; and steps you can take to be an effective servant without getting suckered. We will begin meeting Wednesday, Feb. 12th at 6:15 the Middle School classroom to view the video and then participate in group discussion. The session titles include:

- **Session One:** The Dilemma
- **Session Two:** Why do people beg?
- **Session Three:** An Individual's Response
- **Session Four:** Making Compassionate Decisions
- **Session Five:** Church's and Organizations' Response

Know someone in need? Not sure what to do?

If you know someone in need and you need guidance, let us help. Give them our number or call us yourself to see how we can help you help them. Confidentiality is required and maintained. We have multiple ways to assist people in need through *The Table Food Ministries, The Closet Clothes Ministries, Helping Hands, support groups, counseling and other ministries.*

Contact:

Rachel Stoneman

(318) 965-2273 or rachel.stoneman@bentonumc.org

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES AT BENTON UMC

There are several ways to give in addition to check or cash.

- Online giving opportunity: **e-giving.org**, just login and register. The benefits of registering with e-giving are that saved information can be accessed, transactions can be setup to recur and you can view activity or print reports on your account.
- ACH Giving (bank draft) can be setup by calling the church office.

These opportunities include the availability to give to the General Fund, Building Fund and the Designated Fund. Both options allow you to setup recurring transactions.

Please call Millie in the church office at 965-2273 if you need assistance. Thanks for being faithful stewards!

From the Pastor continued

- The food industry has hijacked my taste buds. Since starting on The Daniel Plan I have drastically reduced all processed sugars (including high fructose corn syrup), trans fats, MSG, and many other chemicals that have previously entered my body via my mouth. My taste buds are able to better test the food and savor the goodness that God placed in it when He created it.
- I understand better how, why and when my body produces insulin to stabilize my blood sugar. I am pre-diabetic and I need to reverse the family history of diabetes and other obesity related diseases.
- When my blood sugar is normal, I am better able to think, remember, recall, and in general to communicate. My brain is not in a constant fog or what we call in our family "sugar on the brain."
- When I exercise on a regular basis, I feel better, have more endurance, sleep better, and I have a better mental picture of me. I exercise at the church Monday-Thursday at 11:00 am with the Bodies On Mission Group led by the very patient Carrie Bamburg. If you are able please come and join us. Class fee is only \$35 per month. If that is too much, let me know and I will help you pay for it.

My new way of living is taking some getting used to. (Okay, a lot of getting used to!) I believe my life is the most free that I can ever recall – Freedom from my addiction as I recover day by day and freedom to live an abundant life (physically, mentally, relationally and spiritually). If you are struggling in life and are looking to live abundant life, I invite you to join me on The Daniel Plan.

Grace and peace,
Rev. Dr. Danny Gleason
Senior Pastor

From the Administrator—Millie Crites

A minister once told me of a very interesting thing that he did in his congregation one Sunday morning. He said that when the elders had taken up the offering one Sunday and brought the plates down to the altar, he took the plates and held them up in the air and he gave a prayer: "Lord, regardless of what we say about you with our lips, this is really what we say about you, this is really what we feel about you. This is really what you mean to us. Amen." Your money follows your heart. If your commitment to Christ has not yet reached your wallet then it has not yet reached your heart.

I have heard people relate to ministers as always asking for money. Truth is they are just following the example set by God. I recently participated in a stewardship workshop and picked up some interesting information that I would like to share with you. God spoke about money in the Bible more than anything else except the Kingdom of God. Money is mentioned 140 times in the King James Version of the Bible. He talked about money more than He did Heaven and Hell combined. As good stewards, Jesus calls us to focus on God - and to put our wealth freely at his disposal. If we do, our hearts will still be with our treasure - but that treasure will be with our true and eternal treasure: God. When ministers speak about money they are following God's teachings. A minister who is not afraid to talk about money and challenge you in tithing is the one who set's the example with his own personal tithing. I asked Danny if it would be ok to reference him in this way because I think it is important for you to know, that we have that type of minister at Benton UMC; the type that leads by example and by his own words! ~ Millie

We have received 72 pledge cards totaling \$364,460.00 for 2014.

There is a lot of God's work to be done through Benton UMC so please, prayerfully consider making your pledge if you have not already done so.

"Get all you can without hurting your soul, your body, or your neighbor. Save all you can, cutting off every needless expense. Give all you can. Be glad to give, and ready to distribute, laying up for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that you may attain eternal life." ~ John Wesley

In Service...

Ambassadors from Benton Middle School

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Doyle Adams | Garrett Jacobs |
| T.J. Anderson | William LeFort |
| Reece Brooks | Cayden Lyons |
| Christian Chatelain | Bryce Myres |
| Trey Dishman | Jordan Myles |
| Austin Foy | Eli Stinson |
| Matthew Gore | Hayden White |
| Dylan Grimes | |

Benton United Methodist Mission Team would like to thank the Benton Middle School Ambassadors listed above and Michael Valentine, Jennifer Campbell and Mary Jo Duddy for serving during **The Table Food Ministries** set-up on December 17, 2013. These 15 students and their leaders organized Toy Shoppe gifts, packed food bags for distribution and separated and bagged 2,550 pounds of potatoes and onions. This was the first time that the ambassadors served at the church and they did a super job and represented their school well. If they had not been here, our team would have worked through the night to get done what they did in about 4 hours.

Thank you so much for your service to our community!



What does 2,550 pounds of onions and potatoes look like? It looks like a big job for the BMS Ambassadors. They handled it well!



Mark and Jennifer help the ambassadors finish their tasks. Serving can be fun!



Servant of the Month



Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.
1 Corinthians 15:58



Isella Reed

The classy lady you see on the arm of Don Reed some Sunday mornings is our Servant of the Month, Isella Reed. Beneath that exterior, beats a generous, compassionate heart that is ever ready to help her neighbor, especially when they need to be fed! Isella helps with the cooking for our Wednesday Nite Live meals, but that is only the "tip" of her personal "food ministry." She is a great Italian cook and regularly provides meals for friends and neighbors. A dinner party at Isella's is a favorite treat – for her, as well as her guests; and she serves the courses herself, rather than sit at the table. Her home and gardens are a welcoming sanctuary for all, and she is there to share love and an encouraging word. Isella is a prayer warrior, active in the Prayer Ministry of our church, deeply committed to sharing her witness and serving her Lord. We are blessed to have this servant in our Benton UMC church family!



Souper Saturday

I have been so blessed by serving as the coordinator of the Souper Saturday mission. I have gotten to know and serve along side some wonderful, dedicated members of our church. What this team does is a tremendous blessing to those we serve. I am including portions of an email I received from Matt Wise after our December delivery (with permission). I don't need to add anything else to what he says.
~Katherine Kavanaugh

...We had a great & blessed delivery day. Ms. Bessie continued to thank Karen for rescuing her cat from the tree. Mr. Artis said his garden was struggling with the frost but he was very thankful for the meal. Ms. Geneva was sad that she had lost one of her dogs, but her niece stayed with her during Christmas and that was a great blessing for her. All were very thankful for the wonderful meal prepared by y'all. I know this is what Jesus would have us doing in honor of his birthday. Truly a great tangible example of what it means to be one of his Disciples, to draw closer to him, & to follow his 2 greatest commandments:

1. love God
2. love your neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40)

Or as John Wesley said,

**"Do all the good you can, By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can, In all the places you can,
At all the times you can, To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."**

...Thanks again to everyone who makes this awesome ministry possible. It is a great blessing to those on our route and an even greater blessing to my family. You make it possible for Karen & me to teach our children what it means to be a "Follower of the Way (Acts 9:2)".

In Christ's service,
Matt Wise



February Serving Opportunities

The Table Food Ministries

Food Truck Unloading

Tuesday, February 18 at 9:00 am

Food Bag Packing

Tuesday, February 18 at 12:00 pm

Food Distribution

Wednesday, February 19 from 12:30-5:00 pm

The Closet Clothes Ministries

Wednesday, February 19 from 12:30-5:00 pm

Souper Saturday

Saturday, February 22 at 7, 8 & 9:30 am
(7—Cooks, 8—Sandwiches & Packaging, 9:30—Delivery)

Please pray for the ministry and mission of Benton United Methodist Church. May we follow and love Christ with all of our hearts, all of our souls, and all of our minds—and our neighbors as ourselves.

Retirement & Nursing Homes

The Arbor House

Frankie Rodes
(W. Monroe, LA 71291)

Cypress Point

Beverly Quillin
Freeman Flowers

Horizon Bay

Bill & Liz DeBusk
Ruth Dixon
Frances Dunnam
Evelyn Futch
Everlene Harvey/healing
Martha Ree Jones
Elsie Whittington
Sybil Vickers
Emmie Green
Betty Wilmarth

NWLA War Veterans Home

Bernie Duddy

Heritage Manor West

Wayne Sorenson

Pathway Rehab

Jerry Paylor

Promise Hospital

Johnny Shelton
Ed Berridge

Pilgrim Manor

Nellie Wyche
Virginia Duke
Dollie Harrington

Military

Our military troops and leaders
Thomas Greathouse
Etienne Menard
Brian Leo
Josh Van Boening
Ben Stafford
Jonathan Glasgow
James Earl Braggs, Jr.

Community Concerns

Government Leaders
Gun Violence
Peace in Middle East
LSU/Schumpert transitions

Church Concerns

Victory Bible Camp ~ Alaska
Church Staff—health concerns
Daniel Plan

Our Church Family & Friends

Jennifer Warner
Ben Gleason
Kim Pullen
Rev. Ed Boyd
Mary Mitchell
Charlotte Woods
Dana Cherry
Jim Kennedy

Johnny Terrel
Robin Berridge
John and Carol Arnold
Joan Gleason
Martha Jane Gormanous
Bob Whittington
Josh Funk & Family
Marjorie Pollard
Beulah Davis
Allison Andrews
Kathleen Melton
Steve Lowe
Don Bernard
Rayann Bernard
Patton Family
Denise Canady
Dianne House
Rachel W.
Thelma Bobb
Bobbie Thomas
Melba Hodge
Pam Taylor
John Nichols
Mildred Stallworth
Steve House
Lisa Glasgow
Mark Brown
Marydeth Richie
George Finck
Gwen Branton
Helen VanHoy
Bennetta Ballew
Patricia Rhatigan
Roz Trussell
Stacie
Rachel Sutton
Shawn Castleman
Emily Brockus
James & Amanda Chico
Nana Morris
Jonel Rummy
Jim Farnum
Bob Robinson
Leroy Moore
Jan Edwards
Jim Atkinson

lupus/cancer
peace of mind/healing
healing
bladder cancer treatment
lung cancer last stages
COPD/hospice
MRSA/healing
stem cell transplant/
recovery
stem cell transplant
strength
strength
health issues
chemo
illness
transitions
congestive heart failure
104y/o—healing
healing
transplant complications
brain cancer
healing
healing
victims of fire
health issues
cornea replacement
Health
personal
health
correct diagnosis
personal
hospice
health
recovering at home
recovery
pneumonia
pregnancy concerns
leukemia
heart valve replacement
breathing problems
back surgery/healing
vision concerns
chemo/lung cancer
shingles
brain tumor
brain tumor
pregnancy complications
new birth Jackson James
health issues
health issues
blood clots
healing
shoulder replacement
illness
Advanced Respiratory
Disease
knee surgery
kidney stones
colon surgery
arm surgery
mad dog bit in Burma
hearing/vision concerns
multiple myeloma

Prayer requests remain on the list for 30 days.

Please help us keep the list current by submitting updates. If someone's name comes off and they still need prayer, please submit a new request.

United Methodist Men

On behalf of our Benton UM Men's group, I wish to thank all of the disciples in our Church for your awesome support of our many ministries throughout 2013. Thanks to you, we were able to provide over **\$2,700** for the maintenance of God's house here at Benton UMC. More importantly, we provided **\$1,800** to the Louisiana Methodist Children's home to rebuild the shattered lives of abused children through the power & love of our living Christ. These children are reminded that no matter what has happened in the past, God and his disciples, love & support them very much. We also provided **\$1,200** to the Bossier Sheriff's Operation Blessing, which fed over **6,294** families last year. Thanks to you, we gave **\$1,175** to help finance our Journey to Bethlehem outreach to our community, sharing the true meaning of Christmas. There are too many ministries for me to list here, but one last ministry of note is our devotional outreach ministry to local fire, police, and military personal. We gave out over **35 Strength for Service to God & Community** books to our Benton fire & police public servants. These books provide daily devotionals for those who risk their lives so that we can be safe. Our prayer is that these brave men & women gain strength through the Gospel of Christ. As you can see, your support of our Benton UM Men makes a profound difference in our community by helping to bring near the Kingdom of God (Matt 4:17).

So how can you continue to help bring near the Kingdom of God? We welcome you to support our UM Men's silent auction which runs from February 16 to March 2. We will have some great handmade craft items and maybe some great food items as well. As a reminder, all men of the church are invited to join us for our monthly meeting and breakfast at 7:15 on the third Sunday of the month. Thanks again for all that you do in service to the living Christ.

In Christ,
Matt Wise

OPALS (Older People with Active Life Styles)

All About the Hummingbirds Tuesday, February 25 at 11:30 a.m.

Those "Older People with Active Life Styles" are meeting the fourth Tuesday, as usual in the Family Life Worship Center. The OPALS gather for food, fun and fellowship! This month the fun is a program "all about Hummingbirds," presented by Margie Covington, Louise Carter, and Debbie Filler. The food is always delicious, costing \$5 and you must phone in your reservation to Sandra Upshaw (1-318-326-5966) by Sunday, Feb. 23. The OPALS invite everyone to join them.

Cooking with The Daniel Plan

IT'S NOT TO LATE TO JOIN A DANIEL PLAN CLASS

This is a sneak peak at the Monday at 12:15 class and cooking with the Daniel Plan. We have had a lot of fun cooking in our the class and trying out some of the recipes. We have had quests from other churches join us, who will be starting the Daniel Plan in February. They are hoping to get ideas to make their classes more enjoyable. Our guest from last week was very inspiring to our group and she is supposed to join us next week to share more ideas. If you haven't settled on a class and the 12:15 slot fits your schedule, please join us for a lifestyle change.

Thanks,
Millie & Rachel

Join us
Mondays
at 12:15 p.m.!



United Methodist Women

February promises to be a busy month for the Benton United Methodist Women—see below for all we are doing!

Silent Auction Begins Sunday, February 2

A Valentine's Day gift basket silent auction – bidding will begin on Sunday, February 2, and conclude after the 10:50 service on Sunday, February 9. See the basket in the North foyer of the Family Life Center.

Cookie Stroll Sunday, February 9

Purchase some HOMEMADE cookies & sweets for your Valentine's Day celebration before and after both services. Patrons can purchase either a \$5.00 box or a larger \$10.00 box and then "stroll" along the hallway of the Family Life Worship Center to fill their box with the cookies of their choosing—the lid must close! No overstuffing the box!!

United Methodist Women's Sunday Sunday, February 23

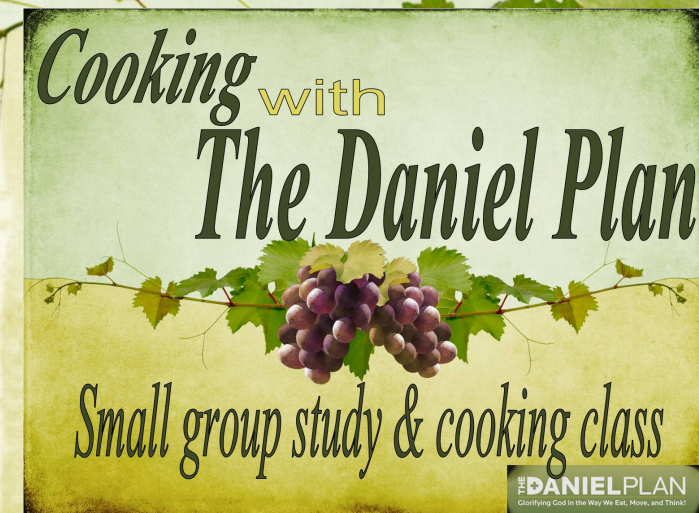
We are thrilled that **Mary Jo Duddy** will be our guest speaker for each service. Join us to celebrate the work of the United Methodist Women and to honor a few of our church members who sacrifice their time and energies for missions.

Spring Style Show & Luncheon Saturday, March 8 at 11:30 a.m.

Table reservations can be made now. Tickets are **\$20.00** – a great price for a delightful afternoon of good food and entertainment. We hope to see you there!

The Benton United Methodist Women invites all women to join us as we continue our circle meetings (small groups), general meetings, missions opportunities, and fund raising events.

- **The Morning Glories:**
4th Wednesday of each month
9:30 am in the Pairs and Spares Classroom
- **The Nightingales Circle:**
3rd Tuesday of each month
6:30 pm in the Eva Smith SS room



Youth Knitting at Benton UMC

Wednesdays from 3:30—4:30 p.m.

Knitting is alive and working well at Benton UMC! Sarah was the first student and after one lesson she has completed over half the scarf she was assigned to make. Katherine serves as mentor to Abby, a former knitter. Abby caught on quickly and is well on her way with her new scarf. The Youth class is starting with scarves, the Prayer Shawl Ministry makes baby items for Crisis Pregnancy Center and the Adult class makes dish cloths for the church kitchen.



Enrollment is open to all so check the Calendar online at www.bentonumc.org and come join the crafting ministries. If you are interested in knitting, please call Connie Wasson at 780-4489.



Thank You!

To the Benton United Methodist Church Family,
Thank you for feeding our team this year. We truly appreciate all the support from our Christian community.

I hope that this new year brings many blessings to your church and to the Tigers! God bless!

Geaux Tigers,
Reynolds Moore



KUDOS FOR MISSION GIVING AT BENTON UMC

I am happy to report the totals for
Advent Conspiracy.
Here is the breakdown:

Red Bird Mission	1,253.67
Heifer International (Matched online)	4,018.67
Stand Up to Hunger	3,275.67
Cambodia	1,192.67
Grand Total	9,740.68

Other Mission Gifts:

Joey Legg Missionary	1,200.00
UMCOR Philippines (Matched online)	3,889.00

The **United Methodist Men** are very generous throughout the year. Listed here are a few of their major gifts:

United Methodist Children's Home	1,800.00
Operation Blessing	1,200.00
Helping Hands	570.00
Caney Scholarships	650.00
Grand Total	9,360.00

The **United Methodist Women** also does their part with

Mission Giving	1,255.00
District UMW	500.00
Higgins Family	50.00
MLK Health Center	62.00
Fuller House	62.00
Daycare Scholarships	1,350.00
Bibles for Graduates	264.00
Grace Community	
Outreach-Poverty Plan of Action	100.00
Crisis Pregnancy Center	250.00
UMCOR	500.00
Advent Conspiracy on behalf of Pastors	250.00
Advent Conspiracy	
Stand Up 2 Hunger	800.00
Red Bird Mission	500.00
NW LA Food Bank	250.00
Providence House	250.00
Journey to Bethlehem	250.00
Methodist Children's Home	250.00
N Rampart	250.00
DULAC	250.00
Shreveport-Bossier Rescue Mission	250.00
Mac Donnell House	250.00
Grand Total	8,040.00

Sunday School classes also give to missions such as: Methodist Children's Home, American Cancer Society, Heifer Project, Operation Smile and fully support the Fire Box Ministry for Bossier Parish.

The **Youth** support 3 Compassion International Children at approximately **\$140 monthly** and give regularly to the General Fund. They hold a 30 Hour Famine each year and have raised over **\$10,000** to help with food, medical supplies, education and church activities.

Summer VBS collected \$3,954.12. Here is a list of the missions this money supported:

LA Methodist Children's Home	500.00
Heifer International	100.00
David Wade Correctional Center	500.00
Benton Middle School Band	250.00
St. Jude	500.00
Paperback for Prisoners	200.00
Smile Train	190.00
Joey Legg Missionary	1,500.00
Christmas for Prisoners	300.00
Grand Total	3,740.00

Thank you for all you do to support mission giving and our community! ~ Millie Crites

IN Student Ministries

INvite ♦ INcounter ♦ INcrease ♦ INgage ♦ INteract

2 Corinthians 5:17

"So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, but keeps going to the end. Love never dies". 1 Corinthians 13:7b-8a

Valentine's Day is more than just a Hallmark holiday. Here is the Wikipedia version:

Saint Valentine's Day, also known as Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine,[1] is observed on February 14th each year. It is celebrated in many countries around the world, although it remains a working day in most of them. St. Valentine's Day began as a liturgical celebration of one or more early Christian saints named Valentinus. Several martyrdom stories were invented for the various Valentines that belonged to February 14, and added to later martyrologies. A popular hagiographical account of Saint Valentine of Rome states that he was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire. According to legend, during his imprisonment, he healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterius. An embellishment to this story states that before his execution he wrote her a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell. Today, Saint Valentine's Day is an official feast day in the Anglican Communion,[4] as well as in the Lutheran Church.[5] The Eastern Orthodox Church also celebrates Saint Valentine's Day, albeit on July 6th and July 30th, the former date in honor of the Roman Presbyter Saint Valentine, and the latter date in honor of Hieromartyr Valentine, the Bishop of Interamna (modern Terni). In Brazil, the Dia de São Valentim is recognized on June 12. The day was first associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionary, and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). Valentine's Day symbols that are used today include the heart shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have given way to mass-produced greeting cards.

Do you remember making those shoe boxes that were decorated with hearts and had a hole cut out in the top for little valentine's cards to be dropped in? As you've grown up, you don't do that anymore. However, each time you do something kind for someone else, that is like giving a card of encouragement or dropping a valentine card in the slot of someone's heart.

So, this month, we will celebrate "love" by our actions, not just words – like the ways in which we worship at INcounter and fasting for the 30 Hour Famine – and by our affirmations – like our participation and learning at INteract and Sunday morning classes as we show the world we are Christians, not by the t-shirts we wear, but by the unconditional love we share in Jesus with our friends at school, our neighbors in the community and beyond.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Super Bowl Flag Football Game

Sunday, Feb. 2nd @ 4 PM
Super Bowl Flag Football Game at Church followed by watching the game on the big screen! Bring a snack to share!

INcounter Student Worship Wednesdays

Dinner at 5:30 PM (\$5/person)
6 PM Snack Bar & Hang Out
6:30 PM Worship
7:15 Snack Bar & Hang Out

Interact Student Small Groups Sundays

6-7:30 PM Junior High and Senior High Small Groups & Confirmation Class (except on the 2nd)

30 Hour Famine

Saturday & Sunday, February 15th & 16th – "RELEASE THE FEAST" www.30hourfamine.org. Starts at home at 6 AM on Saturday, retreat starts at Noon at church and lasts through Noon on Sunday.

Also, remember your "Winter Jam" \$20 is due!