



THE VINE

I Am the Vine; You Are the Branches."

"If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit: apart from me he can do nothing."
John 15:5

A Newsletter for the Benton, Waller, & Town Hill United Methodist Churches

Welcome to the May / June 2022 newsletter produced by the Tuesday afternoon Women's Bible Study group. We will endeavor to print on a regular basis a variety of articles and pictures that pertain to Our Church Family.

Baptism and Salvation

Do I have to be baptized in order for God to save me?

No. God is free to offer God's salvation if for some reason you have not been baptized by the time you die.

If I am baptized, does that mean I will be saved no matter what?

No. Baptism begins God's work of saving us by cleansing us of sin and beginning the work of renewing us fully into the image of Christ. The key word here is beginning. Baptism starts the process. It does not complete it. We can choose by our action or inaction to let the work begun go dormant and have no fuller effect. Or, as John Wesley sometimes put it, we may "sin away the grace received at baptism."

How does baptism relate to salvation?

We say baptism is the "ordinary" or "instituted" means of justifying grace. It is the usual way God has offered the church to enable people of any age to experience the justifying grace of God and the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Salvation normally *begins* taking root in people's lives here. From here we are invited to keep growing in sanctifying grace until by God's grace and our faithful response we are "made perfect in love in this life."

Forms of Baptism

Does it matter how I was baptized, whether by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling?

No. What matters is that you were baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by someone authorized to do so. If you were, we believe you have received Christian baptism. We do not re-baptize those who have already received Christian baptism. By Water

and the Spirit, our statement on baptism, explains, "The power of the Spirit in baptism does not depend upon the mode by which water is administered, the age or psychological disposition of the baptized person, or the character of the minister. It is God's grace that makes the sacrament whole."

Others at a Baptism

Do I have to choose godparents if I have my child baptized?

You are not required to choose additional sponsors, sometimes called godparents. But having another mature Christian who pledges to support your child toward making a public commitment to Christ and growing in holiness of heart and life can be a great blessing.

Does a sponsor or godparent have to be a member of that local church?

At least one parent, guardian, or sponsor must be a member of a Christian church. All sponsors or godparents should be mature Christians ready to help your child grow in faith and love toward God and neighbor.

Baptism and the Church

If I was baptized in another Christian tradition, may I receive communion in The United Methodist Church?

Yes. We welcome all baptized people of all ages to the Lord's Table.

Do I have to be baptized to receive communion in The United Methodist Church?

You do not. But you do need to be able to say you love Christ, earnestly repent of your sin, and seek to be at peace with one another. If you are not yet baptized, we will also counsel you toward baptism.

Does baptism make me a member of The United Methodist Church?

Yes, it does. You are considered a baptized member in that local church and in The United Methodist Church from that point forward.

Can I serve on committees in the church if I have been baptized?

The answer depends on the committee. Our Book of Discipline requires many elected committee members and officers of the church to be not just a baptized, but a professing member in the local church and The United Methodist Church. You become a professing member when you take the vows of baptism and membership for yourself in a public service of the baptismal covenant.

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KIDS FOR CHRIST SPRING SING

On March 27th the Benton Church's sanctuary was filled with the voices of twenty-five children from the elementary school under the direction of Mindy Vincent. They were a portion of the forty-seven children that participated in this year's KFC after school program. Their voices rang out singing songs they learned with their friends and family. The songs took them from creation to the cross, and the older students were able to rap all sixty-six books of the Bible from start to finish! It was great to see not only their smiling faces as they sang, but the pleased looks on their families faces as well.

Next year we are hoping to have even more children involved in KFC and would like to bring back IGNITE for the older kids. The volunteers who gave their time and talents deserve a big thank you from all of us.

LADIES TEA



April 2nd was the day the sanctuary and social hall of the Benton Church was alive with color and laughter. Audrey Schupp hosted the first lady's tea on this sunny day. The concept was well accepted when proposed and the plans fell into place with many helping to make it happen. It was an opportunity to bring ladies of the church and their friends and families together for an afternoon of conversation and fun. Throughout the day new friendships were made and old friendships were rekindled. The beauty of all the different and creative hats brought the room alive with all the colors of the rainbow. Hats of different time periods took some down memory lane. There was much laughing and giggling as fifty-two ladies, teenagers, and little girls wore hats, drank tea or apple juice, ate tiny sandwiches, tried different soups, and indulged in pastries. The young men of the church were our servers and did an excellent job. One even responded to the wishes of a young lady and put on a decorative hat for some posed pictures.

The program was opened with poems about the Power of Women and Women of Christian Faith. The history of the English Tea was reviewed. All because a Queen got hungry mid-day, the "tea" became a tradition. We are hoping the Ladies Tea at Benton Methodist Church will become a tradition to be shared with all generations.

BENTON PRIMARY ELECTON DAY SOUP SALE

Benton UMC held a soup sale on the May 17th Primary Election Day, Thank you to everyone who helped by donating food, purchasing food, and working on the Election Day fundraiser. We earned \$1,094.00 to apply to our loan to help reduce the debt. We will plan to have a similar event for the General Election on Tuesday, November 8th.

THE CLINK FAMILY JOINS BENTON UMC



Rusty and Amy Clink were welcomed as members of the Benton United Methodist Church on Sunday May 8, 2022, along with their children McKenzie, Caleb, and Phoebe.

TOWN HILL ICE CREAM SOCIAL

On Saturday, May 28th, Town Hill UMC will kick off Ice Cream Social Season! Doors open at 4:30 pm. There is something for everyone. Our ice cream is delicious, and we have returned to the original recipe. Every month we offer vanilla, chocolate, and peanut butter along with a seasonal special or two. We also have homemade pies and cakes, if the ice cream isn't enough to satisfy your sweet tooth. Don't forget, we also have wonderful homemade soups, hot ham and ham BBQ sandwiches, hot dogs, and more! So come for dessert, but have dinner, too!

A TIMELESS MEMORIAL DAY MESSAGE FROM BILLY GRAHAM

In 1955 Billy Graham was in Boston to deliver a memorial address to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The following is an excerpt from his timeless message.

Thousands of you gathered here could tell dramatic stories of heroism which you yourself have seen acted out by your buddies on the grim stage of war's theater. They have left this realm of time and space, they have outstripped us in life's races, but the sacred memory of their selflessness and the freedom they died to obtain will live forever.

Three weeks ago, I had the privilege of spending an afternoon with President Eisenhower at Gettysburg. He took me on a personally conducted tour of the Battlefield of Gettysburg, explaining the strategy used by both the Confederate and Union forces. Both of my grandfathers fought at Gettysburg. This famous battlefield, and hundreds of others like it, have become hallowed soil, where thousands of Americans have died either to preserve freedom, prevent aggression or keep intact the union of American states.

Battlefields of the world today are hallowed and holy to every American, and we pause to give them our highest honors, humbly realizing the sacred trust that these, our war dead, have handed to us. As we think of the selflessness and heroism of such fellows, we are reminded of the words of Jesus Christ who said: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The sacrifices of our war dead have been great, yet the greatest sacrifice of all time was made by a man on a cross who died not only physically but spiritually that men might live. We have neglected Him too long! We have rejected His plan for peace and as a result, we have fought, bled, and died for centuries! I challenge the world at this hour to accept His program of heart regeneration that can transform the society in which we live, and we can know the meaning of genuine peace in our time.

If we are to be strong spiritually, it will be through Him. Thousands today are finding a fresh, new meaning of life through Him. They are learning to say with confidence, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengthened me." We can best keep faith with those who have gone before by keeping faith with ourselves, with our highest ideals and with God.

Summer begins Tuesday, June 21st !!!