



Monticello First UMC
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Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Choirmaster: Joneen Padgett

Youth Director: Ashleigh Kelly

Financial Secretary: Sam Kelly

Church Secretary: Gail Cowart

Monticello First UMC • July/August 2022 Newsletter





A LETTER from Reverend BEN STRENGTH, our New Pastor

"I know two things of importance which I want to communicate to all who read this message – YOU need the Church and your Church needs YOU!"

Grace and Peace to you from the Lord Jesus Christ! I am excited about this appointment to Monticello First United Methodist Church. Monticello is not exactly new to me – I taught U. S. History, Gifted classes and Advanced Placement classes at Monticello High School from 1978 to 2008. My family, Barbara, Jim and Karl began living in our place on Goolsby Road in 1991. Jasper County and Monticello are home to us. It was an honor and an unexpected pleasure to be appointed to serve the church and community in Monticello.

I have been a United Methodist minister under appointment since 1970. I had decided to fully retire after serving the Philadelphia – St. Paul United Methodist appointment, in Putnam County, for forty-one years. I believed that after forty-one years with them and fifty-two years under appointment that it was time for me to fully retire. However, an unexpected thing happened on the way to full retirement. God began to indicate to me that He was not finished with me – that there was something else He wanted me to do in His service.

My phone rang one day and your chairman of the SPRC committee, Matt Kelly, told me that the committee and some people in First United Methodist Church of Monticello would like me to consider coming to the church as part-time pastor in charge for the 2022-23 conference year. For me to say that this was a surprise to me would be a serious understatement. I thought and prayed about this opportunity for a few days. I also discussed it with my wife (Barbara) and with my sons (Jim and Karl) and our District Superintendent (Susan Gary Landry). I decided to accept the appointment out of the conviction that this was God's will for me at this time in my life.

I come to your church with a deep sense of commitment to Christ and to the people of Monticello First United Methodist Church. I know that the last two years have been a real trial for all churches. Covid 19 and all of the challenges it has presented have had a serious and negative impact on all aspects of our lives. If this covid plague wasn't enough for us to deal with as individuals, families, communities and churches, we also have serious issues in our society which tend to divide us. I believe we have had too much negativity in our lives, communities, and our churches. What we need now is something and someone positive in our lives.

What we need is Jesus! We need to hear the gospel of God's love, mercy, forgiveness, peace and healing.

COVERED DISH RECEPTION

for

Ben and Barbara Strength

will be held on July 10th in our Fellowship Hall. Bring your dish to the kitchen before the 11:00 service. Please call Cindi Nash (404-545-5953) or Louise Kelly (706-318-6881) with any questions!

See you there!

I have fifty-two years of experience serving Christ in His church. I believe that what we need at Monticello First United Methodist is the message of Jesus Christ our Lord and Master and his love. Please put Jesus first in your life and come to YOUR church as we travel forward in His love and seek to find and follow His will for us.

I look forward to seeing those of you whom I have known for years and meeting those of you who I don't know yet. I am here to serve the Lord and to minister to you. If you need me, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

*I can be reached at the church, by phone, or by e-mail.
Home phone 706 468-0247 ben.strength@gmail.com*



MELODY SINGERS *children's choir*
sang "This Little Light of Mine" for Sunday
service on Father's Day!

They also sang and signed "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Our newly formed choir includes children from the Kelly, Suwinski, Williams and Drew families.

pictured: Melody Singers and Joneen Padgett. L-R, front row: Grant Kelly, Taylor Williams. Back-row: Ellie Drew, Emma-Claire Kelly and Sarah Kait Kelly, Joneen Padgett, piano.



As their smiles attest, the congregation truly enjoyed the singing and signing of the Melody Singers!



Rev. Alan Benson hosts the Children's Moment with the Melody Singers while wife, Kit, looks on. M1UMC presented a plaque to the Bensons for their service. Our congregation was blessed with a variety of speakers April – June!



LIVE FLOWERS IN LOVING MEMORY OF ...

Jack and Gwen Yearwood, from daughters Beth and Patricia. These beautiful roses graced the Sanctuary on Father's Day.

To provide live flowers for the Sunday service, contact a local florist to order and let the office know for whom they are dedicated.



Sunday School 9:45 AM Adults meet in the Fellowship Hall and Youth/Children meet in the Nursery.

Traditional Worship in person every Sunday
or join us on Facebook live at 11:00 AM!

NEWS BRIEFS • NEWS BRIEFS • NEWS BRIEFS • NEWS BRIEFS • NEWS BRIEFS

- **Chicken-Q** on the square raised ±\$2,000 for the **UMM's** charity contributions. Thanks to all who helped!
- The **United Methodist Men's Breakfast Meeting** and The **United Women in Faith's Meeting** will resume in the fall. The combined **Youth House Meetings** of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches will also resume in the fall. Enjoy summer break!
- **Leadership Council Meetings** are held the second Sunday each month and all members are welcome.
- **UPPER ROOMS** for July – August are here! Pickup at the office, Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 11:00 to 4:00 PM. Please call the office and leave a message if you need assistance.
- **Mobile Day at the Jasper County Community Food Bank** (every 4th Thursday) is open to all our friends and neighbors in Jasper County. Hours are 1:00 to 4:30 PM on Mobile Thursday (until July 21st when they change to 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM). Other Thursdays, hours are 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM for food bank clients. If interested in volunteering, call 706-468-6076 and leave your name and number, or speak to Ken Horton, Cindi Nash or Joneen Padgett. The Food Bank is seeking to buy land for a new facility!
- **Choir is off the month of July**. The Christmas Cantata is hosted at M1UMC this year! Join us this fall!



July Birthdays:

- 4 Julie Tucker
- 5 Jackie Tyler
- Hunter Smith
- 9 Ken Horton
- 12 Corbitt Kelly
- Jessica Bell
- 15 Carole Tyler
- Stephen Arena
- 16 Sue Williams
- 18 Eric Arena
- 21 Laverne Smith
- 24 Rinthia Tyre
- 30. Amanda Crews

August Birthdays:

- 2 Cindy Smith
- 4 Dot Strother
- 6 Frank Pool
- 9 Suzanne Arena
- 13 Will McElheney
- 14 Scotty Dumas
- 18 Katherine Sauls
- 20 Lin Caldwell
- 25. Lena Lane
- 28. Jaquilynn Howe
- 31. Zoe Arena

July Anniversaries

- 19 Bill & Cindi Nash
- 22 Eric & Suzanne Arena

August Anniversaries

- 6 Jeff & Mary Greeson
- 8 Keith & Gena Smith
- 21 Leslie & Lin Caldwell
- 26 Don & Louise Kelly

For corrections, additions, deletions to the Birthdays and Anniversary lists, please leave a message at the church office, 706-468-6118.

Office hours are Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

We want to hear from you!