

Opportunities to Worship, Fellowship and Serve

UMYF — Today, 5 p.m. in the Youth Chapel of the Methodist Family Center.

YOUTH CHOIR — Today, 6 p.m. in the Choir Room.

THE GATHERING — This evening, 7 p.m. A special evening of worship to end our Anniversary Sunday is being planned for our non-traditional service. Bring a friend and join with us in The Gathering Room for an evening of worship through music and preaching.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHOIR SCHEDULE — *Chancel Ringers Rehearsal*, 6:30 p.m.; *Chancel Choir Rehearsal*, 7:30 p.m.

THE ENERGETICS — Thursday, 10:00 a.m. in the Billy Raley Classroom.

EPWORTH CHILDREN'S HOME OFFERING — Mother's Day, May 10. Give generously to this valuable ministry of the S. C. Conference of the United Methodist Church!

HANDBELL CONCERT — Tuesday, May 12, 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The School of Discovery Handbell Choir, under the direction of our own Phyllis Hubbard, and The Chancel Ringers will present an evening of handbell music. Mark it on your calendar, and bring a friend!

GRADUATE SUNDAY — On May 17, our high school and college graduates will be recognized in the Morning Worship Service.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP — May 20, 5:45 p.m. Due to the popularity of the weekly Wednesday Night Fellowships through the fall and winter months, we will have a monthly night in May, June, July and August. Join us on May 20th for fellowship with the wonderful family of God at First UMC!

PENTECOST SUNDAY — May 31. The Morning Worship will include Confirmation Sunday and Music Ministry Recognition. Join us as we celebrate the Holy Spirit's ministry in our church!

THE CHILDREN'S CENTER — is collecting old blue jeans to recycle into stick horses for their end of the year program in May. All sizes are needed. Please leave your donations outside the Early Childhood office. Thank you.

DINNER CONCERT — Saturday, May 30, 6:30 p.m. in the Methodist Family Center. This will feature the talent of the First UMC music ministry, and will be an inspirational evening of music. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased from any Youth Choir member or from the Church Office. Proceeds will benefit the Youth Choir Summer Tour, which is June 7-11.

ALTAR FLOWERS NEEDED — Floral contributions are needed for the Sundays of **May 17**, and **July 12, 19**. Please call or email the church office to reserve a Sunday. Sundays open for the remainder of the year are posted on the church website.

Participating in Worship Today

Crucifer—Ruth Lawson Fowler; **Acolyte**—Ellie Fowler; **Organist/Choir Director**—Jim Hepler;

Pianist—Ivy McLaurin; **Ushers**—Hubert Meggs, Stephen Fowler, Robert Fowler, Dean Moore;

Nursery Workers—Cathy Belcher, Jo Black; **Greeters**—Pledger Hodges Class;

Altar Guild—Emily Kelly, Carolyn Wallace

Rev. Mary Virginia Taylor	RESIDENT BISHOP	Joann Hart.....	FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Rev. Quay Adams	DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT	Tim Branch	SEXTON
Rev. Dr. Ben Michael Gafford	SENIOR PASTOR	Rev. J. Leon Newton.....	RETIRED UMC MINISTER
Rev. Jim Hepler	DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES	Office Phone	843.479.3231
Beth Hepler	EARLY CHILDHOOD DIRECTOR	Office E-mail.....	BvilleFUMC@bellsouth.net
April McCall	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Website	www.BennettsvilleFUMC.net

First United Methodist Church Bennettsville, South Carolina

1834

2009

One Hundred Seventy Fifth Anniversary Celebration



The Third Sunday of Easter, 26 April 2009

Claiming the heritage of yesterday's saints;

Praying for the Holy Spirit's fire among us today;

Looking with hope for the long-awaited kingdom.

The Church in Worship



THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE

Gathering Music

Organ-Piano Duets

WELCOME and PARISH CONCERNS

Please sign the attendance folder and pass it down the pew for each person to sign. As the folder is returned, note the names of others in your pew. Extend a welcome to our guests!

SKIT “Methodist Beginnings in Marlboro County”

OPENING VOLUNTARY “Marching to Zion” arr. Jeffrey Honoré
The Chancel Ringers

Dedicated to the memory of those who have “marched to Zion” ahead of us,
and in honor of all today who are “on the march.”

*CHORAL INTROIT “Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation” Dale Wood

Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ the Head and Cornerstone;
Chosen of the Lord, and precious, binding all the Church in one;
Holy Zion’s help forever, And her confidence alone.

*To this temple, where we call Thee, come, O Lord of hosts, today;
with Thy wonted loving kindness hear Thy servants as they pray,
and Thy fullest benediction shed within its walls always.*

Laud and honor to the Father, laud and honor to the Son,
Laud and honor to the Spirit, ever Three and ever One,
One in might, and One in glory, while unending ages run.

(LATIN HYMN, CIRCA 7TH CENTURY, TRANSLATED BY JOHN MASON NEALE [1818-1866])

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Within these hallowed walls generations of Christians have worshiped.

We praise the God of the ages.

Within these hallowed walls our pastors have preached God’s truth.

We honor those who have proclaimed God’s ways.

Within these hallowed walls we have observed the sacraments of our faith.

We celebrate the grace that has been bestowed upon us.

Within these hallowed walls we come from many places and stations in life
to remember the heritage of our faith, and to move victoriously into a new day.

We celebrate this day, and open our hearts to a new day of worship and ministry.

Let us praise Almighty God!

***HYMN OF PRAISE 577** CWM RHONDDA
“God of Grace and God of Glory”

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH — The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*THE GLORIA PATRI 70

MEINEKE

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, by Your Holy Spirit,

You gather, unite, and stir Your people to action.

You nourish your children

and fill them with good things.

The saints of the past have laid a strong foundation.

Yet, too often the Sunday morning joy

remains isolated from the Mondays, Tuesdays and other days of our lives.

God, we long for You to be the passion of every day of our lives.

We long to be a people anointed by Your Spirit to minister grace to a needy world.

Empty us of sin ... deliver us from apathy.

We patiently await the coming of Your Spirit,

when our sons and our daughters shall prophesy,

and our young and old shall see visions.

We want to live prophetic lives.

We want to have purpose and vision.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

“The Spirit of the Lord is now upon Me to heal the broken heart and set the captive free,

To open prison doors and make the blind to see” (*Luke 4:18, sung by The Chancel Choir*)

You are a forgiven and redeemed people...The Spirit of the Lord is upon you to go in His name!

THE PRAYERS OF GOD’S PEOPLE

Silent Prayer and Pastoral Prayer with The Lord’s Prayer in Unison

THE OFFERING OF THE PEOPLE

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Shine on Us” Michael W. & Deborah D. Smith
The Youth Choir arr. Benjamin Harlan

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE 95**

OLD HUNDRETH

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

(TEXT BY THOMAS KEN, 1674; MUSIC ATTRIBUTED TO LOUIS BOURGEOIS, 1551)

***HYMN OF PREPARATION 545**

AURELIA

“The Church’s One Foundation”

THE ANTHEM

“Clouds of Witnesses Surround Us”

Robert A. Hobby

The Chancel Choir

Clouds of witnesses surround us, Saints whose heritage we claim.
Christ’s own love has bought and bound us One with all who bear His Name.

Here, within this congregation, Trusting your strong Word alone,
Help us build on this foundation: Christ, the living cornerstone.

Holy Spirit’s fire, falling Where Your faithful people pray:

Fall on us, expectant, calling, Gathered in Your Name today.

Come, through word of mystic power; Come, through water, bread and wine.

Gifts of grace upon us shower; Christ’s pure light among us shine.

Send us where Your people languish, Lost in depths of sin, despair.

Send us where they lie in anguish, Wounded, wasted, bowed with care.

Lord, Your Gospel’s Word of freedom Let our lives, our lips reveal

Till the long awaited kingdom Comes this broken world to heal.

Help us, as the saints before us, Bear with faithfulness Your Name,

Till we join the mighty chorus Singing hymns of glad acclaim:

Praise the Lamb, once slain, victorious Over death forevermore,

Father, Spirit, ever glorious, Triune God whom we adore.

(TEXT BY HERMAN G. STUEMPFLE, JR. [1923-2007], WRITTEN IN 1989, ©1993 BY GIA PUBLICATIONS, INC.)

***SCRIPTURE LESSON**

The Word of God for the people of God; **thanks be to God.**

THE MESSAGE

Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor

***HYMN OF DEDICATION 117**

ST. ANNE

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

***BENEDICTION**

“The Lord Bless You and Keep You”

Peter C. Lutkin

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Charles-Marie Widor

“Toccata” from *Organ Symphony No. 5*

*Those who are able are invited to stand.

Welcome to Homecoming Sunday at First United Methodist Church! We pray that all who enter our doors today for worship and fellowship will sense the presence of God. A very special welcome to our former members and guests. It is a joy to have you join us for this celebratory day!

The altar flowers are given by the 175th Anniversary Committee in recognition of heritage we share as the family of God at First United Methodist Church.

History of The Bennettsville Methodist Church Established 1834

Methodism came to Marlboro District over 50 years before the Bennettsville church was organized. The Methodist Society at Beauty Spot was organized before 1783. Itinerant circuit riding preachers preached in private homes until the first meeting house was built at Beauty Spot in 1783, about 2 miles northwest of the present town of Bennettsville. It is said to have been the first church built by Methodists in South Carolina. It was of native materials described as “logs, covered with long boards held in place by weight poles, and the seats were split pine logs.”

Bishop Francis Asbury held a quarterly conference there in 1788. He visited the congregation regularly for several years in his travels in the state and recorded the visits in his journal.

In 1810 a neat frame building was built at Beauty Spot original location. It served the congregation until a third church was built on the same spot in 1839. In 1883 a fourth church was built at a site about 2 miles east on the road to Tatum. It is no longer extant but the cemetery is maintained.

Until 1834 the Methodists in the town of Bennettsville worshipped at Beauty Spot. The town had been established in 1819 when the courthouse was moved from Carlisle. The town was growing and the members of Beauty Spot who lived in town found it inconvenient to travel two miles to attend church. On June 21, 1834 Col. William J. Cook conveyed one and a half acres of land on the main street about a quarter of a mile east of the courthouse to Trustees Thomas Cook, John J. McRae, William Dudley, John McCollum, Alexander J. Miller, James C. Thomas and Alexander R. Brown. The first church, a plain square building without steeple, portico or other architectural adornments, was built that year. It has a quadrangular roof ending in a sharp point at the apex. Two doors opened directly on the street and led directly into the body of the church. It was never painted. The bell was swung from a platform outside the church. The men and the women sat separately on opposite sides of the room.

The second building, a larger rectangular wooden frame structure, was built

on the same lot in 1871. Joseph Lindsey Breeden was chairman of the building committee. The church had a half circular chancel with the words "THOU GOD SEEST ME" inscribed on the wall behind the pulpit.

There was no steeple, so the bell remained on the platform outside the church. Before 1872, there was no musical instrument used except a tuning fork or occasionally a cornet. Major B. D. Townsend presented an organ, but for several months, it was not used because some members believed it was an "instrument of the devil" and not fit for church services. Since its acceptance, organ music has been a vital part of our worship services.

The congregation grew and is said to have had the largest membership of any church in town. A larger building was needed so plans were made in 1899 to build a brick, gothic style, church. Construction was started in 1900 with J. L. Breeden again chairman of the building committee. It was completed in 1903. It was described as the most beautiful church east of Columbia. The woodwork was of the best quality. The sanctuary was the octagonal Akron plan with the pulpit in front of the choir loft with exposed organ pipes above the choir. The windows were gothic arch shaped with yellow tinted art glass. On the left side there was an annex that could be closed off with sliding doors. This was used for Sunday school and opened for overflow crowds in the sanctuary.

In 1925, the L-shaped Sunday school building was built attached to two sides of the church. Mr. James O. Breeden was the Sunday school superintendent and overseer of the construction.

In 1955-6, the old sanctuary and annex were renovated to form the colonial style sanctuary with the divided chancel and the central altar. Mr. George B. Baughn was chair of the building committee. The exterior walls were left intact. The old art glass windows with gothic design were replaced with stained glass rectangular windows. The symbols in the windows were chosen to represent Old Testament teachings in the first window on the east side by using the ark of the covenant. The second window on the east shows Christ's birth with the nativity star. On the south side the Trinity is represented by the three leaf clover and orb and cross. The next window shows Christ's earthly teachings with the open Bible. On the west side, one window with a cup and grain represents the last supper and the final window has the empty cross with lilies as the base for the resurrection.

During the 1955 renovation, a chapel was created from a former classroom behind the sanctuary. The pews are from the 1871 church (they may be the original pews from the 1834 church, but we have no proof). The altar the chancel rail are formed from the 1900 sanctuary woodwork. The pulpit and chairs are from that period.

In 1973, a day nursery was begun. This has developed into our present child development center.

In 1976, a multipurpose family life building was built on a lot acquired from the Jess Myers family adjacent to the church on the east side. It contains a kitchen and small dining area-parlor, a basketball court which can be used for large church dinners and other gatherings, and a large stage. The upper floor is used for youth activities. The basement floor has an area used for skating and other children's activities. This building has been a strong arm in the church's outreach and ministry to the community. Dr. John May was chairman of the building committee.

The Milton Moore, Sr. family donated the lot behind the family center to the church in his memory in 1976.

In 1976, a new three manual Casavant Frères pipe organ was installed in the sanctuary to replace the organ which had been in use since 1903.

In 1978, renovation of the basement floor of the church building improved office space for the pastor, the staff and enlarged the day care area. The pastor, Rev. Paul McWhirter, did a lot of the carpentry work himself. At that time, the heating plant and electric wiring were replaced.

In 1980, a 100 by 300 foot lot adjacent to the Methodist Family Center was purchased from the Exum family to be used as a church parking lot.

In 1993, the chapel was redecorated.

In August 1999, Rev. James Hepler joined our staff as Director of Music Ministries. He has developed an excellent music program with choir, organ, handbells and youth choir.

In 2005-6, after lengthy planning, the church plant was extensively renovated, modernized and brought up to date with electric and plumbing codes.

The state fire and day care regulations were met. Ron King and Ron Woodbery chaired the building committee. We essentially have a new building within the original walls. The sanctuary maintains its 1955 appearance except there is now a vaulted ceiling with an area of the 1900 ceiling visible. The acoustics are much improved. On the first floor new church offices, pastor's office, finance office and a youth director's office were made. There is a combined conference room, library and archives room.

The entire child development center was updated. There are new separate entrances from the rear of the church to the office and to the children's areas.

On the second floor a music suite was established with office, practice rooms and music library. A "gathering room" is available for informal services and a place for fellowship. There is a bride's room adjacent to the sanctuary with all the amenities to prepare for weddings. The Billy Raley Classroom is not only used for Sunday School but also for committee meetings.

The third floor contains older children's and adult classrooms, the Sunday School office and a history room to house memorial plaques and other church history information. This is also used as a classroom when needed.

One of the most useful features is an elevator that makes all areas accessible to the handicapped.

Through the years, the church has been active with outreach programs for the community as well as carefully planned worship services, fellowship groups, youth activities, missionary support, attention to shut-ins, and many other activities. Our present minister, Rev. Dr. Ben Gafford, with his ready smile, excellent sermons, understanding our congregation's needs, and empathy is providing the stimulus we need.

Our current Mission of First United Methodist Church is to offer a place for all people to have a relationship with Christ and one another through worship, Bible study, fellowship, and outreach.

Our vision statement is, "First United Methodist Church is seeking to know Christ and to be a church where people are nurtured in the faith with opportunities to share God's love.

by Dr. John May

Ministers of First United Methodist Church Bennettsville, South Carolina

Rev. Dr. Ben Michael Gafford	2005-present
Rev. Gordon W. Timmons	2001-2005
Rev. Robert Clemons	1998-2001
Rev. Carlos Gardner.....	1997-1998
Rev. John Wesley Culp	1993-1997
Rev. Eben Taylor.....	1989-1993
Rev. Dr. Edgar H. Ellis, Jr.....	1986-1989
Rev. James L. Hyatt, Jr.	1981-1986
Rev. E. Paul McWhirter	1978-1981
Rev. Paul Smith.....	1974-1978
Rev. Thomas F. Evatt, Jr.....	1968-1974
Rev. Henry Kohler	1962-1968
Rev. N. K. Polk	1958-1962
Rev. Samuel M. Atkinson	1953-1958
Rev. R. Carl Griffith	1948-1953
Rev. Ernest S. Dunbar.....	1943-1948
Rev. J.E. Clark.....	1938-1942
Rev. Woodrow Ward	1935-1937
Rev. E.K. Garrison.....	1933-1934
Rev. W.R. Phillips.....	1931-1932
Rev. S.O. Cantey.....	1928-1930
Rev. E.L. McCoy.....	1926-1927
Rev. W.I. Herbert.....	1922-1925
Rev. G.T. Harmon	1919-1921
Rev. W.W. Daniels	1918
Rev. R.H. Jones	1916-1917
Rev. Peter Stokes.....	1912-1915
Rev. R.E. Turnipseed	1908-1911
Rev. M.W. Hook	1907
Rev. T.E. Morris.....	1904-1906
Rev. A.B. Watson	1903
Rev. C.B. Smith	1901-1902
Rev. C.W. Creighton.....	1899-1900
Rev. J.L. Stokes	1896-1898
Rev. E.O. Watson.....	1893-1895
Rev. N.S. Wightman	1891-1892
Rev. J.W. Daniel.....	1887-1890
Rev. J.L. Stokes	1884-1886
Rev. T.E. Wannamaker (the first pastor sent to Bennettsville when made a station).....	1883
Rev. John A. Porter	was here in 1871

Anniversary Sunday notes

OUR BISHOP — A very special welcome is extended to Rev. Mary Virginia Taylor, Resident Bishop of the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. She was elected in 2004 on the 34th ballot, receiving 354 of 549 votes cast at the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, and was endorsed by the Holston Conference delegation. She is married to Rev. James Russell "Rusty" Taylor, an elder in the South Carolina Conference, and has two daughters, Mandy Taylor Young, and Mary Tiffany Taylor. Ordained deacon 1974 and ordained elder 1976 in the Holston Annual Conference, "Dindy," as she is sometimes known, served at churches in Athens, Knoxville, Gray, Bluff City, Kingsport, and Chattanooga, Tennessee before being appointed Cleveland (Tennessee) District Superintendent in 1999.

OUR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT — We also extend a cordial welcome to Rev. Quay Adams, Marion District Superintendent. Quay was appointed in 2003, and prior to that served as Anderson District Superintendent, and as minister of a number of South Carolina United Methodist churches. We value his relationship with our church, and welcome him today as he shares in worship with us.

DINNER — Everyone is invited to share in a fellowship dinner in the Methodist Family Center gymnasium. We hope you will stay to enjoy Christian fellowship and enjoy the spirit of the day!

ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE — Special thanks is extended to each member of the anniversary committee for their planning for today's event. The members are: Dr. John May, chair; Bill Kinney, co-chair; Louise Heriot and Carolyn Wallace, invitations; Elaine Crow, and Ken Stuart, food; Douglas Drake, Consulla Hamilton, Betty May, decorations; Lib Thompson, Amy Thomas, telephone; Jim Hepler and Ben Gafford, worship; Ross Stuart, youth.

HISTORICAL SKIT — The skit used in our worship service this morning was written by Betty Brown May, and directed by Virginia Hodges. Narrated by Ken Harmon, the characters are: Rev. Francis Asbury portrayed by Dr. John May; Edward Crosland portrayed by Cliff Crosland (a descendant); William J. Cook portrayed by Bill Kinney. Thank you to all who contributed!

HISTORICAL DISPLAY — The Gathering Room, adjacent to the Sanctuary on the second floor (same level as Sanctuary), has special historical displays. If you have not already seen them, spend some time following the service or the fellowship meal to enjoy the historical memorabilia.

HISTORY ROOM — There is also a History Room on the third floor of the Christian Education Building (at the west end). Historical plaques, pictures, and other items are on display there. The ministers' pictures, which are in the Gathering Room today, will be hung in the History Room later. You are invited to see the History Room at your convenience today.

THE CHURCH BELL — which was rung at 10:15 to summon worshippers to church today, dates from our first church building, built in 1834. The bell was installed in 1852, and was later used in the 1871 building. It was again used in our present 1900 building, where it is in the loft of the belfry. The bell was restored by Mark Trimmier in 1986.

THE SCHULMERICH CARILLON — which sounds the hour every day in Bennettsville, and rings the hymns of our faith at 9 a.m., noon, and 3 and 6 p.m., was a gift of The Kinney Foundation in 2008. It replaced a 1985 carillon, also a gift of The Kinney Foundation. The first carillon was purchased in 1954 by Dr. P.M. Kinney. The carillon was played today from 10:15-10:30 a.m., and will again play during periods of the afternoon today.

CHURCH WEBSITE — www.BennettsvilleFUMC.net has items of historical significance, as well as other information pertaining to the church which will be of interest to former members. In addition to the history and the roster of ministers (both printed in this bulletin), there is a pictorial tour of the Sanctuary, and pictures from the 2005-06 renovation. The church website also maintains information about current events, new members, and other information which will interest former members and friends of the parish. Stay in touch with us through the church website!

