



## Celebration of An Appointment



Oxford First United Methodist Church (OFUMC) held a formal Order for the Celebration of an Appointment for new Pastor Robert L. Wilson (pictured above) on Sunday July 31, 2022. This order is used within the worship service by a congregation whose pastor has been appointed or reappointed by the Bishop according to the polity of the United Methodist Church. But who is Pastor Wilson?

Pastor Wilson (above center) is a

native of Pontotoc MS. He accepted Christ at the age of 12, at Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church, in Fulton MS. Pastor Wilson says that he had no idea that despite the wayward path he took as a teenager, God would intervene in his life, mold, and shape his sinking ship into a steward of the Gospel. That is, at the age of 15, Pastor Wilson sensed his life was washed-up and beaten down, due to mistakes and failures he made as a teenager. At 15, he was placed in a

group home for troubled boys in Amory MS. He lived in the group home for boys until the age of 18.

Nevertheless, Amory becomes home for Pastor Wilson. While residing in Amory, he married the late Crystal Ezell Wilson and joined St. James UMC. After the death of his first wife in 2007, he married Yolanda Cunningham in 2010, and moved to New Albany MS. There they joined Usher Valley UMC in 2011. Pastor Wilson says that the turning point of his life was when he was placed in the group home for boys and when he joined St. James UMC. It was then that he says his eyes were opened to see the goodness of God's love, in giving him a second chance.

As Pastor Wilson puts it, "It was God's crowning grace of love that inspired him to follow Christ, and that journey has brought him to a crossroad in which he heard God's call to go and feed His sheep in 2013. In reflecting on the turning point of his life, Pastor Wilson often finds himself quoting the following words, as a way of describing what God did in transforming his sinking ship into being a man of God who is now a minister: "We should praise and thank God for His goodness of grace and mercy because our past does not determine our future with Christ."

Pastors Wilson attended Itawamba Community College, in Fulton MS. He studied religion at Liberty University, where he received a BS in Christian Ministries. He furthered his theology studies at Asbury Theological Seminary, where he received an MDiv.

Before answering his call to pastoral ministry at Usher Valley UMC, Pastor Wilson served as a lay servant. While serving he started a jail ministry with the United Methodist Men. In this ministry, he

led Bible studies with prisoners and worked with other church organizations in the community helping prisoners prepare themselves to become productive citizens after incarceration. He also served as a volunteer in supporting Pontotoc County Food Pantry. Pastor Wilson currently serves as pastor at Oxford First UMC. He previously served from 2019 to 2022, as pastor of Beverly and Salem UMC in the Ailesville charge, in Oxford MS. From 2014 to 2019, he served as pastor of New Chapel UMC in Plantersville MS.

Pastor Wilson has 6 adult children and 7 grandchildren. His wife Yolanda has a passion for helping seniors and supporting Pastor Wilson. She has served with him as a volunteer in the food pantry outreach ministry. She currently is looking forward to retiring from the IRS in three years, so that she may fulfill her heart's desire of starting a transportation ministry helping seniors. Consequently, Pastor Wilson says, God has truly smiled on him when He brought Yolanda into his life.

After worship a feast was served honoring the pastor and wife. The following pictures are from that day.





# OFUMC UMM in Service to Community

It was a blessing for the United Methodist Men of Oxford First UMC to participate with other churches in Lafayette County by helping Three Rivers Agency on Aging on July 19<sup>th</sup> at the Oxford Market located in the Old Armory Pavilion. Over 200 Farmers Market Nutrition Vouchers were



distributed to senior residents of Lafayette County. Pictured (from left to right) are Jimmy McGlawn, Kenneth Wortham, Rev. Roger Wilson, and Chase Grogan. Thanks for sharing your time for this community event.

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