



Come join us!  
**7 AM on Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**  
First United Methodist Church Winnsboro

We're so excited to invite you to be part of our Easter SUNRISE Service because our youth will be leading a beautiful celebration of the Risen Christ! This service, which will be very different from the traditional service at 10:50 in the sanctuary, will be at the Ken and Elaina Ragsdale's home\*, overlooking their beautiful pasture below as the sun rises in the east! This service will be casual but *filled* with the powerful message, right out of

ancient church history, where we will baptize those called to enter into the body of Christ, and we'll remember *our* own baptisms as we celebrate NEW LIFE in Christ!

This rich tradition of BAPTISM being celebrated at the Easter service of first light is beautifully explained by Rev. Dennis Brasher who writes:

“From the early days of the church, the Easter Vigil was the primary means by which Easter was observed. This practice has evolved in modern observance into the Easter sunrise service that many churches observe, but its history is much richer.

From the earliest days of the church, the Easter Vigil was primarily a means of preparing new converts for baptism into the Christian Faith, which was normally done on Easter Sunday as the focal point of the entire year. This preparation traditionally arises from a set of Scripture readings from the Old Testament that recounts the unfolding of God's creation of a people in the Exodus, and a promise of restoration from Zephaniah.

Following the lead of the Gospels themselves, this provides a crucial link between the revelation of God in Christ and the creation of the church with God's past revelation of himself and the creation of his people Israel. This important emphasis on the continuity of the church with the Old Testament's witness to God also helps define the nature of the church and its mission in the world, thoroughly grounding it in the ongoing work of God in history. The Gospel readings at the Vigil are not normally read until after sunrise on Sunday, or at the very end of the Easter Vigil.

The Vigil itself can begin at any time after sundown on Saturday, although there has been a tendency to begin just before sunrise on Sunday and conclude the service just after the Gospel readings while singing praises at sunrise. In more temperate climates, this is often an outdoor service.”

For more information about BAPTISM in the Methodist church contact our Pastor, Debbie Lyons, 903-342-6172 or see the United Methodist website [HERE](#).

Ken and Elaina Ragsdale's Home  
270 County Road 4228

*From the intersection of SH 11 West and FM 852 West, go 2.75 miles to a right turn on CR 4228.*