

Vision of the Church

I believe that pastors are appointed to a community, not to a brick-and-mortar facility. The community includes the family of believers that are part of Rapid City First, but also the larger body of believers, seekers, and unreached who live in our surroundings. My vision for our church is broad and inclusive. We have plenty of room to attract others with the powerful message of love that we are charged to share by our risen Savior. It's important to say that the vision of the church isn't Rich Bensinger's but will be developed with prayer and input from all of you who know this church and the community we serve.

Leadership Style

People who know me would say my leadership style is transformational. It's built on communication and transparency, working with people to create a shared vision. Building unity, developing bonds, creating energy, and instilling passion. My focus is on the future, building from a strong past and present. I'll work to inspire the church to achieve more than we ever imagined possible by bringing out everyone's gifts and abilities. I delegate and trust people and don't micromanage. I work hard to develop strong lay leadership and encourage people to discern their calling to service and ministry.

Service and Community Involvement

I love being an active part of the local community. I am active in local service organizations and advocate for faith-based positions with local, state, and Federal Government agencies. You will find me walking in hunger walks, building homes with Habitat for Humanity, and riding my motorcycle on charity rides with local veteran's groups to name a few. I believe in a strong interfaith connection in the community and will help build one if one doesn't already exist. I'm retired Air Force, so I expect to be engaged with activities at Ellsworth AFB.

2024 Appointment Rapid City First United Methodist Church



Introducing Rev. Richard "Rich" Bensinger

Family

I am married to the amazing Rebecca Valerie Musgrave. Her email address is trustandobeygod@icloud.com, so you know where her priorities are. She hails from the Caribbean Island of Dominica, the *Nature Island of the Caribbean*. Her mother Olive is one of ten children, and her dad Ruffe is also one of ten children, so 50% of the people on the island are related to her, I think. I have one adult

daughter Alison who is single and is an ER nurse in Boston at Tufts University Hospital. She is an amazing young woman. My parents are now with Christ. I have two younger sisters, Beverly in San Antonio, TX, and Laura Lee in Fishers, IN.

Education

*Bachelor's degree in 1978 in Meteorology/Mathematics from Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.

*Master of Science in 1988 in Meteorology/Computer Science from Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.

*Master of Divinity degree in 2022 from Kairos University at Sioux Falls Seminary in Sioux Falls, SD.

* Certificate in Spiritual Direction in 2023 from Sioux Falls Seminary in Sioux Falls, SD.

UMC Appointments and Church Service History

- Church of the Servant UMC in Oklahoma City, OK, Pastoral Care Chaplain, (2018-2019)
- Londonderry UMC, Londonderry NH, Director Missions and Outreach (2019-2020)
- Arlington Street UMC, Nashua, NH, Senior Pastor (2020-2022)
- Howellsville UMC, Front Royal, VA, Senior Pastor (2022-2023)
- Cool Spring UMC, Delaplane, VA, Senior Pastor, (2022-2023)
- Linden UMC, Linden, VA, Senior Pastor, (2023)

Call to Ministry

I am a third-generation United Methodist minister, following my grandfather and father into ministry. My father entered the US Air Force as a chaplain when I was six years old, so I grew up mainly

in military chapels with a few local Methodist Churches when we were able. I heard the call to ministry when I was a teenager but chalked it up to hero worship of my dad, and deferred it for many years. I served in lay leadership positions in a variety of churches and was the Church Council Chair, Director of Religious Education, Lay Minister, Church Treasurer, and many more. Finally, in 2020, my pastor kicked me out to the UMC Ministry Exploration Summit for the New England Conference and immediately following that, I started my Seminary studies.

Gifts for the Ministry

I bring a unique set of gifts to the ministry. My 25 years in the Air Force as both enlisted and officer have given me a broad spectrum of leadership skills, especially in areas of leading through challenges and difficulty. My years as a senior executive in industry smoothed my rough edges and gave me the ability to negotiate and build consensus and create strategic visions with the plans to follow through on them. The Holy Spirit has gifted me with specific gifts of pastoring and teaching, and I love to preach and teach. I'm distinctly Wesleyan in my theology, so the Means of Grace and the importance of the Sacraments are close to my heart. As a Spiritual Director, I'm empathetic and a good listener. I'm an Enneagram 2 if you follow such things.

Outside the Church

I believe in a good work/life balance. I work hard and play hard. I'm a private pilot, a SCUBA Instructor, and ride an Indian Vintage Chief motorcycle. I'm a skier, sailor, and love to go exploring. I've raced motorcycles, climbed mountains, jumped out of perfectly good airplanes, and almost always have a smile on my face. Rebecca and I love to travel. I've been to all 50 states and a lot of foreign countries.