



Ben R. Alford
AAFA #0505
1936 -2008

Ben R. Alford

Oct 18 1936 - Dec 9 2008
AAFA #0505

The Tennessean

Ben Alford

ALFORD, Ben

Age 72. Husband, father, grandfather, Pastor and friend, the Rev. Dr. Ben R. **Alford** died Tuesday, December 9, 2008. A native of Adams, TN, he was born October 18, 1936 to the late Ben C. and Martha Basford **Alford**, and grew up on a six-generation family farm. He graduated from Jo Byrns High School in 1954 and enrolled at Martin College in Pulaski, TN. Mr. **Alford** received the BA degree from Peabody College in 1958 and the Master of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University in 1961. He was ordained an Elder in the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church in 1962 and in 1998, he earned the Doctor of Ministry degree from Columbia Theological Seminary.

Dr. **Alford** is survived by his beloved wife of 44 years, the former

Sheridan W. Durham; a son, Ben David **Alford**; a daughter, Julie **Alford** Rullmann and husband Kyle Rullmann; five grandchildren, Ben Overton **Alford**, Hanson **Alford**, Cole Rullmann, Jake Rullmann and Cassie Rullmann; a brother, Charles C. **Alford** and wife Patricia, and a sister, Mary Nell **Alford** Lindsey and husband Jim.

Rev. **Alford** served numerous churches in Middle Tennessee over the course of 50 years, including: Kingston Springs circuit, Donelson Heights, Aldersgate, Ardmore, Prospect Circuit, Mt. Denson C.P. Church (interim), Slater's Chapel, Forest Grove, Madison Street, Clarksville, McKendree in Nashville, First UMC Hendersonville, Brentwood, Brewer's Chapel (interim) and Port Royal in

Montgomery County. In addition to local church ministry, Dr. **Alford's** career involved youth work, higher education, human services and agriculture. He served eight years on the staff and faculty of Martin Methodist College as Director of Public Affairs, and later as Instructor of Bible and Religion. He believed strongly in the biblical concept of stewardship, and one of his most prized honors was the Robertson County Soil Conservation award. He served three years as Robertson County Director of Human Services and later, as Director of Personnel for the City of Springfield. In 1999, Dr. **Alford** was selected to be the founding director of Martin Methodist College's new Center for Church Leadership, a post he served until his retirement from full-time ministry in 2002.

Rev. **Alford** held numerous positions of leadership in the United Methodist Church, including three elections as delegate to the denomination's General Conference and four elections to the Jurisdictional Conference, where the church's episcopal leaders are elected. He served twelve years as a member of the governing board of the United Methodist Publishing House and several years on the Board of Trustees of Martin Methodist College, including one year as chairman. In 1997, the college awarded him the President's Medallion

1997, the college awarded him the President's Medallion for his leadership and support of the institution and in 2008, awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

Dr. **Alford's** journal, which he kept for nearly fifty years, is soon to be published as NAMING A LOVE - 49 Years of Observations by a Farm Boy who Became a Preacher.

At his request, Dr. **Alford's** body was donated to the Vanderbilt School of Medicine for medical education and research

A Memorial service will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 14, 2008 at Madison Street United Methodist Church, 319 Madison Street, Clarksville, TN with reception and visitation following the service in the fellowship hall. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the Ben **Alford** Church Leadership Scholarship at Martin Methodist College, 433 W. Madison St., Pulaski, TN 38478; or to Port Royal United Methodist Church, Adams, TN 37010. AUSTIN & BELL-Springfield, TN (615) 384-1000.

REV. and MRS. BEN R. ALFORD
400 Walton's Ferry Rd.
No. 200
Hendersonville, TN 37075

June 19, 1992

Mr. Gilbert K. Alford, Jr.
1403 Kingsford Drive
Florissant, MO
63031-8648

Dear Gil,

Thank you for your letter of April 7. I apologize for taking so long to answer but I have been rather intensively involved in obligations at the General and Jurisdictional Conference levels in our denomination and am just now back in the office.

I appreciate the invitation to join our family association and am happy to respond affirmatively. Enclosed please find a completed application form and a check in the amount of \$25. I had intended to do this long before now.

I have also included an "Alford Family Worksheet" with the best data I have on our branch of the family. I can vouch for the accuracy of page one and page two contains the best information I have been able to get. I would be pleased to have any help you might provide in tracing our branch back to the immigrant ancestor. I would imagine that several of our lines converge there.

We would like to come to Destin this fall if possible. At this time it is unclear whether we can get the time to do so or not.

Thank you and I look forward to meeting you and other "cousins."

Sincerely,


Ben R. Alford

Enclosures

P.S. Please continue sending my mail to the church address in your files.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

505
BEN

Your name BEN R. ALFORD Date of birth 10-18-36

Family members to be included in membership:

Spouse Sheridan Durham Alford Date of birth 7-2-43

Child under 21 Ben David Alford Date of birth 12-20-64

Child under 21 Julie Marlene Alford Date of birth 12-24-66

Child under 21 _____ Date of birth _____

Mailing address: FIRST United Methodist Church Membership sponsor: _____

City, state, zip: 217 E. Main, Hendersonville TN Phone (615) _____

6-19-92
by 6

Tear off and mail with registration fee and first year dues to: AAFA, P.O. Box 1586, Florissant, MO 63031

(I believe your address for me is incorrect. Thanks)

Alford Family Worksheet

<p>1. YOUR (OR SPOUSES) NAME (ALFORD): Ben Robert Alford</p> <p>BORN: 10-18-36 Clarksville, (Montgomery Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>MARRIED: 1-1-64 Old Hickory, (Davidson Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <hr/> <p>NAME OF YOUR SPOUSE: Sheridan Wayne Durham</p> <p>BORN: 7-2-43 Old Hickory (Davidson Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>IF DECEASED:</p> <p>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAMES OF CHILDREN & THEIR BIRTH DATE</p> <p>Ben David Alford 12-20-64</p> <p>Julie Marlene Alford 12-24-66</p>
<p>2. YOUR FATHER'S NAME (ALFORD): Ben Carmack Alford</p> <p>BORN: 11-9-08 Adams (Robertson Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>MARRIED: 1-30-36 Elkton (Todd) KY <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>IF DECEASED:</p> <p>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>CEMETERY NAME PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAMES OF CHILDREN & THEIR BIRTH DATE</p> <p>Ben Robert Alford 10-18-36</p> <p>Charles Carmack Alford 4-30-41</p> <p>Mary Nell Alford Lindsey 8-8-43</p>
<p>3. MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: Martha Louise Basford</p> <p>BORN: 7-19-1912 Sango (Montgomery Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>IF DECEASED:</p> <p>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	
<p>4. YOUR GRANDFATHER'S NAME (ALFORD): Ben Lafayette</p> <p>BORN: September 9, 1858 Wilson Co. Tennessee <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>MARRIED: 1903 Cedar Hill (Robertson Co.) TN. <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>IF DECEASED: Jan. 23, 1923 Adams (Robertson Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>CEMETERY NAME: Elmwood Springfield (Robertson Co.) TN <small>CEMETERY NAME PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAMES OF CHILDREN & THEIR BIRTH DATE</p> <p>Frances Willard Alford 3-10-07</p> <p>Ben Carmack Alford 11-9-08</p>
<p>5. GRANDMOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: Lela Harriett Bigger</p> <p>BORN: March 3, 1870 Fredonia (Montgomery Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>IF DECEASED: Jan. 15, 1944 Adams (Robertson Co.) TN <small>DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</small></p> <p>Cemetery: Elmwood Springfield, (Rob. Co.) TN</p>	

(Please continue on the back)

Alford Family Worksheet - Continued

<p>8. YOUR 1st GREAT GRANDFATHER'S NAME (ALFORD): Wiley Napoleon Bonaparte Alford</p> <p>BORN: Jan. 19, 1826 Wilson Co. Tennessee DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>MARRIED: ? DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>DIED: ? ? DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>CEMETERY NAME PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAMES OF CHILDREN & THEIR BIRTH DATE</p> <p>Sophie Elizabeth 7-25-1849 William Wiley 11-14-1851 Sally N. 9-21-1855 Ben Lafayette 9-9-1858 Fountain Ellis 4-26-1861 Susie B. 9-22-1863</p>
<p>9. GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: Nancy Dicey Bilbro</p> <p>BORN: ? Wilson Co., Tennessee DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>DIED: ? DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	
<p>16. YOUR 2ND GREAT GRANDFATHER'S NAME (ALFORD): N. C. Wiley Alford</p> <p>BORN: 6-12-1783 Wake Co. NC DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>MARRIED: 12-31-1805 Robeson Co, NC DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>DIED: 3-2-1854 Wilson Co. TN DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>CEMETERY NAME Alford Cemetery PLACE (City/Town County State) Mt. Juliet (Wilson Co) TN</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAMES OF CHILDREN & THEIR BIRTH DATE</p> <p>Britton D. Louisa Mary P. James P. Ruth A. Matilda Clarky Adeline L. Wiley Napoleon Bonaparte Sophia Valentine Edmond S. Benjamin M.</p>
<p>17. 2ND GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: Sophia Valentine Drake</p> <p>BORN: 1-5-1789 ? DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>DIED: 5-19-1875 Wilson Co. TN DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	
<p>32. YOUR 3RD GREAT GRANDFATHER'S NAME (ALFORD): Jacob Alford</p> <p>BORN: 12-12-1738 New Kent Co., VA DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>MARRIED: DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>DIED: DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>CEMETERY NAME PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAMES OF CHILDREN & THEIR BIRTH DATE</p> <p>Wiley Elias Sion James Mary Warren Charity</p>
<p>33. 3RD GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: Mary ?</p> <p>BORN: DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p> <p>DIED: DATE (Month Day Year) PLACE (City/Town County State)</p>	

(Please continue on a blank sheet of paper if necessary)
(Or reproduce this page and modify as necessary)



First United Methodist Church

217 East Main Street
Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075

(615) 824-8725

June 17, 1993

Mr. Gilbert K. Alford, Jr.
1403 Kingsford Dr.
Florissant, MO
63031-2422

Dear Gil,

Before I head to our Annual Conference Sessions in Pulaski I wanted to dash off this note to you with the enclosures. They do not have to be returned.

No. 1 is a photograph of my dad taken in April, standing between the graves of his great-grandparents as indicated in the outline. Dad is 84 - will be 85 in November.

No. 2 is a photocopy of an old obituary notice which appeared in the Methodist paper in 1905. I just discovered it. The obituary is for Wiley Napoleon Bonaparte Alford, my dad's grandfather. Our branch of the Tennessee Alfords goes like this:

1. Wiley (and Sophia V.) Alford (tombstones pictured)
2. Wiley Napoleon Bonaparte Alford (one of 11 children)
3. Ben Lafayette Alford (my grandfather)
4. Ben Carmack Alford (my dad, pictured)
5. Ben Robert Alford
6. Ben David Alford, Julie Marlene Alford

Just thought you might be interested.

Sincerely,

Ben R. Alford
Ben R. Alford

BA/ba

enclosures

Handwritten notes and scribbles in the bottom right corner of the page.

Brother W.N.B. Alford, father of Rev. F. E. Alford of the Tennessee Conference, died at his home, in Robertson County, Tenn., May 20, 1905. Brother Alford was born January 19, 1826, and was in his eightieth year at the time of his death. In early life he was converted and joined the Methodist Church and lived all his life in its communion. He loved the Church, he loved all Christians; but he was devoted to his own Church. He was never happier than when the preachers visited him, and never too busy to spend hours in conversation with them. He loved to talk about religion. He had an experience, and was not ashamed to speak of it. His was a happy, Christian life. It was my privilege to be his pastor for three years and frequently to be in his home. It was a truly Christian home. Brother Alford's wife was Miss Dicey C. Bilbro and to this union seven children were born, all but one of whom are living and members of the Church. Their father never accumulated for them a great estate, but he left them a better heritage: "a good name, which is rather to be chosen than great riches." He was a great sufferer in his old age, and for four or five years was almost totally blind, yet he continued cheerful and bright. He had read his Bible much, and in his last sickness would repeat whole chapters. When the end came he was ready. "There are no dark chilly waters; all is bright before me," he testified, and, requesting all of his children to meet him in heaven, he "fell on sleep." Dear old friend of my early ministry, we shall meet again.

George L. Beale

(Rev. George L. Beale served prominently in the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church and for many years was Secretary of the Conference.)

Conference, died at his home, in Robertson County, Tenn., May 20, 1905. Brother Alford was born January 19, 1826, and was in his eightieth year at the time of his death. In early life he was converted and joined the Methodist Church and lived all his life in its communion. He loved the Church, he loved all Christians; but he was devoted to his own Church. He was never happier than when the preachers visited him, and never too busy to spend hours in conversation with them. He loved to talk about religion. He had an experience, and was not ashamed to speak of it. His was a happy, Christian life. It was my privilege to be his pastor for three years and frequently to be in his home. It was a truly Christian home. Brother Alford's wife was Miss Dicey C. Bilbro and to this union seven children were born, all but one of whom are living and members of the Church. Their father never accumulated for them a great estate, but he left them a better heritage: "a good name, which is rather to be chosen than great riches." He was a great sufferer in his old age, and for four or five years was almost totally blind, yet he continued cheerful and bright. He had read his Bible much, and in his last sickness would repeat whole chapters. When the end came he was ready. "There are no dark chilly waters; all is bright before me," he testified, and, requesting all of his children to meet him in heaven, he "fell on sleep." Dear old friend of my early ministry, we shall meet again.



Photograph showing Ben Carmack Alford (b. 11/09/08) standing between the grave markers of his great-grandparents on April 4, 1993. The cemetery is located on a hill just off Central Pike near Mt. Juliet, TN (Wilson Co.) on property owned by Mr. and Mrs. Phil Smartt.

Tombstone on the left bears this inscription directly beneath a D.A.R. medallion:

SOPHIA V. ALFORD

Born June 5
1789

Died May 19
1875

Above a hand pointing upward on the other tombstone are the words "We will meet again." Below, is this inscription:

WILEY ALFORD

Born in
Wake Co., N.C.
June 12, 1783
Died
March 2, 1854



Sugartree Farm

1-5-95

Gil -

I'm sorry to tell you that we lost
our dad on Dec. 27 as the enclosed
obit from the Tennessean indicates.

So much goes with him and so much also
remains.

God's peace,

Ben R. Alford

Ben R. Alford

4643 Goodman Road, Adams, Tennessee 37010

To: [unknown], [72154,1610]
From: REV BEN R ALFORD, INTERNET:SZBZ50A@prodigy.com
Date: 2/3/98, 11:11 AM
Re: Connecting again

Sender: SZBZ50A@prodigy.com
Received: from pimaia4w.prodigy.com (pimaia4w.prodigy.com [198.83.18.139])
by arl-img-10.compuserve.com (8.8.6/8.8.6/2.10) with ESMTP id MAA14102
for <72154.1610@compuserve.com>; Tue, 3 Feb 1998 12:11:21 -0500 (EST)
Received: from mime4.prodigy.com (mime4.prodigy.com [192.168.254.43])
by pimaia4w.prodigy.com (8.8.5/8.8.5) with ESMTP id MAA13492
for <72154.1610@compuserve.com>; Tue, 3 Feb 1998 12:11:14 -0500
Received: (from root@localhost) by mime4.prodigy.com (8.6.10/8.6.9) id MAA08134 for
72154.1610@compuserve.com; Tue, 3 Feb 1998 12:08:55 -0500
Message-Id: <199802031708.MAA08134@mime4.prodigy.com>
X-Mailer: Prodigy Internet GW(v0.9beta) - ae01dm04sc03
From: SZBZ50A@prodigy.com (REV BEN R ALFORD)
Date: Tue, 3 Feb 1998 12:08:55, -0500
To: 72154.1610@compuserve.com
Subject: Connecting again

Gil,

Thanks for the recent mailing which included data about Paducah in October and a mailing list of "cousins". Sheri and I will try to attend the upcoming meeting and I will submit my registration as soon as I can clear the calendar at the office.

I need to correct my address. I am now serving as Senior Pastor at Brentwood United Methodist Church just outside of Nashville. Home address is 509 Clear Spring Court, Brentwood, TN 37027.

I was delighted to find the AAFA home page on the internet this week!
Good job.

I don't know whether this is the place to do an update but I'll submit it anyway: Sheri and I have two children: A SON, Ben David Alford; wife, Katrina Overton Alford; they have two children: Ben Overton Alford (b. 11/09/95) and David Hanson Alford (b. 06/06/97) and a DAUGHTER Julie Marlene Alford Rullman married to Kyle Rullmann; they have a son, Cole Alexander Rullman (b. 09/26/97).

Thanks for all you are doing to keep our family in touch!

Ben Alford