

# WESTOVER REFLECTIONS

WESTOVER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | MARCH 2023

## Letter from the Pastor

Greetings Westover Family,

The Season of lent is upon us. It is a time for reflection, repentance and sacrifice. I pray that this season challenges each of us to consider what we do to build God's Kingdom and how we might do more. One of the difficulties of growing in Christian faith is challenging ourselves. We cannot grow closer to God if we are unwilling to try new things. There is no such thing as progress without change.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Don't do the minimum when you can do more. Challenge yourself to sacrifice more than ever before. Give more time. Give more patience. Give more love. Take on new challenges. Connect with God in a new way. Start a bible study. Read some scriptures. Pray more. Give to a church or charity. Attend more services. Try to spend as much time with God this month as you spend watching television, going to the movies, talking on the phone, eating, reading, exercising, playing games, or whatever else you do. Life-work balance is important but God-life balance is essential.

2. Join the Care campaign. For Lent, I am inviting you to practice kindness and spiritual discipline, in

secret. Each week I will send out a challenge (text or email). Your job is to complete the challenge as often as you can in the week, anonymously. You should journal about your experience.

### RECOGNITION

This month I'd like to recognize Jennifer Proffitt. She is working hard to balance work responsibilities and personal responsibilities and yet has been willing to find room to serve Westover. She leads SPRC and the Trustee Board and seems always willing to say, "yes" to do whatever is required for the building of the kingdom of God. If you see her, take time to say thanks you!

### FINAL THOUGHTS

I look forward to seeing your growth and to sharing my growth with you. Remember, you belong to God and sharing your "stuff" with him really isn't a sacrifice, because all that you have and all that you are is already his.

Blessings,

Your Pastor

**Damion Quaye**

# FIRST FRUITS OF WORSHIP

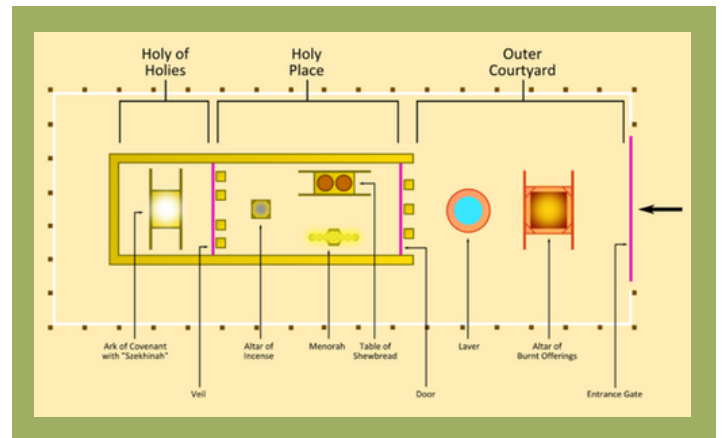
By Bruce Smith  
Director of Music Ministries

## *The Arch of Worship* 3. Letting Go

There is a shape to worship. It moves and flows to reflect that shape, and we are privileged to engage in this ancient ritual and experience daily as individuals and weekly as the collective body of Christ. In the past two months we have discussed "The Arrival" - delving into how we should enter the worship space, beginning our "arch". And last month we looked at "The Engagement" - the place in the outer courtyard where we get in touch with our sinfulness and need for God's cleansing. This arch has its origins in the design of the ancient Hebrew tabernacle (seen to the right here). The three significant places in that tabernacle reflect 3 of the 4 portions of the arch we will discuss. (The Outer Courtyard, The Holy Place (or inner courtyard), and the Holy of Holies). So, let's continue our journey through the arch of worship.

The ultimate goal of the worship experience is the place where the Holy Spirit is holding us, speaking to us, challenging us and ultimately, transforming us. The place in the ancient tabernacle for this worship experience is the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. So, let's explore how we get from the Holy Place to the Holy of Holies.

**1. The Table of Shewbread (Presence of Christ)** - The table of shewbread is the first focal object you would encounter in the Holy Place to the right. This was also referred to as the table of the Presence. There were 12 baked cakes of bread on this table which spoke of God's people who were one with Him as the priests joined together for the fellowship of eating the bread and becoming one.



***"Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry'" John 6:35***

The very nature of bread is to provide physical sustenance and as you eat the bread and digest it, it becomes part of you. The very nature of the Word of God is to provide spiritual sustenance and as it is received it becomes part of our very nature. Just as the table always speaks of fellowship and communion, so the table of the shewbread points to Jesus who has made a covenant built on better promises and provided a blood covenant meal for us to partake that we might all be one in the Spirit. Connection with Christ is this first step.

**2. The Menorah (The Light of Christ)** - The Menorah is next on the left as we pass through the Holy Place. It is the only source of light in the Holy Place, which reminds us of God's Word in John 1...

***"In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:8-9***

Refocusing our eyes and our hearts not on the world around us, but on the light of life—Jesus—will tenderize our hearts and help us to listen for His "still small voice" as we worship.

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## Craft Circle

Join us on Saturday March 4 at 10am in Wesley Hall. We're making knotted fleece blankets which will be donated to organizations that can distribute them where needed. The fleece will be provided so just bring a good pair of scissors!

If you can use a pair of scissors and can tie a knot, you can make a blanket! And, as we found out with the first get-together of the Craft Circle, we can have fun, laugh at our mistakes, get to know each other better, and have a really good time! Please come be with us on Saturday March 4th at 10am. And, as always, even if you don't want join in on the craft, just come and join us for the fun and fellowship! Hope to see you on the 4th!

Note: In April, tentative plans are to meet in the afternoon on April 1st to learn how to make fancy icing and do some fancy cookie decorating! More details later. If you have a craft idea, let us know (Clara Worsley and Sharron Gibson). We found out that Craft Circle folks want to learn LOTS of things!



# HYMN STORY: "JUST AS I AM WITHOUT ONE PLEA"

By Bruce Smith  
Director of Music Ministries

***"O Lamb of God I come, I come."***

If there is one hymn in all of Christendom that has served as the background music for ordinary people coming to Christ, it is the strains of Charlotte Elliot's "Just As I Am". More preachers have invited people to the altar to accept Christ to this music than any other hymn or piece of music. And it makes sense – this is a song that encourages us to step out in faith and come to Christ just as we are, not needing to be perfect to come to Him. Her lyrics are starkly stated to our condition and need for a Savior, and our need to "come".

Charlotte Elliot in 1835 was an invalid living in England. She had a Dr. Malan, physician from Geneva, as a houseguest one evening. And after dinner the subject of personal salvation was broached by the doctor. He asked her if she had ever come to the Lord Jesus to accept Him as her savior. At first, she was offended at the question and immediately changed the subject. But, it got her to thinking, and later that evening she asked the doctor, "You spoke of coming to Jesus. But how? I am not fit to come." He replied, "come just as you are." And later that evening she did. And when she was in her room late that night she wrote the lines of this great hymn.

***"Just as I am, poor wretched, blind; Sight, riches, healing of the mind, Yea, all I need in Thee to find; O Lamb of God, I come."***

Months later she shared her experience with a friend and showed them the lyrics she had written, and somehow people started singing these compelling lyrics to a tune composed by New England composer William B. Bradbury and the hymn became an international beloved anthem to those needing to come to the Lord. Today the hymn has been translated into many different languages and is sung and prayed over as people of every age, race, and nationality come to the Lord for forgiveness and acceptance.

So many of us sometimes think we need to get our act together, dress up in our "goodness" before we can approach God for forgiveness and acceptance, but that just isn't the Gospel message is it? Christ accepts us and **wants us** just as we are, because when we are in that humble place, we discover our need for Him.

As we experience this Holy Lenten season, that should be our focus – "to come". To willingly place ourselves at the feet of our Savior, knowing our sinful, ugly self may not deserve His love, but He offers it nonetheless. We need to come as soon and as often as we can to Him to live out the lyrics from this great hymn...

***"Just as I am, and waiting not, To rid my soul of one dark blot, To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot. O Lamb of God, I come."***

Let's not be afraid "to come"!

# IN MEMORIAM

## CARL PATTERSON RAY MAY 18, 1933 - JANUARY 28, 2023



Carl was born in Wake County on May 18th, 1933, the son of the late Herman and Alice Ray. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother Herman John "Bo" Ray and his wife Doris House Ray.

He is survived by his children, Carl P. Ray, Jr. "Duke", Susan Diane Culpepper and husband Vernon Clay Culpepper, Cindy Ray Coker and husband Randy Lee Coker of Tarboro; Grandchildren, Erica Coker Clark and husband Justin Carroll Clark of Winterville, Joshua Lee Coker of Tarboro, Audrey Ray

Miller and husband Ryan Miller of Deep River, Cierra Leigh Ray and boyfriend Alex Warner of Raleigh, Nicholas Clay Culpepper and wife Rachel Marie Culpepper of Raleigh, and Austin Duke Ray of Apex; and his great-grandchildren, Aiden, Charlotte, Ava, Miles, and Bea..... Ellie Mae was his faithful four-legged buddy.

## MERLE SASSER PITZER MARCH 23, 1929 - FEBRUARY 15, 2023



Merle Sasser Pitzer, 93 of Raleigh, N.C., died on February 15, 2023. Merle was born to the late Leon Edison Sasser and Grace McKee Sasser of Hallsboro, N.C. Merle was an active member of Westover United Methodist Church since 1958. She considered the members of the congregation to be her second family. Merle was also an avid gardener, loving the time she spent in her yard. She enjoyed being with family, friends, and the Thursday ladies luncheon group. Merle was preceded in death by her husband, Arthur Kerner Pitzer, Jr.

She is survived by her three children, son, Eddie Pitzer (Bonnie); daughter, Sue Harrington (Spence); son, Bill Pitzer (Mark), four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

# WESTOVER UMC CALENDAR

**Sunday: Arise & Shine Worship 9-10am**

**Gateway Christian Fellowship 10am-3pm**

**Worship Service 11am-12pm**

**Montagnard Service 1:30-4:30pm**

**Emmanuel United Church 5:00-8:30pm**

**AA 6-9:30pm**

**Monday: NA 6:30-9:30pm**

**Wednesday: Prayer Group 11-11:30am**

**NA 6-9:30pm**

**Thursday: AA 6-9:30pm**

**Sanctuary**

**Fellowship Hall**

**Wesley Hall**

**Zoom Mtg**

## CONTD FROM PG 2

Did you ever notice how when a room or a theater gets dark our other senses pay more attention? That's what the Menorah helps us to do.

Refocusing our eyes and our hearts not on the world around us, but on the light of life—Jesus—will tenderize our hearts and help us to listen for His “still small voice” as we worship. Did you ever notice how when a room or a theater gets dark our other senses pay more attention? That's what the Menorah helps us to do.

**3. The Altar Of Incense (Prayers and Intercessions)** - The incense used in the Holy Place is the last stop in the center before the Holy of Holies. It was a symbol of the prayers and intercession of the people going up to God as a sweet fragrance. God wanted His dwelling to be a place where people could approach Him and pray to Him. This is where we begin to communicate with God, sharing our concerns, fears, troubles, and thanksgivings.

***“...for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” (Isaiah 56:7)***

This is where we begin to respond and speak to the Lord in personal terms. This step in the arch of worship is where we lay the ground work for God's response to us and hearing what He wants from us.

As we proceed through the Holy Place, as we are experiencing the presence of Christ, the light of Christ, and engaging God through prayer of our deepest needs, we are now prepared to hear from God through the Holy Spirit—the transformation can then take place in our lives. That happens in the Holy of Holies.

Next time, we'll discuss the 2nd half of “Letting Go” - Transformation in the Holy of Holies!

### TRAINING RETREAT

Are you interested in being an usher, a greeter, a liturgist or an acolyte? Join us for a Training Retreat on Saturday March 25 from 9:30am-12pm. More details to follow.



### BIRTHDAYS

- 3 MARGARET DANIELS  
YUAN LING WILSON
- 8 SUTTON JAMES GORDON
- 11 JANE BROWN
- 13 BARBARA EPLEY
- 16 SAMANTHA PRICE GRADLE
- 18 DELORIS GARSKA
- 20 ED WORSLEY  
MICHAEL MARSHALL
- 30 STEPHEN ADISA ADEBIYI
- 31 ROBERT DANIELS  
BOBBY MASSENGILL, JR.

# HELLO SPRING