



Westover Reflections - September 2024

William's Wanderings

“They were completely amazed and said again and again. ‘Everything He does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak.’”

-Mark 7:37

There is a verse in Paul’s letter to the Colossians that reads, **“Brothers and sisters: You were once alienated and hostile in mind...but God has now reconciled you in the freshy Body of Christ through His death, to present you holy, without blemish and irreproachable before him, provided that you persevere in the faith, firmly grounded, stable, and not shifting from the hope of the Gospel that you heard...”**

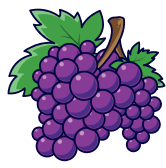
I readily admit that I am an idealist, an eternal optimist, if you will. I believe that this earthly sojourn is filled with kindness and possibilities. I like to think that we want a life filled with compassion for others wherein people want to serve others through volunteerism knowing that even the **simple act** of taking a bouquet of flowers from the **Flower Ministry** brings the proverbial **smile without end**, as well as the invitation of welcome. I still believe in a world wherein we treat others with the same respect and consideration that we desire for ourselves. And I don’t think it is that difficult to do so.

The prophet Isaiah, in **chapter 35**, speaks of a time when the lame will walk, the blind will see, the deaf will hear, and all of creation will spring forth in new life. And the Psalmist, in **Psalm 146**, sings of a world wherein the oppressed are set free, the hungry are fed, and the stranger among us is watched over. **I know!** It is the **Kingdom of God...to come!** And I am thinking that we can get so caught up in what is **“to come”** that we miss the truth that it has already done so. It broke into the world with a Baby born in Bethlehem, a Son of Nazareth, and Savior on Calvary. In each moment God announced that His peace had come.

Yet, two millennia’s later, far too many seem to have forgotten the **“Gospel that [they] heard.”** We demand that others respect our views, our way of seeing the world around us, the standards that we set. And I get this. We somehow think/believe that we have all the answers to what is right and wrong. But my fear is that if we don’t come back to what Jesus taught us that we will miss the **“great reversal”** wherein the ones who were deprived are those who inherit the kingdom **“promised to those who love Him.”**

Still in His Peace,
Pastor William





First Fruits of Worship!

by Bruce Smith
Director of Music Ministries

Hymn Story: “O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing”

“O for a thousand tongues to sing my great redeemer’s praise”

Charles Wesley, the greatest hymnwriter in Methodism, has composed over 6,000 hymns giving praise and glory to God. But this hymn, “O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing”, is the only one to commemorate the first anniversary of his conversion. That conversion story is quite well known for his experiencing the Holy Spirit that “chased away the darkness of my unbelief”. It is no wonder then that on his first spiritual birthday, he penned this glorious hymn declaring his thankful heart to God.

Wesley wrote this hymn in 1739, inspired by the remarks to Wesley by Peter Border: “Had I a thousand tongues, I would praise Him with them all.” Following his conversion in 1738, Charles became extremely ill and in bed with the fear of death surrounding him. That next Sunday, May 21, 1738, his brother and some friends entered his room and sang a hymn to rouse his spirits. In his Journal, he writes “I was composing myself to sleep in quietness and peace when I heard one come in and say, ‘In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities.’ The words struck me to the heart. I lay musing and trembling. With strange palpitation of heart, I said, yet feared to say ‘I believe, I believe!’” These memories are beautifully woven into the words of the third verse:

*Jesus the name that charms our fears, that bids the sorrows cease
Tis music in the sinner’s ear, tis life and health and peace*

Charles Wesley beautifully crafts his lyrics around the theme of “tongues” to show the power of God and how everyone including those with limited sight, hearing, and mobility should use their mouth to sing His praise.

*Hear him, ye deaf, His praise, ye dumb - Your loosened tongues employ
Ye blind behold your savior come - And leap, ye lame for joy*

Such a glorious tribute to our God by Charles Wesley, who laid claim to his heart and calls upon us all to lift our tongues in praise!



Adult Sunday School Class Update

Beginning in mid-October (we’ll have the exact date in the October newsletter) we begin a study of 1 and 2 Peter. We’re finishing up our study of the Gospel of John...this is a powerful Gospel which has taken on new and powerful meaning for class members. Join us on Sundays at 10:00 in the Education Building – the more the merrier!

Craft Circle

Craft Circle will meet in Wesley Hall on Saturday, September 14, 10:00 a.m., for a great project – making new greeting cards from old ones! Everything you need will be supplied. This will be a craft that everyone can do – so join us for a creative and fun time! We'll use these cards as part of the ministry of United Methodist Women which is starting back up – read more about it in this newsletter – and join us for lunch and United Methodist Women after Craft Circle!

United Methodist Women

At noon on Saturday, September 14, Wesley Hall, we're beginning a new chapter with United Methodist Women (now known as United Women in Faith (UWFaith). Bring your lunch and we'll have some fellowship time first with UWFaith meeting after lunch. Lucy Walters will lead UWFaith and we look forward to a new beginning with this ministry which Westover has enjoyed for many years. Ladies – join us on September 14 at noon!

NOTE: The plan is that we'll have Craft Circle, lunch and then UWFaith meeting each month on the same day. So – you can join us for just Craft Circle, or just lunch, or just UWFaith meeting – or all three! We should always be through by 1:30 with all the events.



Phone news

Good news, Westover has our original phone again. Please call 919-851-4431 to reach the church office.

Please sign up to receive phone or text messages about church and member information. It's easy! Just call the church office and ask Susan to sign you up!



United Methodist Men

UMM will meet Saturday, September 14 at 8:30 AM. After breakfast, we will be painting the fence by the paved parking lot. All men are invited to this time of fellowship, food and service.

Happy Birthday!



Happy September Birthdays to:

- 1 Margaret Carter
- 1 Ayden Ray Lucas
- 2 Kim Adams
- 2 Melissa Crowder
- 3 Maggie Sargent
- 6 John Carter III
- 6 John Mitchell
- 6 Kent Gibson
- 10 Amanda Daniels
- 11 Kenneth Medlin
- 12 Margie Liggins
- 14 Kelly Broadhurst
- 18 Jasmine Ksor
- 20 Miles Medlin
- 25 Diane Ray Culpepper
- 26 Mason Chin
- 26 Wayne Miller
- 29 Kim Giannattasio
- 30 Vicki Anderson
- 30 Evan Price

Movie Night

By special request, this month's movie is *Chariots of Fire*. Join us in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, September 13 at 7:00 PM. As always, there will be a great fellowship, a door prize and snacks (usually including homemade cookies!) If you would like to carpool, please contact Kent or Sharron Gibson.