

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - SEPTEMBER 6, 2010

(From the Pastor's Pen)

Last week I wrote about "ritual and moral holiness" and about how holiness is to be our identity as those who belong to God. Permit me one more column from the Book of Leviticus, and this column has to do with the way in which holiness may indeed come to define who we are.

All of us I am sure are familiar with the concept of a "scapegoat." In our society it is most often used to designate a person who gets blamed unfairly. One person may have done something that is morally or legally wrong, but that person manages to escape the blame while the blame gets shifted to another person who may or may not have had anything to do with what happened. Politics, I suppose, is the arena we most often think about in terms of someone becoming a "scapegoat." Such things seem to be an all too frequent happening in that arena.

The concept of the scapegoat actually comes from ancient Israel, and the Book of Leviticus in particular. In chapter 16 in Leviticus in which instructions for the Day of Atonement are given, a part of those instructions has to do with two goats being brought before the high priest. One of those goats is designated as being for God. The other is designated as being for Azazel. The goat for Azazel is the scapegoat.

After the high priest has sacrificed a bull on the altar, the goat that is designated for God is then sacrificed. And then after that is done, the high priest lays his hands on the head of the goat designated for Azazel and confesses all of Israel's sins over that goat. The symbolism is that the sins of Israel are placed on the head of the goat designated for Azazel, the "scapegoat."

Now listen to what happens to that goat as described in Leviticus 16. "When he (the high priest) has finished atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. Then Aaron (or high priest) shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness by means of someone designated for the task. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness."

Once the goat bearing the sins of Israel is set free in the wilderness, it doesn't return to the camp. It wanders off in that barren region never to be seen again. The symbolism is that the sins of Israel are put on the head of this goat and delivered out into the wilderness there to disappear and never be seen or heard from again. One becomes holy by the removal of sin, and a part of the essence of the Day of Atonement in Israel was that sins once confessed were taken away from them never to be brought back. Their sin was removed from them through confession and letting go of those sins.

Now in the New Testament there is further symbolism that relates to the atonement and removal of sins. Jesus died outside the gate of Jerusalem. He died at a place that was outside the city, namely "the place of the skull." The symbolism for Christians is that Jesus, like the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement in Israel, took our sins upon himself and bore them outside the camp, removing them from us. They are to never to be seen or heard from again. As Christians we can be holy because Jesus makes us holy. Jesus of Nazareth, "whom we crucified" as Peter says in Acts, is willing to take our sins upon himself and remove them forever from us. We don't have to live in them. We don't have to continually bear them, but we do have to confess them and we do have to give them to Jesus.

No human being can claim never having sinned. No human being can claim immunity from the power of sin. No human being can claim that he or she in her own power has resisted sin. We are human beings. We do err. We do sin. That is a part of our human condition.

But in a world where so many seem to want to turn to that which is crass and vulgar and profane and unholy, we need to remember that as Christians we are not called to that kind of life. We are called to a life of holiness. We are not called to a life in which we entertain sin so that as the Apostle Paul said in his letter to the Romans "that grace may abound." And we are not called to a "holier-than-thou" way of being. Rather we as Christians are called to a life of holiness because grace is even now

abounding through Jesus Christ our Lord to remove our sin from us.

Living a life of holiness is not about our being good enough in our own power to make it to heaven. It is about letting God through Jesus remove our sins from us so that those sins never have to be heard of or seen again. Living a life of holiness is about letting Jesus take our sin from us and enabling through grace a new life in us. This is the good news, and it is something to think about - and receive.

Until next time, **Bro. Jim**

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN TENNESSEE CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING - OCTOBER 9, 2010

Our Tennessee Conference Annual meeting will be held on October 9th at Crossville UMC in Crossville, TN. Registration begins at 9 A.M. We have been asked to wear green clothing, if available, to signify our "green awareness". The registration cost for the Annual Meeting is \$15.00, which covers our meal and all programming. Our church van is reserved for the trip, and, if we have to have more room, some have indicated that they would be willing to drive and we can caravan there. Let's represent our church and the Pulaski District in a grand way.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN PULASKI DISTRICT FALL MEETING ST. ANDREW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - OCTOBER 23, 2010

The Fall meeting of the Pulaski District United Methodist Women will be held at St. Andrew UMC on Saturday, October 23rd, beginning at 9:00 a.m. The theme for the day will be "Let's Get Together to Join Hands in Christ's Mission." Our focus will be joining together to support Bethlehem Center of Nashville. Our speaker will be from Bethlehem Center of Nashville.. Our speaker will be from Bethlehem Center and our offerings will go to their ministry. We are also asked to bring school supplies, art supplies, used clothing in all sizes, and jewelry for their shop to raise funds. At this meeting, we will install officers for 2011 and celebrate the organization of a new unit. We will recognize faithful UMW members in a program of Lifetime Service Recognition. Please plan to come. We will take the van. Call Mary Ann Clayton today if you plan to go.

UMW SPIRITUAL GROWTH RETREAT

The UMW Spiritual Growth Retreat is scheduled for **Saturday, October 2nd**, (date was changed due to a death), from 9:00 a.m. until noon, in the Friends and Fellowship classroom. All women of the church are invited to attend. The topic will be "Growing in Wisdom and Faith", a study of the book of James.

CHRISTIANS CONNECT

Christians Connect will meet this Sunday, (September 12), following the 8:15 a.m. service, in the Friends & Fellowship classroom. This month's gathering will be hosted by the Friends & Fellowship class.

MOVIE NIGHT IN THE CLC - SEPTEMBER 19 @ 6:00 P.M.

On September 19, at 6:00 p.m. we will have movie night in the CLC. We will be watching Second Hand Lions. A Veggie Tales Princess movie will be shown for the younger children.

FAIR BOOTH

It's almost Fair time and First UMC is spreading the word that we are here to make a presence in Lawrenceburg. One way the Witness/Hospitality team is getting the word out is hosting a fair booth in the commercial building and we need your help to staff our booth. We need people to work the booth Monday, Thursday and Friday from 4-6:30 p.m. and 6:30-9:00 p.m. and all day on Saturday and Sunday. We need a minimum of two people per shift. This is a great time to get out and see people and represent your church at the same time. Sign up in the church office or with Alecia Fischer. Thanks!

UPCOMING MEETINGS - Please mark your calendars

The Lydia Circle will meet on **Monday, September 13, at 10:00 a.m.**

The UMW Executive Committee will meet on **Tuesday, September 14, at 4:15 p.m.**

The Finance Committee will meet on **Tuesday, September 14, at 7:00 p.m.**

The Administrative Board will meet on **Tuesday, September 14, at 7:30 p.m.**

The Mary-Martha Circle will meet on **Tuesday, September 21, at 6:30 p.m.**

The **Nurture Committee** will meet on **Tuesday, September 21, at 5:30 p.m.** Members of the Nurture committee are: Carol Beasley-Chairperson, Cissy Holt, Layde Ezell, Linda Sowell, Leslie Hunt, Tony Clayton, Teresa Carey, Martha Jo Gibbs, Jean Grimsley and Mary Ann Clayton.

The **Age Level Committee** will meet on **Tuesday, September 21, at 6:30 p.m.** Members of the Age Level committee are: Wayne Richardson-Chairperson, Cissy Holt, T.J. Moore, Beth Benson, Kim McKnight, Ann Cornelius, Bruce & Barbara Edwards, Anita Johnston, Jean Robertson and Joyce Holmes.

The **Worship Committee** will meet on **Tuesday, September 21, at 7:30 p.m.** Members of the Worship committee are: Jim Gardner-Chairperson, David Allen, Jerry Tipper, Carol Beasley, Alecia Fischer, Mark Brewer, John Benson, Cliff Philpot and Sid James.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Abby Clayton - Sept. 1

Kamelia Wayne - Sept. 5

Noah "Hunter" Hardy - Sept. 7

Laine Philpot - Sept. 15

Layde Ezell - Sept. 21

Jeff Gibbs - Sept. 26

Linda Newton - Sept. 27

Judy Crowder - Sept. 3

Elmer Cooke - Sept. 5

Katie Lyn Beasley - Sept. 8

Mike Hardy - Sept. 18

Judy Benson - Sept. 23

Georgiana Ricaurte - Sept. 26

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Ed & Eileen Paley - Sept. 17

Bobby & Kathy Belew - Sept. 22

Jerry & Martha Jo Gibbs - Sept. 21

Ken & Nancy Nelson Sept. 27

FALL BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study this Fall will return to Sunday night. As we ended our study last Spring, a number of people expressed the desire to go back to Sunday night. That's what we'll do. We will begin on Sunday evening, September 12th, at 6:30 p.m. We will study the book of Genesis. September schedule:

September 12 - Bible Study-Session 1 "Creation". Read Genesis, chapters 1 and 2

September 19 - Family Fun Night (Movie)

September 26 - Bible Study-Session 2 "The Fall". Read Genesis, chapters 3 and 4

HAPPY ELDERS OCTOBER 5TH TRIP

The Happy Elders have 14 tickets to see the play "Smoke On the Mountain Homecoming", in Dickson, TN, at the Renaissance Center with lots of old fashioned hymns on **October 5th**. Lunch is at 12:00 noon and the play starts at 1:00 p.m. Cost is \$30.00 which covers lunch, play, ticket for the driver and gas for the van. Tip is not included. We will leave the church west parking lot at 10:00 a.m. Age limit is 55 and up. Sign up and pay at the church office or call Jean Robertson at ***** by **September 24**. Checks should be made to the Happy Elders.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson

Freddie Mae Jackson

Bill Evans

Scottie McMackin

Jean Cone

Scott Dean

George Clark
Charlie Krieger
Kelsey Gobble
Rob Nelson & Family
Jim Weatherford
Selene Crews
Jane Marston
Buddy Gibbs
Kenneth Williams
Bea Thigpen
John Held
Betty Evans
Byron Shelton
Evelyn Gallaher
Ashley Holland
Joan Cochran
Edna Earl Thomason: (new address)
3369 Bear Creek Road
Thompson Station, TN 37179

...**Congratulations** to Dave & Ada Hancock, on the birth of a new baby grandson. Elijah Carlton Taylor weighed 6 lbs. & 15 ozs. And was 19 inches long.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER SEPTEMBER 15TH

Workers: Wesley Class
Ham Scalloped potatoes
Green beans Salad
Rolls
Pineapple upside-down cake

ACOLYTE TRAINING
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2010

Attention: All acolytes AND any child 3rd - 6th grade who would like to become an acolyte during the 10:30 a.m. service. There will be a short training on Sunday, September 12th, after 10:30 a.m. worship. This training is a must if you want to be on the Fall schedule. If any questions, please call the church office.

I Will Be Loyal
To The United Methodist Church And
Support It With: My Presence:
Sunday, Sept. 5, 2010

8:15 a.m. Worship Attendance.....30
Sunday school Attendance.....76
10:30 a.m. Worship Attendance.....88

Acolytes: TBA

Nursery Volunteer: Beth Benson

Children's Church: Gayle & Steve Wright

Loaves and Fishes

Tues. Sept. 14: Linda Newton, Ray Price, Martha Jo & Jerry Gibbs

Thur. Sept. 16: Jean Robertson, Anita Johnston, Martha Jo & Jerry Gibbs

NEED A GOOD HOME FOR A CAT!

Teresa Carey has a gray and white, beautiful long hair and very friendly cat. Bella is an 8 year old INDOOR ONLY CAT who has been de-clawed, spayed and has had her shots. She would love to be the only cat but gets along with other cats as well as dogs.

