

SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – OCTOBER 3 EDITION

United Methodists of Thomasville witness God’s blessings through partnership, giving, and mission

By Allison Lindsey

Just eight short months ago, as a group of United Methodists in Thomasville found themselves displaced as a result of disaffiliation, God’s prevenient grace was at work orchestrating the path for these believers now proudly known as the United Methodists of Thomasville.

In January, Rev. Leigh Ann Raynor, following God’s call, came out of retirement to once again shepherd a body of believers who loved the Lord and The United Methodist Church. Their new faith journey began the first Sunday in February, and they have been meeting weekly ever since.

United Methodists have always been a beacon for hospitality with the motto, “Open Hearts, Open Minds & Open Doors,” and through the hospitality of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, the United Methodists of Thomasville have truly been shown what extravagant hospitality looks like in very tangible ways.

The synergies that exist between these two churches and the intentional discernment process by Thomasville United Methodists could become a model for other groups to follow who have found themselves displaced.

What began as gracious hospitality of St. Thomas Episcopal Church by providing space to meet weekly has flourished into a beautiful symbiotic relationship as these two denominations have found themselves independent yet interwoven in worship, fellowship, discipleship, and missions.

“We are so grateful for the generosity of the Episcopal church in South Georgia,” said Anne Bosarge, Director of Leadership Strategies and Local Church Resources. “These congregations have been so welcoming and several have hosted groups during their discernment period. We currently have groups in Valdosta and Camden County also being hosted in Episcopal churches. This is a beautiful picture of what it truly means to be the body of Christ and we are so glad for these amazing ministry partners!”

The ways in which the United Methodists of Thomasville have witnessed God at work is an affirmation for this group of believers who have sought to be obedient, grow in their faith, and love their neighbor through serving. As a result, they also have learned what it means to be “the church” in new ways.

In the beginning, Rev. Raynor immediately found herself posing the question, “How does one start a new church?” She admitted to initially having been focused on all the things of which they would not have in this new beginning: no historic, beautiful sanctuary to meet, no magnificent pipe organ with a skilled organist to help enter into God’s presence, no choir singing beautifully and opening God's Word in song, no money, no committees, and no structure in place.

Fast forward to all that has taken place from January through September 2023 and one will understand why this humble body of believers celebrates saying, “But God!”

On September 1, with deep gratitude, a lease agreement was signed with St. Thomas Episcopal Church, providing a dedicated space to call their own for worship.

“On Sunday mornings we now go into a space that we have been able to set-up in a way that is clearly a worship space,” said Rev. Raynor. “We’ve been able to display the cross and flame, which makes this space

truly 'home' to United Methodists. While we have all grieved the loss of the beauty and the grandeur of the building in which we used to worship, we have truly learned that wherever we are gathered, God is among us."

This symbiotic relationship of two different denominations has happened organically and the United Methodists are striving to be what the finance committee chairman, Matt Delarber, describes as "the best roommates ever" to St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

Some of the ways in which this is happening is the group's involvement in ministries that are already ongoing in the Episcopal church. Members are participating in the October annual spaghetti supper to raise funds for their pre-school by baking 400 brownies and signing up for shifts to serve in the kitchen.

Another beautiful example is a feeding ministry through Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, a mission of St. Thomas, which traditionally has suspended the feeding during the summer. The United Methodists filled the summer months and plan to continue serving throughout the year.

With a welcoming invitation, United Methodist members are also participating in St. Thomas' supper clubs to get to know their hosts better and to grow together through Bible study and service.

Since they began meeting in February, this body of United Methodist believers has adopted their mission statement, vision statement, and core values and are living into a structure.

On September 3, two days after signing the lease, the first Commitment Sunday worship service was held in this space they called their own, and members over-pledged their adopted budget by over \$40,000.

"Our Commitment Sunday resulted in fully funding (+) our budget with basically 100% participation from the congregation - something I personally have not seen in my 20 years involvement in church finances," said lay member J. Knapp. "It begins with having people willing to get involved, laity in action. If they believe enough to support it with their presence and their energy, they will support it with their finances and gifts. When every member gets involved serving somewhere, in meaningful ministry, God does amazing things!"

A Missions Committee is currently being formed with 10% of the new budget being set aside for missions. Members are dreaming and committing to ways in which they want to respond to God's call to go and serve both in their community and beyond. One member wants to go on a mission trip to Rwanda; another member has assumed responsibility for working with Good Shepherd Episcopal Church's Sunday evening dinners; and there is a desire for service with the local homeless shelter. Members also helped to fund a back to school project at Vashti earlier this year.

One Sunday School class is now meeting with plans to begin more in the near future, and members are growing deeper in their faith and with each other through studying God's word together.

But this is not all. The Long Range Planning Committee met recently and looked at the checklist concerning the process for chartering to become a constituted United Methodist congregation.

"Honestly, it was like the checklist was written based on the things we had already done," said Rev. Raynor. "As we went through the list it was 'check, check, check.' Even we were surprised at how much on the list we had accomplished without having actually looked at the list."

Bishop David Graves will be with the United Methodists of Thomasville October 22 to preach and celebrate their witness. When the Rector at St. Thomas, Father Wallace Marsh, learned that Bishop Graves was coming, he extended the invitation for him to preach during their worship service that day as well.

“We couldn't be more excited about what God is doing through the people called United Methodist in Thomasville!” said the Rev. Dr. Ben Gosden, the South Georgia Conference Congregational Development Board Chair and senior pastor of Trinity UMC in Savannah. “They are stepping out in faith and exercising the kind of courage most of us pray to have.

“Many of these folks chose to leave a place they had always known to go on a journey, trusting God will lead them the whole way. Now we're seeing that journey is an adventure into the heart of what God still wants to do through The United Methodist Church in Thomasville. As a Congregational Development Board, we couldn't be more proud. And I know as an Annual Conference, we couldn't be more inspired by these folks!”

Allison Lindsey is a member of St. Mark UMC in Douglas, Ga. and chairs the Conference Nurture Team.



South Georgia receives grant to promote mental health awareness and wellness

The Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church (GCORR) is pleased to announce the recipients of the CORR Action Fund (CAF) Grant program, an initiative aimed at fostering mental health awareness and wellness through the creation of cohorts and small groups in the United States. Among those chosen, the South Georgia Conference has received a grant for \$10,000.

Open to both pastors and laity of the United Methodist Church in the United States, the CORR Action Fund Grant received applications from churches and ministries eager to develop cohorts that address mental health issues within a framework of inclusivity and diversity. The selected recipients have demonstrated outstanding dedication to fostering mental health awareness and wellness, as well as a strong commitment to justice-oriented praxis.

"We are thrilled to announce the recipients of the CORR Action Fund Grant program," said the Rev. Dr. Stephen Handy, action fund committee chair. "These individuals and groups have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to advancing mental health awareness and wellness within the United Methodist Church community. By fostering inclusivity, diversity, and trauma-informed care, we believe these cohorts and small groups will have a lasting and positive impact on individuals and communities alike."

The CORR Action Fund Grant program exemplifies GCORR's dedication to promoting culturally appropriate practices and embracing diversity within the United Methodist Church. The recipients of this grant will make meaningful strides in enhancing mental health awareness and wellness, ultimately contributing to a stronger, more compassionate community.

Minority Clergy Mental Health Intensive
South Georgia Conference
Awarded \$10,000

Will implement a nine-month plan for small groups comprised of identified minority groups in the SGAUMC which will focus on intentional, diverse engagement. We will invite three different speakers who represent these identified minorities to offer trauma-informed, culturally sensitive resiliency training during this planned initiative. We plan to offer encouragement, resources, and engage a roadmap designed to increase intentional diverse engagement and participation and offer those participants the opportunity to be exposed to customized resiliency practices that foster wellness.

“I am very excited about the possibilities and outcomes of this opportunity,” said Rev. Abra Lattany-Reed, Director of Diversity and Justice Ministries for the South Georgia Conference. “Receiving this grant will allow our conference to enhance and further promote mental health wellness and resiliency practices for minority groups because well being of all clergy is a priority for our conference.”

[A brief description of all grant recipients can be found here.](#)



The RISE of College Students

By Suzanne Akins

After spending a couple of fall football weekends in Athens, it’s pretty obvious that college students are able to choose their own path into adulthood. There is so much freedom and so little accountability that sometimes it doesn’t bode well for responsible adulting.

But I get to see a different side of college students.

I saw a group gathered around a breakfast table asking questions and sharing encouragement as they get ready for campers to arrive. I saw an entire staff of college students circled up, digging into the Word to find God’s direction for their day, their week, and their lives. I saw co-counselors partnered up around an auditorium praying specifically and by name for every camper. I saw groups walking around campus praying for God to do a mighty work in the lives of kids. I saw a counselor, in the quiet of the cabin before anyone moved in, with hands on a bunk, praying for the child that would sleep in that bed in just a few hours.

This was all before a camper ever set foot on the grounds of Epworth By The Sea.

This summer, with the theme of RISE using Joshua 1:9 as our foundation, over 600 campers were shown what the Bible says about rising up without fear and being confident God will be with them always.

That message touched the hearts of our college staff too as they navigated God’s call on their lives, learning to listen to that still, small voice.

“God was working in big ways this summer, and every week He spoke to me in a new way. Each week brought a new challenge that God used to teach me something new about myself and helped shape and sharpen me into my best self.” - Sam Hagan, Georgia Southern University

“Each summer I have worked at Camp Connect, God has renewed my mind and soul through experiencing the child-like faith and joy these campers have. I am reminded of the simplicity of my relationship with Jesus, and I always take that back with me to school.” - Abby Lane, University of Georgia

Being in a community of other college students pursuing Christ, away from school and away from home, allowed the Leadership Team to grow their faith in unexpected ways.

“Up until this summer, I had never had friendships that were built on faith. Being on LT has truly shown me the fruitfulness of having Godly relationships.” - Justis Kuykendall, Georgia Southern University.

“Through (the Leadership Team), I learned what kind of people I want to surround myself with and the positive impact this community has on my life. The past three summers, I have learned how to love people well and partner with them in following after Christ.” - Mary Harrison, University of Georgia

“Seeing a single body of believers praising the Lord through so many different ways of worship was super encouraging, especially for someone my age.” - Maggie Smart, Truett McConnell University

This summer, Camp Connect piloted a new program with Counselors in Training (CITs), an opportunity for graduated high school campers to serve on staff as a volunteer the year before they are old enough to serve on the Leadership Team.

“The most meaningful part of being a CIT this summer was just being able to teach the kids all about God’s Word and His abundant love for us. You never know the kind of impact you have on them.” - Colten Roy, Valdosta State University

“I would say the most meaningful part of CIT this summer was being able to connect with the kids and realize what an impact I and other counselors were making.” - Carson Davis, Mercer University

They say college students need certain skill sets and characteristics to succeed: responsibility, organization, resilience, initiative, critical thinking and so much more.

But what I’ve found each year with these college students has been so much simpler: a love of God and a love for others.

Applications for the Leadership Team at Camp Connect will open October 1, 2023. For more information, visit www.campconnectumc.org.

Suzanne Akins is the Director of Camping and Retreat Ministries for the South Georgia Conference. She can be reached at suzanne@sgaumc.com.

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Connecting the United Methodist Church in Mission Global Ministries and UMCOR release annual report

The 2022 joint annual report for Global Ministries and The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), “God’s grace: our source of hope and mission service,” is now available. The report shares the impact of United Methodist mission in the areas of missionaries, evangelism and church revitalization, global health, and humanitarian relief and recovery.

In their opening letter, General Secretary Roland Fernandes, Bishop Thomas Bickerton and Bishop Hee-Soo Jung write: “Without God’s grace, we would not have so quickly assisted in aiding Ukrainian refugees with food, shelter and psychosocial support. We would not have commissioned 54 missionaries at gatherings in regional hubs like Costa Rica and Northern Ireland. We would not have helped reduce the number of deaths from malaria, cholera and COVID-19, nor partnered in the revitalization of 13 health facilities in which to treat and prevent such diseases. And we would not have supported the flourishing of 27 new faith communities in Africa, Central America and Southeast Asia.”

On behalf of United Methodists all around the world and with the generous support of individuals, churches and conferences, read how Global Ministries and UMCOR continue extending the reach of care and compassion.

View, download and share the full [annual report here](#).

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Encounter Youth Retreat set for Nov. 17-19

The South Georgia Conference’s annual weekend retreat for youth, Encounter, will be November 17-19, 2023, at Epworth By The Sea. Through high-quality preaching and worship, youth have the opportunity to encounter God in a new setting, deepen their faith, and learn what it means to put their faith into action at school, with their friends, and in their community.

The theme this year is “Stories.” Students will be invited into a better understanding of how God’s story becomes our story, and what that means in their daily lives.

Albert Williams, campus pastor at Georgia Southern’s Wesley Foundation, will be speaking throughout the weekend, and music will be led by Georgia College & State University’s Wesley Foundation worship band.

Encounter is a great opportunity for churches of all sizes to have a big experience together.

Churches will register as a group and payment is due within seven days. Registration is \$165 per person and includes programming, insurance, food, lodging, and a t-shirt. The deadline to register, edit, or cancel a registration is November 8.

Find out more and register your group today at www.sgaumc.org/encounter.

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South Georgia responds to Hurricane Idalia: ERTs still needed

Right now, there is still a need in the Lowndes County and surrounding areas for work teams. For the past three weeks teams from South Georgia, North Georgia, and South Carolina have been hard at work helping to restore homes and give hope to the community following the destruction caused by Hurricane Idalia on August 30. Our United Methodist connectional system is at its best when we come together to help those around us! Please contact Kelly Crane (kelcrane@gmail.com), Glenn Martin (gmartin0704@gmail.com), or Luis Morales (ert@sgaumc.com) to schedule your ERT team or yourself to be part of a team. Our disaster response team is working with local officials in affected areas to coordinate with their local disaster response efforts.

Financial Gifts: Your financial gift to UMCOR is especially appreciated as our giving is flexible in application and offers high impact. Monetary donations can be given to our disaster Conference Advance Special #6796 - South Georgia Storm Relief by sending to PO Box 7227, Macon, GA 31209 or [click here to give online](#). You can also give directly to [UMCOR US Disaster Response and Recovery](#) Advance #901670.

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Local church grants available for innovative ministry

Do you have an innovative idea for starting something new to reach your community? Do you have a heart for the lost and a passion for the Gospel? Do you have an idea and a person or two willing to walk with you, but you need a little financial spark and coaching to get things going? If the answer is YES, the South Georgia Conference Congregational Development Team would love to come beside you and spark that idea to life with Spark Grant funding!

New leaders are doing new things to reach new people all around the conference. There are tiny sparks of hope and life around SGA that are causing others to catch a vision for what could be in their area as well. BBQ Church is happening twice a month to encourage fellowship and connection. Game Church is telling Jesus stories in a way a gamer can understand. Ump Church is meeting the spiritual needs of baseball and softball umpires who are busy on the weekends and can't get to church. There are home churches and new church starts in various stages of development, and new things are popping up all over the place.

How are these leaders doing so many new things in the face of limited resources? What can the rest of us learn from what they are doing?

Here are a few things all of these new things have in common:

- Discipleship focused: The goal of these new things isn't to grow a church, it's to grow God's people. When you grow God's people, you will develop the church!
- Passion for the lost: Successful disciple-making comes from a heart to reach those who are unreached. Our desire to see people come to Christ must be bigger than the desire for us to have a comfortable place to worship.
- Commitment to the calling: Jesus never said the life of a disciple would be comfortable or easy! As a matter of fact, Jesus compared it to carrying a cross. Starting something new and reaching the unreached is a challenging and unpredictable endeavor. Remain committed to your calling, no matter where God leads you.
- Flexible in method, persistent in mission: The way we've always done things isn't working. This means we will need to attempt new methods to reach people with the gospel and introduce them to Jesus. Some of the things we attempt will succeed and others won't. We must be persistent in our mission of making disciples but flexible in the way in which we accomplish that mission. If we don't, we will quickly find ourselves more committed to the method than the mission.
- Think differently: If you are committed to reaching people no church is reaching you've got to think differently than the way other church leaders are thinking. The same thinking will not produce different results. Read things that are challenging to your mindset and point of view. Learn, grow, and stretch in your understanding of what the church can be.
- Willingness to get messy: "If you're not sweating, you're not serving." While serving can get us physically messy, more importantly we should also be willing to get emotionally and relationally messy. People who are far from God often find themselves in messy and sticky situations they think will disqualify them from God's grace. Walk with them in their mess. Be Jesus to them as you listen without rescuing or solving their problem for them.
- Gospel-focused, prayer-soaked: Why should we expend all this energy starting new faith communities and helping people become disciples? It's not to "save our church," it's to share the good news of the Gospel and respond to the saving work God has done in us. If Jesus isn't the focus and prayer isn't a priority, the new things we create will crumble like sand. We want to build on the rock, on a foundation of faith, truth, love, and the joy of being His children.

To learn more about the Spark Grants, visit www.sgaumc.org/ministryproposal1. The Congregational Development Team looks forward to seeing all God will ignite around South Georgia now and in the future. Let's fan the flame together! Questions? Contact Anne Bosarge at abosarge@sgaumc.com.

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2023 prayer emphasis: October prayer guide

The South Georgia Conference is centering itself around prayer in 2023. October's prayer guide, written by Hispanic Pastors and Laity – Rev. Daniel Medina, Rev. Felipe Ricardo, Rev. Tania Montero, Rev. Jorge Moren, and Julieta Antuna-Medina – is now available at www.sgaumc.org/year-of-prayer.

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Laity Sunday is October 15

Laity Sunday celebrates the ministry of all Christians as they love God and neighbor. As God's people grow in grace to become "all-love" disciples in community, we gather with others and connect all to God's saving love in Jesus Christ. So, on Laity Sunday (this year, October 15, 2023), we continue to lift up the vocation of all to follow the way of Jesus and lead others to him – particularly as we consider what it means to hold fast to the pattern of healthy, sound words that bring life to all our relationships. [Discipleship Ministries](#) has a variety of resources available to help churches celebrate Laity Sunday this year. Resources include a special prayer, Holy Communion liturgy, a litany and information about the history of the service. [View resources](#)

A Word from J. Knapp, Conference Lay Leader:

Laity Sunday is a day during which we recognize and celebrate the work of the laity within our congregations. It is an opportunity to highlight all of the ministry activities that take place throughout the year.

For those involved in a specific ministry, it is difficult to imagine that not everyone realizes the work involved or the impact the ministry is having. I hope you will take this opportunity to not only recognize those that serve but really highlight and share the impact your ministries are having and celebrate that with your entire congregation!

Laity Sunday is a celebration of John Wesley's vision for the Methodist church, and in true Wesleyan tradition this could be a completely lay led worship service on this Sunday morning.

If you have a certified Lay Speaker in your congregation, that is great! If you have more than one, those that are Advanced Certified may offer to speak at another church within your cluster. This is also an opportunity to identify and develop a church member who can be your guest speaker. It can be especially powerful to have a member of the church bring the message or share a testimonial.

We need to take advantage of this opportunity in celebrating our laity to help develop lay speakers in our churches and throughout the district. Encourage your pastor or church staff to view this as an opportunity to teach, mentor, and strengthen our laity.

This may also be an opportunity to strengthen our connection by having laity from our medium and larger churches offer to speak at a nearby smaller church. Or, your youth worship team may offer to lead worship at a neighboring small church!

There are so many things you can do lift up the ministry of the laity – whether it’s Oct. 15 or another Sunday during the year!

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From the Bishop: The Importance of Connection

As we move into October, the sports world connects multiple team sports; so much so that I cannot remember to include each of them. Major League Baseball is all about the playoffs and World Series. Go Braves! Football is in full swing. Basketball is preparing to start their season. Softball, tennis, golf, and cross-country are being played in many parts of the country. There are so many, and I know that I eliminated someone’s favorite sport. It is a fun time of the year.

Connection! As I reflect on this season of life, I realize how important it is that my spiritual life remain connected to God and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:28 reminds us that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called to God’s purpose for their lives. There is power in staying connected to God’s love and teachings.

Staying connected to one another is vital to our lives and work of ministry. I want to express my thanks for you - clergy and laity of the South Georgia Conference - and the wonderful work you are doing in your local churches and your communities. Some days are difficult; some days are a struggle. But you inspire me and encourage me, and today I just want to encourage you and give thanks for who you are and what you are doing.

On September 26th, I attended the Celebration of Life Service for one of our clergy spouses, Robin Hagan. I was inspired by the wonderful time of worship and testimony to the Lord and Robin’s life. It was a beautiful thing to see so many of our clergy and laity brothers and sisters come together to celebrate Robin and to surround Kirk and their children with love and support.

The day was a great reminder of the beauty of our United Methodist Connection. There’s just nothing quite like it, especially here in the South Georgia Conference. Friends, may we not take for granted the beautiful gift we have right here in South Georgia.

I am convinced today more than ever of how much we need each other. We need our brothers and sisters in the faith in the high points and in the low points, in the hills and in the valleys. We are better together.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, may those things of God and each other connect us so we can lean into all God is calling the South Georgia Conference to be today and in the days to come.

I give thanks for you and pray for you. May the peace of the Lord be with you.

It is a pleasure to serve alongside you as your Bishop.

In Christ,
David Graves

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October 8 Lesson: Old and New

Fall Quarter 2023: God's Law Is Love
Unit 2: Faith Triumphs, Law Fails
Lesson 6

Sunday School Lesson for the week of October 8, 2023
By Craig Rikard

Background Scripture: Romans 7:1-29
Key Text: Romans 7:1-12

Lesson Aims

1. Understanding Paul's use of marriage as a metaphor of law and grace.
2. Understanding how the law is always relevant, even for the Christian.
3. Understanding the difference between obeying the law to earn God's favor versus obeying the law as a response to God's favor.

Supplement to Teacher and Student Manuals

Background of Text

Please read the context for last week's lesson on Romans 2:

www.sgauhc.org/advocatesschooldetail/october-1-lesson-inward-and-outward-17661398.

The basic subject matter in Romans 2 is Paul's attempt to create unity between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians. The Jewish Christians possessed the Old Testament as a point of reference in understanding the person of Jesus. However, many, if not most, Gentiles were unaware of the teaching of the Old Testament. Thus, Paul faced the tremendous task of affirming the Mosaic Law without making obedience to the Law necessary for the Gentile Christians to become Christians. He had to value the Law without making it mandatory for salvation in Jesus Christ. The thrust of Paul's argument is that one is saved by grace alone. However, he believed the Mosaic Law was necessary for grace. Grace means God initiates forgiveness and new life for all, but the only way we know what is right and wrong before God is through the Mosaic Law. How do we know we are sinners? We are given the Mosaic Law in Old Testament scrolls and in the conscience of those who did not have regular access to the scrolls and teaching of the Rabbis. When we violate the Law in written Law or violate the Law as it lives in the conscience of the heart, we realize we are in need of grace and forgiveness. Grace and forgiveness are not made possible through keeping the Law more diligently, for we cannot perfectly obey it. Grace and forgiveness come through the gift of Jesus Christ alone.

Still, there were Jewish Christians who believed the Gentile Christians should continue to keep the written Law, observe the festivals, and observe the traditions, especially circumcision. Paul believed when they demanded that Gentiles be circumcised and obey other traditions, they live not under grace; they live under Law. The Law is an informant - a revealer of sin - not a requirement to be obeyed in order to gain salvation.

In what way do you believe the Mosaic Law is helpful for one to become a Christian? In what way does the Law fail us in gaining salvation? Do you believe from Scripture that the Mosaic Law continues to help us in our Christian walk?

Walking Through the Text

Metaphor of Marriage

It is vital to understand that when Paul employs metaphors, he is not attempting to demand a new moral or doctrinal law. For example, in using marriage as a metaphor, Paul is not attempting to redefine or alter the rite of marriage. He is simply using marriage to help illustrate the difference between Law and grace. In this metaphor, the relationship between the legally married husband and wife illustrates the Law. The married people entered into a binding relationship with their spouse. This relationship was unbreakable and unbinding. Those who live under the Mosaic Law live in a binding, unbreakable covenant. Their life and relationship depend on keeping the Law. If they are obedient to the Law, they experience the favor of God. If they fail, they suffer the curse of disobedience.

If the woman commits adultery, she has violated her relationship with Law. (Notice the male is not mentioned as committing adultery). Therefore, having violated the Law, she most likely will be legally divorced, and her life will be cursed. She can never remarry and will always be perceived as a social pariah. As long as the requirement of the Law exists, she is bound to the law and judged by the Law. The Law rules her life.

Paul then adds a caveat to his metaphor. What if her husband dies while she is a faithful wife? Now the requirements of the law are non-binding. Since her husband died, she can remarry. Paul even goes so far as to say if she had committed adultery before her husband's death, the law declares she is an adulteress, a violator of the Mosaic Marriage Law. However, if the husband dies while she is an adulteress, she is then declared innocent of her adultery. She can only be guilty as she violates the Law. If the Law no longer bears upon the current situation, she is declared innocent. She cannot be declared guilty since the marriage no longer exists. We can gain a sense of the complexity employed by the religious leaders regarding the Mosaic Law. In this case, the violation of law had nothing to do with the harm adultery inflicted upon the couple. It had to do with obeying the specifics of the written Law. It didn't matter who got hurt, what mattered was keeping the letter of the Law.

What questions does Paul's metaphor of marriage raise in your mind regarding sin? What was the actual sin in Paul's metaphor? How does the Mosaic Law serve as "master" over the individuals? Where is grace in the metaphor?

Paul now applies his metaphor to Christ. For those Jewish Christians who had lived under the Law (much like the husband and wife in his metaphor), they are bound to the Law and judged by the Law. They are expected to obey the Mosaic Law. Even when they fall short, they are still accountable and judged by the Law. However, if a Jewish person trusts in Jesus Christ, the one who liberates them from the legalistic word of the Mosaic Law, who then becomes their judge? Jesus offers them forgiveness as they are. He is the initiator of grace. The new Christian now is called to fulfill the Law of Laws: "Thou shalt Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength." The new Christian does not obey the Law to gain eternal life. Obedience to this Law of Laws is the *RESPONSE* to the grace and love received through Jesus Christ. Those who violated the Mosaic Law are "declared" clean by the grace of God in Jesus. Declared is a legal term. A judge can declare you clean even if you have done nothing to make yourself clean. Jesus has judged all who are guilty, who earnestly choose Christ the life he offers to be *declared* righteous.

What has the Mosaic Law taught you in your spiritual pilgrimage? If dependent upon the Mosaic Law alone for righteousness, what would we do when we disobeyed? Why is grace, love and forgiveness important when we disobey the Law? How does obedience to the Law of Laws (Deut. 6) liberate us? What do you think is the difference between obeying the Mosaic Law to gain favor with God and obeying the Law of Laws as a loving, gracious response to God's gift in Christ?

Using the metaphor, Paul declares we are dead to the rigid Law, not that the Law doesn't matter. Most of the Law still teaches us the moral and just life. There are some laws which are cultural and no longer speak to our current culture. For example, women do not have to cover their heads in church, and we are not bound to the strict dietary laws of the Torah. However, the Law is dead in that it cannot save us from our repeated shortcomings and the attitudes of the heart that hinder our relationship with Christ. In verse 4 Paul wrote that we are dead to the Law but are alive to the risen one, the Christ who makes us alive to a new Law of godly love, liberty, and grace. Verse 6 reads, "But now, by dying to that which once bound us, we have been released from the Law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way to the written code."

The Law, again, is our teacher

In last week's lesson, Paul addressed this same subject. We can forgive Paul for his repetition. As he shared the good news that the Gentiles did not need to obey the Law for a meaningful, saving relationship with God, Paul was also mindful that if not careful, he made the Mosaic Law appear less precious and useful. The Mosaic Law was indeed precious. It was the gift of God, given to Moses on Sinai. The tablets were carried from place to place in the Ark of Covenant. Prior to Jesus, the Law represented what they knew about God. Still, from the beginning, no one could keep and maintain strict obedience to the Law. Thus, everyone in relationship with the Law was guilty.

It raises the question, why did God give us a Law we could not keep, thus always falling short. According to Paul, the Law was never given to ensure we live a perfect life. The Law revealed the high, moral, life-affirming life God desires for us. The Mosaic Law was the high mark, the gold standard that defined a righteous life. For all who fell short there were rituals in the temple such as the Day of Atonement and the Scapegoat to receive forgiveness for one year.

Jesus did not erase the Law, he fulfilled it. Thus, the law was not annihilated in Jesus, it was perfectly fulfilled. To live the Law of Shema, the Law of love, was to keep the law. When we love God and one another, we do not take God's name in vain or slander our brother or sister. We do not worship other Gods. We do not steal from our brother and sister because we love them. We do not covet our brother's spouse for we love him, his spouse and our spouse. We would never kill or take another life, etc. When we do fall short, for we are still captive to our humanity, a heart of love seeks forgiveness, learns from the sin, and walks again in the new life Jesus made possible.

Can you give further examples of how keeping the Law of Laws (thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself) actually allows us to keep the ten commandments? What do you think is the difference between living a moral life for fear of earning the judgment of God, or living a moral life as a response to the gift of being declared righteous and forgiven?

Prayer

Almighty God, you have revealed to us how we can live together in grace and respect. You have revealed how precious we are to you as you declared us righteous in Jesus. Keep us forever mindful of the high moral standard taught in the Law, and ever so mindful of liberating grace that anchors us in the Law of Laws. In Jesus name, Amen

Dr. D. Craig Rikard is a South Georgia pastor. Email him at craigrikard169@yahoo.com.



“What do you need?”

By Anne Bosarge

Do you ever assume you know what people need? It's easy for us to attempt to answer that for people we know well based on our previous experience with them. As parents, we often know our kids' needs without even hearing a word. You might have a friend so close just by looking at them you can assess what they need. But even with people we know very well, we can make incorrect assumptions. We can assume our spouse needs space when what they really need is for us to come close. We can assume our kids need homework help when what is really needed is a break. It's always better to ask than assume. If that is true for people we know well, how much truer is it for people we don't know well!

Several years ago, my husband Corey met a man named Bob who lived in a broken-down van behind the gas station. Corey always went to this gas station to fill up, and every time he would go to the gas station, Corey would see Bob hanging around. Corey and Bob would inevitably strike up a conversation. He quickly learned the owner of the gas station was allowing Bob to leave his van parked there in exchange for Bob's "protection" when the gas station was closed. Bob was essentially a live-in 89-year-old security guard for this little gas station.

When Corey and Bob's friendship first formed it was getting cool in the evenings on into the early mornings so Corey assumed Bob needed a blanket. Corey brought him one, and Bob was very grateful. As the weather turned colder, Corey brought him a new coat so he would be warm. Bob enjoyed the coat and was so appreciative. Corey gave him a few new flannel shirts and even some new jeans over the next few months to help Bob stay well dressed and warm. Bob always received them with a smile and a thankful heart. But one day in one of their conversations, Corey took the time to ask Bob what he needed. What Bob said was very surprising. While he had enjoyed the blanket, jacket, shirts and pants, what Bob really needed was an address. Bob needed a place where he could receive mail so when his government checks came, they could be safely collected and delivered to him. Bob didn't need what Corey assumed he needed; Corey didn't really know what Bob needed until he asked. Our home became Bob's new mailing address, and we were able to receive his mail for him and made sure everything was delivered safely.

What do the people in your community need? Are you making assumptions about what they need based on your perception of what you might need in their circumstance? Or have you asked them? Have you taken the time to really listen and ask questions to get at the heart of their need? Does your church seek to discover the needs of the people in the community or are you telling them what they need without asking? The church often throws money at problems because we assume most problems have a financial solution. While money might help on a surface level, often the problem goes much deeper. Maybe someone you know needs a true friendship more than a bag of canned goods. Maybe the homeless in your community need someone to see them and chat with them more than they need another blanket. Or maybe the person who seems to always jump from one drama to the next really needs our Heavenly Father who can ground her in the truth of His Word.

Let's agree to stop assuming and start listening. Let's ask questions that allow people to be heard. Let's listen and seek to give what is really needed when we can, not just what is easy for us to collect and donate. Let's not lead with our solutions but with their need. We might just discover something about who they really are and what they really need on the other side of our assumptions.

Anne Bosarge serves as the Director of Leadership Strategies and Local Church Resources for the South Georgia Conference. Email her at abosarge@sgaumc.com.

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When Feeling Like We Can't Cut It

by Hal Brady

A tall, good-looking young man came to a minister's study one day to talk. The young man obviously had a lot to live for, but he had a troubled outlook. He had just taken a series of tests for admission to college and the results had not been encouraging. "They tell me," he said. "I just can't cut it."

Now, I would dare say that this young man was speaking for a number of us within the sight of these words. Sometimes we feel that we just can't cut it. We simply do not have a high enough opinion of ourselves. And, unfortunately, this attitude causes us to run from ourselves, keeps us from loving God and others, and torpedoes our living life at its best.

Low self-esteem especially hurts our relationships! It keeps us isolated from one another. When our major concern is with our own inadequacy, we live to ourselves. We are afraid to venture out in relationships - afraid of rejection, afraid of failure, afraid of comparison. I remember in high school the great difficulty I had in talking with a girl I liked over the phone. I would make the call and struggle for the appropriate words. "Hello," she would answer. I would reply, "This is Hal, Hal Brady." I would always hate having to say that twice. And then tongue-tied silence!

When Jesus was asked about the great commandment, he answered this way, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39). When we first read these verses, we are so overpowered with "loving God" and "loving neighbor" that we almost overlook the key ingredient to the entire process: the words "as yourself." It all begins here. If we truly love God and our neighbor, we must love ourselves. So how do we come to love ourselves and overcome our inferiority or inadequacy? Well, it probably won't happen overnight; but it can happen.

First, we can remember that it's God's estimate of us that counts! An advertisement in a national magazine was sponsored by the Humane Society. Of course, the purpose of the ad was to interest people in adopting homeless pets. The ad featured a full-page color picture of a puppy and a kitten. As an emotional appeal, it accomplished its goal. But it was the sentence at the top of the page that was and is so crucial. The sentence reads, "It's who owns them that makes them important." That's also true especially as it relates to our feelings of inferiority. It's who owns us that makes us important.

Second, we can remember our uniqueness! While I lived in Dallas, Texas, I attended a banquet honoring the great Texas Ranger pitcher Nolan Ryan. What a great pitcher, and, even more, what a great hero for modern culture. The man who introduced him said, "What makes Nolan Ryan unique is that he's one of a kind created by the very hand of God." And that's also true of you and me. That's the reason we don't have to compare ourselves with anybody else, because we are all one of a kind. In reality, there's nothing to compare.

Third, we can love ourselves by making up our mind to be somebody! William James taught that the greatest discovery of his life was that people can alter their lives by altering their attitudes.

In closing, I like the story of the lady who met a little boy and asked his name. He replied, "My name is George Washington." "I hope that you grow up to be like George Washington," the lady said. "I cannot help

being like George Washington because that is who I am,” was the little boy’s reply. By God’s grace, we can be somebody. “Love God and your neighbor AS YOURSELF.”

Dr. Hal Brady is a retired pastor who continues to present the Good News of Jesus Christ and offer encouragement in a fresh and vital way through Hal Brady Ministries (halbradyministries.com).

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A John Wesley Moment: Medicine

By Dave Hanson

John Wesley wanted to help people. He was concerned about health. John studied medicine while preparing to visit Georgia because he felt it would be needed in those primitive conditions. He observed an autopsy while in Georgia. He organized clinics and treated people for all kinds of illnesses. He even wrote “Primitive Physic”, a very popular book on medicine. In this book he very simply named the disease, stated the symptoms, and gave advice on treatments. We laugh at some of the strange folk remedies, but ‘Primitive Physic’ was the cutting edge of medicine in his day. This has been a John Wesley Moment.

The Rev. Dave Hanson is a retired pastor and John Wesley scholar.

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Events for Clergy

Workshop: 'The cost of care in your calling'

The South Georgia Conference Clergy Mental Health Task Force is sponsoring a one-day workshop for clergy focused on “Care to the Caregiver: The Cost of Caring in Your Calling.” Led by Rev. Thomas Waynick, LMFT, the workshop is set for **October 12, 2023, from 10am – 2pm** at the Pastoral Institute in Columbus, Ga.

Galatians 6:2 reminds us to carry each other’s burdens and in this way, you fulfill the law of Christ. This workshop, sponsored by the Conference Clergy Mental Health Task Force, will address the following:

- Effects of prolonged exposure to suffering and on-going demands
- Understanding and providing protection regarding risks
- The symptoms of carrying others burdens for a prolonged time

God commands that we love our neighbor as ourselves but we cannot give what we do not have. We invite you to this workshop to learn to give yourselves the same grace and compassion that you so often give to others in your ministries. The cost for this event is \$25 (lunch is included). [Click here to register.](#)

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Conference Updates & Happenings

Rural Church Rising conference focuses on rural context

Rural Church Rising is a two-day conference - **October 27-28, 2023** - for lay and clergy people serving in rural contexts across the country. This conference takes place at the Warren Willis Camp and Conference Center (4990 Picciola Rd, Fruitland Park, FL 3473) in the North Central District of the Florida Annual

Conference, one of the most established rural districts participating in Fresh Expressions of church. For more information about the two day event, visit www.freshexpressionsfl.org/rural-church-rising-2023. The South Georgia Conference is offering scholarships for lay and clergy to attend making the cost to the participant \$50 per person (mileage and meals on your own). [Register here](#). If you have questions or need more information, please contact Anne Bosarge at abosarge@sgaumc.com.

2023 Lay Servant Ministries & Certified Lay Ministry

Check out the [dates & registration for the 2023 classes](#).

Annual Eagles Retreat - Oct. 16-18

The Eagles, the retired ministers and spouses of South Georgia, have set their annual retreat for October 16-18, 2023, at Epworth By The Sea on St. Simons. This year's program and presentations will focus on World War II. Participants will hear interesting and informative presentations about the beginning and the end of the war in the Pacific from a guest speaker traveling from Orlando, FL. Registration and room check-in begins on Monday, October 16 at 4:00 pm. Dinner will be served between 5:30-7:00 pm. The retreat will conclude on Wednesday, October 18 with lunch. Register by calling Epworth at (912) 638-8688 (ask to speak to Trice Roberts). Invite a friend or family member to come with you for this retreat for good food, fellowship, and fun. If you have questions, please contact David Tart at 229-300-8805 or revdtart@bellsouth.net.

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Resource Roundup – October 2023

Best Practices for handling Church Offering

It's great that people are giving on Sunday morning! But what are you doing with that money once you receive it? [Check out these best practices](#).

Grants available to rural churches

Five \$500 grants are available for rural churches that wish to start or continue an outreach program to attract young people. The deadline to submit applications for the grants from United Methodist Rural Advocates is Jan. 10. Winners will be notified by Feb. 1. [Read press release](#)

Ministry with the community

Learn how to create pockets of hospitality to be more inviting and connect with more people. The Rev. Michael Beck shares tips for being more welcoming. [Read more](#)

Get your social media plan ready

This podcast from United Methodist Communications dives into what the 1-page church social media plan is and how churches have entered an era that finally gives them an advantage in the social media world. [Read more](#)

How the top social media sites use hashtags

Back in 2007 or so, a symbol most often used to represent pound or number, took on a whole new meaning. Ever since, it has wielded great power in the world of social media. That once-lowly symbol is, of course, now known as a hashtag. Using hashtags is a great way for people to categorize, find and join conversations based on a central topic. But did you know that each social media site treats them differently? Let's jump in and learn the differences so your posts receive the most benefit possible. [Read more](#)

New study for Christians on addressing racism

The You Are Here small-group study is a seven-part curriculum developed by the General Commission on Religion and Race. This resource is for Christian people who are ready to learn about how racism operates, how it affects Christian communities and how people of faith can begin to recognize and address it. [Learn more](#)

Creating content for a younger generation

Whether you're a seasoned content creator or just stepping into this vibrant realm, find tips that can be utilized for everyone. Stay ahead of the curve and, together, let's revolutionize the way we connect with younger generations! [Read more](#)

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Retired Clergy Birthdays – October 2023

- 10/01 – David Haygood, Sr.: 100 Lindsey Barron Dr., Apt. 215; Newnan, GA 30263
- 10/01 – E. Warren Williams: 761 Myna Dr., Unit 7084; Ellijay, GA 30540
- 10/04 – Riley Middleton, Jr.: 5002 St. Francis Ave.; Columbus, GA 31904
- 10/05 – Earl Seckinger: PO Box 766; Springfield, GA 31329
- 10/06 – Mike Ricker: 154 Palmetto Dr.; Rincon, GA 31326
- 10/09 – Karen Kilhefner: 7 Mistletoe Court; Savannah, GA 31419
- 10/10 – Hugh Baxter: 1272 Smith Bedgood Rd.; Harrison, GA 31035
- 10/10 – Derek McAleer: 111 Deer Ridge Trail; Macon, GA 31210
- 10/10 – Uley Robbins: 130 Hall Road; Sylvania, GA 30467
- 10/11 – Bob Shell: 210 Castlegate Rd.; Macon, GA 31210
- 10/13 – Bill Neely: 1780 Snug Harbor Dr.; Greensboro, GA 30642
- 10/16 – John Bacher: 400 South Main Ave. 106; Pine Mountain, GA 31822
- 10/18 – Madison Morgan: 599 Cloy-Kildare Rd.; Cloy, GA 31303
- 10/19 – Billy Oliver: 135 Hines Terrace, Macon, GA 31204
- 10/21 – Stanley Harrell: 319 Crescent Road; Griffin, GA 30224
- 10/23 – Frank Danner: 1415 Sunrise Ave.; Moultrie, GA 31768
- 10/24 – James Duke, Jr.: 102 Clarksville Ct.; Macon, GA 31210
- 10/24 – Carl Howard: 154 Ridgeland Dr.; Valdosta, GA 31602
- 10/24 – Willis Moore: 2378 Caladium Dr. NE; Atlanta, GA 30345
- 10/25 – Jimmy Cason: 1321 Kermit Dr.; Statesboro, GA 30458
- 10/25 – Gene Cochran: 4707 120th Blvd.; Lubbock, TX 79424
- 10/25 – Martin Loyley: 1544 Harris Ridge Rd.; Young Harris, GA 30582
- 10/25 – Craig Rikard: 3428 Brandon Dr.; Valdosta, GA 31605
- 10/27 – Bill Jackson-Adams: 17 Lands End Dr.; Greensboro, NC 27408
- 10/28 – Bob Hannah: 20 Putters Place; Savannah, GA 31419
- 10/31 – Bob Moon: 4760 Oxford Rd.; Macon, GA 31210

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Obituary: Robin Halbert Hagan

Robin Halbert Hagan passed away peacefully on the morning of Friday, September 22, 2023, at the age of 45. Our world got a bit quieter, but we know that the volume in heaven just got louder as Robin and her gorgeous laugh entered eternity.

Robin was born on June 30, 1978, in Tallahassee, Florida, to proud parents, Roland and Diane Halbert. She was nurtured in a loving and tight-knit household in Brunswick, Georgia, enjoying a special relationship with her brother and sister. As a young lady, Robin attended the First Baptist Church of Brunswick and completed her high school education, graduating from Brunswick High School in 1996. She attended Georgia Southern University, where she earned her bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development in 2003. It was at Georgia Southern that she crossed paths with the love of her life, Kirk while both were actively involved in the Wesley Campus Ministry. Robin's heart belonged to the Georgia Southern Eagles, and she was the loudest and proudest cheerleader at their football games.

Robin possessed an inner light that illuminated every room she entered. Along her journey, she forged deep and lasting friendships. Her innate ability to connect with others endeared her to people from all corners of Georgia. Robin dedicated her life in service alongside her husband to various United Methodist churches, including Tifton FUMC, Trinity in Warner Robins, Oak Grove in Decatur, FUMC of Statesboro, FUMC Wrightsville, and Christ UMC of Warner Robins.

Robin brought enthusiasm, laughter, and joy to anything and everything she did, from performing in local theater productions, creating fun events and experiences for friends, and making sure each summer was jam-packed with fun.

Robin absolutely loved children, and she devoted many years to teaching. She put her skills to work as an elementary school teacher at Christ School and Central Fellowship Academy. Her genuine love for her students was evident in her dedication to their education, and she poured her knowledge and care into each of them. In return, she held a special place in their hearts, cherishing the love and guidance that she provided to them.

She loved her family above all. She was an incredible mom, and her children Wesley and Henry were her heart and her world.

Her legacy of laughter, love, and the enduring impact of her kindness will live on in the hearts of all who were fortunate to know her, especially her beloved family and friends.

Her memory will forever be treasured by her husband, Kirk Carruth Hagan; children, Wesley and Henry Hagan; parents, Roland and Diane Houston Halbert; beloved siblings, Christopher Halbert of Brunswick and Mandy Halbert Haun (Justin) of Black Mountain, North Carolina; as well as numerous other cherished aunts, uncles, cousins, and nieces and nephews.

A memorial gathering will be Monday, September 25, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at McCullough Funeral Home. A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at Christ United Methodist Church. Robin will be laid to rest privately.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully suggests memorial donations be given in memory of Robin Halbert Hagan to Christ United Methodist Church, 511 Russell Parkway, Warner Robins, Georgia 31088.



Obituary: Rev. Dr. Ross E. Tracy

October 2, 1934 – September 23, 2023

Ross Eugene Tracy of Aldersgate, Charlotte, North Carolina passed away in Presbyterian Medical Center Hospice on Saturday. He was surrounded by all his family and loved ones in his final days.

Ross was born in Quincy, Michigan, the youngest child of the late Elma and Luther Tracy. He had three older sisters, Erma Lou, Carol, and Phyllis whom he loved and teased in equal measure. In the mid 1930's the family returned home to Three Rivers, Michigan, and because of Roosevelt's New Deal, they were able to reclaim the house built by Ross's maternal grandfather and dad, which they had lost in The Great Depression. He spent his growing up years developing a strong work ethic and a love of mechanics and electrics. His mother often said she was afraid to clean under his bed for fear of electrocution! He loved fishing and hunting and water skiing. In high school his passion for cars was kindled and he could repair and soup-up almost any vehicle. Ross and his friend, (later his brother-in-law) Darwin, raced their cars on country roads late at night. After graduation from high school, he left for Michigan Tech University in the Upper Peninsula, where he was planning to study engineering with the dream of someday designing cars. It was here that he felt God's call to Christian ministry and after two years of studying at Michigan Tech, moved to Western Michigan University where in 1956 he received his BS. Then he proceeded to Candler School of Theology at Emory University, in Atlanta, Georgia where he received his Masters in Divinity in 1959. Many years later he received his PHD in Theology from Christian Bible College and Seminary in Independence, Missouri.

While at Emory, he met Memory Large, in the School of Theology Office where they worked. They started going out for fish dinners as friends in January 1959, and were married ten months later on October 17, 1959, in her home state of Alabama. A few years later their daughter Martha came along, followed by three sons - David, John, and Paul. He loved his family very much, and they loved him.

Ross was ordained into the United Methodist Church and began his ministry in the West Michigan Conference in 1959, later he moved to the South Georgia Conference where he retired in 2002. That retirement lasted less than one month and he then served Union Chapel United Methodist Church in Albemarle (where his funeral will take place) until he retired a second time in 2013 at 78 years old. Ross's sense of calling to ministry never left him and his passion for bringing others to know Christ was central to his life's decisions and priorities. Even at the end of his life, as a resident in the Memory Unit at Aldersgate Retirement Community, he would drop by and read the Bible and pray with fellow residents who asked. He will be greatly missed by all who loved him, but we find peace in his final rest and in the blessed assurance in his Lord.

Ross leaves behind his beloved wife of almost 64 years, Memory; children Martha Flavell (David), David Tracy (Kathy), and Paul Tracy (Merritt). In 2022, Ross was preceded in death by John Tracy (Melissa). He is also survived by ten grandchildren, Elinor Flavell, Georgia Flavell and Amanda Peters, Kyleen Dugan, Todd King and Phillip Tracy, Amanda Odom, Noelle Pierce and Jake Tracy, Cameron Tracy. There are also 10 great grandchildren.

The celebration of Ross's life will take place at Union Chapel Church, 24325 US-52, Albemarle, NC 28001 on Saturday, September 30, 2023. Viewing from 10am, service will begin at 11am, followed by the burial at the church cemetery, with food in the fellowship hall after. The service will be led by Rev. Monty Clark and Ross' son-in-law, Rev. David Flavell. Memorial donations may be made to -Alzheimer's Disease Research. Donate to Alzheimer's Disease Research (brightfocus.org) or mail donations to 22512 Gateway Center Drive, Clarksburg, MD 20871



Scripture Readings – October 3 edition

October 8

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

- [Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20](#)
- [Psalm 19](#)
- [Philippians 3:4b-14](#)
- [Matthew 21:33-46](#)

October 15

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

- [Exodus 32:1-14](#)
- [Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23](#)
- [Philippians 4:1-9](#)
- [Matthew 22:1-14](#)