

SOUTH GEORGIA ADVOCATE – OCTOBER 17 EDITION

The Methodist Home for Children & Youth: Finding Faith, Adam's Journey

By Nancy Abarca

"I really believe God has always had His hand in my life, even when I did not know it. He always put the right people in the right place at the right time. The Carpenter's Way Ranch was one of those places."
– Adam Anderson

When Adam Andersen was four and a half years old, he was adopted. On multiple occasions this adoptive family would take him back to the Division of Family and Children Services and say, "You can have him back." Needless to say, Adam had a rocky start. After about 28 homes, Adam arrived at The Carpenter's Way Ranch (CWR) in Columbus, Ga. in 1992.

Adam was only 15 years old, and his outlook on life was bleak.

"I didn't really want to die, but I didn't really want to live either. I just did not care, either way was fine with me," he shared.

Today, Adam reflects on his life and knows CWR was the beginning of his character being redefined. It was there that God would show Adam he was worthy and loved. God placed people in Adam's life who would help, heal, and love him. To this day he still keeps in touch with some of his house parents and "brothers."

Meeting good, genuine, kind hearted people was incredibly impactful for Adam.

"They wanted to get to know me. Not out of obligation or sympathy, but they actually wanted something to do with me. That was huge to me," Adam shared.

Slowly but surely, Adam began to realize God was giving him a family.

Adam graduated from Harris County High School, where he would unknowingly meet some of the most influential people in his life; people he knows God put before him, starting with his wife, Joy. Adam would also meet his best friend, Matt, who went to church with him. This was another turning point for Adam. He had been in and out of various churches, denominations, and religions. Yet, he could not have imagined what God had in store for his life.

"The Carpenter's Way Ranch gave me the knowledge of Christ and really planted a deep seed for what Jesus could do for me and what I can do for Jesus," said Adam.

Joy agreed, "Before CWR, Adam had not had any consistency in his life. God put him where he needed to be, where he could prosper."

Adam's eyes were opened to a different way of living, a life with God by his side. Looking back now, Adam can see God working so clearly throughout his life.

"It is interesting how sometimes God separates you from one thing to put you with another," Adam said. "But it is where He wants you to be; it is what you need. In the moment it can be difficult to comprehend because it is terrible and traumatic. You think there cannot be anything worse than not being with your family, but there is. Although I suffered challenges and hardships, God separated me from that."

For over a year now, Adam has worked as an investigator for Meriwether County Sheriff's Office. He has been a certified police officer since 2003. Prior to that, he was in the service as a military police officer. Since 1997, in one capacity or another, he has worked in law enforcement. Despite his past, Adam has always known his calling is to help people. He is positive it is what God put him on this earth to do. Adam figured the best avenue for that was law enforcement.

At his church they have a saying, "Saved People, Serve People." Adam feels this saying accurately describes him and his values.

The Carpenter's Way Ranch put Adam on a pathway to his life today. He still remembers learning to lifeguard and the transportation CWR provided to and from his workplace. The Home gave him a work ethic and structure; but more than that, it led him to his family and to God. As his wife puts it, "If he had not been there, our family would never have been born. We have two beautiful lovely daughters."

Adam is grateful for the place CWR holds in his life. He continues to support his family, his church, and his community. He is a devout servant of God's work.

"God still uses me and as long as He will use me, I am going to let Him," said Adam.

Nancy Abarca is the Marketing Coordinator for The Methodist Home for Children and Youth.

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LaGrange Chaplain helps students find sense of belonging on the Hill

Submitted by LaGrange College staff

The start of a new school year can bring a feeling of excitement but also anxiety for students away from home for the first time. The Rev. Ashley Fitzpatrick Jenkins (class of '08), who joined the staff of LaGrange College this summer as Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life, aspires to provide a warm and accepting environment for the campus community.

"I want to cheer students on and be with them during their hardships," Jenkins said. "If a student is having difficulty in class, making friends or finding their place in college, I would love to listen to them and assist them in locating campus resources."

She said her journey to LaGrange College, where she met her husband Trey (class of '08), began with former LaGrange College Chaplain Quincy Brown.

"I first met Quincy when he was the associate pastor at my grandparent's church," Jenkins said. "After he left the church, he became the college's Chaplain. When I started looking at schools, my grandparents reminded me about Quincy working in LaGrange and told me to check out LaGrange College."

She said another person who played a critical role in her becoming a student on 'the Hill' was Amy Baxter (class of '06), who was a LaGrange College ambassador.

"When my mom and I came to LaGrange College, Amy was our tour guide," Jenkins said. "After that first encounter, I developed a bond with Amy. She became my roommate a year later and remains a dear friend to this day."

Jenkins said her religion classes at the college helped in her decision to pursue ministry.

“It was wonderful to study under such renowned scholars and then also wrestle with my call to ministry,” she said. “Writing a paper about faith and praying about my calling at the same time affirmed my calling and made me fall in love with God even deeper.”

During her undergraduate years, Jenkins was a Servant Scholar and held leadership roles in student organizations.

After graduating from LaGrange, she pursued a ministry degree at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Rev. Jenkins worked at different churches in the North Georgia United Methodist Conference before being appointed as LC’s Chaplain this summer. She has served as President of the LC Alumni Executive Committee.

Jenkins said she looks forward to getting to know the students.

“I want the students to know that they matter to me and the faculty and staff,” she said. “Everything we do is for our students.”



Pittman Park UMC receives grant to create better accessibility

by [Megan Hopkins](#)

People with mobility challenges will now have an easier time accessing Pittman Park UMC’s Fellowship Hall thanks to an automatic door opener. The low-energy operator arm engages when users apply pressure to the door, opening the door and holding it open to allow those with canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or just full arms to more easily pass through.

Members of [The Bulloch County Historical Society](#) were the first group to benefit from the improvement at their group’s monthly luncheon. It was a fitting inauguration for a project intended to benefit not just church members and guests but also the many community groups that use the facility.

Installation of the door opener device was made possible by a \$1,000 grant from the [Disability Ministries Committee](#) of the United Methodist Church. The grant caught the eye of the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Smith because the church staff had recently been exploring ways to improve the church experience for members with disabilities. Could any of their plans benefit from free money? It was decided that the best project to propose for grant funding would be the installation of an automatic door opener because it was a suggestion directly from a church member with limited mobility and could be prohibitively expensive without a boost from external support.

The project received additional help when congregation member and electrician Jesse Hopkins donated his time and labor to select and install the device once the funding came through.

“It’s been amazing to see this project come together,” said Dr. Smith. “On day one I can say it’s already made Pittman Park a better place.”

Megan Hopkins is the Children’s Director at Pittman Park UMC in Statesboro, Ga.

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UMC Bishops condemn violence in the Middle East, call for prayer and action

They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. (Isaiah 2:4)

In a world already consumed with political unrest and conflict, the recent attacks by Hamas against Israel only add to the reality that the prophetic words from Isaiah are needed now more than ever. As a people who pray for and work toward peace, we in the United Methodist family are appalled, and dismayed by the animosities and inhumane actions undertaken by Hamas. The declaration of war on the part of Israel as a result is also deeply saddening.

We condemn the Hamas militants who have killed and captured civilians, women and children in Israel. We equally decry the deaths of innocent civilians, women and children caught in the crossfire of the Israeli retaliation in the Gaza Strip.

Our own Book of Resolutions (2016) states clearly, “We seek for all people in the Middle East region an end to military occupation, freedom from violence, and full respect for the human rights of all under international law.”

As a result, today we call on all United Methodists to renew a deepened commitment to pray for those who have been injured, abducted, or killed, and to deepen our prayers for those who have suddenly lost a loved one.

The power of and belief in our intercessions cannot be underestimated. Pray for those who are providing support and care for those directly affected. More than that, pray that God’s peace will permeate throughout the land and in the hearts of all those who are initiating this conflict.

In addition, we call on all congregations and leaders to begin initiating special offerings, directed to our United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), to provide specific resources to assist in providing shelter, food, and other necessities to those who have been left homeless, helpless, and afraid.

Friends, we are called to be a people of prayer, a people of hope, and a people of action. Our role should never be minimized, especially in a time when global conflicts are emerging with more frequency. As we watch the news unfold, let us not delay in moving into meaningful responses.

Most of all, let us remain a people of hope who look to the fulfilment of those prophetic words by Isaiah. We look to the days when:

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. In that day, the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. (Isaiah 11:5-6)

May it be so. May it be so. Amen.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
President – Council of Bishops

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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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10 Ways to Say 'Thank You' to Your Pastor

October is Clergy Appreciation Month! Here are 10 ideas for how you might support your pastor this month and all throughout the year:

1. Offer to make pastoral care visits and calls for a week.
Volunteering to help make visits and calls offers your pastor a break to focus on other tasks for the week and helps the people receiving the visits and calls a new personal connection.
2. Make a charitable donation.
Donate to a local charity or one of our United Methodist related ministries (like The Methodist Home for Children and Youth, Wesley Glen, Magnolia Manor, Camp Connect, Vashti, Open Door, Wesley Community Centers, UMCOR, and so many more!) in the clergy person’s name.
3. Explore renewal leave and overall wellbeing for clergy.
Encourage clergy to explore ways to schedule time for renewal leave each year (and each quadrennium) as referenced in paragraph 350 of the Book of Discipline. Also, encourage clergy to make time for counseling and medical appointments as part of their workday.
4. Send a personal note of appreciation.
A “thank you” can be so meaningful. If you’re a parent, be sure to get your kids involved! Have them draw pictures or write a “thank you” too!
5. Support an alternative Sunday worship plan.
Collaborate with the pastor to identify a few Sundays throughout the year that the pastor doesn’t plan worship (i.e. youth Sunday, mission Sunday, a hymn sing Sunday, or a Cantata).
6. Take on a chore.
Offer to hire a lawncare or house cleaning service to help out the pastor.

7. Give a simple gift to your pastor.
Send a gift basket related to your pastor's favorite hobby! Don't know what it is? Just ask!
8. Provide a meal to your pastor.
Drop off a meal or send your pastor a gift card to a local restaurant or Uber Eats – especially on a busy day!
9. Volunteer your time at the church.
Commit to volunteering regularly in some area of ministry. Consistent volunteers reduce stress for the pastor who often has to fill gaps.
10. Pray for your pastors.
Most important, commit to praying for your pastor every day. The power of prayer is life changing!



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.



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.



October 22 Lesson: Spirit and Flesh

Fall Quarter 2023: God’s Law Is Love
Unit 2: Faith Triumphs, Law Fails
Lesson 8

Sunday School Lesson for the week of October 22, 2023
By Craig Rikard

Devotional Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14
Background Scripture: Galatians 3:1-18
Key Text: Galatians 3:2b

Lesson Aims

1. Understanding the significance of “Law” to the Jewish people.
2. Understanding what Paul meant by using the term “foolishness.”
3. Understanding the meaning of “flesh” in the New Testament.
4. Understanding the contrast of “faith by hearing” and “righteousness through obedience to the Law.”
5. Understanding our family roots of faith in Abraham and Sarah.

Historical Background/ Context

There exists a repetition of Paul's thought in the last three lessons. Remember, the letter to the Romans and the epistle to the Galatians are two different audiences. However, both share a similar difficulty: to unify the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians into the one church of Jesus Christ. Consequently, understanding the meaning of Law to the Jewish Christians in contrast to the limited understanding of Law possessed by the Gentiles remains a constant point of contention.

(Please read [the introduction and context of last week's lesson](#) from Galatians for they akin to the context of this lesson).

Paul faced the same difficulty in his writing to Rome in Romans as he did in the earlier book Galatians. The Jewish people did not perceive Law as simply a document of writings concerning moral and acceptable behavior. The Law also provided regulations that ordered Jewish society and provided order. However, the Law represented far more than a series of societal and regulations. Religious faith and day to day life were totally intertwined. Questions could be asked such as:

1. What does the Law require of your family functioning, which includes marriage, child rearing, divorce, etc.?
2. What does the Law require of your business practices?
3. What does the Law require of the way you deal with your livestock?
4. What does the Law require of where you can plant crops and when?
5. What does the Law require you eat?

This list could be extended. To the Jewish people, Law was life. The Law in Judaism also established social class, status, and position. Since the Pharisees and other religious leaders knew the Law (in mind, not always in heart) they socially and economically stood above the masses of people. Since the masses were constantly informed that they failed to keep the Law of Laws, they were never fully favored by God and were reminded of such shortcomings. Since there was power assigned to those who proclaimed to know the Law and were trained in the Law, they were rewarded economically. Thus, if one challenged their superiority, they were challenging the social and economic structure of Israel.

In Galatians Paul addressed the same issue he later addressed in Romans. The community throughout Galatia consisted of Gentiles and Jews. During the dispersion, after Babylon conquered Judea in the Old Testament, the Jewish people were scattered throughout the near eastern world. Most did not return home after the decree by King Cyrus. They had established homes and businesses in the near eastern world. However, synagogues were allowed to be constructed, offering the Jewish people a place to worship and study the sacred texts of the Old Testament. More Jews lived in Syria than in Israel during Paul's ministry. The reason Paul was on the Damascus Road when converted was because he was traveling to Syria to persecute Jewish Christians. Again, more lived in Syria than Israel. Therefore, a large community of Jews and Jewish Christians dwelled in the area of Galatia.

There was equally a large number of Gentiles and Greeks. The Greeks were responding powerfully to the Gospel of Jesus and were a vital part of early church membership. However, most Gentiles did not understand the Old Testament and Law, for it was not as available. They became Christians by responding to the preaching and teaching of the early disciples.

However, some of the Jewish Christians believed that since they had obeyed the Law of Moses most of their lives, and especially underwent circumcision, so should the Gentile Christians. In other words, they needed to obey the Law by attending the Jewish festivals, rites, and especially the rite of circumcision in order to be good Christians.

Paul had to prayerfully, with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, bind these two groups together as family. He could not disregard the Law for it was so meaningful for the Jewish people and had pointed toward the coming of Jesus as Messiah. Yet, he could not allow Law to recapture its former power of determining who would find favor with God and who would not.

Walking Through the Text

How did you start? How shall you end?

Verses 1-3: How did most Gentiles become Christians? Most heard the testimonies and preaching of the early Christians. They witnessed the great works God's Spirit was doing among those in the early church. Thus, they began their journey through hearing the faith and witnessing the signs and wonders enacted through the apostles. Faith cometh by the preaching of the Word in Romans 10:17. They had not become Christians by becoming circumcised or keeping the Law.

However, there were those called Judaizers, men who taught one must become obedient to the Law to become a Christian, especially becoming circumcised. Thus, in the contentious struggle between Jew and Gentile in the early church, they were actually locked into a disagreement related to Law versus grace. Paul asks the pointed question, "Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law or by believing what you heard?"

Can you remember the most influential facets of Christianity that led to your decision to accept and follow Jesus? Can you recall a particular sermon, Sunday school lesson, confirmation series, etc. that moved your heart toward salvation in Jesus? Were there acts of mercy and compassion on the part of others that deeply touched you?

For Paul, the great sign and miracle God used to reveal the liberating truth in Jesus was the gift of the Holy Spirit. We do not know the specific manifestations of the Spirit that moved the hearers. For some, it was the gift of tongues on Pentecost and perhaps other places. For most, it seemed it was the hearing of the Gospel spoken in power and truth. The gift of prophecy Paul mentions in I Cor. 12-14 is actually the gift of the proclamation of the Gospel. In the Corinthian letter, Paul noted that many various gifts were witness that the Holy Spirit had indwelled their lives. The greatest gift of the Holy Spirit to us was the gift of God's love as articulated in the Shema (Deut. 6:4). The Holy Spirit in one's heart "sealed their relationship with God through Christ." The Spirit was the spiritual equivalent of our modern wedding band; it was the outward sign of a permanent seal that made one a member of God's family forever. Paul would write that the Holy Spirit is the blessed guarantee that we are God's through Christ (Eph. 1: 13-14). For most, Paul affirmed that the Holy Spirit gave witness to our spirit that we are children of God.

Can you share how the Holy Spirit has worked in your life? What specific gifts do you believe God has given you through the Spirit that empowers you to serve Jesus in the church? Are you confident you are God's child through the Spirit that indwells you? Can you list some of the ways the Holy Spirit works in your life, reminding you that you belong to Christ and are called to serve?

Since our relationship with Jesus started through grace and the gift of the Spirit, why would the Jewish Christians want to return to the futile dependence of keeping all facets of the Law? James, in 2:10, wrote that if we choose to live by being obedient to the Law, we are bound to keep all of them. For Paul, such a reversal means that all who received salvation through grace, all that learned about the liberating power of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, were choosing to live in vain. If we could be saved through the Law, what need was there of Jesus Christ? How can one experience forgiveness through grace and new life if we abandon grace and return to the futility of the Law?

Can you identify with the temptation to fall anew into legalism after experiencing Jesus through grace? How does legalism affect your walk in Christ in a destructive manner? What helps you most to walk in grace, living a moral life as a response to what God has done for you in Jesus?

Children of Abraham and Sarah

For the Jewish people and Jewish Christians, Abraham is the "THE" father of the faith. The Jews would add, "father of the faith and Law." The phrase "scripture foresaw" implies to Paul that all Old Testament scripture is pointing toward Jesus the Messiah. We understand the Old Testament by looking backward through the life of Jesus, and we understand our future in faith through the living and risen Christ. The Old Testament was never intended to stand alone. It is more intimately related to Jesus and the Gospel than we can fully grasp. However, the Old Testament Law was not the means to salvation, but rather the teacher of moral life that we lived through a personal relationship with Jesus. It revealed our need for Jesus and liberated us to respond to Jesus by living a moral, righteous life.

How have you perceived the Old Testament and Law in the past apart from Jesus? How do you perceive the Mosaic Law now, after following Jesus? Since we cannot memorize or keep every law, how is it that we live in obedience to the Law through grace?

For the Jewish people, Abraham's covenant with God was about them, the Israelites. It pointed to the coming of the Law and all rites and rituals of the Law that connect them with God. Thus, children of Abraham are Jews, and especially obedient Jews who have been marked by circumcision. In the Spirit, Paul recognized the all-important phrase, "All nations of the earth shall be blessed." The Jews were chosen to become the instrument through which grace, forgiveness, morality, etc. would come to the whole world. All in the world were loved and cherished equally. Thus, Paul did not perceive the Mosaic Law as a life-affirming gift for God's Jewish people alone. The Mosaic Law revealed to the entire world our failure to fully obey the Law without error. It revealed all of our need of grace and forgiveness through Jesus. Thus, we -everyone - are in need of grace and forgiveness.

Consequently, what was "foreseen" in the covenant with Abram and Sarai was the worldwide family of God through Christ, redeemed by the life, death, and resurrection and empowered for new life through the Holy Spirit in every believer's heart. It isn't just those who obeyed the Law and were circumcised who were members of the family of Abraham. The family included all who exercised faith in Jesus Christ, the giver of the new covenant written on our hearts. (Read Jer. 31). Faith marks us as children of God; love for all is the common behavior of the children of God, and the faithful walk in the Holy Spirit is our lifestyle, and eternity is our destiny.

If we choose Law we are required to live fully under the command and demands of the Law.

The Law is perfect as a moral guide when lived in the love of God, a revelation of the ideal. However, the Law can only be fully obeyed by a heart that truly loves God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and thy neighbor as thyself. This expression of love was lived perfectly in Christ, yet we fall short. However, perfect love is the guiding star in the heavens that guides our spiritual journey. When we fail, the forgiving love of Christ eagerly forgives those who earnestly desire forgiveness. And grace raises us from our sin and restores us to the journey of love anew. The Mosaic Law is powerless to redeem us from our failure to live in perfect love, but the power of the Holy Spirit within us is not. Though not yet perfect, we are nevertheless walking that meaningful journey toward eternal life in the here and now and the life to come.

In verse 10 Paul writes "For all who rely on the works of the Law are under a curse." He continues, "Cursed is everyone who does not do everything written in the Book of Law." If we rely on the Law for righteousness and the favor of God we are cursed, not because God doesn't love us, but because we have chosen a means

of salvation that cannot save us. Only forgiveness can release us from the brokenness and sin we carry within ourselves having failed at keeping the Law. That forgiveness was given in Christ, given freely to those who receive this free gift as an act of grace. Jesus bore the curse of our sins on the pole, “the cross.” He became the curse of sin, isolation, and rejection. He became the source of mockery and was intentionally ignored and rejected. Nevertheless, he is the truth, and truth proclaims Jesus is the embodiment of God, the one who forgives all sin for those who seek new life and imparts new life through the Holy Spirit.

For you, what did Jesus accomplish that the Mosaic Law alone could not? How is the grace of God in Jesus liberating in contrast to the bondage of the Law?

We are all family with Abraham and made family in the deepest spiritual sense possible in Jesus Christ.

Abraham’s covenant with God, and the instrument through which he participated in the covenant, was the act of circumcision. Though he did not fully understand the grace that was to come in Jesus the Messiah, it was his faith in God in stilling the knife raised to take the life of his only son. There is no greater act of faith than to trust God with one we most love. The halting of the knife implied more than just a major testing of Abraham’s faith. It revealed that the Jewish people lived differently than their neighbors. Many of their neighbors offered living sacrifices to their gods. Many even sacrificed children. However, the God of the Hebrews asked for no human sacrifice. The only sacrifice given would later involve the giving of himself in Christ.

The covenant with Abraham and the act of faith that ratified such a covenant were for the entire world. Thus, the Gospel was and is for the entire world. The world is not saved through obedience to the strict Mosaic Law but rather through the loving grace and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

Where do you see grace at work in the covenant with Abraham and Sarah? What mistake did the Hebrews make in interpreting the covenant as only about them? How would this mistaken interpretation eventually enter into a relationship of contention? How did the grace and love of Jesus unite both Law and grace?

Started in Law, Ending in Grace

All of our Christian journey began in infancy, learning right from wrong as stated in the beautiful law. However, over time our human weakness and sin revealed repeatedly that we failed to live a righteous love. We heard the Gospel, witnessed the Gospel in the lives of others, and were exposed to the Gospel in worship and through reading the Gospel in Scripture. We heard, “We are saved by the grace through faith, it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast.” The Law taught us what it meant to live a moral life. Grace revealed we are forever sealed into the family of God because of our loving response to that grace.

Prayer

Almighty God, how easily we fall into the temptation of attempting to undo our wrongs or rationalization them. All you ask of is an earnest heart, passionately desiring forgiveness and a new beginning. Forgive us those we hurt, and illumine us through your Holy Spirit that we may seek to hurt none and love all. In Jesus name, Amen.

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



A Word of Encouragement to Clergy

Here's a word of encouragement from Dr. Craig Rikard to his fellow clergy for Pastor Appreciation month:

I've heard some churches say we can just get someone to be our preacher.

It is funny how someone thinks being a pastor is simply preaching once or twice a week.

Below is an accurate list of what I and most preachers I know do and have done.

1. We don't just preach our opinion. We actually study the sacred text, seeking its original meaning and then find a way to build a bridge from that text to today.
2. Have responded to calls from people threatening to take their life. Have met people in the middle of the night whose spouse left them. I've met people at the emergency room as a loved one fights for their life. When that is lost we are called to hold them and let them grieve. A doctor once said to the family and me, "I'm sorry but we couldn't save them." (He then described the cause of death, and looked at me and back at the family). "Your pastor is here so I will leave you to him."
3. Rush to the home of someone who did take their life. Often this happens during the holiday season.
4. Answer police calls in domestic fights to calm things down. This can be very dangerous. A minister from South Ga. was shot through the door and prayerfully survived.
5. Serve, knowing in difficult times you will be expendable, or even a scapegoat. Yet, you don't quit because you are called. For the first time clergy are suffering PTS almost at the same rate as soldiers.
6. Take secrets to the grave because people trusted you with them. Without exaggeration I will take hundreds. All of us do so.
7. Try to calm our children who have overheard people verbally assault their pastor - mom or dad or both.
8. Always be on call. I've been called back from vacations twice, once to discover I was called back to read a single passage of scripture. We are rarely off. Even then, the concerns of the church remain in thought.
9. We counsel marriages which are shattered. We help people through divorces when both are members of our church.
10. In an age of rage we are called to self-control and love.
11. If we have 100 or a thousand members, each seeing the world through different eyes and each with different needs, we are asked to preach a single sermon that speaks to all.
12. We walk through our own family and health issues in private. We too experience hurt, brokenness, and illness. Yet, we are there almost every Sunday, preaching the hope we find in Jesus.
13. Many have multiple degrees at religious institutions that are high in cost because they cannot receive federal funding. Then most work for a low wage. We didn't get more degrees for more pay. We wanted to be the best possible in serving God.
14. We bear personal assaults because Jesus did. Also, many of us know the anger coming from another most likely emerges from a lot of pain from past experiences.
15. Every denomination is different, but many go where sent and took a vow to do so. Your spouse often leaves a job and your kids are uprooted. Yet we go and depend upon God's grace.
16. Yes, we are sinners. We fall, react to verbal attacks, and seek to flee temptation. There is no saint in the pulpit, especially not me. We are a forgiven person sincerely seeking to journey upward and higher in Christ.
17. And of course there are the meetings, boards, and visits to the sick and homebound. There are the funerals, which we take very seriously. We are asked to give the final public statement on a person's life, and above all offer hope in Jesus.

The most amazing thing is that we love our life and calling. The friends we make from so many places enrich us. A minister I respected and loved once said to me as a young minister, "Knowing what I now know, if God didn't call me to pastor, I would beg the Lord to do so."

Everyone has a job that involves more than anyone knows. They often feel undervalued and taken for granted. So ministers are not a select group of people with unique requirements.

However, this is pastor appreciation month. So I wanted to affirm and pray for my many brothers and sisters who pastor churches. I am thankful for you and what God has asked of you. Each of you could add to the above list. Yet, we continue to find joy, meaning, purpose and love. We would do nothing else. Even if we could, we don't. We have been called of God.

Remember, this is written by a guy who is just a preacher. And a contented one!



Church Planting: why a building, a pastor, and a checkbook aren't the answers

By Anne Bosarge

In my role as Director of Leadership Strategies and Local Church Resources, I have the privilege of leading our SGAUMC's Congregational Development team. In the last year, South Georgia has put a lot of effort and energy into church planting and revitalization. It's an exciting time to be doing this work as we reimagine what church can look like in the future and dream of ways we can empower laity to be disciples who make disciples.

When I have meetings with groups of people who are discerning their next steps after disaffiliation, I find myself answering the same question: "When will you give us a building, a pastor, and a checkbook with funding to start a church?" What they think they need is version 2.0 of what they had. But what we have discovered is that the churches they left weren't always as healthy and strong as they thought they were. If we want something more effective and missional than what we had before, we must do something different. A building, pastor, and a checkbook are no longer effective ways to make disciples who make disciples. We must make a change in the way we plant churches and train leaders to get different results.

With that in mind, here are five changes we are making in church planting here in South Georgia to be sure we plant new things with a healthy culture that empowers laity as disciples and is focused on mission and outreach.

1. **Build the church from within, not without.** We used to identify a town where there wasn't a UMC and then send a pastor equipped with money for advertising and building rental. We would ask this community outsider to connect with the people there to start something new. The new pastor would have to research and learn about the community and try to make connections with people there. Now, we are looking for passionate laity already in the community who know the people they are seeking to connect with. We want to build the church from within the community, not sending someone who isn't a part of the community to build something from without.
2. **Laity as leaders, pastors as guides.** In the past, the majority of the planting efforts would come from a clergy leader and a few key lay leaders. This core group of people would be the ones shouldering the load of the church planting work. The focus was on getting new people to "attend" so they could be discipled. This top-down approach burned out many clergy and the staff of program-driven church plants, which in some cases resulted in a culture where laity learned to sit and be served instead of engaging and leading. We want to establish laity as the leaders within the church and bring in pastoral leadership to guide so laity can use their gifts in leadership and service.

- 3. Struggle is a catalyst for growth.** On the heels of disaffiliations, we are left with areas of South Georgia with no UMC presence in close proximity. Since we have already stated that a building, pastor, and a checkbook are not enough, let's explore one reason why. Doing that is like giving the keys of your brand-new car to someone from another country who drives on the other side of the road and has different traffic rules, signage, and culture. Yes, they know how to drive in their country, but driving in the US is different. Real damage could be done unless you spend the time learning how to drive in a new country with different ways of operating. Involvement in a church start is very different than being in an established, program-driven church. In an established church, there are rules, procedures, and structures set in place that just don't work in a new church start. Just because you know how to be part of an established church doesn't mean you know how to start a new church. You must change the way you think and try new things. You can't follow the same procedures, committee structures, and policies you had before. Overfunding and overstaffing new church starts prevents people from reaching out to the community and causes them to spiral into the program-generation mindset instead of focusing on reaching people. As they learn from their struggle, new churches grow.
- 4. We are urgent but not rushed.** Here in South Georgia we are not in a competition to plant the most and biggest churches in a specific amount of time. Our focus is on the health and longevity of the churches we are planting. We want them to be healthy, disciple-making engines that have a lasting kingdom impact. While there is an urgency in our mission to make disciples, we do not want to rush the process of discipleship within the people we are working with and for. We want to work with God, not ahead of God. The Spirit's work in the lives of people takes time. As our launch teams form to plant new things, we don't want to rush the planting process and prevent them from learning and growing gradually over time. We encourage them to move at the speed God is working in their group. Some will move more quickly than others based on the discipleship needs of the people in the group and community they are called to reach.
- 5. We must be incarnational instead of attractional.** In the past, many church plants began with worship and quickly added programs to attract people from within the community who would come to experience the latest and greatest methods for reaching people. Church planters assumed the way to reach people for Christ was to attract them to the church with something new, innovative, and creative. The hope was if we could get them to attend an event, they would join the church and become active, tithing members of the congregation. As events in culture get more and more spectacular and harder to compete with, the church needs to stop focusing on attractional programming and instead be doing the relational work Jesus did as He met people along the byways of life. Jesus walked with people, met them at the depth of their need, and offered life, hope, and a consistent presence. That is what it means to be incarnational – that we, like Jesus, meet others in their moments of need, walking with them, listening to their stories, and seeking to understand their experiences so we can show them how Jesus is the answer to their need. The days of attractional church and overscheduled church calendars are gone. We are called to be incarnational and walk beside people – just like Jesus did for us.

If a building, a pastor, and a checkbook aren't the answer, what is? Discernment, patience, a willingness to step outside of our comfort zones, a passion for people living without Jesus, and an attentiveness to the community God is calling us to reach – that is the good work we are doing in South Georgia, and I'm thankful to be doing this work with you.

If you'd like to know more about SGAUMC's approach to church planting, [click here for a training on planting strategy and steps for how to join us in this church planting work we are doing.](#)

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 All is Falling Apart

by Hal Brady

An American cartoonist named Bill Watterson used to draw the comic strip “Calvin and Hobbes” (1985-1995). In one of those comic strips Calvin, the little boy, comes marching into the living room early one morning. His mother is seated there in her favorite chair. She is sipping her morning coffee. She looks up at young Calvin. She is amused and amazed at how he is dressed. Calvin’s head is encased in a large space helmet. A cape is draped around his neck, across his shoulders and down his back, and it is dragging on the floor. One hand holds a flashlight and the other is holding a baseball bat. “What’s up today?” asks his mother. “Nothing so far,” answers Calvin. “So far?” she questions. “Well, you never know,” Calvin says. “Something could happen today.” Then Calvin marches off saying, “And if anything does, by golly, I’m going to be ready for it!”

According to Bill Watterson, Calvin’s mother looks directly at the reading audience and says, “I need a suit like that!” And that’s the way we all feel at times as we face this troubling world of ours. We want a suit like Calvin’s so we can say along with him, “Whatever may happen, I’m going to be ready for it.” So, what do we do when everything seems to be falling apart? We take our cue from the Psalmist!

First, we can believe in the presence of God! When the psalmist was urged to flee before his enemies, he refused. He stood firm, steadfast. How? He said, “In the Lord, I take refuge” (11:1). The psalmist could take refuge in the Lord for two reasons. One, he remembered the past acts of God. A songwriter wrote a gospel song on a prayer he heard an old man pray years ago. The lyrics are, “Lord, we know what you are gonna do, ‘cause we see what you’ve already done.” And how many of us can attest to God’s working in our own lives? The other reason the psalmist could take refuge in the Lord was because he was confident of God’s purpose for God’s people in the present! The Christian faith teaches that history is “His Story.” That God is a vital part of history, shaping its ends. Christianity asserts that God actually stepped into history; so history always has a past redeemed by his grace and a future influenced by his will. And we are reminded of this truth in Maltbie D. Babcock’s gospel song written in 1901, “This is my Father’s world. O let me ne’er forget that though the wrong seems oft so strong God is the ruler yet.”

Second, we can maintain our conviction that the best is more powerful than the worst! Now, this conviction is a claim that has historic truth. Our faith has stood the test of time. As you know, it is rooted in the Old Testament story of a people who were sustained by their religion when the worst was a reality. I’m talking about the children of Israel in the captivity of Egypt, in the wilderness and in exile. By any logical explanation, George Washington should have surrendered several times. His fellow countrymen were indifferent to his cause, and several of his trusted generals betrayed him. But nothing could shake his resolve - not treachery, not injustice, not the element of the weather, and not the armed forces of the enemy. And out of Washington’s resolve a new nation was born. “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (11:3).

Third, we can go right on seeking righteous! The psalmist says in verse seven, “For the Lord is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.” We are being told here that as we continue to seek righteousness we shall be in fellowship with God. He did the best things in the worst times. I’m referring to George Malley, played by John Travolta, in the movie “Phenomenon.” The government thought he was a

security risk. The girl of his interest was afraid of being hurt. His friends did not understand him. The university would not allow him to share his new found knowledge. The public was skeptical. But George Malley kept right on being himself. He kept right on trying to help people. He kept on being optimistic. He kept on demonstrating the greatness of the human spirit. In spite of being held prisoner, made fun of and being severely questioned and doubted, George Malley did the best things in the worst times. And so should we! The psalmist said, "In the Lord I take refuge."

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).



Conference Updates & Happenings

Upcoming Events for Clergy

Book Chat with Anne and Ben - Oct. 25: Anne Bosarge and Ben Gosden are reading, "When Church Stops Working," by Andrew Root and Blair Bertrand. The book is helping us to think thoughtfully about the busyness and programming that we typically pursue in church growth vs a healthier posture of abiding and being the church in Christ. For any clergy who would like to join them in reading the book and chatting over zoom, reach out to abosarge@sgaumc.com. They will have a zoom room open on Oct. 25 at 11:30am.

3Practice Circle Conversations - Oct. 26, Nov. 30, & Jan. 25: There are 3 practices that - when named - help us cross the "difference divide" and create space for real conversation. These 3 practices help and inform our interactions with others, ourselves, and God. Revs. Teresa Edwards, Meg Procopio, and Jared Wilson are going to set the stage for us on how to use 3Practice Circles. Learn more: www.sgaumc.org/3practice-circles.

HealthFlex Annual Enrollment - November 1-16: Annual Enrollment for HealthFlex Participants is open November 1-16, 2023.

Clergy Day Apart: Rest and Restore - Nov. 2: Bishop David Graves has invited Dr. Ron Bell to be with us for a day apart on Nov. 2 at Mulberry St. UMC from 10am - 3pm. As we all live through an unprecedented season in our ministry and in our denomination, it's important that we not only address and process this season in healthy ways but that we rest and restore our mind, body, and spirit. Learn more: www.sgaumc.org/clergy-day-apart.

Upcoming Events for Local Church Leaders

Lay Servant Ministry: [Lay Servant Ministries & Certified Lay Ministry dates & registration](#)

Youth Ministry Network Retreat - Oct. 19-21: This fall, the annual YMN Retreat is gaining a day! Join us October 19-21 at Epworth By The Sea for a getaway that will give you practical tools to take back to your own ministry setting AND make space for spiritual renewal. The retreat is led by seasoned youth directors and tailored for ALL those in youth ministry positions - volunteer, part-time, and full-time. For more information or to sign up: www.sgaumc.org/youth-ministry-network.

Rural Church Rising conference - Oct. 27-28: [Rural Church Rising](#) is a two-day conference for lay and clergy people serving in rural contexts across the country. This conference takes place Oct. 27-28 in

Fruitland Park, FL. The South Georgia Conference is offering scholarships for people to attend. [Learn more and register.](#)

Dinner Church Summit - Nov. 9-11: If you love to eat and you love sharing your faith, why not combine the two? Dinner Church is a new way to “be the church” in the community and create a place at the table for those who are far from Christ. If you’d like to see what it would look like to host a dinner church in your community, join us for the Dinner Church Summit coming up Nov. 9-11. [Find out all the information here.](#)

Creating Hope: Nurturing Christian Community Through Dementia Care - Nov. 14-16: Have you or your church been inspired by respite ministries and caring for those with dementia? Make plans now to join this first-time gathering at Lake Junaluska, November 14-16, for "Creating Hope: Nurturing Christian Community Through Dementia Care." This collaborative gathering of practitioners and caring ministry leaders will focus on designing and supporting a growing and vibrant network of caring ministry leaders who connect the dots between discipleship and dementia ministry through caring community. [Learn more](#)

[View Full Conference Calendar](#)



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: Rev. Floyd Eugene "Gene" Yelverton

Rev. Floyd Eugene “Gene” Yelverton, 79, of Ellaville passed away at his residence on October 4, 2023. Graveside services will be held at Concord Methodist Church Cemetery in Ellaville on Friday, October 6, 2023 at 11:00 AM with Rev. Clint Yelverton officiating. The family will greet friends at the cemetery beginning at 10:00 until service time.

Rev. Yelverton was born September 5, 1944 in Randolph County, GA to Ernest Brown and Alice Jackson Yelverton. He was a graduate of Shellman High School and went on to graduate Summa Cum Laude from Georgia Southwestern University and then his Masters of Divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, KY. Rev. Yelverton began his career in the Methodist ministry at Concord United Methodist Church in Americus, before serving at several other churches before his retirement. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and woodworking and with a little help, was able to build his home and shop building. If he had a motto, it would have been, "God, Family, Country and Missions." In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother and sister-in-law, Charlie and Marie Yelverton.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Meriam Jones Yelverton of Ellaville; three sons, Shane Yelverton and his wife, Donna of Cuthbert, GA, Randy Yelverton of Ellaville, GA and Clint Yelverton and his wife, Cynthia of Newton, GA; nine grandchildren, Benjamin Yelverton (Amanda), Chesley Ekkel (Herman), Melissa Dupree (Kerry), Stephen Goodbread, Blake Yelverton (Cara), Brett Yelverton (Angela), Ashley Parker (Joseph), Bryant Yelverton (Brianna), and Elijah Yelverton; thirteen great-grandchildren, Alicia, Allison, Grace, Declan, Holton, Brooklyn, Mia, Shaley, Cypress, Isla, India, Gunner and Canyon; several nieces and nephews; and his beloved dog, Genie.



Obituary: Emma Jean Blocker Deas

Emma Jean Blocker Deas, 91, passed away October 9, 2023 at Baptist Village in Waycross.

Born May 9, 1932 in Tattnall County, GA to the late William Clanton Blocker and Sinie Waters Blocker; she was also preceded in death by her husband, Rev. John W. Deas, Jr.; and siblings, Monroe Blocker (Thelma) of Little Midway, Eula Blocker Deloach (Curt) of Glennville, Ola Blocker Deloach (Marcus) of Little Midway, Olan Blocker (Lillie) of Brunswick, Ida Pearl Blocker Todd (Talmadge) of Claxton, Earl Blocker (Joan) of Valdosta, Edna Blocker Lanier (Oren) of Savannah, and Medra Blocker Purvis (Vondes) of Savannah.

She and her husband, Rev. Johnny Deas served in the South Georgia Methodist Conference for 28 years including churches in Jenkins, Screven, Calhoun, Ware, Wilcox, Dodge, Bibb, and Effingham Counties. She worked in the school system as a para pro for 25 plus years having retired from Effingham County Board of Education. She enjoyed making bread and jellies to share with friends and family, working with her flowers, gardening, making floral arrangements, and hosting her church women's society.

Survivors include her children, Barry Deas (Rosanne) of Manor, Gale Deas Hodges (John-deceased) of Waycross, Ricky Deas of Springfield, Tony Deas (Dana) of Waleska, and Dennis Deas of Springfield/Reidsville; 8 grandchildren, Brad Henderson, Mindi Deas Johnston (Kody), Johnny Hodges (Michele), Paula Hodges, Ginger Hodges Brown (David), Camille Deas, Carson Deas, and Colter Deas; 8 great-grandchildren, Jami Brown Moran (Frankie), Tyler Hodges, David Hodges, Troy Hodges, Trenton Miller, Lilah Brooke Brown, Breelyn and Bailey Johnston; 3 great-great-grandchildren, Jaxon, Owen, and Charlee Ann Moran; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, October 13, 2023 at the funeral home. Funeral services will be 2 p.m. Saturday, October 14, 2023 at Springfield Oaks Church. Graveside services will be 5:00 p.m. Saturday, October 14, 2023 at Harmony Church, 1688 Harmony Church Road, Glennville, GA 30427.



Scripture Readings – October 17 edition

October 22

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

- [Exodus 33:12-23](#)
- [Psalm 99](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 1:1-10](#)
- [Matthew 22:15-22](#)

October 29

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

- [Deuteronomy 34:1-12](#)
- [Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 2:1-8](#)
- [Matthew 22:34-46](#)