




# *Westover Reflections*

## *October 2024*

*William's Wanderings*

***"Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith. So, we are made right with God through faith and not obeying the law."  
-Romans 3:27-28***



I believe that faith is a wonderful thing. It is beautiful, in fact. When we are practicing our faith at our best, faith is that which draws our attention to the wonder of God's presence, gives us a sense of purpose, and brings communities together, even in the most difficult of moments. In moments when it comes freely, faith is a grace that inspires us to be and become who God intended us to be.

When we forget that faith is a gift, though, its powerful beauty become much less than God intended. Like the Pharisees and scribes of Jesus' time, we can turn faith into some type of legalistic thinking. Of course, like many things that we humans seek to take out of God's control and replace with our own understanding, faith then loses its vibrancy. And like the Galatians we, then, are asked, ***"Have you forgotten the truth that you were taught?"***

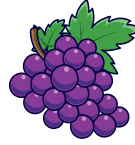
Paul, in this letter to the Romans, reminds us that faith is the root of our salvation, and it is a gift that is available to all. None of us are perfect, none of us is without need of God's justifying grace; for we all come before the Throne of Glory as ***"blind beggars."*** We are all sinners, redeemed only because of the Lamb. In this season of uncertainty wherein many stones are seemingly being cast in this land of many, now divided by so many issues, I pray that you and I will be seen as the people of faith whom I believe us to be, people who would welcome the stranger who seeks to come into our house of worship. Remember, again, that we have all been saved by grace...no one, not one, is without sin and, thus, without need of God's redemption.

**Still in His Peace,  
Pastor William**



# *First Fruits of Worship!*

by Bruce Smith  
Director of Music Ministries



## *Worship - The Force That Moves Us*

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

**Romans 12:2**

What moves you? Is it a beautiful song? A touching movie, or a beautifully written novel? How about that corny commercial with a mom and her child? We are moved by the plucking of our heart strings in this world, certainly. But what’s behind the curtain of those heart strings being plucked? I believe it is that unique, heavenly quality of introspection and emotional reflection that God placed in us. But why would he place that “harp string” in us? Well, I believe it is to remind us of who we are and whose we are.

*“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”* **Psalms 34:18**

Only God fully understands our tenderness, our capacity for “brokenheartedness” and always seeks to heal and restore our hearts. He does this in limitless ways – through the comfort of a friend, through a reminder through the radio of His immeasurable love for us, and in the most palpable way – He restores and moves us in worship.

When we gather as God’s family, we share His love in fellowship with our friends, share encouragement with one another, and pray for those who are struggling, give thanks for His amazing goodness, sing of our praise for His glorious Son, Jesus Christ, listen to his Holy Word and listen as we hear the interpretation of those scriptures – we ought to be moved. We are moved by our memories, our gratefulness, and the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst us.

Many years ago, I suffered an unfortunate falling out with a member of my worship team. Unbeknownst to me, she was struggling with a family relationship issue and I was the unfortunate bystander hit by “drive-by anger”. But her outbursts at me were hurtful, and my initial reaction would have been to go home and sulk and stew over this encounter. But the Holy Spirit guided my actions and moved me to go to the church and spend 30 minutes singing His praises in the church Sanctuary with the sound system on full blast. (If anyone had seen and heard me, they might have thought I’d lost my mind!). But in those 30 minutes, God moved me to the point where I no longer felt angry, hurt, or brokenhearted. Worship healed me and moved me to pray for this daughter of Christ that she might be healed as well.

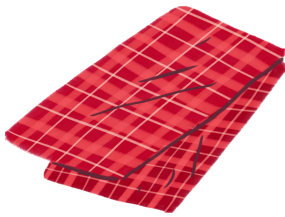
I tell that story to encourage you to invest yourself in worship each Sunday, and each day you read God’s word, and pray (for that is worship too). For in those precious moments, we can take our broken hearts, our “human-ness” before our loving God, and be moved to a new place - a better place. The force of an all powerful God can also move in the most tender ways to heal, restore, comfort, encourage, and reach the depths of our hearts.

So, worship the living God – and may the force be with you!

***October 11-13***  
***What a wonderful, worship filled weekend!***

***Craft Circle***

Craft Circle meets at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 12! We will be working on the knotted fleece blankets – which is a mission project – so this Craft Circle will also be part of our United Women in Faith group for the month. If you have a good pair of scissors, that's all you'll need...making the blankets is easy and fun – (no sewing) and will enrich someone's life. Coffee, pastries, and a door prize will be on the agenda for Craft Circle, too! Join us for fun and some of the best fellowship ever!



***We need your help setting up for homecoming!***

Hope to see you at noon on Saturday, October 12, in the Fellowship Hall, to set up for Homecoming. Tables and chairs need to put in place and decorating needs to be done. The more, the merrier – and the quicker we'll get done. If you can help out, we'll see you at noon on the 12th!  
Thanks in advance!

***Homecoming***

On Sunday, Oct 13, we will have a combined worship service at 10:00 in the sanctuary. We welcome back Pastor Johnny Wright, who will bring our homecoming message.

After we worship together, we will enjoy a *covered dish* lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring your family, friends and food to share. It will be a wonderful time of fellowship and reuniting! Food can be brought to the Fellowship Hall before the service starts. Volunteers will be setting up so everything is ready to enjoy.

***Movie Night***

Kick off the weekend in the fellowship hall on Friday, October 11th at 7:00 PM. This month's movie is *I Can Only Imagine*. As always, there will be snacks and a door prize.



### *Adult Sunday School Class News*

We're finishing up the study of the Gospel of John – we kinda hate to have this study finish – it's been powerful! But next we're studying 1 and 2 Peter – and it should be fascinating as well. Join us on Sunday mornings at 10:00 in Room 102 (Builder's Classroom) of the Education Building – the fellowship is great and questions and discussion are welcome! Come and be a part of something that will help on the faith journey of studying the Word of God.

**NOTE: BECAUSE OF HOMECOMING, WE WILL NOT HAVE SUNDAY SCHOOL ON OCT. 13! JOIN US FOR HOMECOMING!**

### *Check it out!*

Looking for something interesting to read? The "Westover Library" is now located in Room 102 (Builder's Classroom) in the Education Building. Want to read a good Christian novel? We've got them! Want to do some Bible research? We've got lots of books? Need some inspirational reading? It's there! Want to know more about the United Methodist Church? We've got books to help you out! Come and browse; take a book (or books) home to read! You don't need a library card! There's something for everyone – so take some time to check out the bookshelves!

### *Mark your calendars:*

Oct 11 Movie night 7:00 PM  
Oct 12 Craft circle 10:00 AM  
Oct 12 United Women of Faith 12:00 PM  
Oct 13 Homecoming 10:00 AM, lunch following worship service  
Oct 31 Trunk or Treat and Blessing of the Animals 5:30-7:00 PM  
Nov 8 Pancake & Sausage Dinner sponsored by UMM 6:00 PM  
Nov 8 Movie night 7:00 PM



### *Trunk or Treat*

This year we will have our annual trunk or treat on Halloween (due to state fair traffic the prior weekend.) New this year, we are adding a "Blessing of the Animals."

Thanks to Pastor William for agreeing to to take care of the blessing part! **We need YOUR help for the trunk or treat part!**

Please plan to decorate your car and pass out treats to the children on October 31, 5:30-7:00 PM. What a fun way to connect with our neighbors!

Contact Sharron Gibson for questions.



### *Happy October birthday to:*

4 Budd Batts  
6 Christa Crowder  
7 Shannon Fisher  
10 Phyllis Danskin  
17 Kristen Anne Lowsky  
18 Vincent Guilbaud  
19 Danny Poole  
22 Stephen Unartel  
23 Kelly Burleson  
25 Megan Chin  
26 Denise Land  
26 Lynne Price  
27 Yemi Adebiyi  
27 Richard Gradle, Jr.  
30 Becky Rogers  
31 Dot Avery  
31 Bruce Smith





# Trunk or Treat and Blessing of the Animals

Westover United Methodist Church  
300 Powell Dr Raleigh



**October 31**  
**5:30-7:00 PM**



**Treats and  
games for  
children!**

**Treats and  
blessing for  
pets!**

