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# Messenger

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## The Bible: God's Eternal, Timeless Truth

When I'm sorting things on my desk, I usually try to divide them out into one of three piles: Keep it. Throw it away. Or, hold on to it a little while longer, then get rid of it. I'll confess I'm not as good at putting things in that second pile as I should, but when I do, it really helps clear up a lot of my desk. It's a good sorting strategy for me.

It's why I find it fascinating that one of the lead pastors in our United Methodist Church looks at the Bible just about that same way. Adam Hamilton is the pastor of the Church of the Resurrection, one of our largest churches. He is also a leader among the Centrists, the group that holds the theological middle ground between Traditionalists and Progressives. He wrote a book once called *Making Sense of the Bible*, in which he suggested we sort every Bible passage into one of three "buckets."

- 1) **Scriptures that express God's heart, character, and timeless will for us as people.** He'd put things like "Love your neighbor as yourself" and "Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you" in this bucket.
- 2) **Scriptures that expressed God's will at a particular time, but are no longer binding.** He'd put things like circumcision, animal sacrifices, and prohibitions against eating pork here.
- 3) **Scriptures that never fully expressed the heart, character, or will of God at any time.** Here he'd put things like when God says to stone someone to death or for Israel to kill every person in a Canaanite village or even prohibitions against same-sex relationships.

It's a fascinating approach to Scripture. I'll be honest, I really like Bucket #1: God's eternal, timeless truth for us. I'm less thrilled with Buckets #2 and #3. It just raises all sorts of questions for me:

Who gets to decide what goes in each bucket? Our UMC General Conference? The Council of Bishops? A group of seminary professors? Or do we each get to decide which Bible verse goes into what bucket?

So, what if you put "Keep the Sabbath holy" in Bucket #1, I put it in Bucket #2, and your friend puts it in Bucket #3? How do you handle that? Is God's truth subjective and in the eye of the beholder? It's true for you, but not for me? And what's to keep me from moving something from Bucket #1 to Bucket #2 over time? The slippery slope. Today it's God's timeless truth, tomorrow it's limited to the past, and in five years I conclude it was never God's will at all. How do you handle that?

No, the more I think about it, we'd be better off sticking with the Church's original understanding of Scripture: **It's all Bucket #1. It's all God's eternal, timeless truth.** God always meant what He said. Some things, like circumcision, may have been fulfilled in Jesus on the Cross, but it was always God's truth for us. I may not always understand what God said; sometimes I don't even really like it, but it's still God's revealed will for us. (Cont.)



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2**

- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 9:50 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
- 11:00 a.m. Live Stream Worship
- 6:00 p.m. Youth
- 6:00 p.m. Bro. Lauren's Bible Study

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 3**

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5**

- 4:30 p.m. Ladies' Handbell Choir
- 5:15 p.m. W.O.W. Wednesday Children's Bible study
- 6:30 p.m. Charge Conference
- 6:00 p.m. Snack Supper
- 6:00 p.m. Youth

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8**

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market



- 2. Sallie Pender
- 4. Wanda Woodard  
Mike Hughes
- 5. Chip Heidel
- 6. Landon Russell
- 7. Kallie Ketchum
- 8. Carmen Thompson

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- 2. Mr. & Mrs. J. T. Ketchum, III
- 6. Mr. & Mrs. Matt King

(Cont. from pg. 1)

Turns out, sorting piles work really well for clearing my desk, less so for interpreting the Bible. Question: How many other United Methodist pastors read the Bible like Adam Hamilton does? Hmm, I think we may have found where our problem in the UMC got started.

*Brother Lauren*

**CHARGE CONFERENCE**

Our annual Charge Conference will be Wednesday, October 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Dr. Steven Cook, our District Superintendent, will be presiding.



**Operation Christmas Child**

It's time to fill your Christmas Shoeboxes for the waiting children of the world. There are foldable boxes outside the church office, as well as boy/girl slips and large rubber bands to put around completed boxes. Collection date is November 14, 2022.



Our church, along with other churches in our community, are partnering with Martha Coker Green Houses in Yazoo City, "Adopt A House" program.

We have chosen the Luse House as our own project. We have committed to provide something special for this house as often as we wish, at least once a month. We can have parties; play games such as bingo, trivia, puzzle games, etc.; visit; provide music and sing with the residents; and any other activities that you would like.

If you or any group such as Sunday School classes would like to participate by volunteering your time or resources, please contact Rosemary Knox at the church office, at 662-746-7648.

# Children's Page

Last Sunday we finished our September series, *Escaping Egypt*. During the month of October, we will begin a new series, *God Delivers Us*. Our first lesson is called "Celebrate." In this lesson we will talk about how the Israelites were finally free from Pharaoh. This lesson will also take us through the parting of the Red Sea.

## HISKIDZ W.O.W. Wednesday



W.O.W. Wednesday is our mid-week Bible Study for K - 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Along with Bible Study, we will have snack supper at 6:00 p.m. We will have many fun games and activities planned for this year. Invite a friend and get ready for our first fun Bible Study about *BIBLE HEROES*. For the first 5-6 weeks, we will be "unmasking the true hero behind well-known Bible characters." Last week we learned about Hannah-The Praying Mother. Next week we will talk about - Boy Wonder.



## Sunday School

The month of October continues with the series on Moses' faith and leadership and how God used him to achieve what appears to be impossible. Moses doubted himself and felt he was not capable or even feared being used by God. However, God had a plan from the beginning, and He had specifically chosen Moses. God has a plan for each of us, and it is important that we seek Him and His plans for our lives.

## Youth Bible Study and Small Group

The youth will continue to meet every Sunday night in the Youth Basement at 6:00 p.m. Currently our Bible Study for Sunday nights is a series on the book of James. This week we move to lesson 6 in the series, *Practicing Presence*. God is always there for us, we just need to seek Him.

Wednesday Night Youth Group will meet every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. with snack supper in the Fellowship Hall followed by Bible Study in the Youth Basement. Our topics on Wednesday night will vary but will focus more on everyday life experiences, life application, and testimonies.



- \*Charge Conference will be October 5, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
- \*Exploratory meeting about disaffiliation with David Stotts, will be Tuesday, October 25, at 6 pm.
- \*2023 budget proposals due by October 31, 2022.

## Sunday, October 2, 2022

Greeters	Diane Vaughan/Ed & Linda McDonald
Scripture	Matthew 7:13-14
Sermon	<b>“The Narrow Gate”</b>
Flowers	Nathan and Emily Burton

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

### OCTOBER

<b>2. 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b>	<b>Matthew 21:33-46</b>
3. Christ the cornerstone	1 Peter 2:4-10
4. God reconciles us through Christ	2 Corinthians 5:17-21
5. Keeping the commandments	Deuteronomy 6:10-25
6. The golden calf	Exodus 32:1-14
7. God’s favor for the people	Psalms 106:1-6, 19-23
8. Rejoice in the Lord always	Philippians 4:1-9