



C e n t r a l

United Methodist Church

The Messenger

Joseph Easley, Senior Pastor
300 Mary Street
Evansville, Indiana 47710-1292

September 2009

SOME PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATIONS

In my August 23 sermon, “Our Guide: The Bible, Interpreted Through Jesus,” I spoke about the primacy of the Bible in forming our theology. Scripture along with tradition, experience and reason guide our understanding of God. I ended with briefly listing some principles for interpreting the Bible. These are not complete, and certainly not infallible, but I thought they might be worth reiterating here:

Jesus Christ is the Word Incarnate and the lens through which we interpret the rest of the Bible.

Jesus is the fullest expression of God. Scripture witnesses to Him and is understood through Him.

Scripture is written by human witnesses, who retain their human limits.

The writers of the Bible were inspired by God but not “taken over by God” and remained human. The message is transmitted through their human perspective and personality. God can and does work through imperfect humans.

The subject is Divine; the words are human, so we can understand.

God is the subject of the Bible and its inspiration, but it is written in human words. The content has been judged faithful and true but is never complete. It often uses metaphor and symbolic language to convey what is beyond what earthly tongues can fully express. We must recognize the frequently figurative nature of words written so we can know the One-Who-Is, God who is not fully comprehensible by human minds.

Understand the original setting and meaning.

Bible writers each lived in a particular context, out of which they wrote and to which they spoke. Each wrote in a particular time, culture and language—all reflected in the writing—and each spoke God’s word to that setting. First understanding the author’s context and the passage’s original purpose and meaning will help us discern God’s continuing word for us in our time and culture. Study; then ask: “What message is God conveying to us in this passage?”

Seek the universal principles that arise out of the specifics of a passage.

The culture in first-century Corinth required decent women to wear a veil. Only prostitutes appeared in public without one. Some women who became Christians knew that they were now free from earthly rule and wanted to throw off the veil, but Paul counseled them to remain veiled, lest others would think them immodest. The specific practice (Christian women wearing a veil in first-century

Corinth) is no longer required in our culture, but the general principle of modesty is still relevant to women and men!

Recognize the form of literature. The 66 books of the Bible represent Law, Prophecy, Proverbs and many other types of literature. Understanding the form of writing helps us comprehend its meaning. The Gospels are not news reports or biographies, but proclamations of good news through which people are transformed. The New Testament epistles were letters to counsel early Christian and address their issues. Acts, like Samuel and Kings in the Old Testament, is sacred history and is not intended to be a complete or unbiased account of events, but rather to show how God was active in the events. The Psalms are worship songs and honest prayers that teach us how to address God ourselves, but we should not assume that God approved of, nor answered, every petition of the Psalmist, anymore than God does of ours. In sorrow and anger we might want the babies of our enemies killed, like we have suffered (Psalm 137:9); God can hear that kind of prayer and comfort us but will not act like we feel.

It is the Bible as a whole that reveals the Word and Work of God, so Scripture best interprets Scripture.

If a verse or passage doesn’t make sense, don’t get hung up or focus narrowly on it. Individual passages must be interpreted in light of whole scripture. Parts of the Bible can be difficult to comprehend and interpret, unless we hear them in the larger contexts of the chapter and surrounding chapters, the book as a whole and the complete Bible.

Interpretation of Scripture is done best in community.

Working alone we can miss or distort a passage’s meaning. Studying with others helps us get closer to the message God has for us. We can also learn from earlier Christian writers and present scholars, but not one of them has the total answer either.

God does not leave us on our own in this. As we pray, the Holy Spirit guides our understanding. God loves us, wants a relationship with us and desires to reveal God’s self to us.

Your Pastor,

IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH

- Sept. 6 Labor Sunday Communion
3 Simple Rules Series: Practicing “Do No Harm”
Scriptures: Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18
Sermon: “First, Do No Harm”
- Sept. 13 3 Simple Rules Series: Understanding “Do Good”
Scriptures: Luke 6:27-36
Sermon: “The Golden Measure of Doing Good”
- Sept. 20 3 Simple Rules Series: Practicing “Do Good”
Scriptures: Isaiah 58:1-9; Matthew 7:12
Sermon: “Please God: Be a ‘Do-Gooder””
- Sept. 27 3 Simple Rules Series: Understanding “Stay in Love with God”
Scriptures: Deuteronomy 6:1-9
Sermon:
“Keeping the Heart of the Matter at Hand”

LIVING BY A PROVEN FORMULA: “3 SIMPLE RULES” FOCUS BEGUN

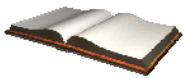
One of the great, almost-forgotten treasures of practical Christianity was developed by Methodist leader John Wesley 270 years ago. A small group of Christians asked for his advice for a discipline to help them grow in Christian life. He gave them an answer that later became the “The General Rules” for Methodists. These principles were re-designated as Three Simple Rules in a marvelous little book of that title by retired UM Bishop Reuben Job. They are truly simple and helpful in guiding us as followers of Jesus: 1) Do no harm; 2) Do good; and 3) Stay in love with God. Living them out is a lifetime challenge.

We are doing an all-church focus on these 3 Simple Rules, which began August 30 and continues through October 4. We will take two weeks with each rule, to understand its biblical basis and meaning and then explore its application in our lives. Worship and Rev. Easley’s sermons are focusing on these. The series will appropriately conclude with communion on October 4, World Communion Sunday.

Rev. Easley is leading a Wednesday night study on the adult material at 6:15 to 7:30 p.m. in the Library. You are welcome to join this at the group’s second session, September 2. Most adult Sunday School classes are using the same material. Children’s classes are using a version of the study for their age, as is the Youth Group. Books for the adult study are still available for \$6 and of Job’s original short book for personal reading and reflection at \$5—or \$10 for the pair.

LITERARY LADIES

The next meeting of the Literary Ladies will be on September 15 at 11:15 a.m. We will meet at the Kennel Club on Kratzville Road.



Bring your favorite books to talk about and any books you wish to share. **Doris**

Kaltofen is our hostess so please plan to pay **Doris** for lunch. If you have questions, please call **Nancy** in the church office.

ENJOY SINGING OR RINGING? CHOIR REHEARSALS RESUME SEPT. 9

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord,” says one of our favorite Psalms, and indeed the joy of music not only praises God but also lifts the spirit of the one making the joyful noise and of the fellow worshippers. Our Chancel Choir and



Hand Bell Choir do enrich our worship and provide a meaningful way for their members to use their gifts in thanksgiving. Chancel Choir rehearsal begins on Wednesday, September 2, at 6:15 p.m. and Hand Bells begin September 9 at 7:30 p.m. New singers and ringers are invited to both.

Again, if you're interested but can't make this time, let **Letta** know of your interest. The time may be adjusted if necessary.

Being a member of one of these organizations is a way to serve God, improve your skills and be a blessing to others.

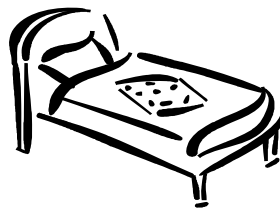
ALL CHURCH BIRTHDAY PARTY

The church-wide Birthday Party is Sunday, September 13 at 5:30 p.m. The entire church is invited to attend this fun-filled event as we feast on sweets, challenge one another in random trivia, and share in wonderful fellowship. Dessert (birthday cake, of course), drinks, barbeque and the “fixin’s” will be provided. Please bring a salad, vegetable, or side dish to share. Child care will be provided. Please sign up through the bulletin insert or call the church office.



SWEET SLEEP RECAP

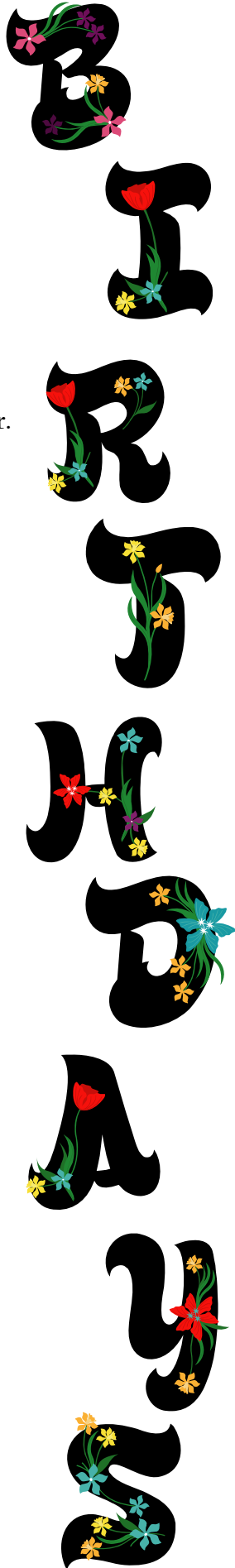
All I can say is thank you, thank you, thank you. I have had the privilege through the pulpit and the Sunday School hour to share of my journey in Uganda this past July, but I will never be able to fully encompass my experience in words. We had the privilege to serve at two orphanages, where we were able to provide 140 beds at Caring Heart Orphanage and 102 beds at Africa Greater Life Orphanage. It was an honor to get to know these beloved children and be inspired by their gratitude and their love for the Lord. It is my hope and dream to travel back to Kampala again next summer, and I would love for others from Central to join me on this adventure. If you would like more information about Sweet Sleep, or about the possibility of joining a team next summer please talk to me any time.



Thanks once again,
Mike Warneke.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Tyler White
- 2 Valerie Kane
- Jerold Moore
- 3 Marian Clem
- Matthew Davis
- Cole Ferris
- Robert Francis
- Ryan Frazier
- Charlotte Robinson
- 4 Kitty Maes
- 5 Olivia Baird
- Ed Higgs
- Helen Lewis
- 6 John Schnackenburg, Sr.
- Matthew Slaubaugh
- 7 Matthew Baird
- Rebecca Morgan
- Elsie Phillips
- Michael Tribble
- 8 Frank Schwitz
- Betty Smith
- 9 Nancy Lehmann
- Jesse Merritt, Jr.
- 10 Regina Redd
- 11 Morgan Ayers
- Grant Dugan
- 12 Marian Gant
- Rosemary Jarrett
- 14 Bessie Patterson
- Auston Pugh
- David Romain
- Shane Wilson
- Bill Wright
- 15 Jennifer Moore
- Barbara Vaughan
- 16 Dustin Aki
- Beverly Ellerbruck
- 17 Richard Crow
- Janet Duncan
- Betty Myers
- 18 Journey Aki
- Ashlee Barr
- 19 Dorothy Frazier
- Tad Mosley
- Darlene Rycroft
- 20 Jack Wambach
- Cooper Willis
- 21 Sylvia Collins
- 25 Dekajuan Halbig
- 26 Austin Halbig
- 27 Nicholas Wilson
- 28 Paula Houghton
- 30 Amelia Guard
- James Kluesner
- Thomas Mirando



Hellstrom (425-1375) for more details.

FIRST SUNDAY COLLECTION FOR PANTRY

For this month's "First-Sunday Pantry Collection" the item is "Can." On September 6, you are invited to bring any food item in a can for distribution at our pantry. This new project of United Methodist Women in support of one of our own missions, started in August with "Box." The first Sunday was chosen, as it might be easier to remember, since it is right after you get the Messenger and usually a Communion Sunday, so think "Jesus shares food with us, so we share with others." However, if you forget, you can bring your gift on a later Sunday. "Paper" (any paper goods) will be the October item, and "Toiletries" for November. In December we will start back through the alphabet: "B, C, P and T."

LIFE ON THE COLOR LINE DISCUSSION - SEPTEMBER 20



This fall's One Book One Community program sponsored by the Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, SW IN Chamber of Commerce and many other groups features Life on the Color Line: The True Story of a White Boy Who Discovered He Was Black, a memoir of growing up in Muncie, IN 1954-1963. Williams, now a university president, overcame the challenges of prejudice—as our nation largely has—but his story has much to teach us. **Rev. Easley** found it well-written, fascinating, challenging and inspiring. You are invited to get a copy of the book, read it and participate in a discussion of it at Central at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 20 in the Nolte Meeting Room in the Family Life Center. (Be aware the book's language is offensive; it is profane but authentic to the situation.) Various branches of the library are also offering discussion on it at a variety of September dates and time; see the flyer on the bulletin board for details. You may want to be at Bosse High School at 7:00 p.m. on October 1, when the author Gregory Williams will be in town to speak.

ENDOWMENT PRESENTATIONS SEPTEMBER 13

The Governing Board for the Endowment Fund of Central United Methodist Church, Inc. met August 20 and had the privilege of deciding how to disperse over \$44,000 in its annual earnings, because of the generosity of members and friends of Central to donate in memory or honor of another person, or who left a bequest to the church. The presentations of checks, half to the Trustees and half to various local missions in the church and community, will be made at the 10:30 service on September 13.

JOIN CENTRAL'S TEAM KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE



September 4 is the deadline for registering to be on Central's team for this year's **Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure**, to be held in **downtown Evansville** on **Saturday, September 19** (5K run/walk begins at 9 a.m.). Online registrations are encouraged, and it is fairly simple to sign up for the Central UMC team by logging onto www.komenevansville.org. Contact Central's team captain, **Ruth Randall** (randall5356@insightbb.com or 425-0326), if you have questions or prefer a paper registration form. The team registration fee is \$25.00 (ages 12 and under \$15). If you cannot participate, you can still support the fight against breast cancer with a

SALVATION ARMY BELL-RINGERS



The Salvation Army is seeking church volunteers to be bell ringers during the Christmas season this year (November 20 through December 24). A new associate pastor of the local Salvation Army recently met with **Pastor Joe**. She's getting acquainted in Evansville to discuss this and said they give volunteers the first choice of times and places to ring. This could be an individual activity or the project of a Sunday School class or other group in the church. Call the church office, if you or your group would be interested in this or call Lieutenant Amanda

YOUNG ADULT SMALL GROUP UPDATE

A men's and women's young adult small group study will continue to meet during the month of September. We will be meeting at the church on September 11 and 25 from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. We will begin each meeting by sharing a meal at 5:30 p.m. and breaking up into small groups at 6:00 p.m. Childcare will be provided here at the church at the cost of \$2 per child. We will be discussing the book, **The Rest of God**, by Mark Buchanan, as we look at inserting more rest in our lives and attempting to honor a true Sabbath. Please talk to **Mike Warneke** if you would like more information on upcoming studies.

FAMILY LIFE CENTER RENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Family Life Center is available to your family, group or office for rental. Let the Family Life Center host your next office party, or a family sports night. Please call the church office for availability in renting the facility this Fall.

CENTRAL WEBSITE TRAINING LUNCHEONS

We are getting ever closer to adding the finishing touches of our new Central UMC website. It is our hope that this new website would not only be a tool for our online outreach, but also a blessing to our members, as we make accessing Central resources much easier for everyone. The Outreach Team will be offering two separate luncheons on Sunday, September 27 at 11:45 a.m. and a date to be decided in October, to offer training to our members on how to navigate the new website, and utilize all that it has to offer. Please call the church office or speak to **Mike Warneke** on upcoming Sundays to reserve a spot at one of the luncheons.

WELCOME to Brodie Grant Duncan who was born to Amy and Jeff Duncan on July 23. He was born in Texas and was welcomed home by his brother Nathan. His Indiana family is Grandpa **Pat** and Grandma **Janet Duncan** and Uncle **Doug**, Aunt **Krystal** and cousin **Kylee**...and to **Cameron Ryan Ferris** who was born to **Jeff and Cathy Ferris** on August 17 and weighed 8 lbs and 8 oz. and was 20 ½ inches long. He was welcomed home by his brothers Cole and Conner.



Bob and Linda Romain are his grandparents and **Betty Romain** is his great-grandmother.



WELCOME to Elaine Violet Barron who was born to Amy and Josh Barron on July 24 at 7 lbs and 19 inches long. She was welcomed home by her sister, Caroline. Her family is Grandpa **Ron** and Grandma **Connie Romain** and **Betty Romain** is his great-grandmother.

OUR SYMPATHY is extended to **Art O'Bryan** and family on the death, July 29, of his brother Donald....to **Rich Crow** and his family on the death, July 29, of his father, Harvey....and to **Lillian Alderson** and family on the death of her daughter, Karen Stevenson, who died Wednesday August 6, in Wisconsin. A memorial service was held in Evansville.

Thanks!

Lillian Alderson and family would like to thank Central's members and friends for the prayers, phone calls and cards in memory of Lillian's daughter, Karen.

SENIOR CITIZENS LUNCHEON

There will be a Senior Citizens Luncheon Thursday, September 17, 2009 at 12 noon in the Garden Room. Please bring a covered dish. Lauren Preskye, Wesselmans Nature Center, will be the guest speaker. Please call **Velma Berry** with any questions, 477-5871.



APPLE FESTIVAL

Weekday Christian Education's 2009 Apple Festival is Saturday, September 19 at Methodist Temple 2109 Lincoln Avenue from 3:00-7:00 p.m. They are having pork chop and pulled pork barbecue dinners this year along with the usual: mums, baked goods and candies, used books, fall décor and many more items.



LIFESAVERS' SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WALK

The tri-state area has experienced a higher than average suicide rate for several years. The Southwestern Indiana Suicide Prevention Coalition is sponsoring the 4th Annual Lifesavers Suicide Awareness and Prevention Walk on Saturday, September 12 at 9:15 a.m. at the Evansville State Hospital. Proceeds from the walk will assist in offering training in suicide prevention to tri-state residents. For more information, please contact Janie Chappell at 812-471-4521, 800-947-6789 or janie_chappell@deaconess.com.

"CONCERT IN THE PARK" SEPTEMBER 19




All are invited to a free concert in Garvin Park 2:00-4:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 19. This will feature the River City Quartet, a popular Southern Gospel group from Henderson, KY. It will be at the Garvin Park Bandstand. It is recommended you bring lawn chairs. For further information contact the concert coordinator, Jerry Lawrence at 909-3555 or jdllawrence@insightbb.com.

PRAY FOR CLUSTER CONGREGATIONS



When you pray for Central, remember to pray for the other churches in our Center City Cluster: Fairlawn UMC, St. John's UMC, St. Lucas UCC and Trinity UMC.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
<h1>September 2009</h1>			<p align="center">Services Every Sunday 8:30 a.m. Contemporary Service 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Traditional Service</p>				
		<p>1</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 6:15 Staff-Parish Mtg. - Lib 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>2</p> <p>11:00 Wednesday Friends - Trinity Room 5:30 Youth - Youth Room 6:15 <u>3 Simple Rules</u> Study - Library 6:15 Choir</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 6:00 Worship Team - Library</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Staff Dress Down Day</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>Communion</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 2:00 Small Accountability Group - Library 3:30 Tutor 5:15 Shalom Mtg. - Trinity 6:00 Trustees Mtg. - Ch-O 6:30 Mission Team - Library 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>9</p> <p>1:00 Mary/Martha Circle -- Nolte Room 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth - Youth Room 6:15 <u>3 Simple Rules</u> Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:30 JACC Mtg. - Library 9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 7:00 Cluster Mtg. at Fairlawn</p>	<p>11</p> <p>5:30 Young Adult Small Group - Trinity Room</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library 9:00 Bridal Shower - Garden Room</p>	
<p>13</p> <p>5:30 Church-Wide Birthday Dinner - FLC</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 4:30 Outreach Team - Trinity 6:00 Church Council - Trinity 7:30 Long Range Financial Task Force - Ch-O</p>	<p>15</p> <p>9:00 Full Staff Meeting 3:30 Tutor 5:45 Nurture - Church Office 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:00 Executive UMW - Library 11:00 Wednesday Friends - Trinity Room 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth - Youth Room 6:15 <u>3 Simple Rules</u> Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 12:00 Senior Citizens Dinner- Garden Rm 3:00 Child Care Team - Lib 3:30 Tutor</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12:00 MESSENGER DEADLINE</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8:00 Komen Walk 12:00 N A Meeting - Library</p>	
<p>20</p> <p>1:00 <u>Life On the Color Line</u> -- Nolte Room</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 7:00 Bea Conder Circle Hostess - Jo Wilson</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 3:30 Tutor 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>23</p> <p>4:00 Power 5:30 Youth - Youth Room 6:15 <u>3 Simple Rules</u> Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 3:30 Tutor 5:15 Flood of Justice - Church Office</p>	<p>25</p> <p>5:30 Young Adult Small Group - Trinity Room</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library 3:00 Baker Baby Shower - Garden Room</p>	
<p>27</p> <p>5:00 Shalom Neighborhood Dinner - FLC</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:30 Rack Shack 6:00 CAJE Team Mtg. - Library</p>	<p>29</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 3:30 Tutor 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>30</p> <p>4:00 Power 5:30 Youth - Youth Room 6:15 <u>3 Simple Rules</u> Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir</p>				