



# Weekly Booster

## CHURCH STAFF

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### Choir Director

Sue Jones

### Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

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Alan Hutchison,

Jeff Hiser

### Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

### Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

### Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Jodi Anderzhon,

Pastor David



## Atonement: How the Impossible Was Made Possible

“Atonement” is one of those religious words that rarely leaves the halls of seminaries and makes its way out into the wider world. For example, if I said to one of my friends with whom I had recently had a disagreement: “I’d like to invite you over to watch the game together this weekend as a step toward atonement,” he would probably respond with, “A step toward what?”

My friend’s unfamiliarity with the term would not be surprising. A Google Ngram search reveals that the word has been steadily declining in popular usage since its peak in 1811. Even regular Bible readers might be unfamiliar with the term because 93 of its 107 occurrences in the NIV appear in the books of Exodus (17), Leviticus (56), Numbers (18), and Deuteronomy (2)—not the first books Christians turn to for their daily devotions.

Clearly “atonement” needs to get out more. It needs to be more widely known because it lies at the very heart of the Christian faith. So, let’s take a closer look at this critically important word.

### What is Atonement?

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines atonement as:

*Continued page 2.*

Question and Answer –

**Q: Which nursery song would Jesus have heard the most?**

**A: Mary Had a Little Lamb!**

**Reminders****August 19<sup>th</sup>**

Men's Bible Study – 8:00 a.m.

**August 20<sup>th</sup>**

Methodist Men's Breakfast  
8:00 a.m. – Fellowship Hall  
\*\*Blessing of the Backpacks

**August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.

**August 24<sup>th</sup>**

T.O.P.S. – 5:30 p.m.

**September 10<sup>th</sup>**

Sunday School Begins  
PK-6<sup>th</sup> & Jr/Sr High

\*\*Worship Assistants are needed  
for September

\*\* Fellowship Volunteers needed  
sign-up in Fellowship Hall



**Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday  
to Deliver Meals  
Sign-Up Sheet is on the  
Welcome Center Counter**

**Atonement - Continued from page 1.**

1. The condition of being *at one* with others; unity of feeling, harmony, concord, agreement.
2. The action of setting at one, or condition of being set at one, after discord or strife: a. Restoration of friendly relations between persons who have been at variance; reconciliation. b. The settling of *differences*, staunching of strife; appeasement.
3. *spec. in Theol.* Reconciliation or restoration of friendly relations between God and sinners.

The note to Exodus 25:17 in the *NIV Study Bible* adds a crucial detail in its definition of atonement as “the divine act of grace whereby God draws to himself those who were once alienated from him *through a blood sacrifice*” (italics added).

**Why Is Atonement Necessary?**

What the definitions for atonement presume, therefore, is the existence of some preceding rupture in the relationship between the parties involved. It is disharmony, discord, strife, or alienation that atonement is meant to resolve. In the case of human being's relationship with God, the rupture is old and deep. It is caused by our sin.

Our estrangement from God began with Adam and Eve's willful sin against him in choosing to listen to the serpent rather than God. They ate a malignant poison that found its way into every area of our beings. Now sin is part of our human nature. It was not originally so but is now a continual and pervasive presence that corrupts that nature. As a result, every human being has sinned and continues to sin.

No one hammers this point home more effectively than the apostle Paul. Quoting many Old Testament passages, he lays down a blistering indictment of human sinfulness:

There is no one righteous, not even one;  
there is no one who understands;  
there is no one who seeks God.

**Continued page 5**

Question and Answer

*Q: Why did Adam & Eve do math every day?*

*A: They were told to be fruitful and multiply.*

**Volunteers Needed**



**LAST PERSON LEAVING**  
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS  
AND LOCK DOORS

First United Methodist Church  
**Please wear your name tag on Sunday mornings**



**Church Office Hours**

**\*\* Children & Jr.-Sr. High Sunday School finished until September 2023**

**Monday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00

**Tuesday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00

**Wednesday**  
**CLOSED**

**Thursday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00

**Friday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00

**\*\*NO Chancel Choir Until Fall** – Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m. Sunday 8:30 a.m.

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.

**BIBLE Quiz**

According to Micah, who gives judgment or a bribe?

- a) its priests
- b) its prophets
- c) its heads
- d) its magicians

How many people went with Elimelech to the country of Moab?

- a) 2
- b) 3
- c) 7
- d) 12

Which son of Jacob was referred to as a lion?

- a) Reuben
- b) Levi
- c) Judah
- d) Simeon

*Check page 4 for answers from the previous week.*



- 20<sup>th</sup> – Jamie Burdorf
- 23<sup>rd</sup> – LeRoy Whitehill, Derek & Stephanie Howard
- 24<sup>th</sup> – Craig & Kathy Harris
- 26<sup>th</sup> – Karen Foster

**\*\*See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to [office@shen.church](mailto:office@shen.church)**

**Shenandoah First United  
Methodist Church**

200 Church St.  
Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail  
[office@shen.church](mailto:office@shen.church)

Same address – a new look at  
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,  
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our Youtube  
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

**\*Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

**Call to Worship**

**Leader: What joy we feel when we are called together to  
celebrate God's love?**

**People: God's love flows through our lives!**

**L: This is what it means to be the body of Christ!**

**P: this is what it means to be faithful witnesses to God.**

**L: Let us rejoice on this day!**

**P: Lord, we thank you for the blessing you pour on us.**

**“Unexpected faith”**

**Gospel Reading: Matthew 15:21-28**

**Songs**

- All Hail the Power of Jesus #154**
- Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone) #3104**
- Where He Leads Me #338**
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness #140**

**Last Week's Attendance**

- In-Person Worship – 59**
- On-Line Worship – 13**

**Our Mission:**

**“Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ's Love.”**

**Our Vision:**

**“We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a  
difference in our world.”**

**Answers for August 13<sup>th</sup> are b) King of kings d) Ezekiel b) 120 years  
Quiz s hints – Q1) Micah Q2) Ruth Q3) Genesis**

### Atonement - Continued from page 2.

All have turned away,  
they have together become worthless;  
there is no one who does good,  
not even one. (Romans 3:10–12)

The words “no one” (4x), “not even one” (2x), “all,” and “together” leave the universality of the problem in no doubt. The sin of every single person has alienated them from God. This “pre-existing condition” is what makes atonement necessary if there is to be any restored relationship with God.

### Where Can Atonement Come From?

We sin-infected human beings, however, cannot bring about atonement ourselves.

We understand from our everyday lives that the guilty party is usually responsible for atoning for their offense. For example, if I damage my relationship with my wife by forgetting our anniversary (which I have never done btw!), perhaps flowers and a nice dinner out could atone for my forgetfulness. Things are not so easily dealt with in our broken relationship with God, however. Our relationship with God is broken because of our rebellion against him (aka sin).

So how can we, who continue to rebel against God in our very nature, atone for our rebellion? We cannot atone for an offense that we continue to commit. We seem to be locked in a fatal feedback loop. Clearly, we need someone else to intervene and do what we cannot. If God wants a restored relationship with us (and what right do we have to expect that he would?), he will have to provide a way for it to happen.

### Atonement in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, God provided the sacrificial system as a way for sinful human beings to restore their relationship with him. Because “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (Hebrews 9:22), for atonement to be realized, something would have to die.

Shedding the blood of the sacrifices effectively served as a substitute for shedding human blood and was the divinely prescribed way for Israel’s sin to be atoned for. This need to cleanse Israel from its sin was preeminently addressed by the annual Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)—the one day of the year in which the high priest entered the most sacred room of the temple to sprinkle sacrificial blood on and in front of the atonement cover of the ark. The ark represented the invisible presence of God himself and was the focal point of this annual atonement rite.

But the fact that the high priest had to repeat this atonement rite year after year indicated its imperfect and forward-looking nature. Moreover, the blood of animals does not equate to the blood of human beings. The author of Hebrews describes the inadequacy and provisional character of the Old Testament sacrificial system for achieving real and lasting atonement:

It [i.e., the Old Testament provision for atonement] can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once and for all and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats [i.e., the animals sacrificed on the Day of Atonement] to take away sins. (Hebrews 10:1–4)

For atonement—the restoration of our relationship with God—to be achieved finally and completely, it would take a perfect priest offering a perfect sacrifice.

### **Atonement in the New Testament**

In amazing and incomprehensible grace, God provided both the perfect human being and the perfect sacrifice for imperfect human beings by sending his son, Jesus Christ. Because Jesus was sinless, unlike the previous high priests, he did not need to make atonement for himself. Moreover, the sacrifice he offered was not in any way provisional or inadequate. It was as perfect as he is because the sacrifice was him. The author of Hebrews explains:

Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that were only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself.... Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own.... But he has appeared once and for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. (Hebrews 9:24–26)

### **Atonement and the Gospel**

The gospel, or “good news,” is that Jesus’ sacrifice of himself on our behalf achieves atonement with God for all who by faith claim Jesus as their representative. It is an atonement that was (and only could be) achieved by the shedding of human blood, the blood of a perfect human being, Jesus Christ.

Only through Jesus is the impossible made possible. Believers’ union with Christ by faith is their claim that he is their high priest and that his perfect sacrifice is made on their behalf. The good news is that just as Adam’s sin brought death to humankind, Jesus’ atoning sacrifice brings life. In the words of the apostle Paul:

The gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! (Romans 5:15)

The fatal feedback loop is now broken. We are no longer helpless in our sinfulness. Through faith in Jesus Christ, our relationship with God is restored. We have atonement. Not only that, but God’s own Holy Spirit is at work within believers to conform them to the likeness of Christ (Romans 8:29) so that we experience more



and more the riches of that restored relationship with the author of life.

The author of Hebrews helps us make the connection between our atonement with God and our new lives in Christ:

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place [i.e., the very presence of God] by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the faith we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.... (Hebrews 10:19–24)

It is impossible to fully grasp the depth and multidimensional character of the atonement. No dictionary article, sermon, theological reflection, or blog post can ever hope to explain it in all its richness. Perhaps it is best to conclude, as Leon Morris does, that “however it is viewed, Christ has taken our place, doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. Our part is simply to respond in repentance, faith, and selfless living.”

*Adapted from the article by Michael Williams, professor of Old Testament at Calvin Theological Seminary and member of the NIV Committee on Bible Translation. HarperCollins Christian Publishing. All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, NIV Weekly Blog, August 14, 2023.*



## Food Pantry Needs for September

Peanut Butter & Jelly, Brownie, cake, cookie, & muffin mixes, spaghetti sauce & pasta (any kind), green beans, corn, peas, pineapple, Tuna & Chicken Helpers, microwave popcorn, Chicken Noodle soup, toothpaste, deodorant

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals with their food items home. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

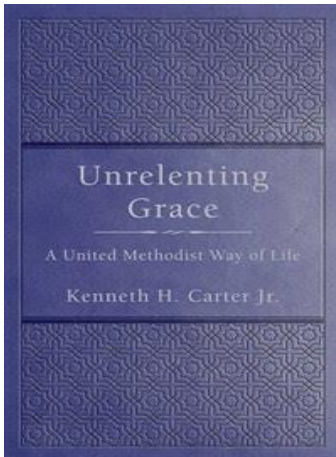
## Hispanic Center

The Hispanic Center needs backpacks for several students. Sue has a variety of ages that could use a backpack before school starts next week. If you would like to donate a backpack you can bring them the next two Sundays and put them in the front pew of the Welcome Center. Your donations are always helpful and greatly appreciated.





Join us on Sunday, August 20 for a Blessing of the Backpacks! This is a way for us to pray for and bless our students and educators in the new school year. If you are going to be a student, teacher, staff, or administrator, bring your backpacks, messenger bags, briefcases, tote bags, purses, fanny packs, and any other bags or packs you use.



### An Invitation from Bishop Kannetha J. Bigham-Tsai

Tuesday's at 7 pm on Zoom: Nov. 28, Dec. 5, Dec. 12 and Dec. 19, 2023

Friends, in November, we will begin a virtual, conference-wide Advent Study of Bishop Ken Carter's new book, *Unrelenting Grace*. Bishop Carter calls grace the essence of a holy life, in which we recognize that God's loving presence in our lives is a gift. Being able to receive that gift and extend it to others "...stretches us, mystifies us, unravels us, and ultimately heals us," he writes.

For this season of Advent, I invite you to explore the unrelenting grace of God with friends and colleagues from around our conference. The study will help us remember who we are as United Methodists, and give us a sense of common belonging, shared identity, and unity. Maybe, it will even put us on a road to healing. The study will last for just four sessions and will be entirely online on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Central, beginning on November 28, then continuing on December 5, December 12, and 19.

We hope Advent in 2023 might be a season in which we embrace grace, seek holiness, and reconnect with one another, culminating in a conference-wide Epiphany worship service of commitment.

For registration information go to <https://www.iaumc.org/adventstudy> or speak with Pastor David. To order books through the church, let Pastor David know of your interest.





## Learning to Listen: Community Bias

As we continue our journey in learning to listen, I want to remind us that biases are neither good nor bad--they just are. Biases can lead toward healthy actions, or they can lead to unhealthy and even harmful actions. In learning to listen, we need to become aware of the biases in us so that we can better discern how they are operating in our own life and choose to avoid the harmful actions that biases can lead us to.



Our third bias is called Community Bias. As human beings, we are fundamentally social creatures that are dependent upon a community for survival and health. Communities can give us a sense of identity, meaning, purpose, and values. Communities can foster strength, goodness, camaraderie, compassion, and love. A bias towards community helps to strengthen that community and it helps to solidify who we are and to whom we belong.

But a Community Bias can make those outside of our community into "others," or "those people." The bias can even lead us to designate those that are outside our community as evil for no other reason than just being outside. Churches are often strong, tight-knit communities with many members holding strongly to a community bias. This can be helpful as it strengthens the community, but there is also the side of this bias that pushes those that are different than us away. If a person has a different socio-economic, racial, or family background they may be pushed out. If a person has differing beliefs, a community bias may trigger people to view the outsider as a threat.

If we take seriously the teachings of the New Testament, then we would see that the church is a community in which we do not see difference as a threat, but an opportunity to grow and encounter God. Being aware of our community bias allows us to be open to growing in compassion, to be more expansive in our conceptions of truth and beauty and gives us the opportunity to welcome Christ into our very midst.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor David B. Clark

**Mark your calendar!**

**CHILDREN'S**  
*Sunday School*

**Begins on Sunday, Sept. 10th!**

Hello!

The new year for Sunday School will begin on September 10th. We have some BIG changes for the preschool-sixth grade group that we are very excited about! Sunday

School for THAT AGE GROUP ONLY will be held during the church service. The children will leave the sanctuary after the children's message, and you will pick them up downstairs in the fellowship hall following the service. The only exception will be during communion week (the first Sunday of the month) when we will return upstairs.

We think this will be beneficial for both the kids and the parents/grandparents!

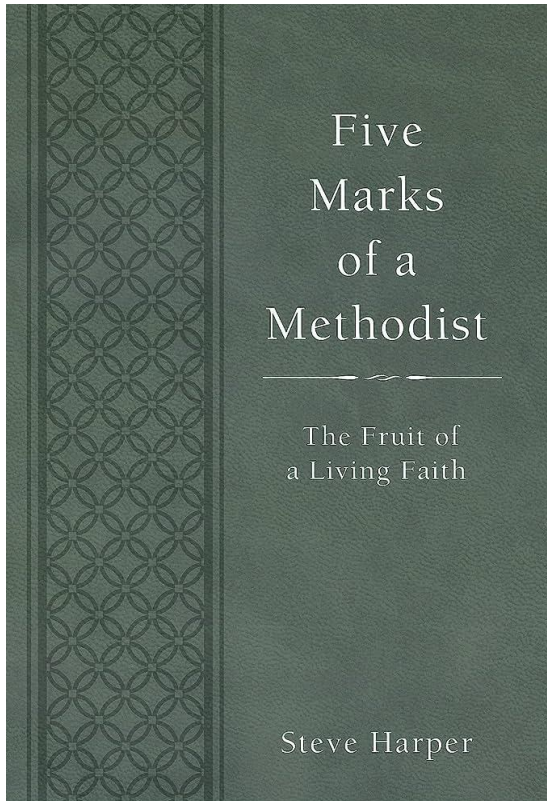
7th-12<sup>th</sup> grades will still meet from 10:30-11:30 AM.

Please let us know if you have any questions!

We look forward to seeing you! Sunday School

Teachers - Laura Bowen, Heather Weiss, Michelle Morelock, Jamie Burdorf, and

Dan and Deb Finlay



## **2023 Aldersgate District Second 6 Week District Wide Book Study**

**Join DS Melissa Drake for the Second 6 Week District Wide Book Study of the year!**

### ***Five Marks of A Methodist: The Fruit of a Living Faith***

Join DS Melissa Drake and the Aldersgate District as we reclaim the joy and passion of being disciples of Jesus Christ as United Methodists in the world today! Meet others around the district—lay and clergy—and grow in your own faith journey.

We are diving into the 5 Marks of A Methodist by Steve Harper, going deeper into those practices that confirm and help us grow in our identity as genuine and fruitful followers of Christ.

When: October 2<sup>nd</sup> – October 30<sup>th</sup> Monday Mornings, 10am

Where: Zoom from the comfort of your own home!

RSVP: Please [RSVP here \(https://bit.ly/3OHHjQ7\)](https://bit.ly/3OHHjQ7) or QR code below to receive the Zoom meeting and Amplify subscription materials.

Optional: In person: Fellowship and Wrap-up Party: November 6 – 11:30 am-1 pm

Book Cost: \$6.79

Participant Guide: \$5.99

