



The
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The newsletter of Soddy United Methodist Church
August 2016



Something has happened to our world. It seems as if we went to sleep one night and when we woke up in the morning everything had changed. All around us were new and different religious perspectives. Churches--once the focal point of every community--struggled to pay the bills, fill the buildings, and attract new people. The idea of absolute truth, of right and wrong, seemed to vanish. Chuck Smith Jr., author of *The End of the World...As We Know It*, says, "**Underneath the surface of our daily lives, tremendous movements have been taking place—shifts in thinking and in what philosophers call our worldview. The rapid pace of innovation, communication, and change has caused a "cultural earthquake," radiating tremors of confusion into every corner of society.**"

But what is the cause of this? Why did the church suddenly seem to become outdated? When did science fail us as the ultimate answer to all of humanity's problems?

We are not the first generation to experience upheaval as things change dramatically in the world around us. People faced similar anxiety and uncertainty in the late 1700s and 1800s with the advent of the Industrial Revolution. Before that, people faced the disjointed feeling of transitioning from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Throughout human history, cultures and worldview have changed significantly. This is usually brought about by new ways of thinking, new ideas or new technologies.

Think for a moment what a quantum change occurred in human society with the

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From Pastor Todd, continued

discovery of fire; the invention of the wheel; the realization that the world was not flat; the invention of the printing press and the automobile; the atomic bomb and the internet. Each of these changes (and many others) caused a complete restructuring of culture and society.

The current state of our world began with an intellectual movement in the 17th and 18th centuries known as 'The Enlightenment.' Also known as the Age of Reason, it celebrated human reason and knowledge over what was seen as "medieval superstition." Thinkers during the Enlightenment arrived at truth claims through the use of reason and the five senses. Religion was, by and large, rejected as a source of truth. At the same time, the notion of human rights replaced that of divine authority. As the Enlightenment took hold, several characteristics began to emerge:

- *Enlightenment thinking sought to replace faith in God with human reason.*
- *Science assumed the key position of influence and knowledge.*
- *The smallest unit in society became the individual--not the family, tribe or church.*

During this time Christianity was downplayed while science was exalted to the status of unquestionable truth. Rather than a biblical understanding of creation, stewardship, and God's sovereignty, Enlightenment thinking dismissed these concepts as outdated or inferior. In their place they used science, mathematics, philosophy and reason to explain the world and humanity's place in it. Another aspect of the Enlightenment was the belief that with all its rational, scientific understanding – and the importance of human reason – it would produce a perfect, planned, more compassionate world. If human beings simply applied their growing knowledge and technologies to the problems in the world (such as hunger, war, and disease) those things would cease to exist. The world would arrive at a golden time of perfection for everyone.

Of course, with the benefit of hindsight we know that the Enlightenment did not produce the utopian society it aspired to. The 20th century proved to be the final nail in the Enlightenment coffin. Two world wars, revolutions, newer and deadlier diseases, and increased poverty proved that human reason and ability had failed. While great advancements were made in multiple areas of society, the Enlightenment failed to live up to its promise of a substantially better world. By the middle of the 20th century, with the threat of nuclear annihilation looming across the globe, the Age of Reason breathed its last. In its place modernity gave way to what is referred to as **postmodernity**, which has been shaping and influencing our lives ever since.

The postmodern perspective of the world today is marked by particular views and understandings:

- (1) *Moral relativism is the dominant factor in individual decision making.*

In postmodernism there is no absolute, undeniable truth. Truth, ethics and morality are whatever the individual deems it to be at any given point.

- (2) *Pluralism is the dominant influencer on spirituality.* Pluralism is the presence of multiple belief systems. We are surrounded by a host of different religions in this age, more so than at any other time in our history. This places many religions in easy reach of postmodern people, and a common approach to faith and spirituality is to "pick and choose" from various religious beliefs.

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From Pastor Todd, continued

- (3) *Traditional authority is false and corrupt.* Postmodern people are extremely distrustful of institutions. They are wary of anyone in positions of authority who claim to have all the answers. Rather than institutions – which in the modern world were the repositories of truth, morality, ethics and citizenship- postmoderns look to themselves or to their specific peer group.
- (4) *The loss of a “meta-narrative.”* For centuries, due to the influence of the church, people (even non-Christians) had an understanding that they were part of a larger story. There was a sense that life had a purpose or was going somewhere. In postmodern thinking, there is no single narrative that encompasses all people. There are only small narratives for the individual or group.
- (5) *Authenticity.* Postmodern people crave authenticity in all they do. Having been raised in the television age and bombarded with false advertising claims and promises, they are very skeptical of anything that seems false to them. They can see through insincerity.

In light of all this, we may be tempted to think that postmodernism is evil or bad. That is not the case. Like any other cultural shift or dynamic change, it has its pros and cons. While it has become more difficult for traditional, established churches to effectively reach and impact postmodern people, it is not impossible.

We must remember that people shaped by postmodern influence, or who share post-modern perspectives, still bear the image of God and are precious to our Lord. Their views on many things will differ radically from Boomer and Builder generations (who make up the majority demographic in most established churches). But the church has a rich opportunity to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to people who are hungry for something real, something permanent, something that gives true meaning.

Churches can connect with postmodern people by using the Bible for teaching more so than for supporting theological doctrines. They hunger for connection with other people because their lives are very fragmented (divorce, blended families, multiple jobs) or compartmentalized (cubicles at work, cars, iPods).

One of the best ways in which we can impact people today is by sharing our own spiritual experiences with Jesus. Our individual stories are of great interest to people, and they are willing to listen to our experiences. Other suggestions may include:

- ★ Providing worship opportunities and experiences that allow for interactive, immersive participation.
- ★ Offering outreach and humanitarian activities that engage the altruistic spirit of postmodern people. **“Postmoderns will be less willing to invest in institutions such as organized religion and more willing to fund relief projects for victims of catastrophes, epidemics, mental illness, poverty, and homelessness”** (*The End of the World*, p. 120).
- ★ Providing plenty of space for people to question and explore the faith and its claims before demanding “a decision” or a commitment to the church. Allow them to *belong* before they *believe*.

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From Pastor Todd, continued

- ★ Use the vehicles of culture (music, film, books, art, poetry, etc.) to help connect and communicate the gospel.

All that we do must be authentic and real. Fake fronts will be shunned. The church must be vulnerable and transparent, honestly admitting its mistakes and shortcomings. Something as simple as this can make a big impact on today's seeker.

This is the culture that our church finds itself in. We can take the ostrich approach and stick our collective heads in the sand and hope it all passes by. Realistically however, we all know this is not practical at best and downright suicidal at worst. Or we can take the approach the apostle Paul used. We can meet people in our world where they are, talk their language, get to know them, and allow God to show us openings into their lives where Jesus Christ can reach.

The mission and purpose of the church is no different in this postmodern age as it has been during any other phase of history. We are still called to win the lost, help the oppressed, serve the needy, and reveal to the world what life in the kingdom of God is like. But in order to do that, we must understand how our world has changed, and what the emerging needs are. Every church must wrestle with the effects and consequences of this change; none are immune. It is indeed a "brave new world" out there – a world that God still loves, still has plans for, and still desires to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. May the Holy Spirit grant us the wisdom, discernment, grace, and power to live as faithful disciples, no matter what the age, season or situation!



Best Wishes

*Congratulations and best wishes
to Marti and Joseph Hendrix,
They were married on July 17th.*

Joseph & Marti are our new youth leaders. We are thrilled to have them working with our youth group!



The UMW met in the Friendship Hall on July 21st. They had a guest speaker, Megan Creecy from the Northside Neighborhood House. Their slogan is "a handup through education & assistance." They try to help people by teaching them how to achieve more, not just by giving them a handout. They do a lot for the people in this area. They have a GED program, give emergency help with utility bills, help

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UMW, continued

people get medicine that they cannot afford, toys at Christmas, school supplies, and help people apply for jobs online.

The Northside Neighborhood House has just opened a thrift store next to the Dollar Tree in Soddy Daisy. You should go check it out. It is a neat store and the money goes to a good cause, helping people in our own community. They also accept donations at their store. All contributions are tax deductible. You can take smaller items to the store and for larger items, like furniture and appliances, you can call 267-2217 for pick up. Store hours are 10:00 AM—5:30 PM on weekdays and 10:00 AM—3:00 PM on Saturdays. The thrift store is closed on Sunday.



August Birthdays

- 5 Nell Smith
- 6 Larry Garner
- 7 Noel Irwin
- 11 Gene Elliott
- 13 Paul Ed Parrott
Brynlie Dotson
- 14 Anne Haynes
- 16 Brody Dotson
Linda Reagan
- 18 Eleana Mullins
- 20 Kristen Woodall
- 21 JoAnne Posey
Caleb Nelson
- 26 Bob Wright
Allison Ellis

August Anniversaries

- 1 Carlos & Barbara Wilson
- 2 Paul Ed and Suzanne Parrott
- 14 Jerry & Anne Haynes
Skip and Martha Sheeks
- 25 Kay & Vicki Hardesty



Sunday, August 7th

Guest speaker FRAN LYNCH

Sunday, August 14th

CHURCH PICNIC at Emerald Bay

Tuesday, August 23rd

Pastor Todd's Bible study begins

A note from Kathryn Mullins...



I just wanted to say a HUGE **THANK YOU** to all the VBS volunteers who made this year such a wonderful experience for all the kids! Our top attendance night was 25, and all the amazing programming kept kids coming back for more each night. Soddy UMC is blessed to have such a carrying and sharing group of devoted individuals who pour out God's love to everyone they meet! **THANK YOU!** ~Kathryn

...and also from Pat...

Thank you, Kathryn, for all that you do for the children and youth in the church!

Also, thank you Roger, Donna and Teresa for the work you did. They prepared fantastic food for the kids and volunteers every night.

I would also like to thank Gabby at Williamson and Sons Funeral Home. They brought a tent and set it up for us, to provide shade for our Arts & Crafts area. ~ Pat



**SUFFERING.
DISASTERS.
ECONOMIC
COLLAPSE.
VIOLENCE.
CORRUPT
GOVERNMENT.**



**IT'S THE
LETTER OF
REVELATION!**

*Want to know more about the
final book of the Bible?*

Join us for a chapter-by-
chapter study beginning
**Tuesday, August 23rd, at
6:30 PM.**



“Perhaps the fundamental difference between our prayer lists and the prayer concerns we find in the bible is that we pray about personal problems, while most of the biblical prayers focus on Christ's purposes.”

~Daniel Henderson, *Transforming Prayer: How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face*

**HELP THE SODDY DAISY
FOOD BANK WHEN YOU
SHOP AT AMAZON.COM!**



If you are a customer of Amazon.com, you can help the Soddy Daisy Food Bank by shopping with Amazon Smile.

In order to support the Food Bank with purchases made through Amazon you must start your shopping session at <http://smile.amazon.com>.

While on the Amazon Smile page:

1. Log in to your Amazon.com account

Welcome to
amazon smile

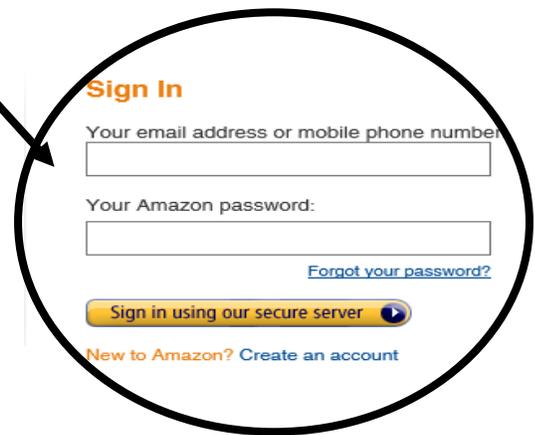
You shop. Amazon gives.

- Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com.

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2. Type SODDY DAISY FOOD BANK in the search bar and click SEARCH

amazon smile

Hello, J. ▾

Select a charitable organization to start shopping (You can change it any time.)

Choose one of our spotlight charities



ASPCA

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States.

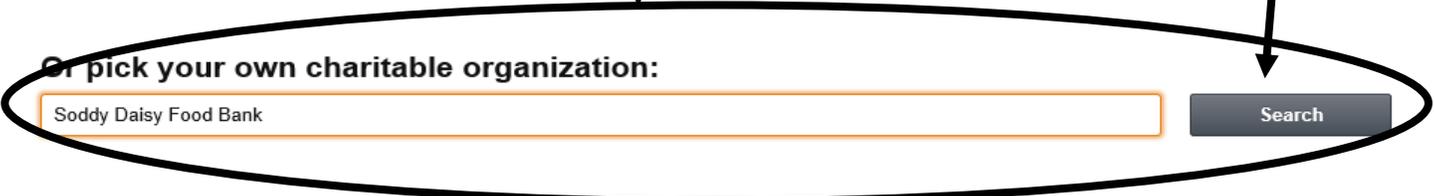
Select ASPCA



Or pick your own charitable organization:

Soddy Daisy Food Bank

Search



3. Select SODDY DAISY FOOD BANK



Select a charity to start shopping (You can change it any time.)

Choose from almost a million charities, schools, and other nonprofits. We will reach out to the organization you select to ensure it is ready to accept donations from Amazon.

Showing 1-1 of 1 Results

Sorted by: Relevance

Soddy Daisy Food Bank Inc

[About](#) ▾

Food Banks, Food Pantries

Soddy Daisy TN

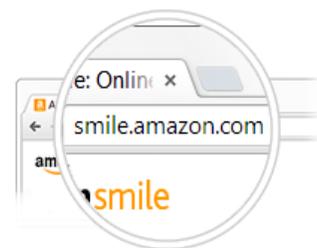
4. Check the “Yes, I understand...” box



Hello, J. ▾

Yes, I understand that I must always start at **smile.amazon.com** to support Soddy Daisy Food Bank Inc.

[Why is there a separate URL?](#)



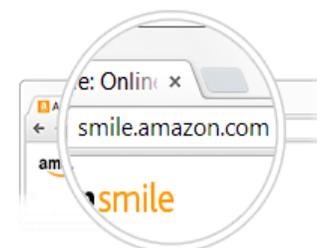
5. Click on START SHOPPING



Hello, J. ▾

Yes, I understand that I must always start at **smile.amazon.com** to support Soddy Daisy Food Bank Inc.

[Why is there a separate URL?](#)

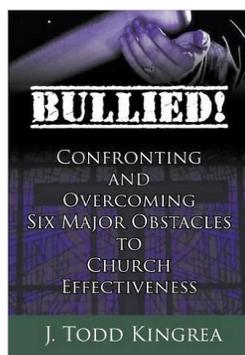


THAT'S IT! Now when you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase price to the Soddy Daisy Food Bank!

**Here's a handy little chart to have on your refrigerator.
God has a positive answer:**



<u>YOU SAY</u>	<u>GOD SAYS</u>	<u>BIBLE VERSES</u>
You say: 'It's impossible'	God says: All things are possible	(Luke 18:27)
You say: 'I'm too tired'	God says: I will give you rest	(Matthew 11:28-30)
You say: 'Nobody really loves me'	God says: I love you	(John 3:1 6 & John 3:34)
You say: 'I can't go on'	God says: My grace is sufficient	(II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)
You say: 'I can't figure things out'	God says: I will direct your steps	(Proverbs 3:5- 6)
You say: 'I can't do it'	God says: You can do all things	(Philippians 4:13)
You say: 'I'm not able'	God says: I am able	(II Corinthians 9:8)
You say: 'It's not worth it'	God says: It will be worth it	(Roman 8:28)
You say: 'I can't forgive myself'	God says: I Forgive you	(I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)
You say: 'I can't manage'	God says: I will supply all your needs	(Philippians 4:19)
You say: 'I'm afraid'	God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear	(II Timothy 1:7)
You say: 'I'm always worried and frustrated'	God says: Cast all your cares on ME	(I Peter 5:7)
You say: 'I'm not smart enough'	God says: I give you wisdom	(I Corinthians 1:30)
You say: 'I feel all alone'	God says: I will never leave you or forsake you	(Hebrews 13:5)



Copies of Pastor Todd's new book, ***BULLIED! Confronting and Overcoming Six Major Obstacles to Church Effectiveness***, are available at both sanctuary entrances. Cost is \$15.00 each. You may also purchase paperback or digital copies online at <http://www.electiopublishing.com/index.php/bookstore>, amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, or other book retailers. Paperback copies may also be ordered from any physical book store.



CALENDAR

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5TH

Soul Sisters Bible study

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7TH

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER **FRAN LYNCH**

MONDAY, AUGUST 8TH

Prayer shawl ministry

SUNDAY, AUGUST 14TH

"Come On In, The Water's Fine"

Church picnic

TUESDAY, AUGUST 16TH

AARP meeting

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18TH

United Methodist Women

SUNDAY, AUGUST 21ST

"It's A Bird! It's A Plane! It's...Jesus??"

Administrative Board meeting

MONDAY, AUGUST 22ND

Prayer shawl ministry

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23RD

Pastor Todd's Bible study on the **LETTER OF REVELATION** begins (Introduction & background)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27TH

Girl Scouts (Friendship Hall, 1:30-3:30 PM)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 28TH

"The View From The Roof"

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30TH

REVELATION Bible study (Chapter 1)

