



The VINE

The newsletter of Soddy United Methodist Church



Wings or not? Do we become angels when we die?

We've all heard it. We may've even said it. When someone dies, a common sentiment is "He's got his wings now" or "She's joined God's angelic choir." Part of the mental image that many people have about the afterlife is that we become angels after death. They see it as a step up from this life: flying through the celestial paradise, swooping here and there, perhaps even strumming a harp. Of course, it's natural that we want our loved ones to be in a better, happier place. We all understand the sentiment.



But there's a big problem with it. It's bad theology.

We **don't** become angels when we die. We don't get wings. Or harps (as far as I know!)

The reason is because human beings and angels are two entirely separate groups within the created order. At the present time, angels are greater than we are because God made us *a little lower than the angels* (Psalm 8:5). But in heaven we'll be higher than the angels—because we'll be like Jesus. 1 Corinthians 6:3 says *Do you not know that we will judge angels?* While this may refer to the fallen angels who chose to follow Satan, it still implies that our status after death will be above that of angels. Thus, becoming an angel can be viewed as a downgrade since we'd be going from God's highest and best creatures to something below them. A promotion to angelhood would be a demotion for humanity.

The Bible doesn't tell us when God created angels, but it does show us examples

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of what they do. Angels serve as armed guards (Genesis 3:24). They form the heavenly choir (Isaiah 6:2-3). They fight evil (Revelation 12:7-9). And they serve as messengers from God (Genesis 18:1; Judges 6:11; Luke 1:11). One passage in particular sums up their vocation well: *Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?* (Hebrews 1:14).

One of the ways that angels serve God is by serving us, the heirs of salvation. In that respect, angels are like everything else in this world: when God's hands fashioned them, he had his eyes on us. The Father formed the heights of the mountains, the roaring seas, the sunlight, the animals, all for humanity's benefit and enjoyment. Angels serve God and serve us! As young parents spend months preparing everything for the birth of their child, so God spent five days preparing the heavens and the earth for the sixth day—when he created human beings who bear his image and likeness, who serve as his stewards here on earth.

Since angels seem so much higher, mightier, and more majestic than us, it may be hard to believe that they're actually beneath us in God's plan of creation and salvation. That's probably because we look at ourselves **as we are** and not **as who we are** in Christ.

Hebrews 1-2 shows the superiority of the Son of God to angels. The angels worship him, not he them (1:6). Christ sits at the Father's right hand, not angels (1:13). The world to come is not subjected to angels but to Jesus (2:1-8). We don't see this yet. What do we see? *We see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone*" (2:9).

Jesus didn't do this for himself but for us—for *everyone*—as the verse says. Christ endured death so that through him the Father might bring *many...to glory* (2:10). In other words, the glory, the reign, and the enthronement of Christ at the Father's right hand are also ours! What happened to the Head happens also to the Body. That's why Paul can make the astonishing claim that God not only made us alive with Christ, but *raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus* (Ephesians 2:6). Already in Christ we're raised. Already in Christ we're seated on the Father's throne. Already in Christ we're regal rulers over the universe.

If we did become angels after death, what a disappointment that would be!

No longer would we be humans with whom Jesus shares the intimate bond of flesh and blood. No longer would we be those who reign with him. No longer would we be created in the image and



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likeness of God. No longer would we be ones for whom Jesus was willing to die.

In God's plan of creation and salvation, for humans to become angels would be a serious downgrade. No longer could we say, "Christ died for me." Therefore, when Christians die, heaven doesn't "get another angel." We cannot become angels any more than we can become giraffes or ocean waves or stars. When believers in Christ die, we go to be with our Lord, to enjoy paradise, and to receive our resurrection bodies. Then, we'll live and rejoice in the new creation that'll have no end. Not as angels, but as our true spiritual selves, redeemed and made perfect for all eternity.

AFRICAN OUTREACH MISSIONS – GHANA

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25TH JUNE, 2024

SODDY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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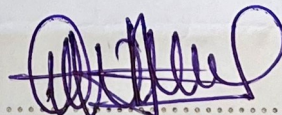
Dear Sir,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The above mentioned outreached missions want to express our appreciation to your church for supporting our work in Ghana over the years. Your continuous support over the years have help sustained our mission work.

May the good Lord continue to open more doors for the church.

Your's in His vineyard



Pastor Anthony Onsu Hammond

The Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations) will meet on Monday, September 16th, at 6:30 PM. Committee members are *Becky Stulce, Marylu McDonald, Sid Parrott, Cindy Cunnyingham, Carla Anderson, Serena Wood, and Kathryn Mullins.*

BEGINNING Tuesday, September 17

Risky Business

How Trusting God Can Change the World



A Bible study
on the books of

Ruth and Esther



The Keep SODDY DAISY BEAUTIFUL FALL FESTIVAL

will be held on Saturday, September 28 from 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

Soddy UMC will be present with a petting zoo and giveaways for the community. *The Outreach Team would like to invite you to help out however you can! Contact Marylu McDonald (423-596-9236) for more information.*

POTLUCK DINNER RESUMES!

Join us on Wednesday September 4 for our first-of-the-month potluck dinner!

The church provides the meat. You bring a dish to share.

The meal begins at 5:30 PM.

BACK TO SCHOOL ICE CREAM EVENT



Upcoming Birthdays!

September

- 8 Roger Graham
Brandi Powell
- 11 John Bramlett
- 13 Samara Jolly
- 17 Victor Rogers
- 19 Michael Musgrave
- 21 Patrick Mulkey
- 25 Trish Jordan
- 26 Dan Hultgren
- 27 Cindy Cunnyngnam
- 30 Sandra Winkles



October

- 2 David Winkles
- 7 Katie Wood
- 10 Kelsey Jones
- 12 Doug Yeatts
Barbara Hendren
- 15 Jessica Lyon
Thomas Hendren
Barbara Musgrave
- 18 Scott Musgrave
- 22 Kathryn Mullins
Gideon Musgrave
- 25 Rachel Musgrave
- 30 Gena Bain
Rick Willilams

Upcoming wedding anniversaries!

September



October

- 1 Carlos & Barbara Wilson
- 3 Mike & Carla Anderson
- 16 Mitch & Suzie Weber

- 7 Mike & Stephanie Parrott
- 20 Roger & Donna Graham
Art & Marylu McDonald
- 21 Todd & Felicia Kingrea

Help bring the Lord's Supper to Soddy Daisy Healthcare

The Outreach Team would like to invite you to join them on **Wednesday, September 11 at 2:00 PM**, as we celebrate Holy Communion with the residents of Soddy Daisy Healthcare. This outreach ministry takes about 40-45 minutes and is deeply appreciated by those who participate. Make plans to join the Outreach Team and members of the choir as we bring the sacrament of the Lord Supper's to them.



September



Sunday, September 1st

SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA
"No Holiness But Social Holiness"

Monday, September 2nd

LABOR DAY

Tuesday, September 3rd

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

Wednesday, September 4th

Potluck dinner (5:30 PM)

Sunday, September 8th

SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA
"Let Us Go On To Perfection"

Tuesday, September 10th

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

Wednesday, September 11th

**Communion at Soddy Daisy Healthcare
(2:00 PM)**

Thursday, September 12th

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Sunday, September 15th

HYMN SING

Monday, September 16th

**Committee on Lay Leadership meeting
(6:30 PM)**

Tuesday, September 17th

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
United Methodist Women (12:00 PM)
*Risky Business: How Trusting God Can
Change the World Bible study (6:00 PM)*

Thursday, September 19th

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Sunday, September 22nd

"Beauty Beyond The Gray"

Scenic South District Conference (4:30 PM)

Tuesday, September 24th

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
Risky Business Bible study (6:00 PM)

Thursday, September 26th

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Saturday, September 28th

SODDY DAISY FALL FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 29th

"Between The Starting Line And The Finish Line"



Tuesday, October 1st

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
Risky Business Bible study (6:00 PM)

Wednesday, October 2nd

Potluck dinner (5:30 PM)

Thursday, October 3

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Sunday, October 6th

"Seeing Ourselves At The Table"

Tuesday, October 8th

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
Risky Business Bible study (6:00 PM)

Thursday, October 10th

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Sunday, October 13th

SERMON SERIES: PROBLEMATIC PASSAGES 3
"Did God Set Pharaoh Up?"

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD (5:00 PM)

Tuesday, October 15th

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
Risky Business Bible study (6:00 PM)

Thursday, October 17th

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Sunday, October 20th

SERMON SERIES: PROBLEMATIC PASSAGES 3
*"Why You Can't Kill A Thief In Broad Daylight
(And Other Weird Old Testament Laws)"*

Tuesday, October 22nd

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
Risky Business Bible study (6:00 PM)

Thursday, October 24th

Choir practice (6:30 PM)

Sunday, October 27th

SERMON SERIES: PROBLEMATIC PASSAGES 3
"Why Is The Bad Guy The Good Guy?"

Tuesday, October 29th

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)
Risky Business Bible study (6:00 PM)

Wednesday, October 30th

SODDY UMC FALL FESTIVAL