



The Messenger

South Hill United Methodist Church

October 2019



The Pastor's Pen...

From "7 Reasons Why A Christian Can Celebrate Halloween" by Alan Rudnick, pastor, author, and speaker



Can there be a Christian Halloween? Can a Christian celebrate Halloween, which honors ghouls, demons, ghosts, and everything that goes bump in the night dangerous or even evil?

Somewhere, in the halls of history, Halloween or All Hallows Eve, got hijacked. What started as a day to prepare for All Saints' Day (November 1st), Halloween became a spooky, evil, and candy filled observance. The term "Halloween" from its beginnings, had nothing to do with any pagan or evil beliefs. The Christian festival All Hallows Eve morphed into our current term Hallowe'en.

The key in understanding the origins of the term Halloween comes from the sense of what is "hallowed" or "holy". In the Lord's Prayer, Christians pray, "Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name..." In the fourth century, John Chrysostom tells us that the Eastern church celebrated a festival in honor of all saints who died. In the seventh and eighth centuries, Christians celebrated "All Saints' Day" formally.

How did Halloween become associated with evil spirits? When we look at history we discover: More than a thousand years ago Christians confronted pagan rites appeasing the lord of death and evil spirits... the druids, in what is now Britain and France, observed the end of summer with sacrifices to the gods. It was the beginning of the Celtic year, and they believed Samhain, the lord of death, sent evil spirits abroad to attack humans, who could escape only by assuming disguises and looking like evil spirits themselves. The waning of the sun and the approach of dark winter made the evil spirits rejoice and play nasty tricks.

If the Christian observance of Halloween began with a religious focus, how can we reclaim Halloween from its current feared status? Here are 7 ways Christians can take back Halloween:

1. **Understand that All Hallows Eve (Halloween) and the ancient pagan festival of Samhain are not the same.** Halloween is often associated with the pagan concept of Samhain, the festival where ancient pagans believed that the worlds of the living and dead would be thinly divided. But, we have seen from the other ancient pagan festivals associated with Christmas and Easter that these pagan connections do not serve as a reason why we cannot celebrate a Christian holiday. Despite claims by modern Wiccans and Druids, there is not one shred of evidence of what actually took place. History has proven that the Christianizing of the calendar has created a rich heritage of faith and spirituality rather than something more evil. Gregory III (731-741) and Gregory IV (827-844) moved the Christian holiday All Saints' Day from May 13 to November 1 to replace the pagan rituals on October 31 and November 1. Gregory III instructed people to dress up as saints. Let the occult have Samhain, we are taking All Hallows Eve back.
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2. The establishment of Christmas and Easter in Europe had pagan connections but we do not abandon these holidays. Neither should we abandon All Hallows Eve. Much of the beef of conservative Christians surrounding Halloween is centered around how pagan observances were mashed together with Halloween. Most Christians may not understand that Christmas was opted for a December observance because of the Nordic holiday of Yule (ever heard of a Yule log?) that occurred near the winter solstice. The observance of Easter refers to Eostur-monath, a month that the Germanic peoples named after the goddess Ēostre. If Christmas and Easter have connections to pagan rituals of celebrating seasonal changes, does that devalue them? **No.**

3. Understanding that early Christians contextualized early pagan holidays into Christian holidays helps us to see that we do not have to compromise our beliefs with pagan ones. Anthony McRoy, a Fellow of the British Society for Middle East Studies at Wales Evangelical School of Theology reminds us: “Of course, even if Christians did engage in contextualization—expressing their message and worship in the language or forms of the local people—that in no way implies doctrinal compromise for Halloween. Christians around the world have sought to redeem the local culture for Christ while purging it of practices antithetical to biblical norms. After all, Christians speak of “Good Friday,” but they are in no way honoring the worship of the Norse/Germanic queen of the gods Freya by doing so.”

4. “Evil” themes in our current secular Halloween observances were not always present. Thus, we can recapture the spiritual with the innocent. Halloween does not have to be a holiday filled with Draculas, bloody masks, or witches. There was a time when children dressed up, but their costumes were not sinister. Sue Ellen Thompson’s book *Holiday Symbols* records that during the Great Depression, “children often disguised themselves as hobos, burglars, pirates... in other words, as economic and social outcasts, symbolic of the troubles from which their parents were struggling to escape.” Those children were trying to make light of their situation. In many cultures, taunting or comically characterizing personal cultural strife was a way of triumphing over that which could not be overcome in their collective psyche.

Elesha Coffman wrote, “Festival of Fears”, in *Christianity Today* that Halloween in the 19th century was devoid of scary masks and monsters: “Mainstream Halloween celebrations in the Victorian era were generally tame and devoid of occult overtones. Instead of pulling pranks or haunting neighborhoods, young people chatted and flirted in festooned parlors. By the beginning of the twentieth century, some towns had gone so far as to make Halloween primarily a civic affair, complete with parades and block parties.”

5. If you still think Halloween is an evil day, then maybe you should see All Hallows Eve as a time when Christians can laugh and even mock evil. Anderson M. Rearick, assistant professor of English at Mount Vernon Nazarene College in Ohio, challenges us to rethink Halloween:

“Should the forces of evil be mocked? Should Satan be laughed at? He most certainly should be. At the beginning of *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis includes two telling quotations, the first from Martin Luther: “The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of Scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn.” The second comes from Thomas More: “The devil ... the proud spirit cannot endure to be mocked.”

“The one thing Satan cannot bear is to be a source of laughter. His pride is undermined by his own knowledge that his infernal rebellion against God is in reality an absurd farce. Hating laughter, he demands to be taken seriously. Indeed, I would say that those Christians who spend the night of October 31 filled with concern over what evils might be (and sometimes are) taking place are doing the very thing Lucifer wants them to do. By giving him this respect, such believers are giving his authority credence.” *(continued on page 3)*



UMW Recalibrating

The UMW is recalibrating for a more faithful future. We are exploring the many ways that we can be in mission at nearly every meeting.

1. We can become “bag ladies.” Most of us cannot go to the fields to glean food for the hungry, but we can make the mesh bags to put them in. All we have to do is cut, tie, count and bundle the bags.
2. We can become “foodies.” By collecting, organizing, and delivering food to local food banks.
3. We can become “roadies.” By taking a bus trip or two learn about how service organizations are able to accomplish so much and learn how we can accomplish more too.



We want to have fewer and shorter business meetings and more mission and learning opportunities for growth as faithful Christian women.

Recalibrating is fun. Come and join us.

- Susie Brack

****CALENDAR CHANGE****

Effective Wednesday, October 2nd, Wednesday evening bible study is cancelled. Also, choir rehearsal will begin at 7 pm and cantata rehearsal will begin at 8 pm.

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Christians should instead celebrate Halloween with gusto. If we follow the traditional formula of having a good time at his expense, Satan flees. By laughing, mocking, and even “cartooning” evil by goofy costumes we can take a posture of triumph with Christ.

6. Christians should focus and teach the concept of celebrating All Saint's Day, November 1st in churches. The term “saint” is used over 60 times in the New Testament. We protestants use the word saints to describe the Christians living and dead. We can also honor our loved ones who have given us Christ, such as our parents, grandparents, etc... We thank God for them and pray that the living “saints” may live in community. We can also learn from the saints of the church for the last 2,000 years. We protestants have often been fearful of honoring and learning from the Church saints for fear that we are venerating them as Catholics do.

7. Christ holds the “keys to death and Hades” (Revelation 1:18). We can take comfort in the fact that Christ defeated death. Even the mere name of “Jesus Christ” can make evil shudder and even follow the commands of God. When Jesus confronted evil demons in the New Testament they were fearful and obeyed the commands of Jesus to leave the people they possessed. Much of the outcry concerning Halloween comes from the fear of evil or welcoming evil into their homes or lives. No one should go out and look for spiritual warfare, but we should take comfort in knowing that Christ has given us the tools to fend away evil: faith in God, scripture, the power of Christ, the Holy Spirit, fasting, and prayer.

Why should Christians allow others to claim Halloween as their own? We should not. We should take back All Hallows Eve by embracing All Saints Day and remembering our “saints”. By separating All Hallows Eve from the pre-Christian practices, Christians can take comfort in understanding the historical Christian remembrance that is associated with All Hallows Eve and All Saints Day. Children can collect donations for UNICEF or for a local cause. We Christians can also view Halloween as a fun event for children by having events in churches or in our communities where children and their parents can dress up, play games, and share some treats in a safe place.



The Endowment Funds

Did you know that this church has three endowment funds?



1. Our youth scholarships,
2. The Randolph Arrington fund for those persons interested in pursuing a divinity or ministerial degree, and
3. The largest fund for improvements to our properties beyond the normal annual budget.

These three funds represent the gift that keeps giving and all three are invested with the United Methodist Foundation in Richmond, VA.

Over the years we have used the youth scholarship fund to award to graduating seniors entering their college years. Our hopes are that one day we can increase the award amounts for our youth.

The newly established Arrington Fund is now being used for one seminary student. This fund was established specifically for seminary students at the wish of Mr. Arrington from a \$50,000 generous gift to the South Hill United Methodist church.

The 3rd Endowment Fund can be only used for capital improvements, extensive or costly maintenance projects, Music & Worship, and Missions above and beyond the normal budget allocations. The fund bylaws do not allow the church to withdraw any of the principal deposits. In the most recent years this fund has provided support for the parsonage kitchen upgrade, the organ refurbishment and console replacement, and main sanctuary upgrades.

Gifts received for the Endowment Fund shall be invested in a prudent manner realizing that endowment funds are special funds invested for

growth & income and protection of principal. The church has been fortunate that fund withdrawals will typically build back up through the UM Foundation Balanced stock portfolios.

Please consider any of these funds in your long-range planning or if you have an unexpected financial blessing you would like to share with our church.

In the vestibule of the church, there is a plaque with the donors that helped establish and maintain this fund. For more information please contact me or the church office.

- Rick Carroll

October Special Offering World Communion Sunday



The World Communion Sunday offering funds graduate racial-ethnic World Communion Scholarships, with at least one-half of the annual amount reserved for ministries beyond the United States. Donations also provide for undergraduate U.S. Ethnic Scholarship and Ethnic In-Service Training programs.



United Methodist Men's Stew Sale

Saturday, October 5th. The cost is \$8 and tickets are available from any UMM member or the church office. You may pick up your stew from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at Golden Leaf Warehouse, 101 Raines Street, South Hill, VA.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

By Lisa E. Clary © August 2019

You are never alone because God walks with you every day
He will never leave you and at your side he will stay

When you are lost he will lead you home
He will keep you on the right path no matter where you may roam

Those moments you feel defeated, broken and let down
He will pick you up and put your feet back on the ground

He will hold your hand and offer comfort when in distress
He will know when the devil is putting you to the test

You may fall but he will pick you up and keep you strong
He will make sure that the road you take is never very long

When others try to break you and bring you to your knees
God is reaching for you to hold you steady and make you feel at ease

You can be surrounded with so many vying for a place
Yet you still feel so alone and there is always too much room and too much space

But you are never alone if you have faith and know God is near
He will watch over you and calm all the overwhelming fear

He will answer prayer and give you a sense of serenity and peace.
He will make sure that all he has to offer is yours and it will never cease

When you feel that you are in darkness and there is no light
He will show you the way to a land that is clear and bright

Even when in deep despair you are never alone.
Because God is by your side and he will guide you home

Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have.



Do you like organizing things? We are in need of a trip coordinator for our church. We have several ideas of trips that members and our community would like to take, but no one to put all the pieces together and make it all happen. Please contact Pastor Brian if you are interested!



United Methodist Women's Potato Luncheon

Plan now to attend the UMW's Potato Luncheon on Sunday, October 13th in the Fellowship Hall following the 11:00 am service. The proceeds will benefit the Society of Saint Andrew. The cost is \$5 and tickets are available from any UMW member.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Mole or Melanoma?

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends that everyone examine their skin regularly to check for signs of skin cancer. About half of melanomas (a form of skin cancer) are self-detected. If you're not sure whether you have melanoma, or just a new mole, there are the ABCDE's of melanoma to look for.



- A. Asymmetrical** - Does the mole or spot have a strange shape?
- B. Border** - Does it have a rugged or uneven outline?
- C. Color** - Does it have more than one color?
- D. Diameter** - Is it larger than the size of a pea?
- E. Evolving** - Has its shape changed during the past few weeks or months?

If you discover any of these changes to a spot or mole, see your physician or a dermatologist.

- Shirley Wetherbee

2019 South Hill Town Clean Up Day



A special thanks to everyone who came out to help with the town clean up day.

Opportunities for Growth and Service...



Mark your calendars and join us this fall for our next 5 Talent event - **Engage: Community Transformation.** It will be held on Thursday, November 14th and South Hill UMC is a satellite location.



Registration forms can be printed and payment can be made at www.lightthenight.net.



Budget for 2019:	\$239,572
GF Offering received thru September 22, 2019:	\$161,265
YTD Percent Budget Received 2019:	67%
YTD Percent Budget Received 2018:	54%
YTD Avg Attendance Combined Worship 2019:	101
YTD Avg Sunday school Attendance 2019:	47



October 1	Marcus Fuller
October 2	Kimberly Barbour
October 2	Chris Clary
October 2	Benjamin Ringo
October 3	Charles Wright
October 4	Roberta Payne
October 6	Dustin Spears
October 8	William Stanley
October 9	Lewis Nichols
October 10	Hilary Hettich
October 10	Tyler Howerton
October 11	Virgil Peters
October 11	Pat Wall
October 12	Cathy Howerton
October 12	Erik Jones
October 12	Brian Pearce
October 13	Warren Edwards
October 14	Mickey Moore
October 15	Robert Thompson
October 17	Johnathan Nichols
October 17	Roger Tanner

October 19	Kim Clary
October 20	Dwayne Gwaltney
October 21	Connie Hendrick
October 21	Glenda Tucker
October 22	Emma Lou Banfield
October 22	Wella Crowder
October 23	Gary Creamer
October 23	Heather Crocker
October 24	Steve Tanner
October 25	Peggy Conner
October 25	Matthew Lynch
October 25	Julia Taylor
October 26	Glenn Barbour
October 27	Mary Coulter
October 28	Doris Morris
October 29	Matt Farnsworth
October 29	Dylan Shafer
October 30	Daniel Gwaltney
October 31	Georgia Shoop
October 31	Doris Turner

If your birthday is missing, please notify the church office so we may update our records.

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South Hill United Methodist Church
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South Hill, Virginia 23970
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office@southhillumc.org
www.southhillumc.org



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Worship Services: Sundays 8:45 a.m. (in the chapel) and 11:00 a.m. (in the sanctuary)

Sunday school: 9:45 a.m.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, 10/5	UMM Stew Sale 10 am – 12 Noon
Sunday, 10/6	World Communion Sunday Staff Parish Meeting 12 Noon Pineview Communion Service 3 pm
Tuesday, 10/8	Prayer Shawl 6:30 pm
Tues – Sat 10/8- 12	South Central Fair, Chase City, VA
Wednesday, 10/9	Pineview Chapel Service 10 am
Sunday, 10/13	UMW Potato Luncheon 12 Noon
Monday, 10/14	UMW Meeting 10 am
Tuesday, 10/15	Third Tuesday Luncheon 11:30 am Brian's Steakhouse - Dutch treat Laity Sunday
Sunday, 10/20	UM Men's Breakfast 8 am Church Committee Meetings 12 Noon
Fri – Sat, 10/25 – 26	Spooktober Fest, South Hill, VA
Fri – Sun, 10/25 – 27	Camp Refuel Youth Retreat at Camp Willow Run, Littleton, NC
November 2nd	District Conference at South Hill UMC 9:30 am – Noon
November 14th	5 Talent Academy, South Hill UMC 9 am – 3 pm
November 24th	Heritage Sunday

Recurring Weekly Events:

Sundays:	Regular Worship Services Youth 6 – 7 pm
Tuesdays:	10:00 am Bible Study 7:00 pm Seekers in Prayer 7:30 pm Synago
Wednesdays:	6:30 pm Narcotics Anon. 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm Cantata Rehearsal AA Meeting
Thursdays	11:00 am Hundley Service
Fridays:	7:00 pm Sobriety Group
Saturdays: 8-3	Upper Room Sale at 619 E. Atlantic St. (1 st , 2 nd , & 3 rd Saturday)
2 nd and 4 th Tuesdays:	6:30 pm Prayer Shawl Meeting



Church Staff

Pastor
Rev. Brian Siegle
Music Director/Organist
Jimmie Crowder, Jr.
Administrative Assistant
Patsy T. Watkins