



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

June 2009

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

As I was thinking about this month's article to you, my wife, Anita, showed me what she had written to be read on the occasion of her new granddaughter's (Kira's) baptism. Anita chose to draw from her family's heritage which is Native American: her father was half Cherokee. Checking on the internet, she found seven laws that guide the Cherokee in daily life. In some ways, they are comparable to our Ten Commandments and there are seven of them (a sacred number in biblical texts). I share a portion of Anita's words with you in order to demonstrate the fact that Christianity taps the innermost depths of human existence. We have more in common with other peoples than we sometimes want to admit.

'Kira, Your Great Grandfather Coffey gave you a spiritual heritage of the Great Eastern Cherokee Nation who uses these 7 laws to guide and advise them in their daily life.

1. The Cherokee honors the authority of the elders, the teachers, and the healers. The Cherokee respects the authority of Grandmother Moon and Mother Earth. Everything that has life deserves respect.
2. In this light the Cherokee considers preserving and promoting the Beauty of Nature as a Sacred Duty.
3. In relationships and decision making, the Cherokee would judge with kindness and wisdom. Use both the heart and reason to make choices.
4. Moderation in all things helps the Cherokee to make the wise choices.
5. In life play fair and do not take advantage of people's disadvantages.
6. When making a pact, promise, or agreement, the Cherokee must keep their Word, it is Sacred.
7. Respect for difference is the basis of Cherokee Indian teachings. Everything the Cherokee does in their way of life has to be based on respect for other people and all living things. The Great Spirit made people of different colors like flowers. There are red flowers, white flowers, black flowers, and yellow flowers. Walk among other people with courtesy and respect. Only think of beautiful things when looking at other people.

Kira, you are a beautiful sunflower, I know that you hold all the beauty of these teachings in your heart... Thank you, Kira, for gifting us with your presence on our Mother Earth. May Grandmother Moon watch over all of your dreams, and the presence of the Great Spirit accompany you all the days of your life. Mom-mom"

Three things strike me in this statement to Kira at her baptism. First, there is the recognition of the wholly other: i.e., God or the Great Spirit. Second, there is definitely an attachment to the earth: i.e., creation, "Mother Earth," and the understanding that "preserving... the Beauty of Nature" is essential to our survival. Third, there is the recognition that relationships are crucial to one's well-being. Relationships require respect, integrity, an affirmation of the inclusive reality of life, and beautiful thoughts when in contact with others.

Thank you, Anita, for reminding me again of vital aspects of my faith and life. And Kira, may God's blessings that placed you and all children on this earth (Mother Earth) always surround and embrace every aspect of your life and that of all children! Don't forget, we're all CHILDREN! See you in church, Sunday.

In Christ,
Phil Shuler

UMW

We won't meet again until September 2009. Join us when we resume meeting.

UMM/UMME

The United Methodist Men will meet on June 13th at 8:30 am at the Fellowship Hall of the church. Join the men for breakfast and fellowship.

Judy's News

Community Food Bank –Granger UMC

Once again the Food Pantry was full and “Walla!” it was empty after serving 33 families on Thursday, the 21st. This was praise that we had enough to feed that many as God continues to bless His ministry. Now we will be busy trying to restock for June 18th.

Exciting News!

For the first time in 125 years, life of church, we now have a sound system. Coleman United Methodist Church donated a sound board. Brian Smith came down and hooked it up and donated his time, his expertise, and cords and mike. Another mike was purchased with cord and stand so Sunday it was ready to go. God is so good to send me so many blessings through friends and family within our Methodist churches.

5th Sunday Community Service

This will be held at our church in Granger on May 31st. Mark your calendars and come see union among churches and the Holy Spirit in the midst of it all. Cody Culp and Patrice Monigan Haynes are going to come and sing. It will be a great night of worship through song.

Monthly Luncheons

No more until September. Enjoy your summer!

News! Bible Study!

Pastor Phil will announce on Sunday if our Bible Study will be held that week on Wednesday. With summer coming, vacations will be taken. So, if you are not in church that week, call someone else to make sure we are having it.

Cowboy Church

Thank you everyone for helping make our Cowboy services such a great ministry. I know it is a lot of work setting up and providing the food. It is appreciated. Working together to further His cause blesses us all. Sometime during the summer a new calendar will be set for the fall and spring. Everyone's input is welcome.