

# The VINE

*The newsletter of Soddy United Methodist Church*



The following is taken from <https://pethelpful.com/>  
Written by Kristin Kaldahl April 12, 2023

## Do Dogs Go to Heaven? A Christian Perspective

I petted the white, silky fur of my American Eskimo for the last time. She lay peacefully – her body still warm, although her heart had quit beating minutes earlier. The vet had listened for a heartbeat with his stethoscope but had found silence. The medicine he had injected had done its job, and my Laika was no longer in pain. Her 15-year-old body was here with me, but where was she? Where was the essence of Laika? Was she in heaven? Do dogs and other pets go to heaven? Is there really a “Rainbow Bridge”? Or do animals just cease to exist?

These questions have been asked by animal lovers for centuries, and even some heavy-hitting theologians have weighed in on the issue. According to many of them, yes, animals probably DO go to heaven.

C.S. Lewis, a well-known apologist for the Christian faith in the 1900s and author of the famous book *The Chronicles of Narnia*, is known for his assertion that animals would get to heaven through the relationship of their owners with God. Therefore, a Christian's pets would be found in the new heaven because of their owner's faith.

“The theory I am suggesting...makes God the centre of the  
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*From Pastor Todd, continued*

universe and man the subordinate centre of terrestrial nature: the beasts are not co-ordinate with man, but subordinate to him, and their destiny is through and through related to his. And the derivative immortality suggested for them is not a mere amende or compensation: It is part and parcel of the new heaven and new earth, organically related to the whole suffering process of the world's fall and redemption." (C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, Chapter 9, p 145; 1940).

"I think God will have prepared everything for our perfect happiness. If it takes my dog being there (in Heaven), I believe he'll be there."

— Rev. Billy Graham

Martin Luther, the well-known reformationist of the 16th century and the unwitting founder of the Lutheran denomination within Christendom, believed dogs go to heaven. Referring to his beloved dog Tolpel, he once said about dogs and other animals being in heaven:

"Certainly there will be, for Peter calls that day the time of the restitution of all things. Then, as clearly said elsewhere, he will create new Tolpels with skin of gold and hair of pearls. There and then God will be all in all. No animal will eat any other. Snakes and toads and other beasts which are poisonous on account of original sin will then be not only innocuous but even pleasing and nice to play with. Why is it that we cannot believe all things will happen as the Bible says, even in this article of resurrection? Original sin is at fault." (From Preserved Smith, "The Life and Letters of Martin Luther" London: John Murray, p. 362; 1911)

But it's understood that even brilliant minds such as Lewis, Graham, and Luther can be wrong, so what is the reasoning behind their belief that animals go to Heaven?

If you look at the quotes above, you see a common theme. The Bible is specific that God will create a new heaven and a new earth at the end of our current earth. This newness will be a "restitution of all things," says Luther. With the understanding that God plans on restoring creation, these biblical scholars agree that within that restoration will be the restoration of our beloved pets.

The Bible mentions this restoration of Creation all throughout.

- **Acts 3:19-21** *19 "Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away. Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord, and he will again send you Jesus, your appointed Messiah. For he*

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## **From Pastor Todd, continued**

*must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things, as God promised long ago through his holy prophets.*

- **2 Peter 3:10-13** *But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.*
- **Revelation 21:1** *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone.*

These are only a very few of the scriptures that describe the restoration of creation at the end of this world. Let's take a close look at Romans 8:18-22, which describes creation groaning for redemption: *Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of child birth right up to the present time.*

We can see here in Romans 8 that even creation has been in bondage and decay because of human sin and is groaning for liberation that the final restoration will give. This passage shows that God is planning on restoring His creation, and animals are a part of that creation.

Hence, Lewis, Graham, and Luther all believed that God would bring back to Himself in the restoration His creation, and our pets are part of that restoration. Dr. Peter M. Kurowski said in his "Animals in Heaven, Pets in Paradise" Bible study:

"The rest of the world, however, stands on tiptoes stretching its collective being eagerly looking forward to the new Eden. Pets in paradise? Sure sounds like it, if we pay careful attention to God's subtle, but clear word. All creation, the creation, this created world, except for demons and unbelievers, is lining up for His love, and His Lordship, plus His promise through St. Paul should give us highest of hope."

So do dogs, cats, horses, and other pets go to heaven? While the Bible doesn't come straight out and say "yes," it does imply through its discussion of the

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**From Pastor Todd, continued**

redemption of God's creation that our pets will greet us in the new heaven and new earth.

As I watched the vet wrap Laika's now still body in her blanket and carry her out the door, I was heartbroken. The pain of the loss was so strong, and it was physical. Yet as I closed the door behind him, tears streaming down my face, I knew that Laika was free – that she was young again, running in heaven.

Will our reunion with our pets be exactly like the famous poem, "The Rainbow Bridge?" While the poem does mention restoration, it is doubtful a place exactly like "The Rainbow Bridge" exists, but knowing the loyalty and love of dogs, it is not hard to imagine a greeting similar to the poem.

## **The Rainbow Bridge**

*Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.  
When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.*

*All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor;  
those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again,  
just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by.  
The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing;  
they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.  
They all run and play together, but the day comes when one  
suddenly stops and looks into the distance.  
His bright eyes are intent; His eager body quivers.  
Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass,  
his legs carrying him faster and faster.*

*You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet,  
you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses  
rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once  
more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life  
but never absent from your heart.*

*Then you cross Rainbow Bridge together...*

*~ Author Unknown*





This year our new district superintendent, Mickey Rainwater, will be conducting individual meetings with each church for Charge Conference.

*Our Charge Conference will be held on Sunday, November 5, at 4:00 PM in the fellowship all.*

The Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations) will meet on Monday, September 11th, at 6:30 PM. Committee members are *Nancy Woodall, Frank Mulkey, Mike Anderson, Becky Stulce, Marylu McDonald, Mitch Weber, Sid Parrott, Cindy Cunyngham, and Kathy Jones.*

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee will meet on Monday, September 18th, at 6:30 PM. Committee members are *Mitch Weber, Kathryn Mullins, Steve Wortham, Roger Graham, Serena Wood, Art McDonald, Vicki Hardesty, Carl McLaughlin, and Kathy Jones.*



*Church potluck picnic*  
**& BLOCK PARTY**  
**& GOSPEL SING**  
**Sunday, October 15**  
*Bring your favorite dish! • Special gospel music!*

**2:00 PM**  
**in the**  
**playground**

# Upcoming Birthdays!

## September

- 8 Roger Graham  
Brandi Powell
- 11 John Bramlett
- 13 Samara Jolly
- 16 Marcie Woodall
- 17 Victor Rogers
- 19 Michael Musgrave
- 21 Patrick Mulkey
- 25 Trish Jordan
- 26 Dan Hultgren
- 27 Cindy Cunnyingham



## October

- 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

# Upcoming wedding anniversaries!

## September



## October

- 1 Carlos & Barbara Wilson
- 3 Mike & Carla Anderson
- 16 Mitch & Suzie Weber
- 20 Carl & Carole McLaughlin

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

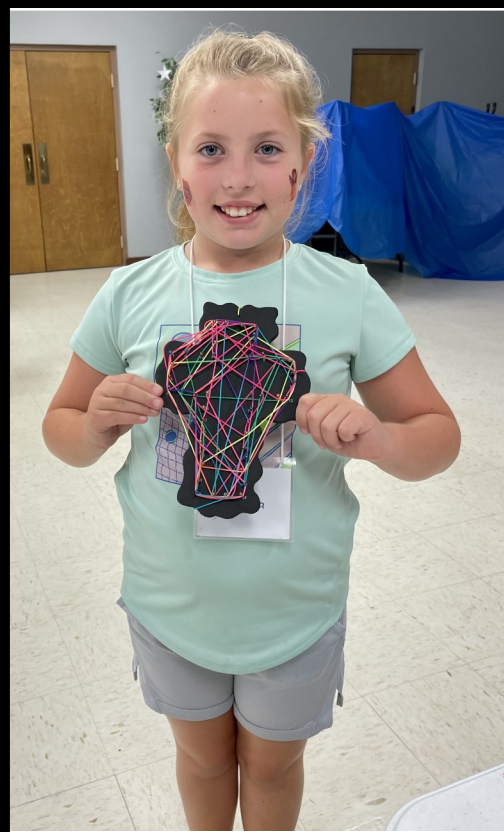
**Pastor Todd and Felicia will be on vacation in South Dakota from September 27—October 4.** *If you have any special needs during that time please contact Kathy Jones (423-285-3183) or Cindy Cunnyingham (423-645-4539).*

**THE SODDY DAISY FALL FESTIVAL WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30. WE WILL HAVE A BOOTH AND A PETTING ZOO, AND WILL BE GIVING AWAY STADIUM CUPS WITH CANDY AND CHURCH INFORMATION.**



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



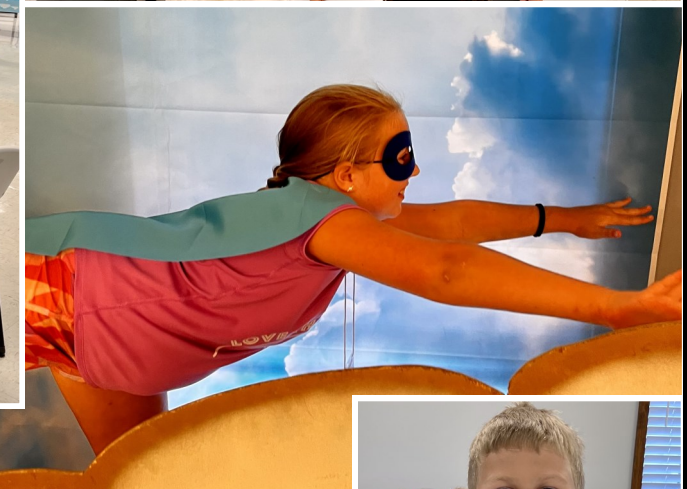


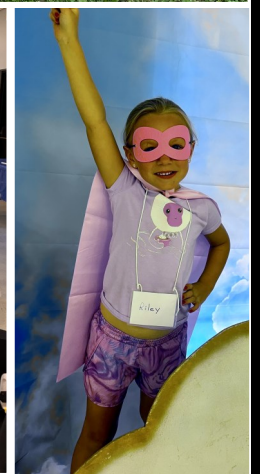
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BIBLE  
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# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL





VACATION  
BIBLE  
SCHOOL



# September



**Sunday, September 3rd**

**SERMON SERIES: BELIEVERS AND THE BRINY BLUE**  
*"Fishing Advice...From A Carpenter?"*

**Monday, September 4th**

**LABOR DAY**

**Tuesday, September 5th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**Wednesday, September 6th**

*Potluck dinner (5:30 PM)*

**Thursday, September 7th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, September 10th**

**SERMON SERIES: BELIEVERS AND THE BRINY BLUE**  
*"The Perfect Storm"*

**Monday, September 11th**

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

**Tuesday, September 12th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**Thursday, September 14th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, September 17th**

**SERMON SERIES: BELIEVERS AND THE BRINY BLUE**  
*"Get Out Of The Boat"*

**Monday, September 18th**

**Pastor Parish Relations committee meeting**  
**(6:30 PM)**

**Tuesday, September 19th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

*United Methodist Women (12:00 PM)*

**1st Corinthians Bible study begins (6:00 PM)**

**Thursday, September 21st**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, September 24th**

**SERMON SERIES: BELIEVERS AND THE BRINY BLUE**  
*"Back To The Beach"*

**Scenic South District Conference (3:00 PM)**

**Tuesday, September 26th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**1st Corinthians Bible study (6:00 PM)**

**Thursday, September 28th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Saturday, September 30th**

**SODDY DAISY FALL FESTIVAL**



**Sunday, October 1st**

***GUEST SPEAKER KATHY JONES***

**Tuesday, October 3rd**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**Wednesday, October 4th**

*Potluck dinner (5:30 PM)*

**Thursday, September 5th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, October 8th**

*"Dinner With John Wesley And Jesus"*

**ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD (5:00 PM)**

**Tuesday, October 10th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**1st Corinthians Bible study (6:00 PM)**

**Thursday, October 12th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, September 15th**

*"Going Home Changed...Or Just Going Home?"*

**Church picnic/block party (2:00 PM)**

**Tuesday, October 17th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

*United Methodist Women (12:00 PM)*

**1st Corinthians Bible study (6:00 PM)**

**Thursday, October 19th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, October 22nd**

**NAVIGATING REVELATION: VICTORY**

*"A Different Nativity Story"*

**Tuesday, October 24th**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**1st Corinthians Bible study (6:00 PM)**

**Wednesday, October 25th**

**FALL FESTIVAL**

**Thursday, October 26th**

**Choir practice (6:30 PM)**

**Sunday, October 29th**

**NAVIGATING REVELATION: VICTORY**

*"The Number Of The Beast"*

**Tuesday, October 31st**

Marys & Marthas Bible study (10:00 AM)

**1st Corinthians Bible study (6:00 PM)**