



# News From Holland

**Holland First United Methodist Church**  
**November 2007**      **Rev. Victor Pena, Pastor**  
**Web Site: [www.hollandum.org](http://www.hollandum.org)**

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

I have been preaching about Paul's first prayer, but I would like to go back and give you a little more history about him. Some people believe Paul to be a villain for the persecution that he heaped upon the Christians. Other people believed that he derived a great deal of pleasure by his actions.

This is far from the truth for Paul was very religious! He was compassionate to the Jewish religion and he knew the Law. As far as he was concerned, he was dedicated to defending his faith.

Paul thought he was right and everyone else was wrong! And those that were wrong should be persecuted.

Paul was probably present when Stephen was being stoned. Stoning was such an up close and personal type of death sentence that you couldn't keep from being emotionally tied to it. IF you were there you were expected to participate. You picked up a rock and threw it hard enough to kill someone!

The bible tells us that Stephen was praying to God to forgive those that were stoning him, and that Stephens face began to shine like an angel. Paul MUST have seen this and wondered what this was. Paul HAD to be effected. For Paul considered himself the same kind of compassionate person as Stephen.

I can only imagine what he was thinking about when this was going on, because Paul thought he was protecting his Jewish faith, and at the same time this mans faith was tearing at the foundation of his own beliefs.

After the stoning of Stephen, Paul had his revelation on the road to Damascus. It was then that Paul realized that the way he once believed was not the true way to believe. There was more much more ... for Paul thought he was right and everyone else was wrong! Paul was wrong.

Don't get me wrong – I think Paul could have been a great Methodist! He did everything by the book in the manner it had always been done. He followed tradition and law to the letter

But our traditions, our hymns, our committee meetings, our methodical ways of doing things cannot save us. These things cannot obtain Grace for us. These things cannot obtain salvation for us. These things cannot even bring us Joy!

Thru out history we have seen in our churches the element of separation to the degree of if you don't worship like I do that then you aren't doing it right.

We need to be careful not to think that our way is the only way to worship God. I will say that JESUS is the only way to God. While some religions don't recognize Jesus, today I am talking about mainstream Christianity only.

There are a lot of good people that have been in the church for a long time. They go along in church so accustomed to following the traditions and laws that they forget that there are other ways of worshiping God ..... and then when they are faced with something a little different they can't handle it.

Time after time, we see church splits on the smallest of issues, the hymnals they use or the songs they sing, the way they pray, the color of the choir robes, yes, it's silly but the list goes on and on. .... Some people get mad and leave while others find new church homes. While other, get a revelation and like Paul, begin to get a deeper understanding.

When someone begins to express their love for the Lord in an open way, do we allow this, or do we say – hey now pipe down! We don't do that here. I'm not comfortable with that?

**WHERE IS THE UNITY IN THAT?** We should be one body one spirit.

And beloved, believe me; the Lord is moving us into a time where He will test our faith and take it to a higher level.

He will separate the true believer – the one that says Lord I love you and only You – from the believer that clings to laws and traditions that man imposed.

We MUST begin to understand that there are other ways to worship God and strive not to be imprisoned or unchangeable as to not appreciate or understand this when it happens. Allowing ourselves to react in a different way perhaps with a smile and by saying that's wonderful! I am so happy for you!

'Your way' is not always the right way. Or the only way. We must allow ourselves to experience faith in Gods way.

We must remember that for as many people that are in the pews, each and every one of us has a different way of expressing our faith and worship.

If we worked as hard on worshipping the Lord and uplifting each other, as we do on criticizing and judging others motives, think of the difference we would experience in our lives.

If we worked as hard on unity as we do on keeping separate think of the difference we could make!

## Cowboy Church

Our kick off was Sunday, Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> and it was a night filled with His glory. Thanks to Brandon Spinn, Brian Smith, Jerry Donica, and Patrice Monigan, music filled the air glorifying His name. Steve Stiles from Thrall contributed Cowboy Codes, codes all of us need to live by. His message is always straight forward and from the heart. Mike Urbantke shared his views with the children, using pecans to illustrate his point. "I want to be a pecan pie, too, Mike!" Pastor Victor summed it all up with his brief but poignant message. We couldn't have gotten off to a better start. Everyone is ready to come back on November 18<sup>th</sup> for our next one. Mark your calendars!

## Judy's News

### Outreach

We never know where God will lead us but do know it is always a blessing when our church can reach out to another. I had the privilege of being the speaker at the Nazarene Ladies Retreat in Abilene, Texas on Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>. What an awesome day that was, and I came home so blessed. By the way, I learned the Nazarene Church is a break off of the Methodist Church. The only difference I saw was they do not "Sit On Their Hands" in praising the Lord.

### Adult Bible Study

After church on Sundays we have this class and it continues to grow. Larry and I take turns leading this study. We are studying a book, "You Can Get Bitter or Better" by James Moore. We always have room for one more! Doris Severson collects \$1.00 each week from everyone in attendance to benefit a family in need at Christmas. Besides growing in our faith, we are a mission too.

### Wednesday Night Bible Study

Pastor Victor is leading a Bible Study on the book of Romans on Wednesday nights at 6:30 pm. Everyone is welcome.

### Monthly Luncheons

We have started back our Monthly Luncheons. Everyone is invited and it is Dutch Treat. We will have them on the fourth Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm. Each month we will decide where the next one will be held. The location will be announced in church. October's is at the Hilton Garden Inn. Mark you calendars. November's will be the 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday, the 29<sup>th</sup>, because of Thanksgiving.

### Special Blessing

Wednesday night, Oct 24<sup>th</sup> was highlighted at 6:00 P.M. with several of us joining our Pastor for a blessing on the Cearley's foundation. Groups of workers will begin the framing on Saturday Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.

**The Community Thanksgiving Service will be held on November 18, 2007 at 10:45 am at the Holland ISD Cafeteria. A meal will follow the services so bring a covered dish. We will not have our regular 9:00 am service but we have Cowboy Church at 5:00 pm that afternoon.**

## Getting To Know You By Doris Severson

Pastor Victor Pena and wife Karen have one daughter, Stacey who is married to Claren Sliger.

Victor is from Aspermont, TX and graduated from high school there in 1975. His mother lives in Greenville, TX. He has two brothers and three sisters. Two brothers are deceased.

His hobbies include restoring things especially old cars and equipment. He had a welding business for thirty years. Victor collects baseball memorabilia and loves riding his bicycle. He says he can meditate and reflect while riding. Karen says he has motorcycle fever--wants a Harley. Victor got to fly the plane on his first airplane ride. It was a two-seater and he actually got to take over the controls.

Karen was born in Wichita Falls into a Scottish/Italian family. Karen was raised in Albany, TX and graduated high school at Abilene High. She attended Odessa Jr. College and McMurry. She loves antiques and collectibles which she buys and sells on EBAY. Karen also likes to be outdoors and working outdoors. She likes to paint, organize and clean. She does not like to cook. She is "waiting" to be a grandmother.

Victor says he likes all food, especially Mexican food and his favorite color is green..... Let him explain why! Karen's favorite food is pasta.

### He's With Me

God's blessed me so much over the years  
 Helped me through sorrows,  
 Dried my tears.  
 It's not for me to understand  
 When things have gone wrong,  
 But my Lord and Savior  
 Has been with me all along.

God's gift of the Holy Spirit  
 Comforts my broken heart  
 And helps me hold on to His promises  
 As I try a new start.  
 Old Satan tries his best  
 To get the best of me,  
 But by my Lord's saving grace  
 I'm Free!

How precious and wonderful  
 To know I'm God's child.  
 Though sometimes I get weary,  
 He's with me every mile.  
 His word is my refuge  
 When storms threaten my peace,  
 But through it all  
 His awesome power  
 Lifts me up and delivers me.

Linda V. Rich (Johnson)  
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