

What if the Hokey Pokey really is what it's all about?
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"Put your right hand in, put your right hand out - put your right hand in and you shake it all about. You do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around. That's what it's all about!"

So goes the song many of us have sung in our childhood. So goes the truth that many of us have lived in our lives - routine day in and day out - working to put food on our tables and clothes on our backs. We do the hokey pokey and we turn ourselves around - and then start all over again.

The Scriptures tell us, however, that life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. (Luke 12:23) The most important things in life are relationships - with each other and with our God. This was driven home to us at 8:46 a.m. on September 11, 2001, when a hijacked passenger jet crashed into the World Trade Center, bringing America face-to-face with unimaginable tragedy - and unprecedented courage. One day we were taking our police and firefighters for granted, the next we were recognizing them for the heroes they were. One day we were worried about how much we could make, the next day we were gladly giving away to people we had never met. One day we were arguing with our kids to clean up their rooms. The next day we couldn't get home fast enough to hug them. One day we were a little lackadaisical about our faith. The next we were fully immersed in seeking time with our Lord.

A year later, something special took place. Did you notice what happened around our country? People from all backgrounds, from all races, from all political affiliations, from all different churches - young and old, rich and poor - came together to remember those who had fallen; to honor the firefighters, police, EMS, and military personnel who protect us and our nation; and to proclaim and celebrate the spirit of patriotism and freedom that still rings throughout our great country.

This was especially evident in Clewiston with special services and times of remembrance in many different groups and organizations throughout the day. The special community service of remembrance was particularly touching to me. For this evening, for this hour, we were one. It didn't matter what church you went to or even if you didn't go to church. It didn't matter whether you were red or yellow, black or white, or even purple or green. It didn't matter. We were all one together, praising God and celebrating the blessings of being Americans. Singing our national anthem with the police and firemen color guards holding American flags was in what one person described as "awesome". The spirit of patriotism was alive and flowing as we thanked God and lifted up those who had served and are serving in our armed forces, and ended joining together as one nation, one community, and even one family singing, "God Bless America". For me, it was a glimpse of some of what God wants for us all - to come together - one Lord, one faith, one nation under God.

I believe the spirit of patriotism is still alive, and I invite and encourage you to join others this September 11th to remember and celebrate the blessings we have. If your church has not scheduled a special service, I invite you to join us in a special joint community service on the eve of 9/11 at Evangel Assembly of God Church in Clewiston. We will be honoring our heroes and praying to our Lord. The service starts at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 10th. We would love to have you join us.

I thank God for all that He has blessed us with. I thank God that in Him, we who are many can become one. I thank God that we are blessed to be a part this great nation, and that God gives us a hope and a future -- even in the midst of terrorism. May He always guide our country. May our eyes always be on Him. May God Bless America!