

JULY 24-27

The Beacon

JULY 2022

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A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

I hope that each of you has a wonderful celebratory July 4th weekend whether it is the weekend prior to the fourth or afterwards. Maybe you will have fireworks, a cookout, or a simple family get together. Whatever you are doing to recognize the fourth, enjoy and be careful.

July 4th is our country's "written in stone" date to celebrate the freedom we have as a democracy that was fought for and achieved in the early 19th century. And the maintaining, supporting, and refining of this "great experiment" has continued throughout the years with challenges to it being more real at certain times than other times. Even in our day the challenge to our democratic form of government is real. In addition, it is not a form of government some countries have (or even wish to have).

One of the marked features or words we use when we speak of our democracy is "freedom." We want or like the idea of being able to vote and in doing so have a say in what plays out on our national stage. Being able to vote is a clear signal to others of our freedom. We also think of freedom as being able to enjoy the pursuit of happiness, among other things, without being encumbered or prohibited. In other words, we like the fact that we are free in a

governmental system to have an opportunity to succeed. And if for some reason, we can give it all a second try. Not all places allow the citizenry such opportunity.

Yet, amid this gift of freedom that was obtained with much cost in the form of all kinds of resources including the loss of human life, we as a people tend to jump up and down and complain about whatever sticks in our craw at the moment. Are we ever satisfied? Content?

A fella I worked with years ago, returned from Viet Nam and it was abundantly clear to me he was different from the guy I knew before he went. He was more talkative but more mellow. He wanted life to be uncomplicated and simple. He knew what he wanted and needed to be at peace within his soul. He did not say it, but I believe he knew what gave him peace in his heart in this life, and it was a detachment from "things." To him this was a freedom that he appreciated and embraced.

Often, we in concert with Paul and a host of others say that we are free in Christ. Are we really? Or do we by saying such words attempt to convince ourselves that we are free? No doubt Jesus calls us to be focused upon him and warns that not to be focused on him may be a sign of an incomplete discipleship.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood the danger of the loss of governmental freedom by people. He furthermore understood that as Christ is the center of our faith, we can have a freedom that sustains us when this world, even in the absence of freedom, gives us freedom to live full in Christ and with one another.

So, enjoy the fourth of July celebrations for our country. Enjoy your freedom in Christ too!

In Christ,

Clarke

Hillcrest: A Place for All People

SEARCH COMMITTEE

In Christ,
 Jason Lipinski
 Linda Wilkinson
 Debra Edwards
 Dian Bean
 Terri Collier

BACKPACK MINISTRY

Jerry Edwards

OPERATION CHRISTMAS

CHILD SHOEBOX MINISTRY

Just a reminder during the month of July, we will be collecting clothing, flip flops, baseball caps, tennis shoes, socks, sun hats. Of course, any other items you deem appropriate will be most appreciated. Also, we are always in need of empty shoeboxes.

Thank you,
 Sharon Duling

OCC Coordinator

BIRTHDAYS

Doug Maupin (7-2)
 Linda Lawrence (7-4)
 Janet Menzies (7-4)
 Virginia Barnes (7-7)
 Barry Britt (7-8)
 Bradley Wood (7-8)
 Lauren Keeler (7-11)
 Martha Lane (7-15)
 Joshua Lipinski (7-16)
 Carter Simmons (7-18)
 Jessica Aylor (7-20)
 Benjamin Aylor (7-20)
 Kathy Johnson (7-24)
 Brenda Kerr (7-24)
 Ella Fox (7-26)
 Terri Collier (7-29)

GENERAL FUND RESULTS

General Fund Balance as of May 1	\$33,439.62
May Receipts (Online giving and regular)	\$18,283.07
May Expenditures	\$10,048.02
Balance as of June 1	\$41,672.67