

From the Pastor.....

## The Fourth of July Formula

Perhaps, by the time you read this, we will have once again celebrated our 241<sup>st</sup> anniversary as a nation. William Shakespeare in his play *Tempest* made this statement, "what is past is prologue." This quote is also engraved on the National Archives Building in Washington DC. There is some truth in this insightful statement for it portends that our present and perhaps our future is influenced by our past. At least let us hope so.

As we look back on the Declaration of Independence that was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, there are some things that were written by our founding fathers that were intended not only for the people of the thirteen colonies but for future citizens as well. These statements are the bedrock of our faith and freedom and certainly are values that transcend time and provide for us an azimuth for the present and future United States of America.

For instance...

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident..."* That is INDISPUTABLE TRUTH.

*"That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights..."* That is, INVIOLEABLE RIGHTS.

*"That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."*

That is, a SOVEREIGN PEOPLE. A sovereign people....from which

government gets its authority and its mandate. To secure human rights which are sacrosanct.

That's what American independence was all about. Take Creator God out of the formula, and the whole structure collapses. Get rid of God, or even marginalize Him, and you ultimately get rid of democracy.

The framers of the Declaration of Independence had their priorities straight. They knew the foundation on which they built our form of government. The order: (1) God, the ultimate Authority; (2) Man, accountable to God, His partner in governing the world, and in charge of his environment.

Remove man's accountability to God, and the door is opened to anarchy, issuing in tyranny - man a victim of his environment. May this prayer for our Nation be our prayer not only for this Independence Day celebration but for each and every day we live as Americans...

"Almighty God of our fathers and mothers...awaken us to the simple fact that if we try to govern without God we are a Godless government. May we remember that trust in God was not incidental to our Founding Fathers, but that it was fundamental to their vision for the Republic. Grant us the wisdom to understand that to govern without God is to condemn our land to a Godless destiny."

Richard C. Halverson  
Chaplain, US Senate  
January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1983



Many of us have already enjoyed vacation time with friends and family. Hopefully this has been a special time, and has given each of us a renewed spirit.

The WMU of the Hermon Association will be making large, Ziploc “blessing bags” to be given out to the needy and homeless. All churches will be collecting different items and these will be assembled at our annual Hermon Association meeting in the fall. Our item to collect as a church, was 300 small tissue packets. We reached our goal in June. Thanks to everyone for your support.

Our group enjoyed preparing the meal for one night for the children attending Bible School. We all agreed how great all the decorations looked and what a great job all the teachers and helpers did each day. It was also a fun and rewarding experience for us as well!

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**"With liberty and  
justice for all."**

# *Musical Connections*

## **Favorites Across the Ages**



**John Markham, with son-in-law Doug Farris, and grandson, Kyle Farris**

Christian music takes many forms, yet its underlying message rings true for audiences of all ages.

Deacon and treasurer, John Markham explains that the familiar hymn, “Count Your Blessings,” is one of his favorites. John points out the value of focusing on the many blessings that the Lord affords us, especially at times when our view is obscured by troubles. The song’s writer, Johnson Oatman (1897) has contributed more than 5000 songs to published hymnals in his lifetime. Perhaps the reason this song has been so universally included in hymnals is that it reminds discouraged Christians of the grace they have been given. It is often easy to take a negative view of life, but when we remember the things we have been given, we cannot deny that we are blessed. The hymn proclaims that all power belongs to God, and that he desires to bless us.

A similar sentiment can be found in a favorite of Worship Leader and songwriter Doug Farris.

Doug identifies the contemporary Christian song, “Speechless” by Steven Curtis Chapman (1999) as one that resonates with him because it “paints a beautiful picture of how amazing and merciful God's grace is and how it can leave us speechless, when we are truly in His presence.” Chapman, a strong advocate for adoption, and his wife, adopted three daughters from China, only to lose one in 2008 in a tragic accident. His music has continued to showcase the principle of hope in the midst of sorrow. Something that was true for songwriters Oatman and Chapman who were separated by more than a century, still applies to the lives of our own John, Doug and Kyle.



Terry Bullock	2
Kyndal Divelbliss	2
Landyn Foltz	2
Erin Kube	2
Gary Meyer	2
Kourtney Sutherland	3
Betty Cooper	4
Sadie Farris	7
Dawn West	8
Kathrine Wright	8
Christian Campbell	9
Morgan Gassman	11
Laura Richbourg	11
Erin Brown	13
Brianna DeLeon	13
Carroll Schools	14
Dean Flora	16
Kendall Thomas	16
Stephanie Sadler	17
Kitty Burke	18
Valerie Ercelebi	18
Will French	18
Cody Kidd	18
Madison Gentry	20
Barbara Lewis	20
Shelby Foltz	22
Brad Thomas	23
Debbie Pickett	24
Shannon Stepp	24
Hannah Kennedy	26
Kristen Kraynak	27
Jeff Sili	27
Eric Jackowski	30



#### **Deacon of the Week:**

July 2	Priscilla Shuler
July 9	Sandy Taylor
July 16	Carolyn Lane
July 23	Brad Thomas
July 30	Daniele Cushing

**Deacons' Meeting Devotions-** Bob Rice

**Building Security:** – Deacon of the week

**Counters**– Brad Thomas and Barbara Lewis

#### **Flowers:**

Jul 2	– James Madison
Jul 9	– Paulette & Ed Britt
Jul 16	– Meredith Pack
Jul 23	– Sallie Tidman
Jul 30	– Margaret B. Lewis & Lillian Jones

#### **Coffee & Snack Schedule**

July 2	Sallie Tidman
July 9	Jenn Thomas
July 16	Meredith Pack
July 23	Sherry Brillhart
July 30	Carolyn Lane

#### **Nursery Workers: \***

July 2	<u>Stephanie Sadler</u> , Karen Covington, Chandler Gustard
July 9	<u>Sallie Tidman</u> , Sabrina Farris, Emily Brillhart
July 16	<u>Tracey Mallory</u> , Kristen Bissoon, Kyle Farris
July 23	<u>Carolyn Lane</u> , Jeanne Jordan, Laney Thomas
July 30	<u>Heather Smith</u> , Jenn Thomas, Christianna Gray

\* Both individuals are responsible for the 8:45 service; the underlined individual is also responsible for the 11:00 service.