

# **“A Gate Between Church and State”**

**By Chaplain Todd DuBord, M.Div.**



## Introducing Chaplain Todd DuBord



Todd A. DuBord was raised in the Bay Area of Northern California, in an atheist and agnostic background. As a young adult, he sensed that there was much more to life than he had been led to believe. In his quest for truth and meaning, Todd sought out the various opinions for the truths and purposes of life, searching in arenas from the sciences to the world religions.

During his years of formal education (B.A. From Bethany University; M.Div. from Fuller Theological Seminary), Todd accepted that the claims of Christianity were true, while maintaining a respect for other creeds and confessions. Todd's areas of expertise are in apologetics, historical and ecclesiastical theology, world religions, biblical languages and canonicity, American religious history, leadership equipping and training, and pastoral care and counseling.

While going through his seven years of undergraduate and graduate studies, Todd also worked in business for a copier corporation, at which he served as Operations Manager for the entire region of Southern California--earning many leadership and management awards.

Todd has served in areas of prison and homeless ministries, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and various discipleship programs and church leadership roles. Through graduate school, Todd served as overseer of a thirteen-facility retirement home and convalescent hospital ministry, as well as a chaplain intern at U.C. Medical Center in Los Angeles and a community outreach intern at Lake Avenue Congregational Church in Pasadena, Ca.

Chaplain Todd served as a youth pastor (of a Foursquare Church) in the 1980's, an Assistant Pastor (of a Presbyterian Church) in the 1990's, and the past 12 years he served as Senior Pastor of Lake Almanor Community Church, located near Lake Almanor on the edge of the Lassen National Forest in Northern California.

Over the past five years, Chaplain Todd has gained national recognition in his work to restore Christian revisionism and reductionism at American historic sites and landmarks. He has successfully led restorations of our Christian heritage to the Jamestown Settlement (first English colony in America) and the Washington Monument (advances that were broadcasted on Fox News and other news agencies across the country--the Fox News segment can be viewed on this website). He continues to march against revisions at various places, including Monticello (Thomas Jefferson's estate), the U.S. Supreme Court, and most recently at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, as well as other historic landmarks that are revising America's religious history. A few of his revisionist stories are contained within Chuck Norris' latest New York Times best seller, "Black Belt Patriotism," for which Todd also served as Mr. Norris' research assistant ([www.BlackBeltPatriotism](http://www.BlackBeltPatriotism)). All of Todd's stories and revisionist research materials can be found at [www.CrossFireUSA.org](http://www.CrossFireUSA.org).

As Mr. Norris' pastor, Todd accompanied Chuck to Iraq in September of 2007, where they visited 15 military bases and over 18,000 troops. The story and some photos of their trip can also be located on Todd's website.

In April 2008, Todd accepted the invitation from Chuck and Gena Norris to join them full time in serving the diversity of their humanitarian and Christian endeavors as the Chaplain of Top Kick Productions (and other Chuck Norris enterprises). Todd also served as co-author with Mr. Norris in his bestseller (#1 on Tyndale Publishing list—Dec. 2009), "The Official Chuck Norris Fact Book" (101 of Chuck's favorite Facts and related stories).

As a speaker and writer, Todd is an inspiring educator and motivator, using a blend of information, historical quotes, visuals, and contagious humor. Many of his past message series (given as Senior Pastor of Lake Almanor Community Church) and present messages (given at various places around the country) are contained on his website as well (see the Sermon Player at the bottom of the home page). Some of his series include "Reasons to Believe," "The Lord's Prayer," "Seven Pillars of Health," "Facing Your Giants," "The Mystery of Marriage," "The Passion of the Christ," etc.

Chaplain Todd speaks across the nation to groups and churches in a variety of service, seminar and retreat settings. Through his website, live messages and collaborations with Mr. Norris, Todd has inspired countless Americans to fight for our country's Christian heritage, by sharing the stories in which he and his California rural church led revisionist corrections at places like the Washington Monument and the Jamestown Settlement (see revisionist stories, research, and photos contained on this website). In addition to his single speech settings on a host of leadership equipping and cultural issues, he gives one-day and three-day seminars on his various series also--one of the most popular of which is his Lord's Prayer series and unique approach to teach and apply it daily according to the acronym L.O.R.D.S. P.R.A.Y.E.R. To request Todd as a speaker, please refer to the contact information on the "Contact Us" page.

To relax, Todd enjoys a good cup of coffee, reading, gardening, exercising, walking his dogs, fishing, and just enjoying the outdoors. Todd is married to his best friend, Tracy, with whom he has enjoyed 27 years of marriage. They have two adult children. Todd and Tracy now reside in Texas.



Chaplain Todd & Tracy DuBord



## Lake Almanor Community Church

2610 Highway A-13 ~ Lake Almanor, CA 96137

Phone # (530) 596-3683 ~ Fax # (530) 596-4682 ~ E-mail: [lacchurch@frontiernet.net](mailto:lacchurch@frontiernet.net) ~ Web page:  
[www.lacconline.org](http://www.lacconline.org)

---

Todd DuBord, Senior Pastor  
Paul Bernard, Student Ministry Pastor

John Erickson, Associate Pastor

Thomas Jefferson Foundation  
P.O. Box 316  
Charlottesville, Virginia, 2290

2/22/07

To whom it may concern:

My name is Todd DuBord and I am the Senior Pastor of Lake Almanor Community Church in California. I've attempted a few different times over the past months (by mail and fax) to inform you of my experience on the tour at Monticello. Because I have not had a reply in four months, I'm writing again with further evidence about Jefferson I've researched in the Library of Congress.

Attached (also online at [www.CrossFireUSA.org](http://www.CrossFireUSA.org)) is a copy of that experience, "A Gate between Church and State," in which I also discuss (documentation from the Library of Congress) how Thomas Jefferson intermingled politics and religion throughout his political career. What I discuss in this document was denied by a tour guide at Monticello when 50 of us from California were being taught by him. When asked about Jefferson's religion, He said quite overly confident, "We all know Jefferson was a strict deist, who ardently fought for the separation of Church and State." He then supported his claim by a diatribe of comments about how secular Thomas Jefferson was. The problem is that his claims reveal how unfortunately ill-equipped he was in how often Jefferson passed through the wall of separation of Church and State in his various positions in government, including president. Attached is a copy of that documentation—which I am hoping can be passed on to the guides at Monticello to broaden their understanding of Jefferson and his views on religion and state.

I'm not an extremist, but a religion major and an American citizen who is sincerely concerned with the preservation of truth and tradition that has been handed down to us (as I'm sure you are too). Again, I'm respectfully requesting this information is passed along to tour guides and that the Thomas Jefferson Foundation assures their guides are presenting a clearer picture of Jefferson, especially in how he not only intermingled politics and religion but was himself much more religious than often assumed or conveyed, even at Monticello.

Respectfully,

Todd DuBord (M.Div.)  
Senior Pastor  
Lake Almanor Community Church

Cc: The Governor of Virginia and other governmental officials



## **“A Gate between Church and State”**

By Chaplain Todd DuBord (M. Div.)

([www.CrossFireUSA.org](http://www.CrossFireUSA.org))

As an atheist, I used to believe in “a wall of separation between Church and State.” After researching the religion and politics of Thomas Jefferson in the Library of Congress, I now understand that barrier was a gate Jefferson would often pass through.

### **The fellow at Monticello**

I don’t believe Thomas Jefferson was an evangelical Christian.

I don’t believe he was orthodox in most of his doctrine either.

What’s more important, at least for this treatise here, is that I also don’t believe he was a dogmatic deist with a secular progressive agenda to rid religion (specifically Christianity) from government, as he is often conveyed, even by our tour guide at Jefferson’s estate, Monticello, in July of 2006.



Land looking east from Monticello (Source of photo unknown at time)

While our guide that summer day was cordial and informative about many matters, when asked about the religious faith of Thomas Jefferson, he abruptly and actually quite arrogantly turned saying, “We all know Jefferson was a strict deist, who ardently fought for the separation of Church and State” (for those who don’t know, a deist is, in short, a person who believes in a Creator who does not involve himself in the personal and daily affairs of men). The guide’s added comments left no doubt that Jefferson would have never allowed any mixture of religion in government. But is that the truth?

The truth is Jefferson was more religious than most know and used both his governmental positions and even funds on occasion to establish churches, distribute biblical information, and promote Christianity. Yes, promote! Let me explain.

## The rule of king and priest: the background of Jefferson's opposition

If one is to understand Thomas Jefferson's views of religion, Christianity, and especially the separation of Church and State, one must understand the government and religion of England and its effects upon the first two centuries of our nation.

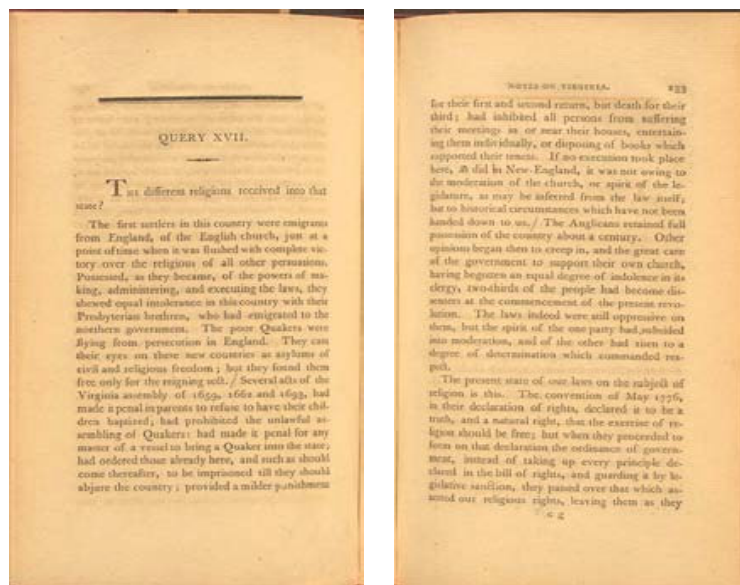
The fact is the only England early American colonists knew was one ruled by kings and priests. This form of tyranny was the milieu in which our country and Jefferson was born and would fight. He did not want America to model the motherland, not in that respect.

Jefferson, being born in Virginia, was also raised Anglican (Church of England)—the only denomination funded by Virginia taxes at the time. Anglican's apparent religious monopoly over England and Virginia augmented his passion for the freedom of religion.

As if his strict Anglican upbringing and education was not enough to cause a certain polarizing in Jefferson's heart and mind, his later experiences in France just before the French Revolution also multiplied his distrust of Catholic priests and bishops.

One must also remember, as Jefferson penned in his *Notes on Virginia*, a law was in effect in Virginia that

"if a person brought up a Christian denies the being of a God, or the Trinity ...he is punishable on the first offense by incapacity to hold any office ...; on the second by a disability to sue, to take any gift or legacy ..., and by three year' imprisonment."



(Library of Congress)

The Library of Congress further comments from his *Notes*

Thomas Jefferson reflected on the religious intolerance in seventeenth-century Virginia, specifically on the anti-Quaker laws passed by the Virginia Assembly from 1659 onward. Jefferson apparently believed that it was no more than an historical accident that Quakers had not been physically punished or even executed in Virginia as they had been in Massachusetts.

Jefferson believed that [religious freedom was a natural right of all](#), regardless of beliefs. He felt the government should not interfere with one's personal faith. He supported the idea that all, including Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and even atheists, should practice their beliefs (or no beliefs) without facing disadvantages.

This is shown in his notes on [John Locke's "Letter on Toleration,"](#) where Jefferson wrote that "neither Pagan nor Mahometan (Muslim) nor Jew ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth because of his religion". He emphasized that civil rights are independent of religious opinions, a principle later expressed in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. Jefferson saw religious freedom as an inherent right that the state should protect, not restrict.

Jefferson believed in and carved a Creator for America in the *Declaration of Independence* that endowed humans with unalienable rights, such as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But could these exist if a person felt like one Christian sect had a stranglehold over society? Not according to Jefferson. In a letter to Benjamin Rush, also a signer of the Declaration, in September of 1800 he reflected back on this era by noting,

...the clergy [had] a very favorite hope of obtaining an establishment of a particular form of Christianity through the United States; and as every sect believes its own form the true one, every one, perhaps hoped for his own, but especially the Episcopalians and Congregationalists.

Of course in time many clergy and others, especially those in New England, who would be regarded today by many as fundamentalists (though the pejorative term didn't exist at the time), considered Jefferson an atheist and enemy of Christianity. In reality he was neither of these things. Still their polemical responses, heightened during his candidacy for president, were regarded by Jefferson as irritants and further exacerbated his feelings and thoughts about the potential relationship between Church and State. Evidence for his annoyance is felt in his passionate words written also in the September 1800 letter to Rush and during these personal attacks by select clergy—words now etched on the wall of his memorial: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

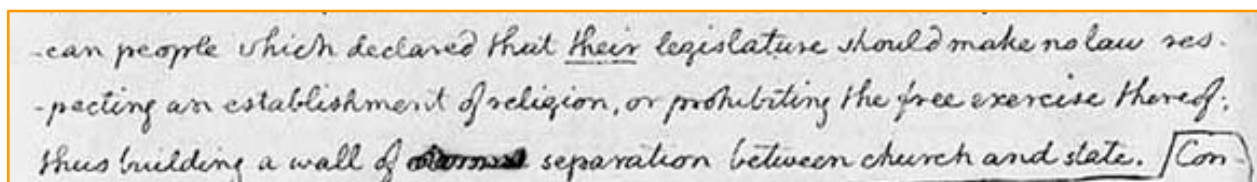
Jefferson's experience with denominational intolerance further enhanced his skepticism of religion's role. This narrow-mindedness did not increase his antagonism against Christianity, only the *tyranny* of any sect of Christianity over the State. His apparent struggle with this particular brand of clergy is obvious in his words to William Short, "the



serious enemies are the priests of the different religious sects, to whose spells on the human mind its improvement is ominous.”

One must keep these antagonistic matters in mind when reading any of Jefferson’s dialogues with other religious groups or clergy, especially the letter (dated 1/1/1802) which he wrote shortly after he was elected President and while still recovering and reviling from a fiery mudslinging campaign from those New England clergy. He wrote in response to a respectful, formal invitation to address the Danbury Baptist Association in Connecticut: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/f0605as.jpg>

Believing with youth that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative power of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between Church and State.

A photograph of a handwritten manuscript snippet, likely a page from Thomas Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptist Association. The text is written in cursive and reads: "can people which declared that their legislature should make no law res- pecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; thus building a wall of ~~eternal~~ separation between church and state. [Con-". The word "eternal" is crossed out with a horizontal line. The snippet is enclosed in a thin orange border.

(Library of Congress)

The fact is those eight words of Thomas Jefferson, “a wall of separation between Church and State,” were written in reaction and possibly retaliation to the verbal attacks from New England clergy, calling them in another personal letter an “irritable tribe of priests.” (Another fact pointing to Jefferson’s retributive attitude is found in that the FBI uncovered the scribbled out word as “eternal”—“a wall of *eternal* separation...”). With such inflamed language, should this agitated commentary of Jefferson be used to definitively interpret the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment and his views of the strictly secular inter- relations of Church and State for every American generation hereafter?

It was in this religious background that Jefferson would push for one of his crowning achievements in Virginia, the Bill for Religious Freedom, which passed in 1786 by the Virginia General Assembly. It would serve as a predecessor for the later First Amendment with its religious liberties guarantee in the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses (1789)--<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006490.jpg>. Both would help establish a freedom of religion (not freedom *from* religion) in our country.

### **The intermingling of Church and State by Thomas Jefferson and Congress**

Some might find it difficult to believe, but the Bill for Religious Freedom and the later First Amendment were born during a time when government was also busy aiding the progress of Christianity, sometimes intentionally, sometimes unintentionally. Let me give several examples from Thomas Jefferson and those with whom he served.

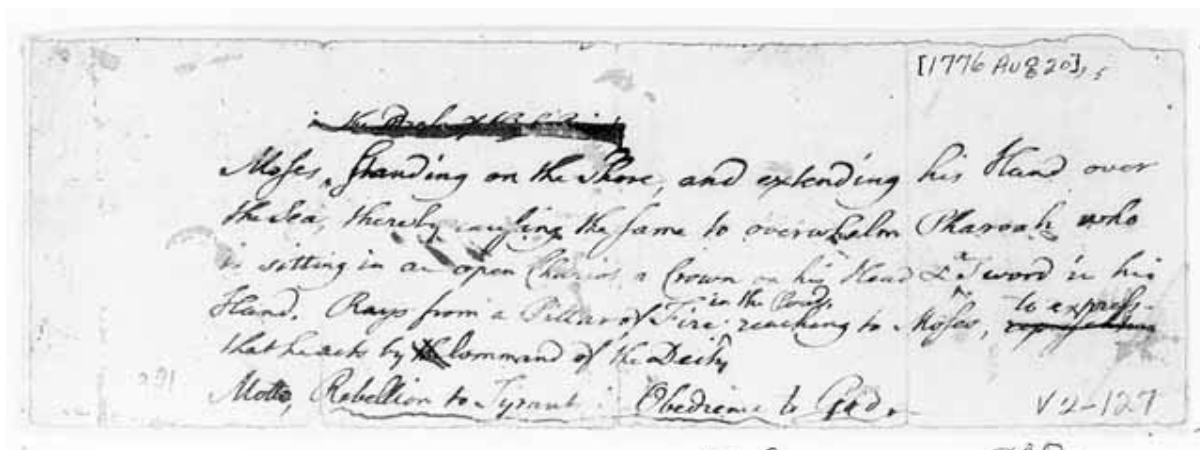
(1) While later as President (1801-1809), Jefferson opposed leading the nation in days of fasting, thanksgiving, and prayer, in 1774 he helped create a resolution for a Day of Fasting and Prayer, as a young 31-year old Virginian. Jefferson later admitted in his biography that he “cooked up [the] resolution...for appointing the 1<sup>st</sup> day of June...for a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer” in order to rouse Virginians “from the[ir] lethargy,” but it still doesn’t take away from the fact that he did.

(2) The Continental Congress (of which Jefferson was a part in 1775-1776 and 1783-1784) appointed national days of fasting and prayer for the colonies every year, like this one on May 17, 1776: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/f0404s.jpg>

*The Congress....Desirous...to have people of all ranks and degrees duly impressed with a solemn sense of God's superintending providence, and of their duty, devoutly to rely...on His aid and direction...Do earnestly recommend Friday, the 17th day of May be observed by the colonies as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that we may, with united hearts, confess and bewailed our manifold sins and transgressions, and, by sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease God's righteous displeasure, and, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain this pardon and forgiveness.”*

Could you see Congress making similar Christian declarations today?

(3) Regarding the proposed seal for the United States, Jefferson first recommended one reflecting the “children of Israel in the Wilderness, led by a Cloud by Day, and a Pillar of Fire by night....”, but later accepted Benjamin Franklin’s suggestion to adapt the Old Testament account of God’s parting of the Red Sea. (See below) <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel04.html>



(Library of Congress)

As the Library of Congress concludes:

Although not accepted these drafts reveal the religious temper of the Revolutionary period. Franklin and Jefferson were among the most theologically liberal of the

Founders, yet they used biblical imagery for this important task.

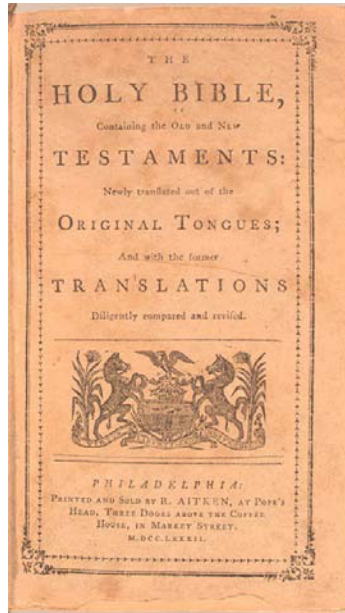
Do these symbols seem like they could come from those who are ardently in favor of the separation of Church and State?

(4) In 1777, one year after the creation of the Declaration of Independence, though Jefferson was not on the Continental Congress at the time, it maintained the same spirit toward religion and the State. In that year, Congress voted to import 20,000 copies of the Bible (from “Holland, Scotland, or elsewhere”) for the people of this new nation, because they could not obtain them from England during the Revolutionary War. The Committee of Commerce recommended this to Congress because “the use of the Bible is so universal, and its importance so great” (*Journals of Congress*, Vol. 8, pp. 734- 735)--[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=lljc&fileName=008/lljc008.db&recNum=360&itemLink=r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc00897\)\)%230080361&linkText=1](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=lljc&fileName=008/lljc008.db&recNum=360&itemLink=r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc00897))%230080361&linkText=1)

This import was affirmed by the thirteen Colonies by a narrow 7-6 vote, but it was not enacted upon by Congress, probably because Robert Aitken (1734-1802), a Philadelphia printer and the first to publish a Bible in this U.S., was already busy printing the New Testament in 1777, which would also be followed in 1778, 1779, and 1781. (At first the committee thought domestic productions too expensive, only to learn in the end that it was being done by Aitken at less cost than it would be to import).

On January 26, 1781, Aitken petitioned Congress to officially authorize a publication of both Old and New Testaments--<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006481.jpg>, which he was preparing at his own expense (*Journals of Congress*, Volume 19, p. 91--[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=lljc&fileName=019/lljc019.db&recNum=102&itemLink=D?hlaw:14:./temp/~ammem\\_1jAn::%230190103&linkText=1](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=lljc&fileName=019/lljc019.db&recNum=102&itemLink=D?hlaw:14:./temp/~ammem_1jAn::%230190103&linkText=1))

On September 12, 1782, the Congress “highly approve[d] the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken....recommended this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States.” (*Journals of Congress* ([http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=lljc&fileName=023/lljc023.db&recNum=115&itemLink=r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DATE+17820912\)::%230230115&linkText=1](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=lljc&fileName=023/lljc023.db&recNum=115&itemLink=r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DATE+17820912)::%230230115&linkText=1))



(Library of Congress)

(5) Under President Washington, in whose cabinet Jefferson was Secretary of State, the Secretary of War Henry Knox, sent Christian missionaries “of excellent moral character” to be “friends and fathers” to the Indians on the edge of the western frontier. Jefferson carried on this tradition a few years later as President.

As President, in 1803, Jefferson recommended that Congress pass a treaty with the Kaskaskia Indians, which was negotiated by William Henry Harrison, governor of the land and superintendent of Indian affairs, in which “the United States will give annually for seven years one hundred dollars for the support of a [Catholic] priest....the United States will further give the sum of three hundred dollars to assist the said tribe in the erection of a church”—all of which was to be paid out of the United States treasury! (*Public Statutes At Large Of The United States*, 1948, 7:78-79, Article 3rd-- <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=007/llsl007.db&recNum=90> ).

Though some try to escape Jefferson’s Christian acts by emphasizing his purpose as “civilizing the Indians” and acquiring additional land for the U.S., they overlook that he did so by supporting Christian missionaries, paying for a priest’s salary, building a church, and “promoting Christianity” (see #7 below)!

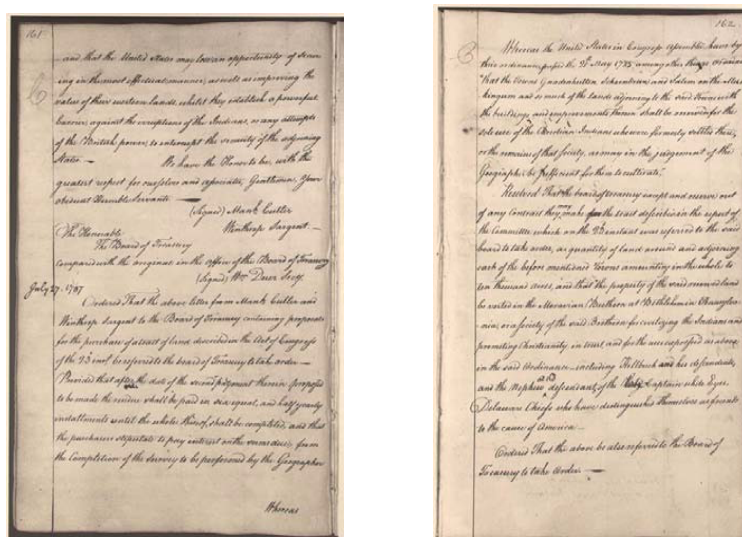
Moreover, if these were not regarded as Christian acts than why did Secretary of State James Madison warn President Jefferson that others would see his action as “a principle not according with the exemption of religion from civil power”?

(6) Two similar treaties were made with the Cherokee and Wyandotte tribes in 1806 and 1807!

(7) President Jefferson also extended three times a 1787 congressional act in which lands were appointed, “For the sole use of Christian Indians and the Moravian Brethren

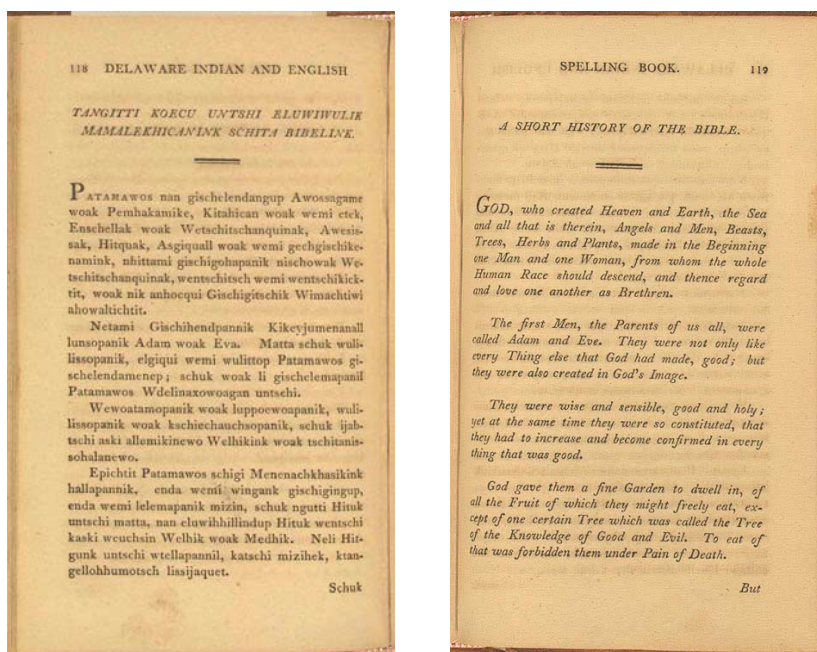


missionaries for civilizing the Indians and promoting Christianity.”  
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006403.jpg>  
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006404.jpg> and



(Library of Congress)

What did those missionaries teach? According to the Library of Congress, “David Zeisberger (1721-1802) was a famous Moravian missionary who spent much of his life working with the Delaware Indians. His Spelling Book contains a ‘Short History of the Bible,’ in the English and Delaware languages” (on top of next page).  
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006774.jpg>  
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006775.jpg> and



(Library of Congress)

(8) Jefferson signed bills which specified monetary support (pay) for chaplains in

Congress and in the military.

(9) While the United States' President, in 1805 Thomas Jefferson was elected the first president of the Washington, D.C. public school board, which used the Bible as a text in classrooms ([http://www.bibleinschools.net/sdm.asp?pg=found\\_father](http://www.bibleinschools.net/sdm.asp?pg=found_father)). Though some doubt Jefferson's advocacy of the Bible as public education curriculum (<http://candst.tripod.com/tnppage/arg6.htm>), there is no sufficient reason for doing so. In 1813 a report by one principal to the board of trustees conveyed the advances his students made in spelling and reading using the Bible as a text, just three years after Jefferson left the school board and Washington, D.C. for retirement in Virginia:

55 have learned to read in the Old and New Testaments, and are all able to spell words of three, four, and five syllables; 26 are now learning to read Dr. Watts' Hymns and spell words of two syllables; 10 are learning words of four and five letters. Of 509 out of the whole number admitted that did not know a single letter, 20 can now read the Bible and spell words of three, four, and five syllables, 29 read Dr. Watts' Hymns and spell words of two syllables, and 10 words of four and five letters.

While not specifically stated in previous records, there is no reason not to believe that the Bible was embedded into the public school curriculum when Jefferson was president of the board just three years earlier. Would and could the board have established its usage in such a short time, if it was not previously a regular part of the curriculum?

Jefferson even reassured one Christian school that it would receive "the patronage of the government" (According to a letter of Thomas Jefferson to the Nuns of the Order of St. Ursula at New Orleans on May 15, 1804—the original letter is at the New Orleans Parish).

(10) Jefferson signed the Articles of War (April 10, 1806), which "earnestly recommended to all officers and soldiers, diligently to attend divine services," something he himself regularly did in the House of Representatives his whole time as president. Jefferson even attended church there just two days after writing the Danbury Baptists about "a wall of separation between Church and State" (according to John Leland's journal entry dated January 3, 1802--<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/f0613s.jpg>)

Again, the *Library of Congress* comments about their location

Church services were held in what is now called Statuary Hall from 1807 to 1857. The first services in the Capitol, held when the government moved to Washington in the fall of 1800, were conducted in the "hall" of the House in the north wing of the building. In 1801 the House moved to temporary quarters in the south wing, called the "Oven," which it vacated in 1804, returning to the north wing for three years. Services were conducted in the House until after the Civil War. The Speaker's podium was used as the preacher's pulpit. <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel06-2.html>



(Library of Congress)

The Library of Congress further explains the following (with title) about these Christian church services <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel06-2.html> :

### **The State Becomes The Church: Jefferson And Madison**

It is no exaggeration to say that on Sundays in Washington during the administrations of Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) and of James Madison (1809-1817) the state became the church. Within a year of his inauguration, Jefferson began attending church services in the House of Representatives. Madison followed Jefferson's example, although unlike Jefferson, who rode on horseback to church in the Capitol, Madison came in a coach and four. Worship services in the House--a practice that continued until after the Civil War--were acceptable to Jefferson because they were nondiscriminatory and voluntary. Preachers of every Protestant denomination appeared. (Catholic priests began officiating in 1826.) As early as January 1806 a female evangelist, Dorothy Ripley, delivered a camp meeting-style exhortation in the House to Jefferson, Vice President Aaron Burr, and a "crowded audience." Throughout his administration Jefferson permitted church services in executive branch buildings. The Gospel was also preached in the Supreme Court chambers. [Underline added]

Jefferson's actions may seem surprising because his attitude toward the relation between religion and government is usually thought to have been embodied in his recommendation that there exist "a wall of separation between church and state." In that statement, Jefferson was apparently declaring his opposition, as Madison had done in introducing the Bill of Rights, to a "national" religion. In attending church services on public property, Jefferson and Madison consciously and deliberately were offering symbolic support to religion as a prop for republican government.

(Can anyone imagine a government allowing such church services today in the Capitol?)

## **Congressional conclusions**

Perhaps the best summary of the relation between the State and Christianity during Jefferson's day (which includes the four years he was in Congress) is noted by the Library of Congress ("Religion and the Congress of Confederation: 1774-1789"--<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel04.html>):

*The Continental-Confederation Congress, a legislative body that governed the United States from 1774 to 1789, contained an extraordinary number of deeply religious men. The amount of energy that Congress invested in encouraging the practice of religion in the new nation exceeded that expended by any subsequent American national government. Although the Articles of Confederation did not officially authorize Congress to concern itself with religion, the citizenry did not object to such activities. This lack of objection suggests that both the legislators and the public considered it appropriate for the national government to promote a nondenominational, nonpolemical Christianity.*

*Congress appointed chaplains for itself and the armed forces, sponsored the publication of a Bible, imposed Christian morality on the armed forces, and granted public lands to promote Christianity among the Indians. National days of thanksgiving and of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer" were proclaimed by Congress at least twice a year throughout the war. Congress was guided by "covenant theology," a Reformation doctrine especially dear to New England Puritans, which held that God bound himself in an agreement with a nation and its people. This agreement stipulated that they "should be prosperous or afflicted, according as their general Obedience or Disobedience thereto appears." Wars and revolutions were, accordingly, considered afflictions, as divine punishments for sin, from which a nation could rescue itself by repentance and reformation.*

*The first national government of the United States, was convinced that the "public prosperity" of a society depended on the vitality of its religion. Nothing less than a "spirit of universal reformation among all ranks and degrees of our citizens," Congress declared to the American people, would "make us a holy, that so we may be a happy people."*

(There were many other Christian acts by government during this period—a must read and display for those interested is on the Library of Congress website—<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel04.html> )

## **Jefferson's personal faith and religion: a unique work in progress until his death**

Jefferson was of course a very complex individual, especially in his views of religion and faith. He, however, is often only painted in educational circles as a valiant secular progressive, who was trying to rid government of Christianity in particular. That is also the impression that we received from the guide at Monticello, a portrait, I believe, that ought to be brushed wider to include a more in-depth picture of his relationship between religion and politics.



Undoubtedly, he had strong differences with many American clergy, and conveyed many conflicting statements at different times in life about his own faith, but his passion and debate was not about eliminating Christianity from government. His concern was to reduce the risks of any one religious denomination (or sect) ruling in government, not to remove religious influence from government altogether. While he was an advocate for the separation of the State from aligning with any specific national Church, he was not attempting to neuter government from Christian influence.

The fact is Jefferson noted his strong belief in a God to whom he and our country owed its allegiance (words now also inscribed on the wall of the Jefferson Memorial):

*The God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift from God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice cannot sleep forever. [from Jefferson's A Summary View of the Rights of British America and Notes on the State of Virginia, 1781].*

Are those the words of a “strict deist,” whose God was a divine watchmaker, not involved in the affairs of men? Sounds to me more like a preacher than a politician!

While Jefferson conveyed deistic tendencies at times in his writings, denied Jesus’ miracles and deity, and certainly was Unitarian in his theology, his faith was far more complex than “strict deism.” On the other hand, as he wrote to William Short on October 31, 1819, he declared that the teachings of Jesus contained the “outlines of a system of the most sublime morality which has ever fallen from the lips of man.”

He also concluded over a few different occasions in his latter years (June 26, 1822, letter to Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse; Sept. 18, 1813, letter to William Canby; January 9, 1816, letter to Charles Thomson) some further thoughts about Jesus:

*The doctrines of Jesus are simple, and tend to all the happiness of man....*

*Of all the systems of morality, ancient or modern which have come under my observation, none appears to me so pure as that of Jesus....*

*I am a real Christian, that is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus.*

Thomas Jefferson was opposed to the tyranny and corruptions of Christianity (brought about he believed by the “priestcraft” or clergy), “but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself,” as he wrote to a friend, Dr. Benjamin Rush--<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/vc006656.jpg> . He continued, “I am a Christian, in the only sense he wished any to be; sincerely attached to his doctrines, in preference to all others.”

In the end, it doesn’t seem to me that one can say things like the above and be a “strict

deist” at the same time, because Jesus’ doctrines included the belief in the immanency of a God who will never leave us or forsake us, always willing to intervene and help us in our times of need, and one who would enter the world again to judge the living and the dead. That is not a divine watchmaker.

### **Why wasn’t this taught to me in U.S. History class?**

Can anyone today see a President taking such Christian actions, signing such treaties, or using governmental monies to further “promote Christianity” as Jefferson did? I don’t know if anyone else has a different experience, but I cannot recall one of these facts about Jefferson’s Christian beliefs, passion, or government practice ever being taught to me in public school.

Does his intermingling of religion and politics seem like deeds of the “Thomas Jefferson” so often conveyed today in educational circles and at Monticello?

If Thomas Jefferson espoused a wall of separation between Church and State, he also breached it, by merging Christianity and politics over and over again. Tyranny was the reason why Thomas Jefferson advocated a separation of Church and State. Personal beliefs, civility, and growth of Christianity and the western frontier are the reasons why he mixed them.

**As a result, I am again respectfully requesting that a fuller view of Thomas Jefferson and his intermingling of government and religion (specifically Christianity) be reinvestigated and reintroduced into the Monticello tour guides’ information and education.**



# MONTICELLO

DANIEL P. JORDA  
*President*

March 6, 2007

Rev. Todd DuBord, Senior Pastor  
Lake Almanor Community Church  
2810 Highway A-13  
Lake Almanor, California 96137

Dear Reverend DuBord,

It's always good to hear from one of our visitors, and thanks very much for your extended letter.

We appreciate your commentary on Jefferson and religion, and I will share it with our Director of Interpretation, Gary Sandling, who oversees the house guides.

Thanks again for your interest and thoughtfulness in writing, and all the best.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Jordan  
President

cc: Gary Sandling

THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION, INC.  
POST OFFICE BOX 316  
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22902  
PHONE 434 984.9801 FAX 434 977-7757  
djordan@monticello.org

## Round #2



# Lake Almanor Community Church

2610 Highway A-13 ~ Lake Almanor, CA 96137

Phone # (530) 596-3683 ~ Fax # (530) 596-4682 ~ E-mail: [lacchurch@frontiernet.net](mailto:lacchurch@frontiernet.net) ~ Web page:  
[www.lacconline.org](http://www.lacconline.org)

---

Todd DuBord, Senior Pastor  
Paul Bernard, Student Ministry Pastor

John Erickson, Associate Pastor  
Scott Cory, Chair of Elder Board

Mr. Gary Sandling  
Director of Interpretation  
Thomas Jefferson Foundation  
P.O. Box 316  
Charlottesville, Virginia, 22902

10/20/07

Dear Mr. Sandling:

I genuinely appreciate Mr. Daniel P. Jordan's (President of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation) correspondence to me (dated March 6, 2007--attached) regarding my research "A Gate Between Church and State" (also attached and posted on our website, [www.CrossFireUSA.org](http://www.CrossFireUSA.org)), which details some erroneous information given by guides at Monticello to our group of 50 Californians in July of 2006. Mr. Jordan also sent a carbon copy of his letter and my research to you.

I am not an extremist or a conspirator, nor do I wish to be a public pain, but to date I have not heard any response from you regarding my research materials Mr. Jordan passed along to you, so I'm writing and sending them again.

I'm also writing about yet another (and similar) unfortunate circumstance with one of your guides, who incorrectly informed our second group of 56 Californians on June 4, 2007 about Jefferson's religious practice, beliefs, and actions mixing Christianity and government.

I tried to make contact with you while at Monticello, but you were unfortunately out of the office. I spoke to Shirley (last name?), who is (I was told) the second in command in your absence. She was very cordial and asked if I would like to talk to two other associate curators who were present at the facility. I answered in the affirmative. But when she asked the nature of the discussion, and I mentioned "Monticello's teaching on



Jefferson's views of Christianity and government," she responded that only you could address that because the other curators' expertise was on architecture, artifacts, etc."

I apologize for my delay in writing, as I wanted to respond to you as soon as we returned to California in June, but I was caught up in several summer emergency situations with my pastoral position, then I was invited on a trip to Iraq with Chuck Norris in September during which we visited 15 military bases there to encourage the troops.

Moreover, I do not wish to jeopardize any guide's employment and have no complaint against the three or four who taught our groups except for the fact that they were uneducated and/or misinformed about Jefferson's views on Christianity and politics, and hence passed off that faulty information to us two years in a row. Our guide this year was an American history major graduate from Virginia University. He was articulate, an exceptional teacher, and well-versed in Jefferson's life and the Monticello estate. Our group thoroughly enjoyed his cordiality, professionalism, and wit, until the last 10 minutes of the tour when I respectfully asked the following religious questions during a time when he asked us if we had any further questions.

Because I wanted to see how he understood Jefferson's view of Christianity (and not just religion in general) and particularly how he intermingled it (or allowed such) with government, I asked four questions of him. Before I document those questions and his answers (which were heard by the others in our group of course), I must tell you that this was the only time the guide became noticeably nervous and seemingly insecure in our entire tour. And I assure you (and have many witnesses) that I was not interrogating in any respect, but merely asking respectful questions as he requested.

**My question to guide:** "Did Jefferson ever intermix Christianity and government?"

**Guide's response:** [Answering confidently] "No, not that he would have considered so."

**My follow-up question to guide:** "So he never intermingled politics and Christian belief or practice?"

**Guide's response:** "No, Jefferson did not."

While it is espoused and correct that Jefferson did much to assure the separation of Church and State, it is equally true that he did not try to eliminate Christian influence from government--just the dominance of Christian sectarianism. In my research (attached and located at [www.CrossFireUSA.org](http://www.CrossFireUSA.org)) I cite from the Library of Congress over a dozen major occasions in which Jefferson merged Christianity and politics, including (as you know) his own proposal of biblical imagery for the U.S. Seal, endorsement and use of government buildings for church purposes, and the signing of treaties for federal monies to be used to support priests, missionaries, military chaplains, and build churches on the western frontier.

**My question to guide:** "Did Jefferson ever attend Church Services while President?"

**Guide's response:** "No, not unless he was asked by a delegation."

**My follow-up question to guide:** "Do we know where Jefferson would have attended Church?"

**Guide's response:** "The America Episcopal Church, but it burnt down."

This is an exact quote from the Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel06-2.html>:

***The State Becomes The Church:  
Jefferson And Madison***

*It is no exaggeration to say that on Sundays in Washington during the administrations of Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) and of James Madison (1809-1817) the state became the church. Within a year of his inauguration, Jefferson began attending church services in the House of Representatives. Madison followed Jefferson's example, although unlike Jefferson, who rode on horseback to church in the Capitol, Madison came in a coach and four. Worship services in the House--a practice that continued until after the Civil War--were acceptable to Jefferson because they were nondiscriminatory and voluntary. Preachers of every Protestant denomination appeared. (Catholic priests began officiating in 1826.)*

I'm sure our Monticello guides in both years would be completely surprised to discover that just two days after Jefferson wrote his famous letter to the Danbury Baptists citing the "wall of separation between Church and State," he attended church in the place where he always had as president: the U.S. Capitol. The very seat of our nation's government was also used for sacred purposes. If the Library of Congress can state that, can you please assure the guides could be trained to say so at Monticello?

**My question to guide:** "I heard Jefferson was the President of the first public school Board in Washington, D.C.?"

**Guide's response:** "Yes, he was."

**My follow-up question to guide:** "Did you know the Bible was used as a school text in that area?"

**Guide's response:** "I did not."

While the United States' President, in 1805 Thomas Jefferson was elected the first president of the Washington, D.C. public school board, which used the Bible as a text in classrooms. Though some doubt Jefferson's advocacy of the Bible as public education curriculum, there is no sufficient reason for doing so. In 1813 a report by one principal to the board of trustees conveyed the advances his students made in spelling and reading using the Bible as a text, just three years after Jefferson left the school board and Washington, D.C. for retirement in Virginia:

55 have learned to read in the Old and New Testaments, and are all able to spell words of three, four, and five syllables; 26 are now learning to read Dr. Watts' Hymns and spell words of two syllables; 10 are learning words of four and five letters. Of 509 out of the whole number admitted that did not know a single letter, 20 can now read the Bible and spell words of three, four, and five syllables, 29

read Dr. Watts' Hymns and spell words of two syllables, and 10 words of four and five letters.

While not specifically stated in previous records, there is no reason not to believe that the Bible was embedded into the public school curriculum when Jefferson was president of the board just three years earlier. Would and could the board have established its usage in such a short time, if it was not previously a regular part of the curriculum under Jefferson?

Jefferson even reassured one Christian school that it would receive “the patronage of the government” (According to a letter of Thomas Jefferson to the Nuns of the Order of St. Ursula at New Orleans on May 15, 1804—the original letter is at the New Orleans Parish).

**My last question to guide:** “Why the Separation of Church and State? To keep the State out of the Church, or the Church out of the State, or both?”

**Guide's response:** [Hesitant and nervous], “To keep the State out of the Church I believe.” He further elaborated on how our founders did not want a replication of what existed between the King of England and the Anglican Church. While his answer is absolutely true, it is only partially accurate. It is also true (as you know) that Christian sectarianism or denominationalism (not Christian belief and practice) was to be prohibited from dominating the State. The first amendment excluded the State from interfering in Church affairs, but also excluded sectarianism from taking over the State.

---

Again, I do not wish to make a case against your guides, only to say that it seems that Monticello needs to add to or revise its educational guides, as the incorrect information has now been disseminated two years in a row to our groups of 50 plus tourists. Could this be coincidental? I am truthfully only trying to help you in fine tuning the tours at Monticello. They are exceptional in all cases, except it seems the religious education—at least based upon these two major tour groups from the west coast.

Being that Jefferson's work on the relationship between Church and State was one of his most significant emphases, I'm certain that there is a section in your training manuals for your guides about his beliefs and what he did and didn't espouse regarding the relation between the two. Might I respectfully request a copy of the training manual, so that I can settle for my own mind and tens (if not now hundreds) of thousands of others across America who have access to my research from our website or some secondary source?). I would gladly post a reassurance to the public from you that it is in (or has been revised in) the training material by quoting from it, or a letter from you that it is being reviewed for proper emphasis in the training material.

Because of the related Internet news articles posted on [www.worldnetdaily.com](http://www.worldnetdaily.com), you should know I've been interviewed on over three dozen radio stations nationwide, about Monticello's educational oversights and potential need to enhance its tour training manuals. Because these news agencies are curious about Monticello's next response,

about 20 station managers have given me their e-mail addresses and are waiting to hear back from me about your response.

I look forward to multiple trips to Monticello in the future with other groups from California, but I am genuinely hoping to hear a greater and more accurate emphasis upon Jefferson's views of religion and especially how Christianity at times merged with government, at the same time he fought for the separation of sectarianism.

Respectfully,

Todd DuBord (M.Div.)  
Senior Pastor  
Lake Almanor Community Church

cc: Mr. Daniel P. Jordan, President

attachments



## An Email from Monticello

**(The following email has been the only correspondence I've received from Monticello or those who are employed by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation)**

(The following email has been the only correspondence I've received from Monticello or those who are employed by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation)

**From:** Gary Sandling [mailto:gsandling@monticello.org]

**Sent:** Saturday, October 27, 2007 9:01 AM

**To:** lacchurch@frontiernet.net

**Cc:** Dan Jordan

**Subject:** Your visit to Monticello

Dear Rev. DuBord,

I must apologize for not responding to your first letter and you certainly have no cause to apologize to me. I did receive your first letter and essay and read them with interest. I received your packet this morning and I have now read the second. I have placed your essay in a file in our training library where it will be available to all of our staff to consult. You have clearly undertaken considerable research on this topic. I have used, in fact, your observations of your first visit in subsequent training sessions and I will share your observations of your visit with our staff.

We have a wide variety of subject matter to cover on tours of the house. We do not provide our guides with tour scripts but do strive to provide for them a variety of primary source documentation and secondary literature on a variety of subjects pertinent to giving tours at Monticello. While we know that visitors appreciate a broad perspective of Jefferson's life and interests, we also realize that we do not cover many of these topics in depth, particularly those that involve Jefferson's public life. In recent years, there have been many important works written on religion in early America that have given a fuller, more nuanced picture of the public and private place of religion, and particularly Christianity, in the founding era. We will add to that stock of knowledge your conclusions on the subject. Thank-you for sharing it with us.

Best wishes,

Gary

Gary Sandling

Director of Interpretation & Training

Monticello, the Home of Thomas Jefferson

434.984.9833