

“...proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants.” --Leviticus 25:10b
“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!” --Psalm 33:12 (esv)



Sesquicentennial! That's a mouthful!! And a word I had never heard until the coming of this year, the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. In my selections for this newsletter, I'd like to take the 250th to share some of my thoughts about our nation and its history. The verses above, taken out of the Old Testament, refer to the nation of Israel, but have been often applied to our own nation, a country often seen as a modern Israel under the hand of God. The founding fathers of our nation believed very strongly that Divine guidance was at work in the founding of our nation, often referring to that work as Providence, a word they also used as a synonym for God. The laws of our nation were strongly influenced by biblical principles, if for no other reason than that since the days of Constantine and the spread of the Roman Empire, as well as the Catholic Church, across Europe the message of Christ in one form or another was the dominant religion of the people and the governments. As nations formed their laws, the roots were the Roman Empire, particularly with the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church. With the Reformation, the Catholic Church came under scrutiny, and then with it, the monarchs aligned with it, and so the Protestant perspective of scripture's influence on national laws impacted places such as Switzerland and Germany. So when it came time for our European founders to establish a new nation, it was natural that they did so following the Western Traditions of Greece and Rome, as well as the Christian teachings. In that sense, we were founded on Christian principles, and laws such as the Muslims Sharia law or the Hindu laws of India played no part. Still, there were issues to be reconciled (for which you may refer to the Bible Students article.

What kind of Christian faith varied depending on whether the colony was founded by Puritans such as Massachusetts, Baptist at Rhode Island, or Anglican/Episcopalian such as the Carolinas. Signers of the Declaration of Independence were Anglican, Congregationalist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Quaker, Roman Catholic, Deist, Unitarian and a few that it isn't known if they were involved with a church at all. In the next decade, the religion of the Constitution signatories added Methodist, Hugenot and Lutheran. The Baptist influence was felt particularly in the fight for the Bill of Rights, specifically in the realm of religious freedom, because so many had suffered persecution at the hands of the established Anglican Church in England (and had seen it in the Catholic countries of Europe), so they wanted to avoid that ever happening again by a government tied to a church. Some of those folks would feel right at home in our church. Some were find us rather radical with our focus on personal conversion and believer's baptism. Some we might not be so comfortable with, either, such as when Thomas Jefferson preferred viewing Jesus through the lens of morality rather than divinity. Likely then, as was especially the case in the 1950's and 1960's (as well as today!), there would have been those who attended church as a proper social practice, rather than our of personal commitment to and knowledge of Christ. Regardless of whether we would agree with their view of God, Christ, salvation or scripture, the moral code that underlies the laws of our nation has as part of its foundation, the moral teachings of the Bible.



Lead Pastor- Richard Crooks | Music Director- Sasha White | Youth Leader- Jesse Kracht



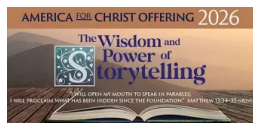
JULY 2026

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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And yet, somehow they moved forward. I suspect that they also took into consideration the scriptures that talk about freeing the oppressed, such as Isaiah 58:6, don't you? In this article, I simply want to challenge you to consider (or maybe even research) how these individuals would have handled the teachings of scripture while taking the actions they did to create a new nation. The Christians in the Roman Empire had to wrestle with those questions, and yet chose not to attempt a revolt as the Jewish people did. Christian believers such as Martin Luther and the Pilgrims had to wrestle with the issue when the church/government ties they lived under had gone astray. Christians in Hitler's Germany or Communist China and U.S.S.R. had to seek how the scriptures apply. How would YOU go about reconciling these passages in the midst of an oppressive government? What would be YOUR chosen path?



Nebraska American Baptist Men's Camp
August 7-8, 2026
Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center

Friday Steak Dinner
Fellowship
Campfire
Shooting Range
Camp Activities

Friday & Saturday \$105 Saturday only \$50 Friday only \$40

Keynote Speaker
Rev. Lauren Parliment

REGISTER
campmerrill.com

Bring a friend, your son, grandson, brother, or uncle. All ages welcome!


Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.” Romans 13:1-7 (esv)

For this article, I want to continue on the theme of our nation's 250th Anniversary and its relationship to Christianity and the scriptures. But here I want to approach it a different way, just to give you something to chew on. We regularly hear that our nation was founded on Judeo/Christian principles and the moral teachings of the Bible. And as I described in my Pastor's Notes (but only in a limited way), the Founding Fathers came out of a Christian heritage as they sought to begin a new country, one which they believe they were creating under the guidance and blessing of Divine Providence. But as individuals with that heritage and who, as mainly Protestants, would have had great respect for the authority of scripture, they had some obstacles to overcome. My Christian History professor had a book I never got to borrow to read, titled The Pulpit of the American Revolution, because often the things discussed in the congressional meetings were topics that had also been addressed in the pulpits each weekend. For the Founders to do what they did, they had to work out their theology along the way.

The verses above talk about being subject to the government, and seeing the government as being appointed by God and working on his behalf. In Europe, the terminology they were familiar with was the "divine right of kings," based on this very notion. So when the founders of our country decided to revolt instead of being subject, they also had to consider whether their actions were in disobedience to the clear teaching of scripture! Even the question of being taxed, which was part of their battle cry, is addressed here in Romans. As students of history, they would have been aware of how the Christians living during the reign of Nero and other cruel rulers chose NOT to fight against their government, but to witness within. Our founders were choosing a different path.

Jesus's teaching to "render to Caesar that which is Caesar's," and "turn the other cheek" must have also weighed heavy upon them. Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 to pray for kings and leaders must also have been in the forefront of their thinking. And, of course, any Christian who chooses to fight in war has to reconcile their actions with the commandment telling us not to kill. Beyond that, as they framed the constitution, they also were cognizant of scripture's teaching about slavery, such as 1 Corinthians 7:21-22 and Philemon in which freedom from slavery is much preferred over slavery itself, and so though they did not include instruction in the constitution itself in order to form the government, they made clear statements that it was an issue that needed to be resolved and a practice that would need to be ended within a few decades. How they must have struggled to apply scripture to the realities of their situation!

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.
-John 8:36 niv




Through the decades, our nation has had a sense that God was somehow at work in our midst. The Monroe doctrine of Manifest Destiny, the theological wrestling with slavery at the time of the Civil War, the fight against the godless Nazis and atheistic communists..even the establishment of Thanksgiving and the slogan "In God We Trust" on our money...so many things in our nation's history have been impacted by faith in God. And God has spread the Gospel across our nation, sometimes even using our less than perfect policies to create opportunities to know him. Indeed, Christian Spiritual music was born in the midst of the culture of slavery!

I have wrestled with issues such as the Vietnam War, or with the propping up of awful dictators like Filipino President Marcos, and how sometimes our nation's wealth has been at the expense of other people. I have struggled to see how selfish people in our nation have become, living in mansions while wearing clothes made by people who barely survive in metal shacks and meager meals. I have observed riots in the streets over racial tensions, women's rights, court sentences, police conduct, anti-war protestors, and most recently the divisions over immigration policies, Israel/Palestinian relations and deeply divisive political stances.



But, growing up with a World War II vet father, I also know we fought to stop terrible and brutal regimes, and after our side won invested millions of dollars in helping our defeated foes get their nations back on their feet. I have met a man from Swaziland who was deeply impressed by the generosity of our country when they were trying to form their nation newly released from British rule. I've seen us land people on the moon, robots on Mars, and fling exploring camera spacecraft beyond our solar system. I've been to countries where one has to be careful what you say, or where individuals (especially women) need to be sure our arms and legs were covered lest we offend local law. I have been to nations where bribes to the police were normal and expected practice, while females in the society have little or no protection from abusive men.

We may not be a perfect nation, but our ideals are noble. Every individual matters, every citizen has a voice in their government, we try to find ways (through government and private efforts) to stop the spread of diseases here and in other countries, to provide a safety net for the poorest in society and education for all. We are have the privilege of free speech and freedom of religion, even though sometimes I don't like how those freedoms are used or abused. I could add many more things, as could you I am sure. And I pray that in these strange times we will not lose our way as a nation, or forget the roots and ideals that have brought us to this point and served us so well for 250 years.

This year, I am saddened because I also remember how excited our country was to celebrate our 200th anniversary, while today instead of excitement there seems to be only anger, criticism, complaints and ungratefulness. I realize how incredibly blessed I have been to be born into the "Grand Experiment" of democracy, a form of government that was innovative and unheard of when our nation launched into it. I especially realize that when I stop to compare what I have here with what I have seen in other countries. I am thrilled that some of the World Cup Visitors are speaking out about how incredible our country is, often in exact opposition to what they had believed about us and what they expected to have happen. This 250th, might I challenge you to try making a list of 250 things about your life here in the United States that make you feel blessed by God? And, if you can't stop at 250, it's okay to make your list longer. If we can't think of 250, then perhaps we need to step back and change our perspective a bit.

Happy Anniversary, United States,
 A grateful citizen...



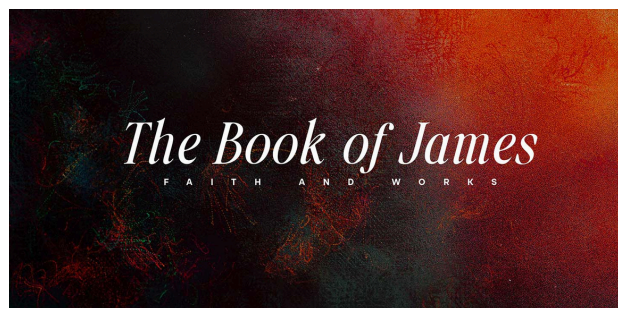
**GLORY, GLORY,
 HALLELUJAH!**



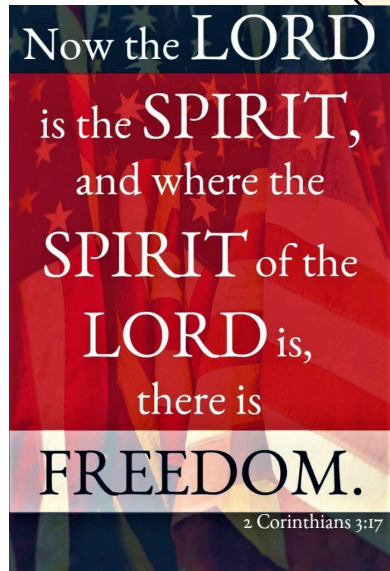
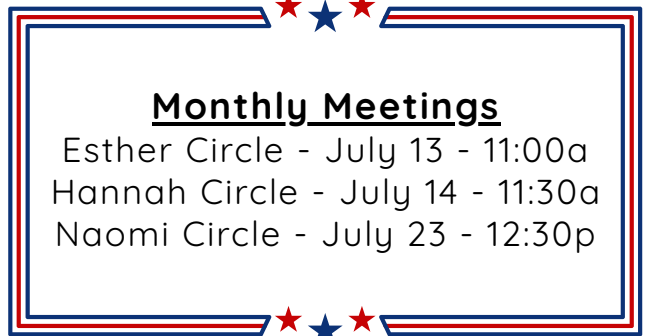
FBKIDS & FBYOUTH



From our youngest campers to our *not so youngest* campers, God has been at work in amazing ways this month! Through worship, Bible study, games, laughter, and new friendships, camp has been filled with moments that will last a lifetime. Take a look at some of the memories being made!



Our Quarterly Meeting is July 2nd @ 1:30pm in the Parlor. We can't wait to see you!





Vision Team Minutes: June 13, 2026

Attendance: Randy Cash, Eileen Cash, Marcia Hill, Joel Foreman, Diane Borer, Mary Weldon, Terry Woodman, Betty Laughlin.

Opening prayer: Joel Foreman

Devotion: Mary Weldon

Treasurer: Randy reported that \$47,000 has been received for the stained glass repair. The next "Laten Fund" installment will be available at the end of June. Diane Borer suggested people save their spare change and the months that have five (5) Sundays people donate the change to the stained glass repair, maybe even label it "Fifth Sunday Change Jar". Randy made a motion to take \$7,000 from the Paulger Memorial to help cover expenses for the Colorado Youth Conference and Jesse Kracht's Mission Conference expenses. The remaining \$1,500 from Vicki Anderson Memorial. Mary Weldon second the motion. PASSED

ABM: Joel reported that John C. Fremont Days in July 10-12. We will continue to sell hotdogs and Midland Campus. Volunteers are encouraged to be here at 7:30a on Saturday to set up. We have 700 hotdogs to grill and wrap. Mary received an anonymous donation of \$100 dollars to go towards hotdog buns.

ABW: Eileen reported their next meeting is July 2nd with the "Ladies Day Out" event being held in September and the Christmas event will be in December. Marcia Hill reported we have 6 kids attend VBS at Camp Moses Merrill on June 4, the Bible lesson was on Noah and the kids made animals out of pinecones. Betty reported the cards continues to be sent out. Sherri Sharp has made connection with Nye Court.

Missions: Diane reported that cards continue to be sent to missionaries. Socks are being sent to Jamaica with ABM helping with the postage. There will be a missionary passing through our area in September. The committee would like to plan something special on Friday Sept, 11.

Property and Finance reported July 6 will be the install date of the stained glass windows. A special thank you to Joel, Justin and Alan for coming to the church to put back in a pirce of tempered galls that was blown out by a storm.

Pastor Crooks: Provided a hand out with a list of tasks needed to be completed for the Region Conference, volunteers are needed. Julie Boettcher, a graduate of Judson College will be doing a quick tour in August. The committee was asked if we would like for her to come and sing. The date would be August 2nd. The type of music is Independent Folk Music. Terry Woodman made a motion for her to come and Marcia Hill second. PASSED.

Closing Prayer: Betty Laughlin

Respectfully submitted: Shelly Bowen, clerk.

*We ♥ our
Volunteers*

FB Kids & FB Youth

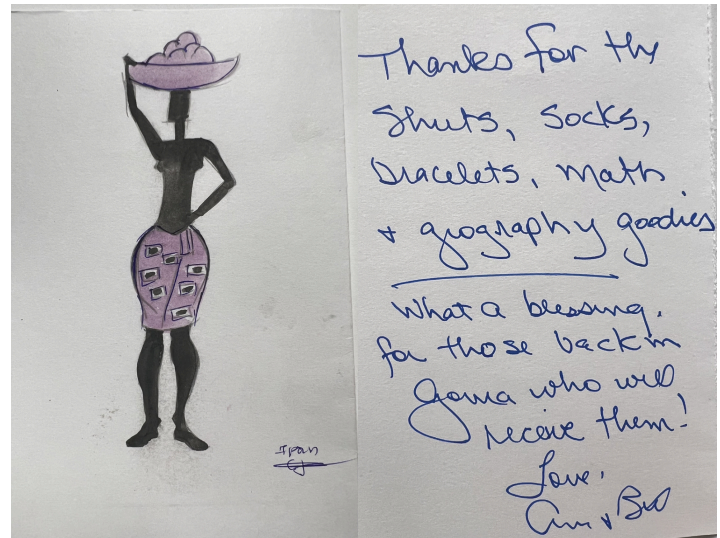
Now Open For Registration!

A CHURCH WITH A HEART IN THE HEART OF FREMONT

Visit www.fremontfbc.org For More Info

Groups Start Back in August!

SCAN ME!



For even the
Son of Man
came not to
be served but
to serve, and
to give his life
as a ransom
for many
Mark 10:45

WORSHIP IN THE PARK

John C. Fremont Park



July 12th
10am

A message from Pastor Richard Crooks of First Baptist Church

9:15A - TRADITIONAL SERVICE
10A - CASUAL SERVICE IN THE PARK

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 4 Joel Foreman
- 4 Shay Scott
- 9 Linda Schuette
- 9 Matthew Schulz
- 13 Amy Schollmeyer
- 14 Charlotte McKenzie
- 18 Lacey Pilkenton
- 19 Matthew Hammond Sr.

HAPPY Anniversary

22 Richard and Nola Crooks

MAY BIBLE HISTORY ANSWER

(Reminder - There wasn't a June History Puzzle, to remind us not to leave undone the things God asks of us)
The two church groups believed to be the most ancient are the Coptic Orthodox Church found primarily in Egypt even today, traditionally believed to be started by the Gospel writer Mark in the mid-first century. The other is the Syrian Orthodox Church where Paul had gone to persecute Christians in Damascus, long before Mark began learning mission work from Paul. Both have had a continuous existence, and both face very trying times today in the midst of radical Muslim sects such as the Muslim Brotherhood and ISIS

JULY HISTORY PUZZLE

In honor of our nation's 250th birthday, let's turn to a piece of American Christian history. What was a "chapel car," who used it and why?

JULY BIBLE PUZZLE

In line with our nation's Sesquicentennial celebration, there is a Bible verse inscribed on an famous piece of American memorabilia. What is the verse, what does the verse actually refer to in scripture and what is it inscribed upon?

MAY BIBLE PUZZLE ANSWER

(Reminder - there was no June puzzle as a reminder for us to not leave undone the things God asks us to do)
The prophet to described himself as a tender of fig trees rather than a prophet was Amos (Amos 7:14). Paul's commercial vocation was tentmaking, as were Aquila and Priscilla. (Acts 18:1-3)

Happy Birthday America! For me, the story of America has been one of faith, courage, perseverance, and hope. From the birth of our nation in 1776 to the country I know and love today. Each generation faced moments of celebration and sorrow, victory and hardship. Through it all, we can see the faithful hand of God leading, providing, and offering hope even in the darkest seasons.

Our nation has witnessed the founding of a new republic, westward expansion, the struggle to preserve the Union, the fight for freedom and civil rights, world wars, times of economic uncertainty, acts of tragedy, and seasons of healing and renewal. Along the way, Americans have accomplished incredible feats, cared for one another through difficult times, and continued striving to build a better future for the generations we leave behind.

As we celebrate America's 250th, give thanks—not only for the freedoms we enjoy, but for God's steadfast presence throughout our nation's journey. We remember those who sacrificed before us, honor the blessings we've received, and look ahead with confidence, trusting that the same God who has always been faithful in the past, and will continue to guide us in the years to come. May this Independence Day be more than fireworks but a celebration of history and God's promises. May it be a reminder to seek God's wisdom, walk in His truth, and continue building a nation that reflects His love, justice, mercy, and grace for future generations. God Bless America!
-Amity Bruce

"IT IS FOR FREEDOM THAT CHRIST HAS SET US FREE. STAND FIRM, THEN, AND DO NOT LET YOURSELVES BE BURDENED AGAIN BY A YOKE OF SLAVERY."
GALATIANS 5:1

Volunteers Needed in CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Starting August 2026
Wednesday Nights

COME SEE LIFE CHANGE HAPPEN!

Contact the Office for more information!!



We believe in the power of prayer!
Whatever you're facing, we'd be honored to pray with you.



SCAN ME!



Things Happen and Plans Change - It's Always A Good Idea to Verify Dates/Times/Places 😊

*Event in Family Center

July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10a - Women's Coffee 7p - Bible Study	2 10a - Pastor-Led Bible Study/Zoom 1:30p - ABWM Quarterly Meeting	3 Office Closed 9a - Men's Coffee 10a - Nye Sq. Bible Study	4
5 COMMUNION 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service*	6 Stained Glass Window Installation Day! 9a - Men's Coffee	7 6:30p - Property Team 7p - AA Meeting	8 10a - Women's Coffee 7p - Bible Study	9 5:30p - Kay Circle Mat Weaving	10 9a - Men's Coffee	11 7:30a - Volunteers arrive to help with Fremont Days
12 9:15a - Traditional Service 10a - Worship in the Park John C. Fremont Days	13 9a - Men's Coffee 11a - Esther Circle 6p - Woodcarvers	14 11:30a - Hannah Circle @ La Hacienda 7p - AA Meeting 6p - Personnel Team 6:30p - Vision Team	15 10a - Women's Coffee 7p - Bible Study	16 10a - Pastor-Led Bible Study/Zoom	17 9a - Men's Coffee	18 9:30a - ABW Bible Study
19 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service* 11a - Bible Study	20 9a - Men's Coffee	21 7p - AA Meeting	22 10a - Women's Coffee 7p - Bible Study	23 12:30p - Naomi Circle 5:30p - Kay Circle Mat Weaving	24 9a - Men's Coffee 10a - Nye Sq. Bible Study	25
26 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service* 11a - Bible Study	27 9a - Men's Coffee 6p - Woodcarvers	28 7p - AA Meeting	29	30 10a - Pastor-Led Bible Study/Zoom	31 9a - Men's Coffee	
<p>Cookies & Coffee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 - Naomi 12 - ABM 19 - Hannah 26 - Esther 						

Fremont Day Volunteers - Please meet at the church July 11th at 7:30am to start preparing for the day!