



Mayflower Messenger

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

July 2022

Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Congregation,

I hope your Summer is off to a good start! For me, July is Summer and Summer is freedom. The month of June is almost Summer, but not yet. It gets warm, but it's not quite there. Technically, August is a Summer month, but it is just too hot! July is hot, but not so much that you have to stay inside. Quite the contrary, it is a time to enjoy others' company and be out and about. It is also the month we celebrate our independence. July fourth is the pinnacle of backyard bbqs, picnics, and time spent outside with friends and family. It continues to bear the distinction of being the one day of year when the most hotdogs are consumed. For me, that meant putting one line of ketchup and one line of mustard on either side of the dog. If onions and relish were available, they went on top. A few years ago, when I shared that with others, I was met with looks of surprise. You put that on your hotdog? Yes, I put that on my hotdog, ...doesn't everyone? No, they went on to tell me how they dressed their hot dog, and after hearing it, I was more convinced than before that I liked mine just the way I made them. But, when I asked them where they got their idea, they mentioned the name of a restaurant that specialized specifically in hot dog sales. I could not believe it, but low and behold, they were right. There is a whole cottage industry of restaurants doing the same thing. Maybe you were aware of this, but it was new to me. Always up for a new culinary experience, braved this new world and I decided to go. I ordered two different styles of hotdog with tater tots on the side; why not go all out! They were good, different, but good. The tots were great as always. But as I reflect on the experience, I think about church, about worship styles. Maybe during COVID you surfed the web or your TV and watched services at

different churches. Worship styles now-a-days vary from silence (Quakers) to a rock concert and everything in between. It makes a person wonder, can people worship God like that? Is there an official way to worship God? I know some think they can only worship God by sitting in a particular pew, but what about worship styles? One of the things I hope the Bible Study group enjoyed discovering while studying Revelation was the role of the Lamb. It was the Lamb, bearing the marks of slaughter (crucifixion) that was worthy to open the sealed scroll (Rev 5:6) and bring forth the coming age. It was the Lamb who took the throne, the central position, and continued to rule (Rev 7:17, Matt 28:18). Like I mentioned on Sunday, people have a way of leaving out parts of the Trinity. They like some of what God has revealed and forget the rest. Doing so may play to their interests, but it does a great disservice to the church. I am not concerned about the style people use to worship God, but I am concerned they worship God in the fullness of the Trinity. Personally, I see that happening at our church. We celebrate the full revelation of God, not just in word, but in deed. Do we all agree, no, not on everything. But come Sunday morning, we are all there, singing, praising God, and praying for one another. Praise God! Folks, make it a priority to have a wonderful Summer!

God's peace,
Pastor Brian

Please remember to pray for... Bill Browne; Brian & Maureen Wininger; Joan Noel; Sue Unsworth; the men and women serving our country in the military; first responders and police officers.

Notes to the Church:

Dear Friends: Thank you for your generous donation of \$150.00, received on May 16, 2022. Your kindness will make a positive difference in the lives of our less fortunate Citrus County neighbors. Your generous gifts assist year-round with our Food Pantry, Mobile Canteen Feeding Program. Rent and utility Assistance, Children's Activities, Holiday Support, and all of the programs that the Salvation Army provides for our neighbors facing financial hardships.

Our Sunday services are: Sunday School, 9:45am and Worship Service, 11:00am, and I wish to extend an invitation to come visit us. Music and Biblical studies are a big part of our Worship Service. We are located at 712 S. School Ave. In Lecanto or join us for our live online worship services at:

<http://www.facebook.com/SalvationArmyCitrus/>.

What a blessing it is to see firsthand all of the lives that are being changed for the better by your kind and generous gifts! May God bless you for thinking of others and for putting those kind thoughts into action. We could not do all that we do, without you! In His service, Hank Harwell, Major, Citrus County Corps

July Birthdays

04 C.J. Messenger	18 Betty Donahue
05 Donna Carpenter	19 Karen Frakes
14 John Wilson	24 Peggy Allison
15 Maureen Wininger	26 Barbara Mazur

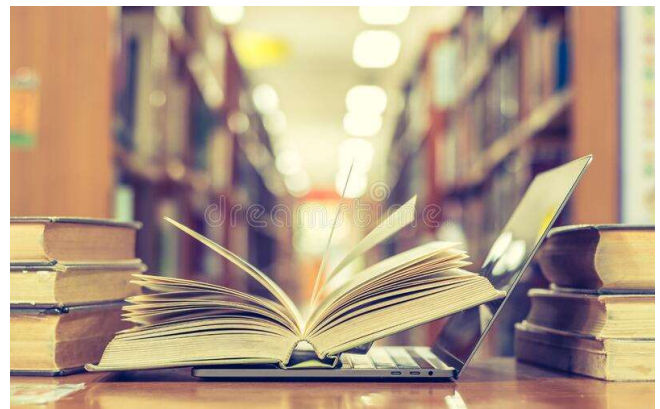
July Anniversaries

14 Wilma & Ed France
17 Vera & Charles Murphy

Church Finances: As of June 19, 2022 the church has taken in \$42,096.72 in the General Fund and have spent \$39,149.36. We are maintaining a balance of \$140,543.15 in all accounts (checking, CD's, and savings).

Church Outreach:

In the month of June our church donated \$100.00 to Key Training Center. Their Mission: To assist persons with developmental disabilities achieve their God-given potential through an array of individualized services that promote growth, choice, and independence with kindness, love, dignity, and respect.



Library News: Did you know we have a church library? It is at the far end of the hallway on the right. The ladies have done a fabulous job rearranging books and getting them into bookshelves so that they are easy to browse through. You'll find books of fiction, mysteries, faith, and much more. Please feel free to borrow any book and return as soon as you finish. If you'd like to donate books to the library, you can do that as well.

Please visit our new website!

<https://www.citruspringcongregational.org/> You can catch the latest sermon, announcements, and the latest issue of the Mayflower Messenger.

Deacons' Corner:

Greetings church family,
 A little background on my wife Debbie and I. We moved to Citrus County back in June 2019. I love the warm days and starry nights here in Florida. We had lived in Northern Virginia for quite some time and don't miss the cold weather and traffic. When we settled into our new home we began attending several local churches. I can't explain it but we were drawn to CCCC. It is said that God has a plan, has THE plan for everyone and everything. This must be part of his plan. Our church has a lot of members that go out of their way to connect with other members, especially new people. These connections help build a strong bond in our church. I am honored to be on the Deacon's Board. As a Deacon I am hopeful to be of greater service to our church and members.



God bless you all,
 John Wilson

Trustees News: The Trustees have been busy working on projects around the church. Here is a list of some of the things they are working on:

1. Replacing one of the air conditioning units in Fellowship Hall.
2. Work is being done to renovate the sign in front of the church.
3. The lock on the side door to Fellowship Hall has been fixed.

Women's Fellowship:

Women's Fellowship is done meeting for the summer. Meetings will start again in September. Please consider coming to the meetings as they do lots of wonderful and fun things.

**Friday Night Dinners at the Citrus Springs**

VFW!! Friday dinners are from 5 PM to 6:30 PM (but I recommend you come early). The price is now **\$12.00** per person, but that includes dinner, salad or coleslaw, dessert, and free coffee. You will not leave hungry!

Jul 01	Pot Roast
Jul 08	Fried Shrimp
Jul 15	Roast Chicken
Jul 22	Pork Roast
Jul 29	Roast Beef

NOTE: Sunday Brunch will not be served on the first Sunday as there will be a cookout on Monday the 4th in celebration of Independence Day. Cookout is at noon and the cost is \$10.00 per person. Sausage & peppers, hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, potato salad, dessert, etc.

Sunday Brunch in July will be July 17 from 11:00am until 12:30pm.



Another Declaration of Independence: Freedom in Christ

Mike Pohlman
29 Jun, 2010

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

Like millions of Americans this week, my mind is on the Fourth of July holiday and what it represents: our freedom as a nation. This freedom is a precious thing, bought with the sweat, toil and blood of countless Americans who initially fought to obtain it (Revolutionary War), as well as those who have fought to secure it in the centuries since that fateful day in 1776.

Gratitude without measure wells up in my heart when I consider the brave men and women of the American military who, this Fourth of July, will be serving in Iraq and Afghanistan to combat the tyranny of terrorism. These soldiers stand in the train of valiant warriors who fought in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam and the first Gulf War. Each of these conflicts—while unique in themselves—shared the common goal of protecting American freedom. Today's battles are no different.

But even as I prize my freedom as an American, I am moved to consider a greater freedom—my freedom in Christ. It is the freedom that comes with being a disciple of Jesus Christ. "If you abide in my word," our Lord declares, "you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).

This statement was shocking to Jesus' audience. These proud men thought they already had all the freedom they needed by virtue of being "offspring of Abraham" (John 8:33). Jesus proceeds to point them beyond any

national, social or religious freedom they might enjoy to the freedom that comes through His person and work: "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin ... So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:34,36). Contrary to what Jesus' listeners thought, they were in bondage to sin and subject to the tyranny of it.

Commenting on this passage of Scripture Leon Morris writes, "People do not always, or even usually, realize that they are in bondage. They tend to rest in some fancied position of privilege, national, social or religious. So these Jews, proud of their religion, did not even know their need to be free."

Even as Christians we can fall prey to the temptation to trust in other things for our freedom from the tyranny of sin: status, money, good works, associations, etc. But the true disciple finds freedom in Christ and Christ alone.

What am I trusting in today?

The Fourth of July is a wonderful time to consider our freedom—as Americans and as Christians. Our national freedom is precious, but our freedom in Christ is of infinite worth.

The great hymn writer Charles Wesley was undoubtedly moved by his freedom in Christ when in 1738 he penned this stanza:

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

The saving truth that Jesus speaks of in John 8:32 brings ultimate freedom—freedom from sin and death and the devil; freedom from a life of futility and an eternity of wrath. It is freedom from the tyranny of hate and bitterness and cruelty. It is the freedom to love God and neighbor.

May this "Declaration of Independence" be on my lips and in my heart this Fourth of July holiday.

As you celebrate the Fourth of July, think of creative ways to make the "Declaration" of freedom in Christ to family and friends. How can this holiday be a bridge to our loved ones to share the gospel?