

The background of the top section is a photograph of a church interior, featuring several arched stained glass windows with intricate designs and colorful panes. The text is overlaid on this image.

# THE COCHRAN CHRONICLE OUR LIFE TOGETHER

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## FROM OUR PASTOR

July has arrived, and with it the annual celebration of Independence Day, complete with neighborhood parades, backyard cookouts, and fireworks displays. More and more I notice churches getting in on the act, hosting concerts filled with patriotic music and festivities. One very large church in downtown Dallas recently put on something it called “Freedom Sunday,” which, according to the church’s website, was a celebration of “our freedom as Americans and our freedom in Christ with patriotic worship and a special message” from the pastor in a sermon he titled, “America Is a Christian Nation.”

Three things bother me about that. First, notice the priority of allegiance. As Christians who live in America our fundamental freedom is from, through, and in Christ. Paul in Romans 8:2 reminds Jesus’ followers that “through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” No other freedom matters if we are not first free from the law of sin and death that oppresses all human beings in slavery to base instincts, desires, and actions. As prisoners of sin, inextricably entwined with our human nature, we cannot be free unless Jesus has delivered us from its power by his death and resurrection. As grateful as I am for the heroic sacrifices of the men and women of our armed forces in defense of freedom, humanity’s freedom was won at Calvary, and Jesus claims primary allegiance.

Second, patriotic worship sounds dangerously like blasphemy or idolatry. The worship of the church is always—and only—Christian worship of the triune God. An Orthodox scholar says, “Christian worship is primarily and essentially an act of praise and adoration” in which people give thanks to God in words, actions, and music for God’s redeeming—and liberating—act in Christ through the Holy Spirit. Countries and rulers of countries that demand or expect us to worship them, their ideals, or their symbols will find themselves on the wrong side of God’s judgment (see Daniel 3-4). The symbol of the church is not the flag or an eagle or the Liberty Bell but the cross and a towel and basin. The song of the church is not the national anthem but “Alleluia!” and “Worthy is the Lamb.” Jesus—not America—is the name at which all knees bend.

Third, the claim that “America is a Christian nation” requires some working out. It is true that many of the Europeans who first colonized North America did so for religious reasons, whether to evangelize (sometimes violently or forcibly) the native peoples or to practice their version of religion without undue interference from the state. It is true that many of the men and women whom we regard as the nation’s founders were practicing Christians (though their understanding and practice of the faith probably varied considerably from ours today) and that many of their ideas and principles enshrined in law were informed by their faith. And it is true that apparently Christian mottoes like “In God We Trust” and “one nation under God” appear in our currency and Pledge of Allegiance (though a pertinent question is, What God is involved here?).

(Continued)

We would do well to ask whether those considerations are sufficient to make ours a “Christian nation.” Indeed, we might ask first, What is it that makes a nation Christian? If the reply is, “It follows the Ten Commandments,” I would ask, “Shouldn’t it follow Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount?” If the reply is, “It is a nation that respects God,” I would ask, “Is God respected by the astonishing number of mass shootings that occur in our country or the way immigrants are currently treated or the way the poor, the sick, children, and the elderly are cared for by government programs?” It isn’t sufficient to point to the fact that a vast majority of Americans say they believe in God. Believing in the God revealed in Jesus Christ and made present by the Holy Spirit will result in works of righteousness (private devotion) as well as works of mercy (making a positive difference for others). Or, as the Letter of James puts it, “Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder” (2:18b-19).

However it is that you will observe the Fourth of July, as you do so, give thanks for the inestimable blessings of liberty which we enjoy in abundance in this great land. Just remember that our first freedom is in Christ, for which we give God thanks in Christian worship, in a country that, through ceaseless effort and by God’s grace, is still endeavoring to become “a more perfect union.”

Peace,

Jeff

## The American Flag on the 4th of July

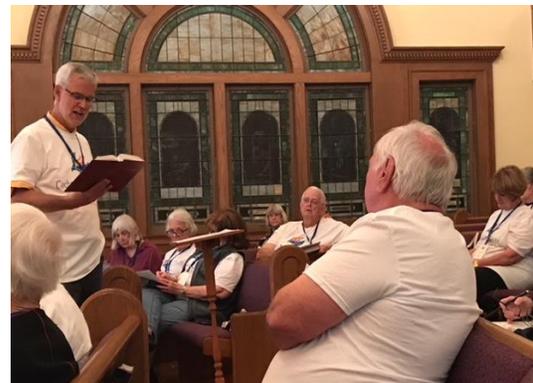
Above the chaos of man’s disarray  
Old Glory waves on this special day.  
A threat to the tyrant whoever he be;  
A banner of hope to those who’d be free.  
Our flag by breezes tossed and curled;  
A symbol of freedom throughout the world.  
As though with a voice the flag speaks to me  
of blood on the beaches at Normandy.  
Of jungle warfare in Vietnam  
and the desperate fight to save Bataan.  
Of battle fatigue and tough Marines;  
how it returned with MacArthur to the Philippines.

Of soldiers and sailors and gold Star Mothers  
and the folly of men who destroy one another.  
From Flanders to Punch Bowl and Arlington’s graves  
we’ve buried our heroes, the young and the brave.  
White crosses mark the spots where they lie;  
A sad occasion where the flag must fly.  
so much injustice and so many tears  
this flag has witnessed for so many years.  
So as I view it proudly on this special Day,  
for Peace on Earth, quite humbly I pray.

Laura Sue Perrenot

# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

## The Holy Spirit You Never Knew In Pictures



# HIGH NOTES FROM CORY

Cochran Chapel United Methodist Church  
Chancel Choir Singers

*presents*

## Down Home Hymn Sing



You are cordially invited to this year's CCUMC "Down Home Hymn Sing" We will sing some of your favorite hymns and even allow you to select one or two hymns for the congregation to sing. We will end the night with refreshments in the fellowship hall. Please invite a friend and come join in as we celebrate the music that has shaped our church for centuries.

**Sunday, July 15, 2018 at 6:00 pm in CCUMC Sanctuary**

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## North Dallas Shared Ministries

July Need: Mac and Cheese



Please leave your donations of *Mac and Cheese* under the North Dallas Shared Ministries sign in our atrium or, if you prefer not to shop, checks can be made out to CCUMC, noted for NDSM or donations can be made online.

## Please Remember in Your Prayers

The family of Howard Cox, who passed away on June 18.

David Ricketts, at Baylor Hospital, who is battling an infection.

Will Smith, at home, who is dealing with sciatica.

Please let us know how we may pray for you by emailing: [office@cochranchapel.org](mailto:office@cochranchapel.org)

## Cochran Kitchen Update

In June, Cochran Kitchen:

- Served 62 guests 165 plates of food
- Distributed 45 Bags of Grace (non-perishable food items) to guests
- Provided showers for 13 guests
- Gave 35 guests bus passes
- Offered dozens of bags of hygiene products and items of clothing.
- Many Thanks to our volunteers!

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

**Our Next Cochran Kitchen is July 25**

3:00 to 4:00 PM – “dress” tables, place condiments

4:00 to 5:00 PM – set up stations (shower, clothing, drinks, greeting); wash fruit, wrap flatware with napkins

5:00 to 5:30 PM – Greet, talk with and listen to guests

5:30 to 7:00 PM (or until food runs out) – serve meals, listen to/talk with guests

6:30 PM until Meaders has been cleaned up

For more information, please contact the church office at 214-352-4889 or email [office@cochranchapel.org](mailto:office@cochranchapel.org)

# IMPORTANT DATES

## CALENDAR AT A GLANCE – JULY

Monday, July 2 - **Widowed Persons Service Board Meeting**, Fellowship Hall, 2:00 pm

Tuesdays, July 3,10,17,24,31 – **Brown Bag Lunch**, 12:30, **Knit Wits**, Fellowship Hall, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Wednesday, July 4 – **Church Office Closed for the Holiday**

Wednesdays, July 11,18,25 – **Bible Study led by Rev. Jeff Hall**, Fellowship Hall, 10:00 am

Sunday, July 15 – **Hymn Sing**, Sanctuary, 6:00 pm, refreshments to follow in Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, July 17 – **Finance Committee Meeting**, Fellowship Hall, 6:00 pm

**Board of Trustees Meeting**, Fellowship Hall, 6:45 pm

Wednesday, July 25 – **Cochran Kitchen**, Meaders Hall, 5:30 pm

Thursday, July 26, **Reading Circle**, Fellowship Hall, 2:00 pm

Friday, July 27 – **Solis/Cain Wedding Rehearsal**, Sanctuary, 5:30 pm

Saturday, July 28 – **Solis/Cain Wedding**, Sanctuary, 11:00 am, **Reception**, Meaders Hall, 12:00pm



Sara Akers – July 10

Scott Anders – July 27

Adelle McLester – July 31

# FINAL THOUGHTS



## ANGELS AMONG US



Many Thanks to:

**Martha and Jim Dempsey** for coordinating food, decorations and volunteers for Howard Cox's memorial service and for VBS for Adults.

Among those who helped with one or both of those events were:

**Judy Smith, Karen and Andrew Kahn, Fran Obar, Margo Cummings, Geri Cerwinski, Lynn Bickley, Chris Tuveng, Scott and Suzette Foster, David Ricketts, Eddie Victorina, LaJuana Garrison, Cory Roberson, and Kay Mahoney.**

**Linda Rolen** for designing and installing creative bulletin boards in the children's area.

**Lynn Bickley** for coordinating with local charities to remove unsold items after the garage sale.

**Eddie Victorine, Neil Bickley, Mac Smith, Louise Smith, Lynn Bickley, Karen Watts, William Knight, and Kay Mahoney** for counting the offering after worship services.

A BIG THANK YOU TO

**ignite**

*In God. Nothing Is Too Extreme*



### SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

#### and BIBLE STUDIES

**Nursery:** 9:00 AM; RM 100 for children 3 years of age and younger.

**Children's Sunday School:** 9:00 AM: Class meets on 1st floor of Education Building for children ages 4 years of age and older.

**Open Door:** 9:00 AM in RM 201: Led by Neil Bickley. All adults are welcome.

**Seekers:** 9:00 AM in RM 203: Led by Pastor Jeff. Continuing a study of the prophet Habakkuk to try to understand how God is still working in a world that often seems unfair. All adults are welcome.

**Pastor's Bible Study:** Wednesday mornings at 10:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Led by Pastor Jeff. Beginning June 6 we will be learning about couples in the Old Testament. Far from being perfect, these families were often dysfunctional but still teach us about the nature of faith.