

Vancleave Church of Christ

Weekly Newsletter

Dedicated to spiritual encouragement and Christian ministry

July 4, 2021

Christ Makes Us Free by: Duane Patton

On July 4, 1776, 56 men from 15 newly united states and of their own free will and persistent determination assembled together as “representatives of the united States of America...” They appealed to the “Supreme Judge of the world” for the character, or, the decency of their intentions. They declared in writing their intentions were to be “Free and Independent States...Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown...” In support of such a bold and ambitious declaration, they also stated a “firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,” mutually pledging to each other their “Lives, [their] Fortunes and [their] sacred Honor” each one signing such a declaration with their own hand (See the final paragraph of the *Declaration of Independence* at the National Archives web site, <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>). The idea of freedom motivated and bound these men together under a common conviction because they had lived long enough under political, moral and religious tyranny – they had suffered too long having their God-given rights violated and they vowed to make changes for the better even if the changes cost them their very lives!

Today, Americans and many others throughout the world have benefitted from the honor, courage and commitment of these 56 lions of liberty. For all the imperfections that have developed over the course of time (largely due to weaknesses of imperfect people) the United States of America remains to be a beacon of hope for all who truly desire the kind of freedom proposed and embodied in the *Declaration of Independence* so long ago. But, as unique and inspiring as that document is, the Bible provides far greater freedom still! Consider the words of the apostle Paul as he wrote to Christians in Galatia: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free...” (5:1). Such a statement must have come from his clear understanding and deep appreciation of the words spoken by our eternal King, Jesus Christ, when He announced this simple but deeply moving contingency that binds God’s people together: “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31, 32, KJV). Every soul has been enslaved by sin – (viz., Romans 3:10, 23; 6:17ff; 1 John 1:10). Sin and its consequences are far worse than any form of human tyranny. There are many in the United States who, although free in the flesh are still bound by the tyranny and doom of sin. According to the Scriptures, God has not commanded sinners to come to the church; instead, He commands the church to go to the lost and dying world with the soul-saving message of true freedom found only in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. After all, if the Son makes you free, then you are free indeed! (John 8:36).

Seeking first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness...

Schedule of Services:	Local Works of Faith:	Foreign Missions:	Subscribe to our YouTube Channel:
Sunday	Sunnybrook Children’s Home	Guyana, South America	Vancleave Church of Christ Digital
9:00 AM Bible Class	Gulf Coast Bible Camp	India	Ministries
10:00 AM Worship	Local Food Pantry		
6:00 PM Worship	Annual Youth Events		
	Back-Pack Buddies		Local Wi-Fi Network Access:
Wednesday:	The Gospel of Christ TV (Fox 25)		SSID: 2Wire029
6:00 PM	Every Sunday at 6:30 AM		Key: 399572302
Prayer, Bible Study, Devotional			E-mail: vco_christ@att.net

Prayer Requests and Announcements

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open into their cry ~Psalms 34:15

Mike Kenney: May receive a partial bone replacement treatment to help eliminate infection.

Frieda Wilson (sister-in-law of Al Lowery) recently suffered a stroke and needs our prayers.

Vance Herrin (Lisa Patton's brother): Diagnosed with COVID-19. Very sick at this time.

Jane Gibson: Will need surgery on her heart. Our prayers are welcomed at this time.

Jerold Bosarge is back at home and showing signs of improvement. Appreciates our prayers.

Scott Moran: Still in need of our prayers as he continues to recover from a recent train accident.

Wade and Joanna Phillips: Safe in Guam and working diligently. Please pray for their work and continued good health as they spread the good news and strengthen the church overseas.

A men's business meeting is scheduled for next Sunday (July 11 at 4:00 PM).

First Sunday Fellowship Lunch today! All are invited and welcome to attend. A short devotional will follow the meal and evening services will be cancelled for the day.

Others: _____

Some previous prayer requests and announcements may not be reflected in the above list. Please refer to earlier published bulletins for these as well as other announcements and other ministry opportunities.

If you have any updates / corrections on any prayer requests or other announcements, please share them by sending an email to vco_christ@att.net or simply text or leave a voice message at **601-436-0868**.

WEEKLY WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT: If "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" aren't you glad that our Lord always lives to make intercession for us? (cf., Hebrews 7:25; the quote is traditionally attributed to Wendell Phillips, January 28, 1852, though many others have borrowed in in some way)

"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch"

(Mark 13:37, KJV)

Daily Bible Reading Plan for 2021

Week 27

Day	Passage	Thoughts for Meditation
MONDAY	2 Kings 5-8	How is Naaman being asked to exercise humility?
TUESDAY	2 Kings 9-11	Are you waiting for or have you ever waited for justice in an unfair ordeal?
WEDNESDAY	2 Kings 12, 13 2 Chron 24	How does faith inspire action in this account of Jehoahaz and Elisha?
THURSDAY	2 Kings 14 2 Chron 25	Regarding "marrying for money," what might we learn from these passages?
FRIDAY	Jonah 1-4	Jonah acted out of prejudice against the Ninevites. How did God address this?
SATURDAY	2 Kings 15 2 Chron 26	How did the most common temptations of greed and power affect these kings?
SUNDAY	Isaiah 1-4	God balances His justice with His mercy. How does Isaiah describe this balance?

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalms 119:105