

It's July 4th; Independence Day – the day to show your patriotism; your pride in being a citizen of the United States of America, right? And what does that look like in real life for those of us who are Bible-believing Christians?



Is it contradictory to put our hands over our hearts and “pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America...” and also publicly confess, as we do each Sunday in worship through the Creed, or as we did in our Confirmation vows, that there is only One true Triune God in whom we believe, and to whom we commit our undivided allegiance to the point that we will “*suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it*” (Confirmation Rite, LSB, pg. 273)?

I have been reading (through audio book) an intriguing (and very long) philosophical fiction novel, written by Ayn Rand – a Russian Immigrant, in 1957 called *Atlas Shrugged*. What's intriguing to me is how accurately Ms. Rand describes the two opposing political and economic views that we still see almost 75 years later in our country and the dramatic conflict that surfaces in our human reactions to these different world views. In fact, I have to remind myself over and over that she wrote this novel so long ago, because the arguments and internal and external struggles among the people of all levels of society sound like it is describing our world today.

Why am I telling you about this in a church newsletter? Because it raises a concern that continues to affect not only this world in which we live as Christians, but also our interactions and ministries within Christ's Church. As I asked at the beginning, is it possible to be a good, patriotic citizen of the U.S. and also a faithful Christian in Christ's Church?

Ayn Rand's book poses a similar question while never directly entering the religious realm. In fact, she is more against God/religion in her philosophy stating many times that human reason is the one characteristic upon which the world's existence must rest. So, as Christians, living in this non-Christian society today, the important question that her novel should prompt us believers to ask is this, “What does God and His Word have to say about this? Does He want us to align with Democratic Socialism or Capitalism?” Coming out of Russia, Ms. Rand gives a clear firsthand description of the destructive outcome of democratic socialism where the overarching goal of balancing the individual well-being of all of society establishes a large government (though directed only against capitalism) to restrict and tear down all initiative and advantage that comes from individual achievement so that no one feels bad for being less talented and those with more talent will not be rewarded any more than anyone else. The goal is “equality” in all things. But as Ms. Rand saw in Russia that ends up being the downfall of a government because everyone is then in poverty except for a select few, who are in power.



The opposite side that Ms. Rand promotes is a strict capitalist society where individuals or businesses own and control the country's economy. This approach thrives when government intervention is limited and individual initiative and achievement is rewarded by what society is willing to pay for the products or services that are produced.

The interesting thing that Ms. Rand unintentionally reveals in her accurate portrayal of society's conflict is how utterly destructive things become when both sides aggressively fight for their preferred approach refusing to bring God into the picture with the influence of His perfect truth. He teaches that it should never be just a “one or

the other only" approach.

You see, God's Word actually teaches us that there are some components of socialism that must be important to us; things like equality and willingly sacrificing our best interests for the sake of those who are less fortunate and in need. Philippians 2:3-4 says, "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." Libertarians (a branch of socialism) of various flavors like to quote the Biblical command, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt. 22:39).

Let each
of you look
not to your own

interests,
but to the
interests of
others.



What they often don't realize is that, while that passage aligns with their social justice agenda of loving and advocating for others, it, at the same time, also aligns with the capitalistic priority of "love for yourself" as well. There are other passages that speak of the capitalistic importance of hard work, like Genesis 2:15 where God instituted work as a bedrock of our human existence: "Yahweh God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." And we can't just ignore this passage from 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat."

The reason that we have such division, not only among ourselves here in the U.S., but around the entire world is because our political and economic systems, as well as our selfish sinful natures make us pick sides and then take those agendas too far in the extreme so that our pride then leads us to think and say, "My way; my agenda; my party; my philosophy of life is entirely right and yours is entirely wrong." This is the approach Ms. Rand promotes in her novel, that there are only two options – either 100% socialism or 100% capitalism, an approach that a majority of people in our culture today still espouse and the source of our conflicted country/world today.

And you see, that's what happens when we remove God and His truth from the equation. It's "me, me, me" against "you, you, you" in everything, when it should be God's truth of Law and Gospel; truth and grace; justice and mercy; love for God above all else and then living in that love so that we love our neighbor and love ourselves "because [God] first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:19). Here's God's wider explanation, "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the [substitutionary sacrifice] for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1Jo 4:10-11).

When this, and the rest of God's truth in Scripture is firmly rooted into our worldview, then we are able to see how we can rightly believe in and live for God above all else and also pledge allegiance to this country in which He has blessed us to live! Then we have the guidance and discernment from the Holy Spirit, not to just buy into this or that popular or political agenda "hook, line and sinker" but we are armed with the truth and love from God to live for Him and love our neighbor enough to actually listen and engage in conversation; to take the time to try and truly understand his/her concerns and convictions and then make decisions that are in line with what God says is best and right above my own and anyone else's selfish agenda.

So this 4th of July, celebrate your first "independence day" from sin, Satan and death because of Jesus, and then in the freedom of His love let your patriotism show as a true citizen of the United States here on earth and a citizen of God's Kingdom in heaven (Phil. 3:20).

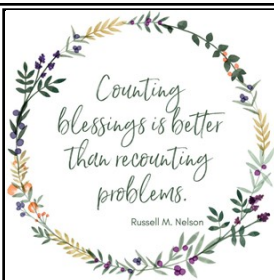
Living and serving in the joy of Jesus,

Pastor Keith Beed

But we are citizens of heaven,
where the Lord Jesus Christ lives.
And we are eagerly waiting for him
to return as our Savior.

Philippians 3:20





CELEBRATING OUR BLESSINGS!

**It's easy for us to find
things to gripe about, but
God's blessings abound!**

- ✦ The Rocky Mountain District Convention and the opportunity to go.
- ✦ The religious freedom in America.
- ✦ All the rain and storms that have, in most cases, positively affected our growing season.
- ✦ The joy of preparing, with our youth, for a fun experience at the National Youth Gathering.
- ✦ The generosity of Mt. Calvary members, whose support makes our youths' trip possible.
- ✦ Loving family that cares for their loved ones when they are ill and/or hospitalized.
- ✦ Isaiah, Jared, and Jeffrey's confirmation.
- ✦ Watching birds nest, hatch and finally leave the nest.
- ✦ Safety on the roads with all the construction.

Count Your Blessings

The Board of Spiritual Outreach has been busy gathering books, bookmarks and crayons as well as other materials to give to people at the Ft. Lupton 4th of July celebration. We are looking for volunteers to help set up the booth and to take it down at the end. If interested, please sign the sign-up sheet that is on the table in the fellowship hall.



We also plan on setting up a booth at Platteville's Harvest Daze on Saturday, August 16th. Once again volunteers will be needed to set up and work at the booth. The sign-up sheet will be made available soon.

Welcome Folders are now complete and are waiting for approval from the Council. Once approved, the folders will be handed to our visitors and guests.

We are still collecting **medicine bottle caps** for Miracle House who redeems them to support the ministry of providing shelter for people who are transitioning from homeless and jobless into a more stable environment. They will take caps that have Dales Pharmacy on them or just generic/plain caps. There is a container on the table by the restrooms to put the caps in.

We also collect **milk bottle caps** from the Longmont Dairy for Butler Elementary. There is a box on the table by the restroom to place the caps in. A big thank you to all those who have been donating!

- Judy Kimball

Divine BIBLE Study

9:00am

2nd and 4th Thursday
of the month



The Divine Bible Study will be starting a new study of *Timothy, Titus and Philemon* in a few weeks. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each

month at 9 am and everyone is invited to attend. Check with Becky or Mark Pilson for the date on the new series.





Remember –
Confirmands this includes YOU!
Please remember that we cannot be a
Youth Group without YOU!
All school age kids are welcome:



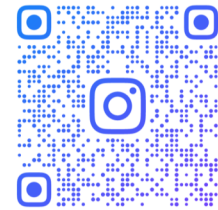
Congratulations Jeffery, Jared and Isaiah on your confirmation! We are all so proud of you!

The Macho Man Bake Sale was a great success! Isaiah Dux was crowned Macho Man Baker.

VBS, *Movie Messages: Toy Story* was also fun, entertaining, and inspiring. We learned how to be a good friend and that we always have a friend in Jesus. A big thank you goes out to Tracy T., Jessica, Corinne, Landon, and Nona for all the work they did making VBS so successful.

We wish God's blessings on the five participants going to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, July 18th-July 24th. During the worship service on July 13th we will have a special commissioning for the participants. Watch for information on how the congregation will be able to follow the events of the gathering. To follow our participants through Instagram, scan the QR code or go to:

https://www.instagram.com/banana.senor?utm_source=qr&igsh=MTF0dXNsY3hiaG1kag==



@BANANA.SENOR



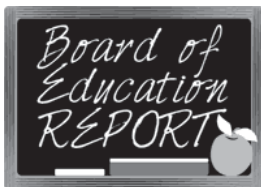
For those interested, many of our youth are involved in the Weld County Fair which is being held July 19th-July 28th at Island Grove Park in Greeley.

Outside of Church

The next youth group meeting will be held July 27th after Bible Study and Sunday School. Target 1 has proposed a fishing adventure for anyone interested in fishing on Saturday, August 2nd. Please talk to Tracy T., Nona, Corinne, Jessica, or Landon if you are interested in going to this event so we can get the necessary equipment and a fishing spot. The next day, August 3rd, is Faith Day At The Rockies. See Tracy T. about getting your tickets for this event.

Yours In Christ's Service,
 Nona Schaefer, Chairperson Board of Youth

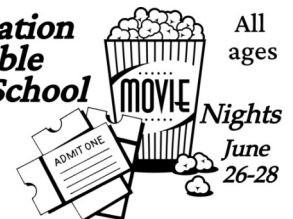
YOUTH
 Our next Meeting is:
June 27th
After Sunday School



A big Thank You to all those who both attended and helped out with VBS! We had a great time!

Over the summer we **are still** offering Sunday School as needed. However, if you know in advance that you will have younger visitors with you, it is helpful to let us know so we can prepare enough material.

Vacation Bible School



All ages

Mov
Nights
June 26-28



Do you enjoy fishing? Would you be willing to mentor some people who have not been fishing or would like some pointers? Our Youth Group and Board of Ed. would like to host a fishing outing for all kids and adults interested! We are planning it for **Saturday, August 2nd**. Where we will be fishing will be based on how many people are interested. Please let Nona, Landon, Corinne, Jessica, or Tracy T. know if this sounds like you and if you would like to bring family or friends too – we would like this to be an outreach as well. - Tracy Tiscareño

Thoughts from your Elder



This summer has already been a vibrant and meaningful time in the life of our congregation. In June, we celebrated the confirmation of Jeffrey, Jared and Isaiah. This is a significant milestone in their faith and a joyful demonstration of God's work in their lives. We also just concluded another wonderful year of Vacation Bible School. And soon, three of our youth:

Owen, Jacob and Isaiah will attend the LCMS Youth Gathering in July, joining thousands of fellow believers to worship, grow, and be equipped as followers of Jesus.

Moments like these give us reason to rejoice and to reflect. As we celebrate these important events, we must also ask ourselves: What comes next for these young people? How are we, as a church family, continuing to support, teach, and encourage them to remain engaged in their faith? Too often, confirmation is treated by confirmands and their families as a graduation, but in reality, it is just the beginning.

Martin Luther spoke directly and passionately about this very responsibility. He wrote:

"For what other purposes do we old people live than to care for, to instruct, and to train the young? It is not possible for foolish youth to instruct and sustain themselves. This is why God has entrusted them to us who are old and know from experience what is good for them. And He will demand a very strict accounting from us for them. Therefore Moses commands: 'Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee' (Deut. 32:7).

But it is a sin and a shame that we have come to the point where we must actually urge and be urged to train our children and youths and seek their best interests, when nature itself should drive us to this, and the examples of the very heathen afford us manifold instruction. There is not an irrational animal that does not look after its young and teach them what they need to know. The ostrich is an exception; God says of her (Job 39:16) that she, hardened against her young ones as if they were not hers, lets her eggs lie on the ground. And what good would it do us if we possessed and performed all else and were downright saints but neglected the chief purpose of our life: to take care of the young? I do believe that among outward sins none so heavily burdens the world in the sight of God or deserves such terrible punishment as the sin which we commit against children by not educating them."

Luther's words are strong, even sobering, but they are also deeply rooted in love. He reminds us that the spiritual care and education of the next generation is not optional or secondary. It is central to the life of the Church. God has entrusted young people to us, not just to their parents or pastors, but to the whole body of Christ. And He calls us to guide them with wisdom, compassion, and conviction.

So as we look back with joy on the confirmations, the fun of VBS, and the anticipation of the youth gathering, let us also look forward with purpose. Let us not be ostriches, hardened and forgetful of our young. Let us be like Jesus, who welcomed the children, blessed them, and called us to do the same.

Let this be our commitment: to walk alongside our youth not just for a season, but for a lifetime. To nurture their faith not only in church programs, but in our daily prayers, conversation, and as examples. To be a community where young hearts are not only taught, but cherished, and where we, as adults, recognize that one of the most sacred purposes of our lives is to help them grow faithfully with God.

-Scott Heusinkveld, Elder

*Train a child
in the way
he should go,
and when he is
old he will not
turn from it.*

PROVERBS 22:6





Mt. Calvary's Ministry Plan – Monthly Update

Target Group #1 combines both the Youth and the Education Boards. (For this Target, the term “youth” is used to reflect all school-aged students.)



Our Target: **Mount Calvary is actively involved with the youth in our community.**

We have two goals and our tasks are listed below each:

Goal #1: Goal: Have three youth activities in 2025

- ✦ **Task:** Fishing Outing, August 2nd.
- ✦ **Task:** Movie at the Church?
- ✦ **Task:** Activity with other churches?

Goal #2: Participate in two community based activities in 2025.

- ✦ **Task:** National Night Out?
- ✦ **Task:** Trapper Days?
- ✦ **Task:** Outdoor games

We have several other suggestions as well. With the National Youth Gathering and the County Fair coming up, we have had less opportunity for availability. We also worked as a Target to host Vacation Bible School this year. We had over 25 participants this year! Watch for more opportunities to participate and invite friends and family as well.

Take me out to the ballgame...

See Jeremy Camp in concert after the game at Coors Field for **Rockies Faith Day 1:10pm, Sunday, August 3rd** when the Rockies will host the Pittsburgh Pirates.

We have 40 tickets reserved in the **shade** in the upper most deck behind home plate—Section U332, rows 11-14. They are just \$22 each. Please sign-up if you are interested and so we can get a count. Final payments are **due** July 6th. Questions? See Tracy T.

