

This month, on July 4<sup>th</sup>, we Americans will be celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our nation; commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. And for this momentous occasion many within our federal, state and local governments – for good reason, have called for and organized special events and activities.

Some however – both from within the government and Christian organizations, have sought to use this anniversary as an opportunity to promote various expressions of a long-standing movement in our country known as *Christian Nationalism*. We hear catch phrases like “Rededicating our Country Back to God” or “Reclaiming America for God”, which initially sound great to our Christian ears. But to a Biblically trained and historically conscious person, all of this should raise the flags of caution and direct us to carefully explore what those people and organizations are really seeking to accomplish.

You see, *Christian Nationalism*, at its core, is not consistent with the core values of either the United States, as defined by the Declaration of Independence, or the Christian Church, as defined by Jesus in the Bible. *Christian Nationalism* is a term, sadly, that is often used as a weapon by both extremes in U.S. politics to try and dominate or attack those of the opposite side. One extreme uses it to convince Christians that they must be more assertive – even coercive in seeking to force everyone to embrace Christianity and its morals, while the other extreme uses the label to defame, shame, and vilify Christians into silence and submission to their anti-Christian agendas and ideals. The basic idea of the Christian Nationalist movement is the desire to bring the national government and the Christian Church together into one unified entity.

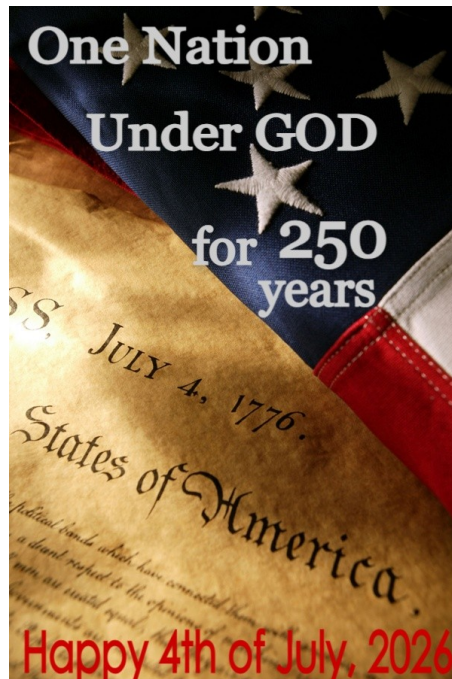
Yet, even Jesus, in His time on earth never promoted or expressed a desire for such a thing. When the Pharisees (religious leaders) and the Herodians (politically active Jews) tried to trap Jesus into saying

something contrary either to Scripture or against Caesar, Jesus answered, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mk. 12:17). With those few words, Jesus is abundantly clear: The earthly government is only ever to be about governing the things of this earthly realm, and the Kingdom of Heaven (i.e. “The things of God”) is subject only to God and the truths that He has revealed to us in His Holy Word. That is why Peter and the apostles said, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Romans 13:1-6 teaches that God is the one who allows and establishes earthly government, but only for the expressed purpose of serving as God’s instrument for protecting people against earthly oppressors, and for exercising “God’s wrath” (i.e. punishment and discipline) against those who do wrong. That’s what Martin Luther called *God’s Kingdom of the Left*. But *God’s Kingdom of the Right* is not to be influenced ever from earthly governments as it is primarily about Christ’s Church and

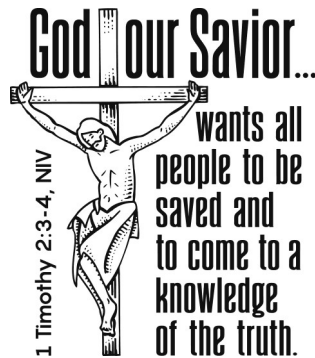
her proclamation of the Gospel; the free gift of grace in Jesus to all repentant souls. It is certainly God’s desire that we Christians live out our faith in such a way that we actively impact and influence the morals of right and wrong in our earthly nation with the truths that God has given us in His Word.

But here’s where the ideals of *Christian Nationalism* seek to go too far; beyond what even Jesus wanted when the Roman Empire was in power. We are not ever to force or coerce people into the Christian Church or into faith in Christ. That is the way of many false religions like Islam, Hinduism and the Jewish church in Jesus’ day. That is the way of many socialist, communist and other nations today and throughout history, where the earthly government has taken the place of god; dictating what people can or cannot believe; what jobs they can have; even what they eat, wear and where they live. Ultimately the



basic goal of *Christian Nationalism* is that the United States will become what they want to call, in a warped understanding, a “Christian nation”; that is, in a forced manner through declaration, law or some other coercive manner that dictates what all citizens must believe, etc.

There is though, a God-pleasing way that a country can be considered a “Christian Nation.” That is when the founding principles, laws and morals of a government and people are consistent with God’s Word because the Christian beliefs of the leaders and people have come to exist through the witness and collective desire of Christ’s people of faith. Of course God “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1Tim. 2:4). Yet, the idea of souls being forced into salvation is not only against what Jesus taught, it is also contrary to what the founding fathers intended when they wrote the Declaration of Independence. Most of them had come from oppressive governments in Europe with state run churches, in England, Prussia, Spain and other places. And that is why these words are so prominent in the Declaration: “*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*” Did you catch the all-important distinction in those words? A person’s rights come from God, not from men, or from ourselves, as so many want to try and claim in our country today. And among those God-given rights is the “liberty” before the law to pursue various beliefs and attain various levels of income and societal status determined by the priorities that make one “happy” – even if those pursuits might be contrary to what God desires of us.



has always been intended, both by God and our founding fathers, to go only one way – not both. God has created us first and our earthly governments after that as His instruments for our care and protection. He intends and desires His faithful believers to be active in this earthly life, including in all of the different parts of government. He actually wants our Christian beliefs and values to influence our nation and government – through our witness, not by force. But He does not intend, or allow the

earthly governments to enter into or influence His Churchly and spiritual matters. That alone is His to lead, teach and save through His Son Jesus.

This “one way” separation is clearly laid out in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in what is called the establishment clause that simply says, “*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof....*”

Notice it limits “congress” (government) but it does not limit the citizens’ exercise or expression of their religion. This is why I say that there is only a “one-way separation of church and state.”

When this is understood correctly, the blessings that we celebrate this year on our 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary (and every year throughout the year) remain true blessings from God instead of some kind of self-praise for what we think we have accomplished or forced upon our fellow citizens. As we say in the pledge of allegiance, we understand – even as we are one nation out of many backgrounds and beliefs (*E Pluribus Unum*) that we only exist as “One Nation Under God” because He alone remains forever over us; over our nation and over all things.

In the joy of serving you under God,

You see, the “separation” between Church and State

*Pastor Keith Best*

HOPE FIRST  
FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Hope Family Resource Center in Brighton is Pro-Life and is one of our “green” envelope missions that we support. They have recently opened “The Hope Exchange” as a way to help their families. They are asking for the following items:



Donations They Are Seeking (*all donations are tax deductible*):

- Household essentials such as toilet paper, paper towels, laundry detergent, and fabric softener
- Boys’ and girls’ clothing in sizes 6-14
- Men’s and women’s socks
- Teen boy clothing including t-shirts, tracksuits, gym shorts, sweatpants/joggers, hoodies, and shoes/slides \*please no vulgar apparel\*
- Pampers/Huggies Size 6 Diapers
- Baby Girl Clothes Size 24 Months

Hope First Email: [info@hopefirstfrc.com](mailto:info@hopefirstfrc.com)

Phone Number: (720) 654-6075 Call for drop off times



## CELEBRATING OUR BLESSINGS!

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

- ✦ Cathy Newell for faithfully bringing Helen to church on Sundays and helping her get groceries and run errands.
- ✦ Mark Pilson for faithfully bringing Ray to church and has also assisted Cathy and Helen with some projects.
- ✦ For all of our elders and their faithful service to our church and especially assisting with Sunday worship.
- ✦ For our ushers and their continued assistance with church services.
- ✦ The recent moisture we have received and the sun to grow the plants.
- ✦ That the damage to our church from parking lot vandals has only been minimal.
- ✦ That we are FREE in the U.S. to worship Christ without fear of physical harm.
- ✦ Those in the military and public service that protect our freedom.

**These are just a few of the MANY blessings bestowed on us at Mt. Calvary. Instead of counting our complaints, let's try counting our blessings from God!**

*Count Your Blessings*

## Board of Human Care

We are looking for someone to fill out the cards that our congregation sends to members on their birthdays, anniversaries and baptismal anniversaries. We have a box of cards and stamps that we would give you along with a calendar with all the dates. This can be done from your home and is a great way to serve and care for our church family. Please pray about this and if it is a good fit for you and let us know!



Thank you and best regards,  
Board of Human Care  
Cathy Newell, Jan Hagan, Christina Kraemer

“that the members may have the same care for one another...” I Corinthians 12:25b



Financial Report through May, 2026:		
	May	YTD
General Income	21,757.69	106,066.75
General Expenses	21,694.32	116,231.24
Difference	+ 63.37	< - 10,164.40 >



### Are you willing to provide Coffee & Snacks one time?

We all enjoy snacks when they are there, but when people don't sign up, there are none. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board if you would like to host Coffee & Snacks. We do ask that you stay and clean up afterwards. There is also a list of set up/clean-up details for your convenience. Remember—we have a dishwasher!

**Thank you for signing up!** And thank you to those who have already been stepping in!



## The Board of Education

We are excited to share two events FOR ALL AGES that are going on this month!



First, VBS is almost here! It will run **July 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> and it is not just for kids!** We will watch **Zootopia** (rated PG) in parts and discuss the world view messages it is sending and what the Bible has to say on the topics. **July 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>** will be from **6-8pm** and

Saturday the **11<sup>th</sup>** from **5-7pm**. We will do a wrap up on Sunday during Bible class/ Sunday school time. Besides learning, we will have snacks, crafts, games and fellowship! Please join us as we explore Zootopia!

**On July 25<sup>th</sup> we are having a Picnic and Kickball game in the park** at the South pavilion at Rail Road park located at 2<sup>nd</sup> street and Pacific Ave in Fort Lupton.



The Youth and Board of Ed. will supply the meat, buns and bottled water. Please bring a side to share, sunscreen, and friends!

**We will meet at the park at 10:30 am** for a youth led devotion. We will eat around **11am** and we hope to form our kickball teams by **12**. We plan to be there until at least 2pm, however we do have the pavilion until 8pm-that's a lot of kickball though!!!

Let's have some fun! Watch for more information.

- Corinne Gabel



When a teenager earned his driving permit, he approached his father, to discuss using the car. His dad replied, "I'll make you a deal. Raise your grades, spend some time in your Bible and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk."

A month later, the young man came back. "Son, I'm proud of you," his father said. "Your grades are up, and you've been faithful in your Bible study. But you didn't get your hair cut."

The teenager paused. "Well, Dad, I've been thinking. Samson had long hair. Moses had long hair. Noah had long hair. Even Jesus had long hair."

His father nodded. "That's true. And they walked everywhere they went."

**Please remember that we cannot be a Youth Group without YOU! All school age kids are welcome:**



Currently we have at least 12 kids in Middle and High School that need both leadership and guidance. What are we doing to encourage them to continue coming to church? Unfortunately, **we need Adults** to plan everything. Presently there are only 2 Youth Board members (one—a parent of 2). Please prayerfully consider joining them in planning activities and meetings!

### From University Lutheran Chapel:

Dear Mission Society Congregation, Yes, it is July, but actually our "fall semester" begins in August! We are looking forward to our fall semester and inviting you to help us provide a dinner for our students following our Sunday services.



### Here are the Sundays:

August 30	October 4	November 1
September 6	October 11	November 8
September 13	October 18	November 15
September 20	October 25	December 6
September 27		

### Here are some details:

- Plan for between 18-26;
- Gluten free options are appreciated, but not necessary;
- We have beverages, you do not need to provide those;
- We have many condiments available in our refrigerator, please ask if you have a need, we need to use them up;
- We have table service.

These meals provide invaluable time for students to connect and form relationships as we seek to Gain, Regain, and Train believers for the future.

Please reply to [ulcofficecu@gmail.com](mailto:ulcofficecu@gmail.com) with a date sign up or with any questions. Thank you for your investment in our students and our mission.

Many thanks, Joanne Jarvis,



Communications, Gifts & Development



## Thoughts from your Elder



### Greetings people loved by God.

During our Ascension Day service Pastor preached on Acts 1:1-11. Verse 8 starts, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you”. My silly human pea brain started thinking about this. How much power could the Holy Spirit give us? The disciples spoke in tongues, healed people, and cast out demons. Philip, after sharing the good news about Jesus with the Ethiopian eunuch, found himself carried away by the Spirit of the Lord.

Maybe the Holy Spirit could give me supernatural powers? Could I fly like superman? Have x-ray vision? Maybe run as fast as Flash Gordon? Or perhaps be able to heal a sick friend or family member? After these thoughts came a memory of a sermon I heard years ago where the pastor said a member asked him to pray for healing. His response was that even if he could heal her, she was still going to die someday and that it was more important that he share the Gospel message with her so that she would live again with Jesus.



The second half of Acts 1:8 reads. “...and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.”

This is one of the powers that we are given—to be Christ’s witnesses.

Luther’s last written words are that we are “all beggars before God” in need of God’s grace. We read this in our elders meeting study this month. In the next sentence in our study, the author of the *Lutheran Witness* article said, “The Holy Spirit opens our hearts to that extravagant grace of God in Christ. And we are

enabled to receive it” (Robert Benne, *LW*, Sept. 2024, *One King, Two Kingdoms*). We are enabled to receive it? This, my brothers and sisters, is what the Holy Spirit gives us in baptism – that we are all going to live forever. We are “immortal.” All humans are “immortal” and will live forever, but where? We believers like to focus on Heaven but remember

nonbelievers will live in Hell in the afterlife upon Jesus’ final judgment of all flesh. So, let us use the power we are given from the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses throughout the whole world.

- Doug Haiar



### Still Worth More Than You Know

A speaker opened his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill and asking a crowd of 200 people, “Who would like this?”

Nearly every hand went up.

“I’ll give it to one of you,” he said. “But first...” He crumpled the bill tightly in his fist. “Who still wants it?”

Hands remained in the air.

He dropped it to the floor and ground it under his shoe. Then he picked up the wrinkled, dirty bill. “How about now?”

The hands rose again.

“My friends,” he said, “you’ve just learned an important lesson. No matter what I did to the money, it never lost its value. It was still worth \$20.” Life can feel the same way. We are dropped, crumpled and ground down by our choices and by circumstances beyond our control. At times, we may even feel worthless. But our value does not change.

In God’s eyes, you are never less than priceless. Clean or dirty, wrinkled or whole, you remain precious to Him. As Isaiah 43:4 says in the NIV, “You are precious and honored in My sight, and because I love you.”





## 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 2026

✦ **Task:** Activity with other churches?

**Goal #2:** Participate in two community based activities in 2026.

✦ **Task:** National Night Out?

✦ **Task:** Trapper Days?

✦ **Task:** Outdoor games

So far, we have accomplished two tasks under Goal #1: fishing outing and movie night. We had a nice turnout March 15<sup>th</sup> for “The Jesus Film” movie night. As seen in last month’s newsletter, we had several people show up for our fishing event. We even had non-church friends! On July 25<sup>th</sup>, we will have a picnic and kickball event which we will be inviting other circuit churches to. Please plan to come! Watch for more activities in the future!



### Johann Sebastian Bach & Martin Luther

*“To God alone be the glory.”*

Bach devoted nearly his entire professional musical life to service in the Lutheran Church. J.S. Bach was born in Germany in 1685, 202 years after Martin Luther. This allowed Luther to have a profound impact on Bach and for Luther’s influence to continue to carry forward through Bach.

Bach’s connection and admiration of Luther stems from his childhood. He attended the same Latin school that Luther did. Bach was able to experience firsthand the fruits of Luther’s emphasis on the importance of a sound Christian education and sturdy theological foundation.

Bach was known to have several theological books, and the Luther translation of the Bible that he owned (which is housed in our St. Louis Seminary library) contains many notes as written by the musical genius himself.

Bach focused his professional career on playing the organ at various Lutheran churches from 1703-1750.

Little of Bach’s music was published during his lifetime. A rediscovery of his music in the early nineteenth century cemented his place in the history of western music.

Let us rejoice in the contributions and influence of J.S. Bach, in the way that Luther and Bach would have us rejoice, giving all glory to God for His many blessings!

Bach signed his manuscripts – S.D.G. (Soli Deo Gloria) “To God alone be the glory.”

“The aim and final end of all music should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul.”  
— J.S. Bach

