

Happy Birthday USA!

As a pastor, I appreciate the opportunities this nation provides for the unfettered practice of religion. I may not always agree with the policies or policy makers in this country; yet, I am sincerely grateful for the freedom our constitutional foundation provides. In its first amendment, the Constitution of the United States begins, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” This, I agree, is a fine idea. I do not want our government prohibiting how I practice my religion nor do I want it telling me what my religion should be; hence, the understanding of a separation between church and state.

However, lines are often crossed. For example, each session of congress begins with a Christian prayer; witnesses in a trial swear on a Christian Bible; and our paper currency declares “In God We Trust.” (Which was added, by the way, in 1957 as a testament against the godless communists.) Additionally, many pastors exhort their flock to vote for a particular political candidate and many churches engage in exorbitant patriotic displays. It seems that separation between church and state has become has become pretty darn thin in places. Well, you say, that’s okay, we are a Christian nation. Well...

If you mean the majority of religious folks in this country are of the Christian persuasion you are correct. However, once again, the constitution prohibits the establishment of any state-sanctioned religion. So, officially we are not a Christian nation. We are a nation in which a majority of its citizens claim to be Christians (“claim” may be the operative word here.) Yet Christianity is not the officially sanctioned religion of the state. As a matter of fact, most of the founding fathers were deists, not Christian. (Just take a gander at Thomas Jefferson’s amended version of the New Testament, the “Jefferson Bible.” Spoiler alert; Jesus is not divine but just a really amazing fellow.)

Okay, Pastor Dan, what’s your point here? Don’t you love this country? Of course, I love the United States of America. I am proud to be a citizen and I gratefully celebrate its birthday on the 4th of July. (4th of July trivia question: Did you know that the primary authors of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, both died within hours of one another on the 50th anniversary of its signing, July 4, 1826?) So, my point? My point is that I too often see the love of country overshadowing our love of God. I sometimes think we have more faith in elected leaders than we have in Jesus; we appreciate the sacrifices of American heroes more than the sacrifice of Jesus; we respect

the flag more than we respect the cross. This is a great country which has provided me with the unparalleled opportunity to worship as I wish. And during this 4th of July holiday I will thank my country, I will respect my country, I will love my country.... but I will worship my God.

God's peace be with you,

Pastor Dan

Council Members. Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Randy Trulen – 715-675-4091; rtrulen@gmail.com

Vice President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; 715-571-4057l cooley1512@outlook.com

Treasurer: Curt Cooley – 715-675-8566; 715-571-4057; usfcool@gmail.com

Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892; tammism79@gmail.com;

tammism@aspirus.org

Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; lsillars@aol.com

Scott Oestreich – 715-675-4360; scottsmachinellc@gmail.com

Evangelism: Erin Randall – 715-212-3720; emrandal@mtu.edu

Fellowship: John Marquardt – 715-675-3300; johnnym54401@gmail.com

Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; 715-432-3837; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Worship: Heidi Teske – 715-551-4485; heidi.teske2007@gmail.com

Mission Statement: “We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church.”

Serve God through worship, prayer, and the dedication of our lives to His kingdom.

Serve Each Other by mutual care and support to encourage everyone to fulfill their God-given potential. **Serve the Community** by making known the good news about Jesus and the love of God by word and deed. **Serve the Wider Church** through prayer and practical support to help spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world.

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings

6:30 p.m. Wednesday Evenings (5/30 – 8/29)

Please join us as we worship our Lord!

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Homebound Parishioners. The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Ann Kieckhafer
1347 Crystal Avenue
Room 236-1
Naperville, IL 60563

Ellen Kruit
1821 N. 4th Avenue
Room 215
Wausau, WI 54401

Harriet Wanner
1240 Merrill Ave.
Apt. 2
Wausau, WI 54401

Financial Report for May, 2018

Income Received	Expenses Paid	Difference	Budget
\$15,888.97	\$17,386.64	(\$1,497.67)	\$13,600

Year-to-Date			
Income Received	Expenses Paid	Difference	Budget
\$63,314.55	\$72,017.85	(\$8,703.30)	\$68,000

Attendance Report

	<i>2018</i>	<i>2017</i>
<i>Average Weekly/May</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>Average Weekly/Year-to-Date</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>136</i>

Dixieland Band/Ice Cream Social – Sunday, July 8. Come and listen to the Dixieland Band during Sunday’s worship service on July 8th at 9:00 a.m. Following the service there will be an ice cream social in the fellowship hall.

Food Pantry. The food items collected for the food pantry will be donated to Maine School. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the school, please contact the church office.

Council Meeting Minutes. Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

Announcements. If you would like to have an announcement included in our weekly bulletin or newsletter, please submit the information in writing and put it in either Pastor Dan's mailbox or the administrative assistant's mailbox located in the narthex. If it is more convenient for you, you can submit your announcements via e-mail to stjohnwausau@msn.com. The deadline for submitting announcements for the Sunday bulletin is the Thursday before by 9:00 a.m. The deadline for the newsletter is indicated on the monthly calendar.

July Birthdays

7-1 Karrissa Fitzke
7-1 Connie Nowak
7-1 Sarah Preisig
7-3 Dylan Marquardt
7-4 Leopold Schiller
7-6 Nichole Saari
7-8 Chelsi Bronsteatter
7-8 Sue Rakow
7-9 Tammi Smith
7-10 Bryce Heil
7-11 Vernon Bahr
7-11 Aiden Ohrmundt
7-12 Debbie Knapp
7-12 Brec Ohrmundt
7-12 Ashlee Walters
7-14 Henry Marquardt
7-15 Britta Rowe
7-16 Agnes Schelbert
7-17 Mason Hirn
7-18 Debbie Klug
7-19 Aleah Oestreich
7-20 Scott Buchberger
7-20 Pam Mootz
7-20 Kara Rode
7-20 Ava Rode
7-20 Eli Swemke
7-21 Carrie Hoeft
7-21 Mike Kilinski
7-21 Jake Schoepke
7-22 Ann Kieckhafer
7-22 James Nolan
7-23 John Marquardt
7-25 Kate Young
7-26 Coleton LeDuc
7-26 Earl Schmieden
7-27 Gene Bahr

July Anniversaries

7-10 Terry & Jamie Kickbusch
7-10 Randy & Brenda Knudsen
7-12 Jason & Amanda Grueneberg
7-14 James & Stephanie Borelli
7-15 Greg & Nicole Melander
7-18 Fritz & Pat Poeske
7-23 Brandon & Brooke Schindler
7-28 Randy & Diane Trulen
7-29 Gene & Lane Bahr

7-27 Brandon Landrath

7-27 George Webb

7-27 Joanne Zahn

7-28 Bianca Melander

7-30 Shelley Kufahl