



The Messenger

THEME: "GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME"
(JULY 2017)

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* ARTICLES NEED TO
BE SUBMITTED TO
PETE BY THE LAST
SUNDAY OF THE
MONTH - FOR NEXT
MONTH'S PUBLICA-
TION.

Carl's Comments - Reverend Carl Thompson



What is patriotism to a Christian? It is more than singing patriotic songs, waving the flag, and feeling emotionally stirred over our nation's heritage. As we celebrate Independence Day, let's consider what patriotism is and is not.

I've seen a lot of hostility expressed in the name of patriotism. It's very easy to demonize those who take opposing stands regarding political issues and call them un-American. The conflict between our two political parties is not a struggle between good and evil. We should hold strong convictions regarding political matters, but we need to be civil toward opposing views.

Americans value their freedom, but for many, freedom is the right to do anything. Taken to an extreme, freedom is anarchy and lawlessness. Society needs rules to be able to maintain order. People claim you can't legislate morality, yet if you think about it, most laws have a basis in what we believe is moral behavior and fairness. True patriotism recognizes that we answer to a higher authority, that it matters how we live as citizens in a world God created.



God has given us great blessings in our country. These blessings are worth preserving through prayer and devotion to God in the face of those who would tear it down. But it is so easy for our nation's leaders, and for us, to be too prideful. Now, this doesn't mean that we can't have pride in our nation. There is absolutely nothing wrong in being appreciative that we live in a nation that has been GREATLY BLESSED. But we are not to become arrogant.

Furthermore, we are not to think that we have become a great nation by our own power and strength. We need to remember these words as we practice our patriotism, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Patriotism involves taking a stand, writing letters to those in authority, and supporting candidates whose ideology concurs with our convictions. Patriotism is not shown by the number of flags we fly but by living the courage of our convictions, which may mean having to take a stand, and always means praying for justice and national repentance.

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Calendar of Events

Sunday Morning Coffees at 9:30
Sunday Worship Services at 10:00

- **Tuesdays** - Men's Prayer Breakfast at 8 am
- **July 2** - Chuck Donley as Guest Preacher
- **July 16** - Called Session Meeting 11:15am
- **July 30** - Breakfast Social before church - 9:00 am / Fifth Sunday Guest Speaker
- **Chair Yoga** Continues on Tues 1-2 pm & Thurs. 10:30 - 11:30 am

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 2017						1
2	3	4 Fourth of July	5	6 Yoga 10:30	7	8
9	10	11 Yoga 1 PM	12	13 Yoga 10:30	14	15
16 Session Meeting	17	18 Yoga 1 PM	19	20 Yoga 10:30	21	22
23	24	25 Yoga 1 PM	26	27 Yoga 10:30	28	29
30 Breakfast Social & 5th Sunday	31	Notes:				

Carl Continued..

What contribution can we make to help preserve our nation and our way of life? How can we impact our nation morally and spiritually, especially in preserving the values upon which America was founded? We can make a difference by remembering the greatest commandments: to love our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love our neighbors.

Patriots are people who care about this country, and what it stands for. Patriots are people who recognize the benefits of the Constitution, people who hope to preserve our nation's values. A patriot is one who votes, earns an honest living, studies our nation's history, and knows what is going on today. As we teach our children to appreciate America, we need to rekindle the principle of selfless service.

A Nation is as GREAT as is its ALLEGIANCE to God. Sadly, I believe America has become less and less a nation who recognizes that God is Lord. When God is no longer revered then a nation will gradually slip into moral decay. It is time for America to trust God, and we who believe, must lead the way. May you have a wonderful 4th of July Celebration.

God Bless You All, *Carl*



Going Home

Ralph and I are in Washington, Pennsylvania. We are visiting my family here.

Washington lies about 30 miles south of Pittsburgh. This is the town that I was born and raised in. This where I graduated from high school and had my first child. I left here when I was eighteen years old, and now I just come to visit a couple of times a year.



My parents and my brother still live here, not to mention numerous cousins and four aunts. And those are just the living relatives. There are several graveyards in the surrounding counties which hold the remains of my grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, brothers, and my birth father, who was killed in the Korean conflict.

They say that "you can't go home again." And yet, you must. The voices, both the living and the dead, call you back to where it all began; just as your Heavenly Father beckons you to:

"Come home; come home; ye who are weary, come home". "Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, oh sinner, come home."

From a Merry Heart in Pennsylvania - *Linda Lloyd*

Common Lectionary Readings (Carl will change topics at times due to requests or other circumstances)

	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost — July 2	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost — July 9	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost — July 16	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost — July 23	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost — July 30
1st Reading	Genesis 22:1-14	Genesis 24:34-67	Genesis 25:19-34	Genesis 28:10-19a	Genesis 29:15-28
Psalm	Psalm 13	Psalm 45:10-17	Psalm 119:105-112	Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24	Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
2nd Reading	Romans 6:12-23	Romans 7:15-25a	Romans 8:1-11	Romans 8:12-25	Romans 8:26-39
Gospel	Matthew 10:40-42	Matt. 11:16-19, 25-30	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	Matt. 13:24-30,36-43	Matt. 13:31-33, 44-52

July Birthdays

Evelyn Thompson 7
 Matt Arant 15
 Susan Carroll 15
 Danney McCort 15
 Nancy Healey 27

About our Members

Jerry Schleicher has had some "fainting spells". After many tests his doctors determined that he had an irregular heart rhythm. Last week he went to Austin and had a procedure called an ablation. It solved some issues, but others were identified. The doctors are considering other options including the installation of a pacemaker. Pray for the doctors to find the solution and peace for Jerry as he continues to patiently await resolution.



Rip VanWinkle got dizzy and fell several weeks ago. The neck brace was worn to protect a fractured vertebrae. His neck is healing and in the next couple of weeks he will undergo tests to determine the cause of the dizzy spells. Pray for the doctors and patience.

A Summer Prayer

Long warm days...
 The pace of life slows...
 A time for picnics and rest in the shade...
 Lord, help me to rest awhile
 in the cooling shade of your presence.
 Slow down my restless heart and fill me
 with gentle compassion for all your people.
 Amen. - Author unknown

THE WORD OF GOD

I am still in Pennsylvania with my family as I write this, but I have sequestered myself in my room, and have been looking over the June "Messenger" that Pete sent out.

I wanted to see if the scripture passages that Carl was preaching on today aligned with the passages that we heard in my parent's church this morning. (They are not Presbyterian; they are Catholic.) Much to my surprise and delight, they did.



Isn't it a wonderful thing to know that the word of God is still the word of God, no matter where you go to worship?

The scripture from Romans 6 has particular meaning for me.

Sometimes it seems that no matter how I struggle to do what I know is right, no matter how much I desire to do what is right, I still just can't seem to "get it right." Do you ever feel that way?

It is a great relief for me to read those passages that the apostle Paul wrote, and to be assured that it is the "sin in me" that causes me to act in ways that I have no desire to act. And an even greater relief to know that: "There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus; the life-giving spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death."

Praise to the Lord God almighty for his wonderful gifts of forgiveness and grace, and for Jesus Christ, who died to set us free from our sins.

May God abundantly bless you.

From a Merry Heart,
Linda Lloyd

Editor's Note: Carl actually preached based on a request and not the Common Lectionary on 6/25.

Committee Report



The nominating committee has worked to identify a candidate to replace Mike Moore. The recommendation was accepted by Carl and will be submitted to the session for review and vote.
Carl Menyhart

Sunday Morning Coffee Continues



A Note from Nancy Healey - Benevolence Committee

~Something BIG and Wonderful In Georgetown~



Many of you may already be familiar with a wonderful restaurant in Georgetown, but if not make plans to visit The BIG Cafe. What a gem this restaurant, gift shop, and beautiful nursery is! The BIG Cafe is owned and run by the **Brookwood Community In Georgetown (B.I.G.)** which is a home for adults with

special needs. The mission of Brookwood is to provide educational opportunities leading to jobs from which a sense of personal responsibility and dignity comes.

When you enter The BIG Cafe, you will find all sorts of "feather your nest" items, pottery (made by the Brookwood residents), baby gifts, jewelry and unique, quality gifts. The restaurant is charming and bright with great food-yup, prepared and served by the Brookwood residents. After lunch, be sure to visit the nursery where you will find beautiful plants, indoor and out, lovingly

cared for-yes, by the Brookwood family members.

The hours for the restaurant are 8 a.m. to 2:30 Monday through Saturday.

The address is 905 N. Church Street, and it is easy to find by taking the Williams exit, turn left crossing over I-35 towards Austin Avenue and turn left on to Austin Avenue. The BIG Cafe will be on your right almost immediately. There is parking on the side and in the back. The motto for the cafe is "Helping Others Never Tasted So Good." It will be a meal that brings joy to you and others!



Donna Dunn, Director of Body of Christ Medical and Dental Clinics will be presenting to the congregation July 30. This is one of the organization's that our giving supports.

Veteran Stories

Just a reminder, the *Veteran Story Book*, honoring all veterans of the Presbyterian Church of Salado is currently being assembled. All who served in uniform are asked to contribute. The Deadline is Oct. 1, so it can be completed for Veteran's Day. I can help with your stories if you wish. If

you're looking for an idea on what to share, a sample Army adventure story is attached, courtesy of JR Lett.

For any questions, advice, etc. contact Renita Menyherth at 254 317 2961.



JR Lett swears there are no words to describe monotony in a desert. As a soldier who has the distinction of invading Iraq twice, JR believes that makes him an expert on the subject.

"First of all, it's quite an enormous and therefore very slow operation on arrival to organize soldiers, equipment and begin deploying to the assigned location," explained JR. "Then you're in a staging area where there's considerable down time. And it's the same thing going back. What's really ironic was landing in the desert the second time in 2003 at the very same place I was the first time in 1991!"

JR proclaims it doesn't take long for boredom to begin whenever the Army's "hurry up and wait," routine begins. Checking equipment, performing guard duty, playing cards, electronic games, reading adventure novels and talking about home and family only lasts so long.

"You can't go anywhere because there's nowhere to go in the desert. And even if there were, it's off limits," added JR. "And the scenery all looks the same: nothing but sand and icky critters. Therefore, soldier morale does become a concern."

So, when the subject of a tank drag race was casually suggested by his crew, JR decided the best thing to do was just let them talk. Before long, it wasn't just talk.

JR had always loved tanks with their heavy firepower and strong armor. He inherited his affection for the majestic armored fighting vehicles from his father, who would give him the oath when JR decided to join up. He compares the vehicles to football in that it can be a rough and tumble type game, especially during maneuvers and actual combat. And while some may view the huge iron contraption as simply that, to JR it represents a tremendous feeling of adventure. Especially when driving through the ranges, playing war games, or the competition to be the best in tank gunnery qualifications.

There's also the bonding in tank crews that develops and grows due to their assigned tasks. Each crew member has an intricate, but essential responsibility. The driver makes sure the tank and crew arrive at their assigned area on time and safely. This means accurately following the tank commander's directions while scrutinizing anything and everything in front of the vehicle. He must consider the current driving conditions, the kind of terrain the tank is moving over, and be on the lookout for any obstructions that might be hazardous such as a sudden large body of water.

The gunner protects the tank and crew since he's the one who pulls the trigger and fires, while the loader ensures the tank has the correct and right amount of ammunition. The loader also stores the ammunition, but the whole crew helps with the ammunition loading process which lasts about three to five seconds.

The tank commander has the overall responsibility for the tank crew. As the ranking officer, he gives the orders to his three other crew members. Again, JR compares those orders to football in that the commander controls the operation just as a quarterback instructs his players where to move when executing a play.

"It's vital each crew member have confidence in one another," added JR. "The knowledge everyone is working together, and having faith each soldier is executing his vital task in a professional manner is what binds us together and promotes bonding."

Although the four team members have different tasks and responsibilities, no one is independent of the other and each must know the other's job backwards and forwards, inside and out, and right side in - just in case.

"War is a life and death business," explained JR. "You don't know when the worst could happen and you have to keep going because other lives are at stake. So, we're four individuals with four different jobs who come together to complete one mission. And that's why we cherish that exceptional brotherhood we call camaraderie."

When it became obvious to JR the tank drag race was on, he carefully selected an old airfield runway nearby. About 100 feet wide and two miles long, the field was perfect for the race. He also offered to be the flag bearer signaling when to start and stop.

The rules mandated there be three races. Since there are four tanks in a platoon, there would be two races between two tanks. The winners of the two races would then compete in a third race and an overall champion declared.

As the tanks moved side by side into position, enthusiastic spectators gathered to watch. In true drag racing form the tanks began revving up their jet engines, a clear indication the event was being taken quite seriously. With great ceremony JR gave the start signal, and the official Operation Iraqi Freedom drag race began! In all their glory the magnificent, steel machines sprang forward, each determined to be the first one over the finish line. Both races lasted 15 to 20 seconds and after two winners

were confirmed, preparations immediately began for the final competition.

After the initial race, JR had become somewhat anxious. His tank, "Bandit," had won the first contest and now it was gearing up to compete for the highly prestigious and sought-after championship title. To JR, his honor, competency as a tank commander and reputation was at stake.

And being a native Kentuckian, JR now ranked the tank drag race with the prominent Kentucky Derby held at Churchill Downs, the world's most legendary racetrack. Glancing around, he could almost picture the traditional, dazzling hats proudly worn at the annual event by Derby patrons instead of the drab Army head gear. "And it was as if my horse, uh... that's my tank... was in that glorious race and all I could think of was win, win, win!!! Saying a quick prayer for his crew, JR signaled and the tanks took off.

"They were going downhill so they were able to get good speed," said JR, conjuring up the memory of watching the impromptu race that now had spectators jumping up and down and yelling encouragement to the participants.

JR needn't have worried. When the race was finished, amid whoops and shouts, "Bandit" was declared the official winner by one by tank's length! The winning tank crew was grandly applauded by their fellow Army soldiers who had eagerly welcomed the spontaneous sports event. There was no official prize, but JR says the pride and bragging rights will do. And they have lasted him a lifetime.

"It was that typical GI fun thing," laughed JR. "Everybody was watching and later said they wished they had joined in. The tank drag race provided that comic relief from the earlier 16 hour convoy to Bagdad and the one coming up to Bashara."

JR believes discovering something unique to do when soldiers get together is significant because it prevents them from dwelling on what may be disastrous situations ahead. JR also stressed the importance of faith. "Just like the philosophy there's no atheists in the foxhole, well, I've never seen one in a tank either."

JR also shared the secret to winning a drag race for future Army tankers. "Get a quick start, keep the pedal to the metal, charge forward! And always keep your opponent in the rear-view mirror!"

June 25, 2017 - Hotdog Social



Gota' have chili on a hot dog!

