

GREETINGS FROM GREENVINE



I truly enjoyed our July 4th celebration on Sunday evening. I think we fed about 125 people. I don't know how many people we entertained with the fireworks. Wickel Road was lined from the Lutheran Church to FM 2502 with vehicles and there were several vehicles in their parking lots. Also several vehicles were parked across the street at the Green Door as well as some parked along FM 2502. With the number of vehicles present, I wouldn't be surprised if over 150 people enjoyed the show. We had a number of people here who we had never met. I think it was a wonderful success.

Bobbie reminded us that back in the 1950's and 1960's Greenville Baptist often celebrated July 4th on the grounds. What a wonderful celebration to renew. We had set aside funds for outreach into the community and have never really used those monies. I believe that we used those monies in the correct way. We even have some left in that account. I really think that we should once again re-establish the annual celebration on July 4th of every year. We got so many people here for a visit. Hopefully some of those neighbors will return for a visit to our regular church services.

A special thanks to the "Fireworks Guys;" Jeremy Schulte, Scott Schulz and Jeremy Faulkner. What a special production that awed us all. We had 5 men from Adult and Teen Challenge who came to set up, take down and help in all areas needed. They did such a great job. Sonny Rice and his "All Star" band did such a wonderful job. All of you who brought cookies and bars were surely appreciated. Thank all of you so much for your work. All the decorations and details. Security was busy keeping us safe and helping in the logistics of parking and helping folks get to and from their cars. Karen and Jim used the golf cart and Jim's gator to transport both people and supplies.

A special thanks goes to the Latium, Greenville and Wesley Volunteer Fire Department personnel who were on hand to show off a couple of trucks as well as provided a special "grass truck" to watch over the fireworks.

We cannot omit the truth that God took care of the weather as well. The heavy rain in the morning was not a surprise. The surprise came with the predicted rains not coming. Only God can change the course of weather. He has been so good to the people here at Greenville through the years. That is just another significant showing that He approved of our celebration.

On Sunday, I tried to read a verse that I had written down, but could not find while at the pulpit. I would like to quote it now:

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” When Paul was writing this little letter, he also included in Chapter 2: 4, “False believers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus to make us slaves.”

Galatians was written for the purpose of making it clear that the Law enslaves, but the Gospel sets free.

Paul presents the truth of freedom from the law of sin and death several times in the book of Romans. In Chapter 8: 1 & 2 say, **“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus that law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.”**

Paul finalizes the truth of freedom in Galatians 5: 13 & 14: **“You, my brothers and sisters were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”**

Jesus said in John 8: 36; **“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”** Part of Christ’s work here on earth was to set the “captives free.” Isaiah is quoted by Paul in the book of Ephesians 4: 7 & 8;

That truth and quote is also in Psalm 68. As followers of Christ we have a real freedom.

I am reminded of the great freedoms that we have here in these United States. Our Declaration of Independence says that we have 3 inalienable rights: Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. The country’s forefathers realized that God has given those truths to all, but because of tyranny, sometimes those are taken away. We are so fortunate to live in this country.

Currently we have the freedom to not only celebrate like we did on Sunday evening, but we have the freedom to meet together the way we did on Sunday morning. We are guaranteed by our Constitution to be able to worship our God the way we believe the Bible has told us to. What a great freedom.

I read a quote this week from a friend. I don’t know who originally wrote it.

“Only two defining forces have ever offered to die for you...Jesus Christ and the American soldier. One died for your soul; the other for your freedom.”

I've heard that many times and haven't really wanted to use it. I don't want to compare Jesus with fighting men. However, there is some truth there as we look at it.

As I think of my time in the military, even though I was drafted, I remember thinking that I was willing to give my life for the country that I loved to keep it free. It seemed worth while. It seemed like an honorable occupation. I like to think that I am a patriot. I like to think that the Oath of Enlistment that I took on July 29, 1969 is still in effect for me. I wanted to help in keeping our country free. I wanted to pay any cost to guarantee my friends and family would continue to enjoy the freedom that I had grown up with.

I love our country, but I do not want to confuse that with the love I have for our Savior, Jesus Christ. I am constantly reminded of what took place when I was in the military and it sometimes overtakes me. I think that I have even been haunted by those memories at times. Some of the men who I knew there who died have an effect on me. Even with that huge impact on my life, I don't want to be known as the man who is steered by his time in the military and the difficulties that I went through there. However, I want to use those for God's glory and use them to reach others who may have those same type of circumstances.

I'm so happy that we had this celebration, and that we are already thinking about doing it again next July 4th. It has really opened up some ties with the community that we need. Maybe it is the means that God will use with us in getting younger couples and families to visit and be with us. That is my prayer. I hope it is yours too.

Blessings. Jack & Karen

Announcements

- Please remember to complete your information card for the directory.
- Wednesday Night Bible Study -Wednesday nights @ 6pm
- Women's Ministry - 2nd Tuesday of each month @6pm - Next meeting July 13@6pm
- Men's Prayer Breakfast - Wednesday June 29, @ 7am

Prayer Requests

Jack - Upcoming treatments for additional kidney stones and fractured wrist

Larry Pulliam - Recovering from knee surgery

Carol Witte - Still not feeling well. She is being treated for 2 bacterial infections - Jim says she is starting to feel better.

Byron Rutland - Having issues with Diverticulitis - He is scheduled for surgery August 9, 2021

Dorothy and Ben's 3 yr old Great Niece, Dovie Guelker was kicked by a horse and sustained a concussion, damage to her heart and liver. Please pray for a full recovery.

Dorothy and Ben's grandson Ran is seeing doctors this week for new testing

Becky's granddaughter Taylor who has Cystic Fibrosis and is having health issues

Debbie and Cliff's grandson Chace - recovering from dental surgery

Colin Smith - 18 yr old with a Traumatic Brain Injury. (Patient of Karens)

Gerri Smart's daughter Terri has been diagnosed with cancer. She has started her chemo treatments. Please pray for strength as she walks through this and prayers for Gerri as well as she she helps Terri through this process.

Cliff Reed's dad is recovering from a UTI (He was hospitalized earlier this week)

Joe Durrett - Stomach cancer and heart attack - home on hospice care

Ray and Bev Morris - Bev and been diagnosed with Alzheimers

Cliff's dad has dementia and is not doing well.

Mandy Forester - Upcoming Brain surgery

Sandra Carson's daughter Candace is having some mental health issues

Bob & Sadie Easley - Health issues

Ed Ehring's sister Julie Robison is suffering from Alzheimer's.

Vicky Hoffman - legally blind but her eyes are getting worse

Prayers for those working in health related jobs, for protection. Especially those from our own families:
Karen at St Joseph - Susan - State School - Zella Johnson