

Shepherd's Staff

July 2014

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.

Gaps in the Row

If all things are indeed equal, then all gardens should be able to have more plants growing. What I mean is, in our garden this year I planted rows of vegetables as directed, evenly spaced in soil that was prepared the same throughout. Yet when the time came for the plants to poke through, I had gaps in the rows! The seeds were from the same package, in the same soil, fertilized the same, the same water availability and even the same sun shining on the soil to warm it. Yet I had gaps! I find this all puzzling but do admit that I am still an amateur at gardening.

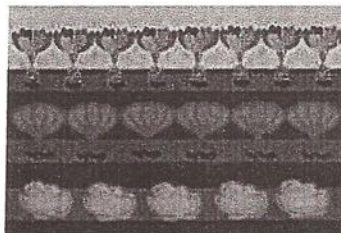
I did go back, armed with additional seed, and replanted hoping the soil will be more favorable to the germination and growth of my plants. We do seem to be unwilling to accept defeat in many areas of life. I am still waiting to see if this second round will bring the desired results. It would help if I knew why the garden had the empty spots though.

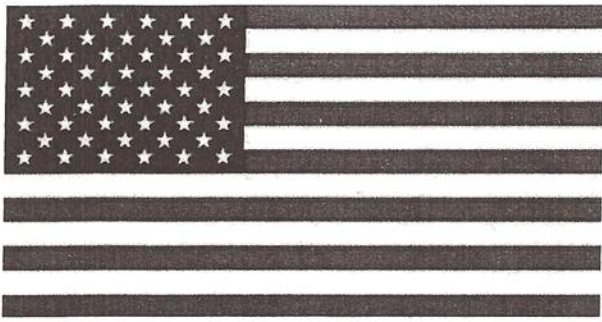
This made me think of the empty spots we have in our churches. The same story of salvation is told through many generations and yet we have empty seats. We provide the same opportunities to everyone and yet the results vary. We do try to come up with reasons as to why this is. I am not sure what your theories may include, but I do know that we are encouraged to not give up too soon.

We do have one assurance that we can hold to, that the Spirit is the way that God uses to bring everyone to a saving faith. In this I know I find comfort as Jesus told us that we cannot see where the wind (same word for Spirit in the Greek language) comes from nor do we know where it is headed. In short, we do not know what the Spirit is doing or at what pace. What we see as a gap in the seats should not discourage us but instead encourage us to pray more diligently. We simply do not know the schedule the Spirit is working under.

Not knowing the plan of the Spirit is no excuse though for being what God has called us to be. We are still called to be ambassadors for the Kingdom. We never know what word of encouragement or what example of love in God's name will change a person's point of view. In this regard we must do what Paul talks about, namely, run the race we are on until we are crossing the finish line.

Pastor Rus





PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

"I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE, WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL."

The Pledge of Allegiance received official recognition by Congress in an Act approved on June 22, 1942. However, the pledge was first published in 1892 in the Youth's Companion magazine in Boston, Massachusetts to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America, and was first used in public schools to celebrate Columbus Day on October 12, 1892.

In its original version, the pledge read "my flag" instead of "the flag of the United States." the change in the wording was adopted by the National Flag Conference in 1923. The rationale for the change was that it prevented ambiguity among foreign-born children and adults who might have the flag of their native land in mind when reciting the pledge.

The phrase "under God" was added to the pledge by a Congressional act approved on June 14, 1954. At that time, President Eisenhower said:

"in this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

Red, White and Blue Dessert

- 2 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
 - 2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
 - 2 quarts strawberries, halved, *divided*
 - 2 quarts blueberries, *divided*
- In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, sugar and extracts until fluffy. Fold in whipped cream. Place a third of the mixture in a 4-qt. bowl. Reserve 20 strawberry halves and 1/2 cup blueberries for garnish.
 - Layer half of the remaining strawberries and blueberries over cream mixture. Top with another third of the cream mixture and the remaining berries. Spread the remaining cream mixture on top. Use the reserved strawberries and blueberries to make a "flag" on top.
 - Yield: 18 servings.

THE U IN JESUS

Before **U** were thought of, or time had begun,
God stuck **U** in the name of His Son.

And each time **U** pray, you'll see it's true,
You can't spell out Jes**U**s and not include **U**.
You're a pretty big part of His wonderful name,
For **U**, He was born; that's why He came.

And His great love for **U** is the reason He died.
It even takes **U** to spell cr**U**cified.

Isn't it thrilling and splendidly grand
He rose from the dead, with **U** in His plan?

The stones split away, the gold tr**U**mpet blew,
And this word res**U**rrection is spelled with a **U**.

When Jes**U**s left earth at His **U**pward ascension,
He felt there was one thing He just had to
mention.

"Go into the world and tell them it's true
That I love them all - Just like I love **U**."

So many great people are spelled with a **U**,
Don't they have a right to know Jes**U**s too?

It all depends now on what **U** will do,



July Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

- 7/2 Gaylen Mulder
- 7/3 Sylvia Jansen
- 7/3 Janet Johnson
- 7/3 Darrell Druvenga
- 7/8 Clarence Karsjens
- 7/14 Curtis Kalkwarf
- 7/14 Michael Mulder
- 7/20 Frank Pott
- 7/20 Marcia Allspach
- 7/21 Marjorie Aswegan
- 7/22 Luke Edeker
- 7/25 Lola Stirling
- 7/25 Carla Mulder
- 7/26 Kenneth Johnson
- 7/26 Mary Vry
- 7/26 Kamie Shepard
- 7/26 Amy Swanson-Haan
- 7/27 Gene Venenga
- 7/28 Joy Kneppe
- 7/31 Jenna Siems

Happy Anniversary

- 7/5 Dale & Angie Meester
- 7/23 Dennis & Sharon Schipper



Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.

CRC Service Schedule

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
7/6	Ryan & Stacy (N) Steve & Charlene (S)	Gerald Haan	Paul Haan Family
7/13	Ken & Nancy (N) Clarence & June (S)	Mark Kramer	Mary V., Mary B.
7/20	Dennis & Sharon (N) Marlyn & Marcia (S)	Delbert Cordes	Kevin & Shelly
7/27	Ken & Janet (N) Pat & Deb (S)	Ken Meester	Ken & Nancy

*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.



4th of July

E Q S T R I P E S W L I B E R T Y S
E A R T N I C K J M N B V C X Z T A
T R G T Y U I O U P L K J H G F D S
Q W E L R T Y U L I O N G C D X S B
P Q A Z E S W E Y D F R T M G H J L
A M L O J X D E W Q S D O F G H B U
T P I C N I C S N A T D R S E F C E
R M E G A N H J K T E X D P J R C R
I E R T H U D F E E S A D A G H J K
O P O J T A M E R I C A C R E T H U
T S T A R S V F C H A R F K E R T Y
I E J K L Y B R D W X F T L H S E V
C D S G E R T T Y U U I K E L K T H
W A E R T Y G J M N V D E R O R I G
A R M N F A S D F W E H J S L O R T
D A K L L Y H R F R E O A S D W N J
G P H F U I R D E T I H W H A E T Y
F O U R T H O F J U L Y Q W D R C H
T Y E C G T A E D Y U I K J N I E N
I N D E P E N D E N C E R H J F H B

AMERICA

FREEDOM

PICNICS

BLUE

INDEPENDENCE

RED

EAGLE

JULY

SPARKLERS

FIREWORKS

LIBERTY

STARS

FLAG

PARADES

STRIPES

FOURTH OF JULY

PATRIOTIC

WHITE



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