

Shepherd's Staff

July 2021

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.

Can You Hear Me Now?

The catch phrase of the cell phone company, "Can you hear me now?" has been going through my head as I watch the events of life unfold before my eyes. The loss of morality in society has become undeniable. The fight over the lives of babies in the womb to the disregard of life on the streets of many of the major cities in our nation is appalling. The state of marriage in our land and throughout the world is far from what God ordained as one man and one woman bound in holy matrimony. History tells us that the fall of great civilizations happened due to the loss of a moral stand that is in keeping with God's view of morality and yet here we are testing God's patience. We were once a nation blessed but the strife we are now witnessing is frightening.

We try to come up with all the manmade reasons for the conditions of the weather that has us enduring the colder winters and hotter and drier summers claiming climate change from our abuse of fossil fuels to over population. We see the fires that threaten many people and structures that we are wondering if they will ever get back to a normal range where rain is able to fill the lakes and slow the fires due to dryness. The flooding of other parts of our country with the strength of storms taking lives and homes and businesses seems to constantly be on the rise. Through all these and more I wonder if we are not hearing the voice of God speaking to us calling us back to a relationship with him where the Ten Commandments are not only read but lived out.

In many ways as Christians we have become complacent in our morality. We see what is going on around us yet we have become desensitized to the shock of it all. While there have always been crime and murders, the blatant acts of daytime shootings and the violence of people today seems to have reached a new level. Hearing the reports on the news nightly of mass shootings so often has dulled our senses. We just turn away and express the joy that it has not happened in our neighborhood yet. We have become complacent in the number of abortions in part because they are done in the secrecy of clinics that hide behind the names of women's clinics. The sheer number of babies that are killed if they would be reported on a regular basis would shock us.

So what are we to do? If God is calling us to come out of our complicity, where do we begin? I believe that God is trying to wake our nation to the crimes against the righteousness of God in a real way. We must first confess that we have let our world sink into a new low that needs to be shaken out of the complacency and disregard for life and the rule of God in his creation. We also need to fall to our knees in prayer to ask God for the direction he would have us go. It may be that we must begin by writing letters to our elected officials to work for a return to the values that we once held on to as a nation. Returning to be a nation where the commands of God were taught and honored again and living out the commands that teach that all life is valuable because it is God given. We need to return to the concept that families need a mother and a father for the nurture of children in strong homes. A place where values of hard work are taught for gaining the things that we need so we can share with those who need help in the short term as scripture teaches. A place where we can return to the ordering of our lives according to the pattern of putting God first in our lives with a day of worship once again being honored above the activities of the world. This may sound unlikely in the condition our world is in but with God we must remember that all things are possible.

We simply must listen to the instruction of God in his Holy Word and live in obedience to the will of God. We may not change the entire world but if we all start with our own families we may set a new trend that we will be shocking in its effect. If we follow the biblical principle of family first then our neighborhood to the world we will see a change that God promises. One thing we should never do is underestimate the ability of God to bless the work he calls us to do. Who knows, God could be calling us and asking, "Do you hear me now?"

Pastor Rus

BIBLE VERSES

for the **FOURTH OF JULY**

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

- **2 Corinthians 3:17**

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

- **1 Peter 2:16**

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

- **Galatians 5:1**

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

- **Psalms 33:12**

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- **John 8:32**

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

- **John 8:36**

Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free.

- **Psalms 118:5**

For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.

- **Galatians 5:13**



July Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

7/3	Darrell Druvenga
7/3	Janet Johnson
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
7/26	Mary Vry
7/26	Amy Swanson-Haan
7/27	Gene Venenga
7/28	Joy Knepe

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 Armstrong by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.

4th of July Rice Krispies Treats

Celebrate Independence Day with these fun and colorful treats!

Course: Dessert Cuisine: American Servings: 16 bars

Ingredients

- 6 c. Rice Krispies cereal divided
- 1 (10.5 oz.) pkg. miniature marshmallows divided
- 3 T. margarine or butter divided
- Wiltons red and blue gel food coloring



Instructions

1. Grease a 9x9-inch glass baking dish. Divide 2 cups Rice Krispies cereal into 3 separate bowls, set aside.
2. Place 1/3 of the marshmallows and 1/3 of the butter into a large microwavable bowl. Melt in the microwave for a few minutes or until they begin to get big and puffy and the butter is melted, watch carefully. Take them out, stir well and add blue food coloring. Immediately stir in 2 cups of Rice Krispies, mix well. Press into prepared baking dish with wax paper or buttered hands.
3. Repeat steps for all 3 layers starting with the blue, then white and then red. Let cool, cut, serve and enjoy!

lady bug maze



Help the lady bug find her way out!

