



ABC Newsletter

Volume 14, Issue 7

July 2018

Atwater Baptist Church

July 2018 –we celebrate freedom in the United States

Who cannot be moved by the poem on the statue of Liberty, and the bright hope that invited and encouraged people to come to America?

*"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

-Emma Lazarus, November 2, 1883



True freedom comes through Christ Jesus our Lord

I've been viewing the growing controversy over immigration and the recent decision by our nation's leadership to implement a policy of separating young children from the parents as they cross the border seeking freedom and opportunity, fleeing harsh criminal conditions, poverty, and hunger.

I struggle to share my views in the church context but find I cannot remain silent of such an egregious and unbiblical practice, that includes an attempt to justify this behavior in part by claiming it is "biblical," generally referring to Romans 13's injunction to obey the governments laws. The context was the evil Roman empire, the same people who executed Jesus. But at this time very few Christians were citizens or involved in the Empire's version of ruling.

In that historic context, Romans 13 also says: *Whatever other command there may be, they are summed up in this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law (verses 9b-10).*

In today's world "neighbor" means a whole lot more than the people next door, especially when we consider that just one part of the "world-wide community" (2.3 billion) are fellow Christians, whether in India, Nicaragua, China, Europe, or Mexico. As believers we are challenged to obey the "law of love," and, stand up for Jesus and our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, not just "those like us," here in the United States, or California, or Atwater Baptist Church.

Christians have been commanded to be—like Jesus—"in the world but not OF the world (John 17:14-16)." At the same time we have a responsibility to participate as citizens in our democracy (Only about 30% of registered voters actually vote in any given election). As citizens we bring our biblically shaped values to bear in participating in our democratic, pluralistic (many beliefs, opinions) society.

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Meanwhile, the news channels, the press conferences, the coffee klatches and the water cooler conversations heat up as our government has implemented this “just consequence” policy on immigrants seeking freedom and opportunity in America. So the policy figures, the “just consequence” of coming across the border illegally, seeking freedom from violence, poverty, and hunger, is to separate young children from their parents and put them in cages, like dogs in a kennel.

The immigration problem is complicated and difficult. Citing scripture to justify immoral actions by the government, separating young children from their parents, is both immoral and unjust. Baptists have a long history of helping immigrants and refugees. The bible says to do so, we too were once people facing persecution and had to flee our country, and Jesus, Mary and Joseph had to flee to Egypt to save their baby’s life from the cruel injunction of Herod to kill all the first born in the land, lest one of them be the Messiah.

As believers in Christ we must reject this “solution” to the immigrant crisis and call upon the secular administration of the U.S. government to reverse this policy of separating young children from parents, all the while seeking a just and reasonable solution to our immigration problem.

Pray for our leaders, pray for our nation, pray for those millions around the world who struggle, just to stay alive.

In the name of Jesus, *Pastor John*

P.S. Included in our newsletter is a letter from our denomination leader Rev. Dr. Lee Spitzer addressed to Jess Sessions, urging him to change this in-humane, unjust, and unkind separation of parents from young children. JHD

Some scripture verses to ponder while thinking about our nation’s immigration crisis:

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow (Isaiah 1:17).

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things (Romans 2:1).

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world (James 1:27).

This is what the Lord Almighty said: “Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other” (Zechariah 7:9–10).

Also in Romans 13 are these verses Sessions failed to cite: *Whatever other command there may be, they are summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law (verses 9b-10).*

(retrieved 6-20-2018 from: <https://baptistnews.com/article/verybiblical-a-response-to-jeff-sessions>)

Newsletter
DEADLINE

Friday, July 20th



Friday, July 6th, 1:00 p.m.

By popular request our next outing will be to the Branding Iron on July 6th. We will be meeting there at 1:00 p.m.



The Story of the Fourth of July

The Declaration of Independence

We celebrate American Independence Day on the Fourth of July every year. We think of July 4, 1776, as a day that represents the Declaration of Independence and the birth of the United States of America as an independent nation. But July 4, 1776 wasn't the day that the Continental Congress decided to declare independence (they did that on July 2, 1776). It wasn't the day we started the American Revolution either (that had happened back in April 1775). And it wasn't the day Thomas Jefferson wrote the first draft of the Declaration of Independence (that was in June 1776). Or the date on which the Declaration was delivered to Great Britain (that didn't happen until November 1776). Or the date it was signed (that was August 2, 1776).

So, what did happen on July 4, 1776?

The Continental Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. They'd been working on it for a couple of days after the draft was submitted on July 2nd and finally agreed on all of the edits and changes. July 4, 1776, became the date that was included on the Declaration of Independence, and the fancy handwritten copy that was signed in August (the copy now displayed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.) It's also the date that was printed on the Dunlap Broadside, the original printed copies of the Declaration that were circulated throughout the new nation. So when people thought of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776 was the date they remembered. In contrast, we celebrate Constitution Day on September 17th of each year, the anniversary of the date the Constitution was signed, not the anniversary of the date it was approved. If we'd followed this same approach for the Declaration of Independence we'd be celebrating Independence Day on August 2nd of each year, the day the Declaration of Independence was signed!

How did the Fourth of July become a national holiday?

For the first 15 or 20 years after the Declaration was written, people didn't celebrate it much on any date. It was too new and too much else was happening in the young nation. By the 1790s, a time of bitter partisan conflicts, the Declaration had become controversial. One party, the Democratic-Republicans, admired Jefferson and the Declaration. But the other party, the Federalists, thought the Declaration was too French and too anti-British, which went against their current policies. By 1817, John Adams complained in a letter that America seemed uninterested in its past. But that would soon change. After the War of 1812, the Federalist party began to come apart and the new parties of the 1820s and 1830s all considered themselves inheritors of Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans. Printed copies of the Declaration began to circulate again, all with the date July 4, 1776, listed at the top. The deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on July 4, 1826, may even have helped to promote the idea of July 4 as an important date to be celebrated. Celebrations of the Fourth of July became more common as the years went on and in 1870, almost a hundred years after the Declaration was written, Congress first declared July 4 to be a national holiday as part of a bill to officially recognize several holidays, including Christmas. Further legislation about national holidays, including July 4, was passed in 1939 and 1941.

Agape, Bonnie

Regular Meeting Times this Month

Sundays:

9:00 AM NLCC Worship
9:30 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM ABC Morning Worship
6:00 PM NLCC Youth Group

Tuesdays

8:00 p.m. Phoenix Group

Thursdays:

9:30 AM Prayer

Fridays

7:00 PM—9:30 PM Phoenix Group

Special Dates this Month.

Wednesday, July 4

OFFICE CLOSED—4TH OF JULY

Friday, July 6

1:00p.m. Happy Trails Outing

Monday, July 9—Friday, July 13

5:15 p.m.—8:00 p.m. VBS

Wednesday, July 11

9:00 a.m. USDA Commodities

Tuesday, July 17

7:00 p.m. Diaconate Meeting

Friday, July 20

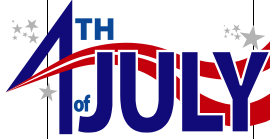

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE

Tuesday, July 24

9:00 a.m. Senior Brown Bag



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

<p>1</p> <p>9:00 a.m. NLCC Worship</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 a.m. ABC Worship</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>4</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> 	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>1:00 p.m. Happy Trails</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:00 a.m. NLCC Worship</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 a.m. ABC Worship</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Brown Bag Distribution</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:00 a.m. USDA Commodities</p> <p>VBS</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:00 a.m. NLCC Worship</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 a.m. ABC Worship</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Diaconate Mtg</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p> 	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:00 a.m. NLCC Worship</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 a.m. ABC Worship</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Brown Bag Distribution</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:00 a.m. NLCC Worship</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 a.m. ABC Worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Phoenix Group</p>	<p>July Birthdays</p> <p>6 Glen Peters</p> <p>28 Bill Maddox</p> <p>29 Julie Luxon</p>			



What a great time we had when our Happy Trails Outing on June 15th went to the Pageo Lavender Farm. The lavender fields were beautiful and the history of growing lavender plants was informative as well as watching the distiller operate. Followed by a nice lunch on the patio enjoyed by everyone.

Our next outing by popular request will be lunch at the Branding Iron on July 6th at 1:00 p.m.. Bring a friend and enjoy a good meal plus fellowship!

We are working to keep the grass watered and green for Vacation Bible School, July 9th thru 13th. Pray for a good attendance.

Richard Maddox, Moderator

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Pew Bible Project

Thank you for your generosity in giving to our new project of new sanctuary Bibles. We have enough to buy them. However, the Bibles we want are temporarily out of stock until July 20th. So we will be ordering them but will not receive them until later in July.

I hope you all have a lovely summer.

Eileen Gasaway, Worship Committee



Love, In the Name of Christ Pantry Report

We have helped two different women in the months of May – June. We bought them fresh and canned food enough for a few weeks. They are very appreciative for our help to them. Thank you for your support.

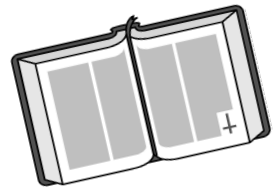


We have just finished the one Great Hour of Sharing. The theme was “More than we can imagine.” The goal was more than reached with at least \$535. Praise the Lord and thank you for all your giving. This money will be used to help many people to improve their lives around the world.

Ruth Ann Gasaway



United In Christ,
Growing in Grace,
Reaching Out in Love



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Atwater Baptist Church.
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our page to start getting pictures
and announcements!

Remember In Prayer

Hanna Hoyt, Marie Pimentel, Dora Wilcox, Morgan Yarbrough, Eileen Gasaway, Pat Yarbrough

Our Military families, leaders, and president

Our Missionaries:

Rev. Lauran Bethell,
Steve & Cari Wendel.



JULY 9TH-13TH

Visit our church web site
www.atwaterbaptist.com
for a more complete
prayer list.