

THE GLEANER

May/June 2025

Independence Day

This coming Friday is July 4th, when we here in the United States celebrate the birth of our Nation. Many simply call this floating holiday "July Fourth". I prefer to call it "Independence Day". That's because it is the day we as a people declared our independence from Great Britain, our mother country. That is also why I prefer the term "War of Independence" versus "American Revolution". The Declaration starts off by saying:

"When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness..."

That has led to 249 years of self-determination on the part of this now great Nation, a Nation which after World War Two eclipsed Great Britain in terms of world power and significance.

We as a Nation pride ourselves in independence: it's in our DNA. This seems natural, because our nation is built of many peoples who fled tyranny and other things, seeking a better life for themselves and their families. It takes a strong streak of independence to leave one's homeland to go to another continent and a new Nation in order to forge a life that is a least relatively, freer than what one left. Bible, especially the New Testament, speaks not of independence, but INTERDEPENDENCE.



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We as Christians, while enjoying the freedoms that generations of men and women have fought and died to maintain, are to share in life together, helping each other and supporting one another as we walk through this life as people with feet in two nations: The United States and the Kingdom of Heaven.

Why do I, as your pastor, think this is important?

Because I believe that while most people embrace the freedoms enshrined in our Constitution, many do so at the expense of the freedoms of others. We are free to live as we like, as long as our freedom doesn't infringe on the freedom of another. This is a biblical principle. Jesus said, "Do to others as you would like them to do to you. If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them!" But our interconnectedness as believers in Christ goes beyond this.

The Apostle Paul believed that, the interconnectedness of believers through their shared relationship with Christ, highlighting themes of unity, spiritual growth, and mutual responsibility. He described this connection using the metaphor of the body of Christ, where each member plays a vital role and contributes to the overall well-being. Here are five ways he taught this truth:

1. **We have Union with Christ:** Paul taught that believers are united with Christ through faith, death, and resurrection. This union transforms their identity, making them new creations in Christ
2. **Mutual Responsibility:** Paul emphasized that believers are responsible for each other's spiritual well-being. This includes encouraging one another, bearing one another's burdens, and striving for unity
3. **The Body of Christ:** He used the analogy of the human body to illustrate how believers are interconnected. Each member has a unique function and is essential for the body's proper functioning. This means that believers should care for and support one another, recognizing their interdependence
4. **Transformation and Growth:** Paul believed that believers are not only united with Christ but are also being transformed into His likeness. This ongoing process involves renewing their minds, seeking God's will, and bearing the fruit of the Spirit
5. **Suffering and Perseverance:** Paul also acknowledged that believers may face suffering, but he encouraged them to persevere in faith, knowing that God is working in them and will complete the good work He has begun

So yes, **let's celebrate our independence as a Nation.** But let us also pray for our Nation and its leaders, that they may make decisions and govern according to the principles of God's Word, rather than the principles of this world, which are set against Christ and his Kingdom.

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Rather than being stubbornly independent, let us rather echo Paul who said, *"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* And also, *"Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."* Pastor Tony



July 2025 Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Program Recently I read an article that stated over one fourth of the world's population is under 15 years of age. What a tremendous field for the shoeboxes which carry in them the Gospel of Salvation. Several books of the Bible speak to Christ's mission on earth. Christ's ministry included both the preaching of forgiveness and spiritual freedom as well as freeing those who were bound by various physical ailments. He also entrusted his ministry to his disciples and to all his followers—that means us. One of the ways we do this is through the shoebox program. Jesus never veered from his ministry and with His help neither will we. The months of July and August usually see the school supplies on sale at Walmart. We do need 61 boxes of Crayola crayons 24 count size. The remaining school supplies have already been purchased. I am relying on you to work this out and to not let the opportunity slip by as these crayons are expensive at any other time of the year.

Thank you for your continued support for this program and for Jim and I as we continue through this disease process. I miss you all very much and the time we spend together. Thank you. In Christ's love, Sandy

We certainly miss Sandy. TPC is having a season of illnesses in our small congregation. Please continue to pray for Jim and Sandy, as well as Nancy and Lee, Esther and Dick, and others. A big thank you to Diane for keeping us informed through "Praise and Pray", in spite of all she has been through. I keep mine all week to refer back to it and others have mentioned they do too.
Need Prayer? TPCPray4me@gmail.com

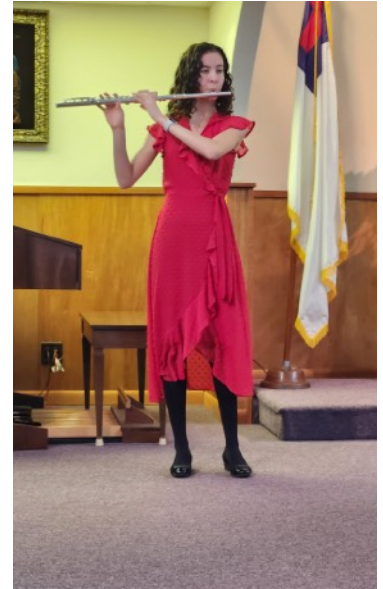
Birthdays and Anniversaries July & August

Birthdays

Tana July 3
Barbara H July 14
Kerry July 18
Darla M August 17
Sandi M August 19
Gary August 27

Anniversaries

Tom & Kathy August 16



Thank you Nayeli, for sharing your gift with us. We pray for you in your future, that God will always be with you. It is off to college where you will shine.TPC

Social Media

Facebook in June

Increase to 182 followers (up 2)
3.9K views which is up 7.9%
Content interactions 199 which is up 10.6%

Instagram in June

132 following (those who follow us)

Instagram and Facebook have merged so it's hard to break down the stats but I am sure there are people at Meta working on improvements.

We are having slow growth in both the platforms we are using, Facebook and Instagram. But that is ok: God has a plan for us.

Our last video brought an interaction from a family that watched our June 29th service saying "Good morning family, joining Sunday service from Kenya be blessed all". What a blessing that simple remark had on my heart. Thank you as always, to Tana and Kathy. We are a team, Chris

From Georgia a selection of Senior Hymns that will be placed throughout the Gleaner. There are nine in all. The first one is a hymn with the title of "Precious Lord, Take My Hand and Help Me Up."

"then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil." – Deuteronomy 11:14

GLEANER JULY 2025 OUTREACH

Are we ready for **Cheese Days** and the height of summer fun?! *Outreach* sure is. Here's a rundown of what we have planned for the weekend of July 12th-13th:

Saturday 12th:

-We are meeting at the church Saturday at 10:30am to cut up watermelons. Gary and I are delivering them the night before, so if you want to donate any watermelons, meet us the night before or Saturday morning.

-10am-Gary and I are putting out the newest addition to Cheese Days. Did you figure out the answer from the clues in the weekly Praise and Pray? It's something almost every street carnival has. It's totally reusable year after year. Everyone can use it during Cheese Days. Give up? We are introducing a "**Say Cheese**" board in 2025! It's a facial cutout board with a cheese themed background. So step up, stick your head through the hole, and become a piece of Swiss or Bleu (or cheddar...) cheese!! It should make for some great community pics and instagram posts.

-11am-12pm (ish)-Parade starts and we will be out front to hand out free watermelon slices to the community at our watermelon table. There will be a hose handy for people to wash afterwards as well as a garbage can for the rinds. We will hand out slices until they are gone, or there are no more people out front. (I'll take the bins home with me to wash, so minimal cleanup)

Sunday 13th:

-Church service at 10:30am

-After church we will grab 1-2 tables and take them to the **Toledo Park** and set them up for anyone wanting to come and eat lunch in the park during the Lions Club big BBQ. You can purchase a lunch from the Lions, or simply sit and enjoy fellowship for an hour. There will be a "Plan to Make It" list out soon. After lunch the tables will be taken back to the church.

It will be a fun Cheese Days this year, we will see you there! Don't forget to Say Cheese!

Diane Geister, Outreach

"It is Well with My Soul, But My Knees Hurt", "Just a Slower Walk with Thee", "Nobody Knows the Trouble I Have Seeing", "Count Your Many Birthdays, Name Them One by One", "Go Tell It on the Mountain, But Speak up"

A big thanks to everyone for their articles!

Worship

Gary is joining the moderator team. Sandy has stepped back to spend precious time with Jim. Thankful for all who feel led to organize the service, serve communion, read, and pray. We are always eager to welcome new people to the team.

On Sunday June 27th we presented Nayeli a card and with wished her well as she begins her adventure in college. Kathy is looking for a new piano player. God has been faithful. We have been blessed with young talented pianists these last few years. I am excited to see what the Lord will provide. Pastor Tony is heading to his 50th HighSchool reunion in July. We can expect an inspiring video sermon the week he is away. Paulli

Winlock/Vader Foodbank & Rowdy Rooster

The Foodbank is grateful to Diane and session for providing can openers. Winlock has a number of unhoused individuals that need help. Lack of can openers has been a barrier to accessing easy to prepare nutritional food for these individuals. Sue has returned from her cancer treatment and is back behind the registration desk. Sue does a great job welcoming people during the food distribution days and helping them through the system. I continue to be blessed to serve once a month and I get to practice my rusty Spanish. Clothing and houseware distribution has been busy. The Rowdy Rooster is busy most days. A number of community members frequent the bistro as a meeting place for coffee and meals. Rylee and the volunteers are friendly and helpful, always looking for ways to help people. It is a lovely place to meet up if friends and new neighbors and find out what is happening in the community

“Give Me the Old Timers’ Religion”, Blessed Insurance”, and my personal favorite”
 Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah, I’ve Forgotten Where I Parked”
 Thank you, Georgia!

Toledo Neighbors Program

This year the annual appreciation dinner was held at the Hall on June 21. Although the weather was drippy, our mayor and TNP treasurer manned the barbecue and prepared hotdogs for all. The event was well attended. There was live Bluegrass music. It was great to see the hall full! Plans are underway for the Fall Apple Cider Press and future community potlucks.

The 7 week trial of commodity boxes was slow to start but became quite popular. This program benefitted the participating farms as well as the recipients of the boxes. TNP distributed 40 boxes per week during May through June. This grant helped with the food budget. Customized boxes became available to the public for purchase, at a cost of \$38 per week. Toledo is considered a food desert and TNP would like to see the Hall become a food hub.

Our church continues to collect hygiene products for distribution at the Hall. There is currently no money in the budget to purchase these much needed items. The individuals relying on TNP to help meet their weekly needs are most appreciative. The garden is now producing product, lettuce, rhubarb, artichokes, kale, and herbs. Brooke and her team of volunteers have been busy planting, weeding, and now harvesting. Individuals wishing to help are welcome Friday mornings and Saturdays. The two classes "Grow your own Apothecary and Gardening 101" were well attended and brought new community members to the hall. More classes are being considered. Our own Rebecca, has taken the lead on scheduling volunteers to provide soup, treats, and/or sandwiches in the meeting room during food distributions on Saturdays (11 to 12:30) It is a great opportunity to visit with community members and get to know your neighbors.

"As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work." John 9:4

"Man is like a breath; his days are like a fleeting shadow" Psalm 144:4

Enjoy this summer. It too will pass quickly. Your sister in Christ, Paulli

Box Contents

SOUTH WEST WASHINGTON FOOD HUB

Four Elements Farm
Cilantro
Red kale
French Breakfast Radish
Wobbly Cart Farm
potatoes
Lady MacDonald's Farm
microgreens
Kirsop
Bok Choy
Newaukum Valley Farm
mint
oregano

Piece by Piece Farm

Savory French Toast and Breakfast Radish

EQUIPMENT

- 1 large skillet

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon whole milk but any milk will do!
- 1 teaspoon fresh za'atar
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice about 1/2 lemon
- 1 large slice of bread whole wheat or sourdough are my favorite
- 1 tablespoon of salted butter
- 3-4 small breakfast radishes really well washed
- 3 tablespoons whole milk ricotta cheese
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

- In a wide, shallow bowl, whisk together the egg, milk, za'atar, salt and lemon juice. Drop in the bread and let it soak up as much of the liquid on one side before flipping to let the other side soak, the goal is to have all of the liquid absorbed.
- Place a large pan over medium heat and add the butter, let it fully melt before adding the bread. Cook until nice and golden, about 3 minutes on each side.
- There should still be a bit of butter left in the pan when you remove the bread, add the radishes in, give the pan a quick shake to coat and let them cook undisturbed for about 3 minutes. Give them a flip, season with a pinch of salt and cook for another 2 minutes.
- Add the French toast to a plate, smother the ricotta on top (I love a smooch) and pile on the radishes. Finish with a squeeze of lemon and a few cracks of black pepper.

Box Contents

SOUTH WEST WASHINGTON FOOD HUB

Newaukum Valley Farm
Lettuce
Lady MacDonald's
Microgreens
Microgreens
5 Hearts Farm
Red Radish
Adam's Mushrooms
Shiitake Mushrooms
Wobbly Cart Farm
Purple Potatoes
Tunawerth Creamery
Cream Cheese

Kingfisher Farm

Sautéed Shiitake Mushrooms

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup mushrooms
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 4 cups thinly sliced shiitake mushrooms about 18-20 mushrooms
- 1/4 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- pinch salt/pepper
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 3 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1/2 tablespoon maple syrup
- pinch red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 tablespoon arrowroot or cornstarch

Instructions

- Heat sesame oil over medium heat. Add garlic, spices and mushrooms and cook for 5 minutes.
- While mushrooms are cooking, make your sauce. Mix together sauce ingredients until fully combined
- Pour sauce over mushrooms and fully combine sauce with mushrooms. Cook for 5-8 minutes until mushrooms are cooked through.
- Serve mushrooms with sides and toppings of choice. I went with rice, sesame seeds and cilantro.

Paulli took pictures of what is in a "Commodity Box" I find this an interesting idea, a good way to get fresh products and as an aid to local farmers. They are small to read but more information is coming. Thank you, Paulli! Chris

Treasure's Report for May and June 2025

Although the month of May saw red numbers for the bottom line, we rebounded nicely in June. We're ready to go into the summer in the black. After June's session meeting there will be a fresh set of numbers to look at on the bulletin board in the elevator lobby. Rebecca gets closer by the day to getting our QuickBooks online version up and running. It's been a tedious process as we weren't able to bring the old financial data over to the online QB. She's had to input, by hand, everything we need to continue seamlessly.

The bell tower louvers are in place and the bells are ringing at 10:30 every Sunday morning and every day at noon! Residual dollars from the bell tower fund have been (or will be) moved to the Reader Board Fund. The committee has been a bit preoccupied with family matters, so we don't have the focus that we will have in the months to come. Our congregation has been blessed with a set of circumstances that allow us to look positively toward the future, including the placement of an electronic, programmable reader board. Of course, with the Provision of our almighty God! That's all for now. See you at the Church on Cheese Day Saturday!

In Christ, Tom

Judy

It is with great sadness that our Sister in Christ, Judy, passed away recently. Her Celebration of Life is on July 26th at 1pm followed by a luncheon at TPC. Please RSVP to Diane at digeister64@gmail.com if you plan to stay for it.

I remember her mostly from the Presbyterian Women's group. She welcomed me with open arms like my own mother would have done, with a big hug, like I was the very person she was waiting for. We were almost strangers, but over time, when she discovered I was an "Air Force Kid" we shared many memories of that life. Later, she needed someone to pour the juice into those tiny little Communion serving cups, and I said I would do it. I am glad that we now observe by intinction. Judy was always kind and friendly. It is by the grace of God that I met her when I did. My dad had recently died, and Judy treated me like an old friend. I will always be grateful to her. It is comforting to remember we will all see each other once again, upon Jesus's return, and we will shout "Hallelujah"!

