

JULY 2026 FIRSTNEWS

250 YEARS



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Happy Birthday to the United States of America!

Every Fourth of July, we celebrate our independence as The United States of America. On Independence Day, we commemorate the Declaration of Independence of the United States on July 4, 1776. On the original July 4th, Continental Congress declared that the thirteen American colonies were no longer subject to Britain and were now free, independent, and united states. We thank God for our country. We are so blessed to live here, and we praise God for the freedom we have to worship God in our country. As we are celebrating the United States of America's 250th birthday this July 4th, what a great time to pray for our country to come back to God!

In the last several decades, there has been a growing movement that has been focused on the negative aspects of our history of slavery and racism. Though such themes are unfortunately a reality in our history as a nation, I'm proud that since the Civil Rights era to the present, America has made tremendous progress in righting the wrongs from the past. As Christians, it is our responsibility to represent our Savior in our country since we are all created in God's image. As Psalm 33:12 states, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance."

As believers that are saved from our sins, our Independence Day was won at Calvary when Jesus Christ died for our sins on Good Friday and rose from the dead on the third day on Easter Sunday. Jesus gave us our independence from the tyranny of sin and independence to serve God. As the Apostle Paul states in Romans 3:25a, "God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith."

Christians are no longer under the power of sin. But we must live out the independence that we have from sin and live a life for God's glory. As Jesus said in John 8:36, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." This freedom that we have in Christ needs to be lived out as we cling to Christ and abstain from sin or to anything else that would keep us from serving God. Jesus died for our sins to give us the privilege to walk in freedom, have the joy of freedom in Christ, and to celebrate such freedom we have as the children of God. As the Apostle Paul said in Romans 6:12-13, "12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness."

On this special 250th Independence Day, let us celebrate the independence we have in the United States and let us celebrate the independence we have in Jesus! Happy 250th birthday to the United States of America!

Blessings, Pastor Kenny

Happy Birthday

- 3 Karynn Johnson
- 4 Tyna Carter
- 5 Garnell Friend
- 8 Mary Gray
- 9 Shelvy Stokes
- 10 Marian Little
- 12 Ted Marcum
- 12 Bonnie Taylor
- 13 Linda Baker
- 13 Carol Paroz
- 15 Carmon Miniard
- 16 Gaynell Crawford
- 16 Eddie Steele
- 20 Allen Riddle
- 22 Joy Sowles
- 24 Peyton Swope
- 24 Treva J Bope
- 25 Linda Mertz
- 26 Billy Boyd
- 28 Betty Rysenga
- 30 Jan Daudert

HAPPY Anniversary

- 1 Vernon & Linda Wittenbrink
- 2 Shawn & Sarah Swope
- 5 James & Dorothy Bensel
- 5 Pastor Kenny & Sorina Howard
- 9 Bobby & Janis Steadman
- 10 Fred & Irene Dye
- 23 Jim & Doris Covalt
- 23 Robert & Virginia Kaetzel
- 23 Gayl & Ruth (Krupa) Van Ansdale
- 27 Rob & Kelly Stevens
- 29 Dean & Darlene Terrell



ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Pastor Kenny and Sorina will be on vacation until July 10th

July 1st (Wednesday) at 6:00pm will be a Celebration of America's 250th Birthday! We will have grilled food, music, and sparklers! There is a sign-up sheet in the lobby to bring sides and desserts. We all will come together for this special time during the midweek service time starting at 6:00pm. See Pastor Tim with any questions.

July 11th (Saturday) Men's Breakfast at Golden Coral in Winter Haven. We will have breakfast, devotion and meeting. All men are welcome!

July 13th - July 18th Guatemala Missions Trip

July 17th & 18th (Friday & Saturday) Ladies Weekend of Fun & Fellowship through Crafts, Scrapbooking, Puzzles and/or Games. The group will begin at 1:00pm on Friday and at 9:00am on Saturday. Come join the fun! All women are welcome!

July 18th (Saturday) Ladies Lunch at Sweet Magnolia Tea & Bistro in Auburndale. We will meet there at 11:00am. Please sign up in the lobby.

July 21st (Tuesday) at 6:30pm - Leadership Council Meeting

July 25th (Saturday) at 9:00am - Decorate the church for VBS

JULY 27TH - JULY 31ST VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

