



The Cross & Steeple

www.collinsvillebaptistchurch.com

July 2015

From John

Put me down as someone who loves stories. And who can see the story in history.

It was my first trip to Philadelphia. Summer of 1976 or 77. We were visiting Gloria's sister. On the trip over we had stopped at Gettysburg. Now we were in the City of Brotherly Love. I did not know anything about Philly cheese steaks (oh, my terrible ignorance). Rocky was a new movie and the statue (now concrete foot prints) did not yet exist at the Art Museum.

But oh, the things that were there. Benjamin Franklin's house. Historic churches. And what I most wanted to see. The Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. Gloria and I with our two very small boys waited in line to touch the Liberty Bell in its new home – built for the bicentennial – across the street and in view of Independence Hall. A pause as I touched it, a tremor in me, not the bell. *Leviticus 25:10 – proclaim liberty throughout the land* written on the bell. The famous crack in it.

And then Independence Hall. The sun was shining brightly, John and Mark holding our hands as we dodged traffic to get across the street. Waiting in line to go into the building. Park rangers putting us into a group of about 25, giving us a quick history lesson. And then we walked into Independence Hall and into the room.

I had dreamed of being in that room. It looked just as I knew it would. My eye and my imagination looked around. Thomas Jefferson sat right over in that area. He wrote the Declaration across the street in his rented room and then brought it in here. The back of the chairs – that's what Ben Franklin saw when he said that you could not tell if the sun on top of the chair was a rising son or setting son, just like the new country they were creating. That table is where John Hancock sat as he put his name on the Declaration in letters big enough for King George to read. Then he told the others to sign it so he wouldn't be the only one committing treason. We sometimes forget that our patriots were risking their lives.



I was overwhelmed to be in that place where the United States came into being. Where those men placed their lives in danger of British jail and execution. By signing a piece of paper with Jefferson's words on it. A Declaration of Independence.

The place where our country became a beacon of freedom for all people. "All men are created equal." Not some, all. "And endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." That piece of paper claimed all people's freedom to be given by God. No matter what a king or anyone else said.

I looked around the room. Imagined Jefferson and Franklin and Adams. Felt their presence there in that room 200 years later. I felt

very, very proud to be and American (before the song existed).

I floated out of the room to let others have their turn. We moved around back and started to walk toward more of the historic area. And there was Carpenters' Hall. We sometimes forget that the First Continental Congress met there in 1774. It is a smaller building with much less glamour. We walked into it and looked at the displays of those first meetings about independence. I glanced up at a framed print. It showed the delegates on their second day of meetings. Down on their knees praying. Seeking God's guidance and presence. And I smiled. It all began with prayer. And ended with a document that declared freedom had been given to all. By God. Let us never forget those patriots. Or their reliance on God.

Several years ago a famous Russian author talked about what had happened to his country, the Soviet Union. How the communist takeover had happened and had destroyed freedom and brought constant repression including his own sentencing to a Soviet prison camp for his writings. He recalled his family discussing how things had gone so terribly wrong in his country.

"I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: **Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened...Men have forgotten God.**"

And then he warned that he saw the same thing happening in the US – people forgetting God. The Soviets had created a country that proudly said that there was no God. And they paid a terrible price for that. His warning to us: Don't forget God.

Are we forgetting God in the United States? That is frightening to consider. More frightening would be if we thought that God is forgetting us. But the most terrifying thing should be realizing that God is not forgetting us. And He is fair and just. And judges all sin. Even in this country.

The quote above is from Alexander Solzhenitsyn who won the Nobel Prize for Literature for his books exposing the problems in his native USSR. He was sent to Soviet prison camps for his writing and then exiled.

The painting is of the first prayer in the Continental Congress in September, 1774, almost two years before the Declaration of Independence was adopted. The painting is by T.H. Matteson in 1848. His imagining of the scene is supported by reports of those there that day such as John Adams. Much of the prayer was recorded by those present. It asked for God's protection as the members of Congress declared themselves to be dependent only on Him. May we do the same.

Don't forget God.

Note from John – this article was written before the Supreme Court decision on marriage that came down this week. Today I would add – Do you think that our country is forgetting God? You must decide for yourself. Today, after this decision, I do not see how I can think anything else. And I know that God is watching us.

**Quarterly Ministry Meeting and
Covered Dish Dinner**

Sunday, July 12 at Noon

*Discussion of Youth Council Leaders,
Use of Church Building for Weddings
or Other Events*

Shocco Springs Choir Week

Friday, July 10-Saturday, July 11
Leaders' Conference

Children's Choir Summit

Monday, July 13- Thursday, July 17
Children and Youth Conference
Mix MusiCamp



Operation Christmas Child
Girls' Clothing Items

Upcoming Events

First Day of School for Students -- Fort Payne and Collinsville
Thursday, August 6

Thursday, August 27 - High School Football Starts
Football Dinners at Churches

See You at the Pole
Wednesday, September 23

Collinsville Quilt Walk
Friday, September 25, 2015
Noon until 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 26, 2015
10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.



To the family of Coach L. D. Dobbins.

To the Dorr family in the loss of John's
mother (Leah's grandmother).

To the family of Mary Hortense Blanton.

To Dr. Scott Argo in the loss of his mother.

The newsletter is now available by
email. If you would prefer to
receive yours electronically,
please send an email to
mamiemoore@hotmail.com with
your name and email address.



Youth Group Wednesday 6 pm

Worship Team Wednesday 7 pm

Van Driver needed for Wednesday nights. Can you help?

~ July 2015 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Birthday Lue Deen Perkins	2 Birthday Emilee Garoutte	3 Birthday Jared Edwards Jerrie Alexander	4 Birthday <i>United States of America</i>
5 Birthday Teresa Bobo Flowers Vanessa Chambers	6	7 Birthday Julie Norris	8 Birthday Haley Hunt	9 Birthday Julie Arthur	10 Birthday Karlie Plunkett	11 Birthday Glenda Morgan
12 Lord's Supper Clyde & Sandra Killian Flowers	13 Birthday David Borntrager Dylan Nelson	14 Birthday Joseline Delacruz Katelyn Rogers Tammi Tucker	15 Anniversary Scot & Angie Shankles	16 Birthday Jess De La O Jacob Jones Bryan Scott	17 Birthday Annabelle Shankles Mix MusiCamp	18 Birthday Nikki Nelson Shelby Godshall Anniversary Rosemary & Hoyt Brooks JoAnn & Lamar Smith
19 Flowers	20	21	22 Birthday Belle Hamiter	23	24 Birthday Daizy Gallegos	25 Anniversary Jimmy & Tangy Carter
26 Birthday Jason Norris	27	28 Birthday Crista Newsome	29	30	31	



It seems to me that summer is flying so quickly that it is just a blur! Weren't high school graduations just a few days ago? There are summer trips and family gatherings, Vacation Bible School and Independence Day celebrations, and for some, mowing and gardening, canning and freezing. I am sure I may be leaving out some of the things that may be filling your schedule, like a forty hour work week, perhaps!

Our children, youth and their leaders have met pretty much non-stop since the choir year ended. There are Bible lessons and water games and the worship team continues to learn great music to share with our church family and others. In addition to mission activities, many are hard at work helping to raise money for Shocco Music Camps. This year we may have our largest number of campers ever. The weekend before they head to camp there will also be leadership training for directors and teachers.

I want to thank our church for its investment in these young lives. Many of you have devoted large portions of your time in working with our children and youth, directly and/or indirectly year round. Some are planning, teaching, directing music, preparing meals, transporting, praying, contributing financially and, as you do these things, you are serving the Lord and His Kingdom.

Thank you for all the ways you express your love for our Savior. I would ask you to continue to pray for Shocco Music Leadership Training (Summit) July 10 and 11, and the campers and leaders for Music Week (Mix/Remix) July 13-17, 2015. Then I would ask you to turn your minds, hearts and prayers toward a new church year, and ask God how He would have you serve in 2015-16. As God blesses our church and it continues to grow, we are in need of more and more members to help nurture young people and minister to others as well. There is no better way to invest our lives than serving the King of Kings! It has eternal dividends!

Thank you for allowing me to have a small part in serving with you. Gloria Morgan

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Restoration of a Nation!

by George Whitten, Editor of Worthy Devotions

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. Psalms 33:12

Throughout the United States today, everyone will be celebrating the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence — a document through which leaders of the colonies in the New World broke free from the King of England.

The declaration begins: "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."

While revisionist historians are working hard to remove any trace of Christian/Biblical ideals from the foundations of America, today's celebration finds its basis in a foundational document which appeals to the authority of a Divine Creator, one whom most of the founding fathers fully believed to have been the author and main subject of the Holy Bible, and who was the guarantor of certain "inalienable rights". So the Fourth of July — more than just a celebration of independence, ought also to be a day which recognizes God's participation in the nation's birth.

I've read and heard all kinds of advice about how America ought to be transformed, while a simple recognition of God's covenant offer to a nation goes ignored. The words found in 2 Chronicles 7:14 could be claimed and applied to any nation, but particularly one whose foundational documents and institutions have drawn their inspiration substantially from Biblical monotheism. "If my people, which are called by my name, *shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*"

IF we truly want to see healing brought to any nation, then this conditional covenant is for **US** and the restoration of our land will require our part in the covenant: humility, prayer and repentance, so that God can forgive our sin and heal our land!

True restoration and healing only comes through true repentance and God's grace! With so much work to be done — may restoration begin with us!