

The Pleasant View

PASTOR ED'S EPISTLE

Honoring God & Our Country

We are celebrating our two hundred and forty – third year as a nation this July 4th. Our country has been through periods of moral and religious excellence with several revivals coming to our country and periods of moral decay and religious persecution in some form or another.

To be clear, our nation was founded upon Judeo – Christian principles brought here by the Pilgrims who were fleeing Europe and specifically England to be able to practice their religion freely. It just so happened that their primary religion was Christianity. I believe it was God's divine Providence that allowed our country to be established. **Also, to be clear**, not everyone who were considered the founders of our country were born again Christians. Many were Deists and others had unique and radical views closely associated with Christianity and the Bible.

Religious freedom dates back to Martin Luther and the time of the Reformation. He desired for people to have their own copy of scriptures as evidenced by his translating the Bible into the German language and to distribute copies to the people. He also challenged the traditions of the church as equal to the teaching of the Bible. He felt people should read and interpret the Bible as they desired.

The Pilgrim's came to Northeastern America and expanded on the ideas of religious freedom. There is plenty of detailed history on this for anyone to research but suffice it to say, there was even religious persecution among the people from Europe as the country was being settled.

Fast forward to our current times. Religious persecution is in full swing around the world and in our country. China is aggressively tearing down Christian churches and India is going after Christians and churches as well. Those are just a few of the place's persecution exists.

In the United States, we have all heard in the news about small skirmishes at this point in our culture, that are attempts to infringe on our religious freedom. What are you and I doing to promote and encourage religious freedom?

First, we need to be careful to say that religious liberty is our "right" as Christians. We know that we have an amendment in our Constitution that states **"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."** As Americans we talk as if this is a right and it is as the law of our land, but for us as Christians, it is a privilege for us to enjoy. In a sense, as Christ followers, we do not have "rights" but we live with grace given to us daily in our lives from God. So, we should be so grateful for the privilege of having the freedom to worship without government intervention.

Second, we are to protect the opportunity for all in America to worship freely. Whether that be those who are Muslim, B'hai, Atheists who gather, Jewish people, etc. Everyone should have the opportunity to worship freely however they believe. As Christ followers, we, need to stand shoulder to shoulder with those of all faiths to petition our government to maintain the amendment that is part of the document that has become the foundation of our nation. As we have opportunity to vote, to speak out, and find ways to support religious freedom, it is vital that we do our part to protect this privilege. Many people around the world covet this freedom that we enjoy.

Third, we must take advantage of this opportunity by propagating the Gospel. We need, as believers to stay positive and share what we are for and not just what we are against. We are for justice, peace, hope, mercy and help to our fellow man because of our relationship with Christ. Those are themes that will resonate with our culture. Many are trying to secularize those themes but by our being a part of the culture, with Christians rubbing shoulders with non-believers and making relationships, opens the doors for spiritual conversation. We do not know how long this opportunity will be in front of us so NOW is the time to worship freely, to preach the Word for discipleship and for evangelism in a relevant way.

Fourth, the biggest need is for us as Christ followers to pray for revival. It must begin among the believers in this country and then spread to our churches. Our country was established so that the churches would be the moral compass of the country by their influence and teaching of the people. We as churches are not to interfere with government but we can influence it by developing godly leaders to run for office and represent the people in the areas they are elected from.

Since church attendance is declining and Bible illiteracy in this country is growing, this is a difficult situation for churches to be the moral influencers based on God's Word in our country for the local, state and federal government. Revival in the past has begun with believers, then moving into churches, and then bringing in the lost in communities to Christ because of the change they saw in the believers around them. That is God's plan for revival.

As we celebrate our freedoms here in America, and there are many, may we at this two hundred and forty- third year birthday be reminded of our freedoms and do our part to maintain them because the Gospel and lost people's lives are at stake.

I am faithfully,

Yours and His,

Pastor Ed Hedding

ELDER REPORTS

The elders met on May 13th, 30th and June 17th, 2019

The elders are currently studying together the book Peace-keepers by Ken Sande.

The elders discussed the upcoming informational meeting on May 19th. The first point of discussion will be Austin Fink and the elder's recommendation to hire him full time to minister to our youth as well as lead worship. A job description will be passed out to all at the meeting. The money for his salary will come from the general fund and savings as needed. The second point of discussion will be the 65-inch video screen project. The elders will share someone gave a large gift and the elders asked their permission to use it for this project which they agreed to. We will put a picture on each table for all to look at rather than try to project it up on a screen. These will be the two points of discussion for the May 19th informational meeting.

The elders moved into a time with the deacons and deaconesses. Janice Fendley and Carol Urda shared what the current role of the deaconesses looks like. The deacons discussed with the elders Circles of Concern and people were added and subtracted from the list. A new list will be made and given to all who oversee our church families in the Circles of Concern. A sample form was given out to give some guidance on what to do with those who are under the care of the elders and deacons. Feedback was asked for and Carol Urda asked the elders about the status of looking into the purchase of an elevator for the church. Dale Von Thun shared with Carol that discussion is ongoing with the elders about this addition to our building. It was shared that Mel Dirksen would like some chairs with handles downstairs like the church purchased upstairs a few years ago. It would allow him to come downstairs for events. The elders will look into purchasing four more chairs for downstairs.

After further discussion after the elder meeting, Pastor Ed moved two of the four chairs with arms downstairs to see if that would take care of the issue without purchasing any more chairs.

Scott Lee was present at the May 30th meeting as a representative for the finance team and he discussed the changes necessary to the 2019 – 2020 budget that needed to be made concurrent with the hiring of Austin Fink for the full-time position of Worship and Student Ministry Leader. This would take place if Austin is voted in and the updated budget is approved. The elders approved the updates to be recommended to the church members at the June 2nd, 2019 business meeting.

The elders discussed the business meeting details for

Sunday – June 2nd. Three items will be presented for a vote:

1. The elders make the motion to hire Austin Fink as full time Worship and Student Ministry Leader
2. The elders make the motion to update the 2019 – 2020 budget
3. The elders make the motion to approve the video screen project based on the estimate by Advance Audio for \$11,041.

Pastor Ed will moderate the June 2nd business meeting that will meet at 11:30 am.

This all took affect on June 3rd since the church membership voted unanimously to hire Austin Fink as a full time Worship and Student Ministry leader. Austin Fink started full time on June 17th.

The elders approved giving Dave Hodges from CF Youth Hope to receive a \$25 gift card for coming from Moline to share with Terry Canright, Mike Fendley and Pastor Ed Hedding. He shared some insights on what it looks like to minister to students in the 21st century (Gen Z and Millennials). The elders will send him a thank you for his time with the group mentioned above.

The elders discussed a recommendation from someone on the worship team to seek professional legal advice concerning our Worship Application that Gage Pedersen, Austin Fink and Aaron Barfels developed. The Worship Application was approved previously by the elders in its final draft. The elders discussed it and decided not to pursue professional legal advice since it is an in-house document.

The elders approved the giving Austin Fink a license to preach. It will be presented to him at a future Sunday service by the elders.

Pastor Ed noted that Mel Dirksen will preach on June 23rd and Dale McCaulley will preach on June 30th while Pastor Ed is on vacation. He will be on vacation from June 17th – July 5th, 2019.

The elders briefly discussed the safety team and Mike Fendley is in the very beginning stages of gathering a team together to develop safety procedures for tornado, fire, and active shooter issues.

The elders briefly discussed the need to set aside time to dig deeply into "The Timothy Initiative" materials to consider setting up a new group study on disciples making other disciples. This will be a part of an elder meeting in the near future.

Pastor Ed shared some things he learned that we should apply to our church when he went to the Law and Tax Seminar hosted by WDLM at Coram Deo church in May, 2019. Richard Hammer was the seminar presenter. Here are some things to apply to our church setting:

- ◆ Do a national background check on anyone new who wants to work with our children as part of our Safeguarding Your Children program.
- ◆ Get our scanner working downstairs for kids to check – in for Sunday School.
- ◆ The elders discussed the possibility of putting security cameras in throughout the building.
- ◆ It was suggested to put a clause in our application for those applying for a position at PVBC that they give permission to contact their previous employers to get a reference. They must sign the permission form giving us the right to talk with previous employers and the freedom to ask any questions we want of them.

The elders determined that Saturday – July 27th would be the best day to have our semi-annual Ministry Team Leaders meeting beginning at 8:30 am. Pastor Ed will talk with Jeff Nelson from the Bettendorf Police Department about giving us a short presentation on being prepared and what to do in the event we have an active shooter in the church or on the church property. Pastor Ed will communicate the date to all of our current Ministry Team Leaders, and Deacons, Deaconesses

Mike Fendley agreed to moderate the elder meetings from July 1st – December 31st, 2019. Aaron Barfels volunteered to take the elder minutes for the said months of the meetings.

Pastor Ed mentioned and reminded the elders that we need to develop a way to mentor Austin with his role of working with the Chaos Student Ministry. The National Youth Workers Convention in Dallas this fall was suggested and other materials and discussion are going on as we prepare for the fall season of student ministry. Pastor Ed, Mike Fendley, Terry Canright and Austin will meet toward the end of summer as part of that process.

The elders expressed a desire to each have a hardcopy and electronic of the church policies. It was also suggested that we include policy information for members in the annual report or by some other means.

The next elder meeting is set for July 15th at 4:00 pm.

Submitted by Pastor Ed Hedding



Youth Group (Grades 7-12) JULY/AUG. SCHEDULE

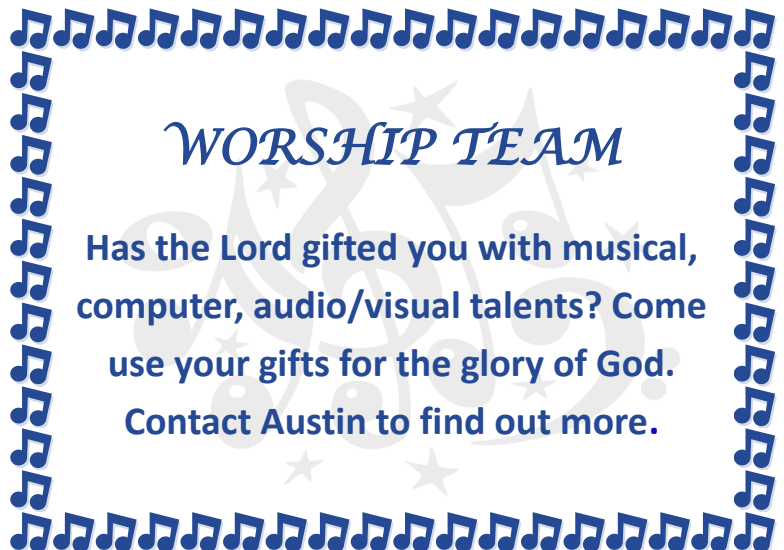
- ◆ July 10th ~ 6:30-8:30
Field of Dreams movie @ PVBC
- ◆ July 24th ~ 10:00 - ???
Field Trip to Dyersville
Leave @ 10:00 am from PVBC
- ◆ August 7th ~ 6:30-8:00
Water Games @ PVBC
- ◆ August 16th-17th ~ 7pm-7am
Lock-In @ PVBC



2019 FINANCIALS

Giving: \$57,099
Savings: \$70,250
Total Expenses: \$65,764

* Amounts are for the general fund
for start of fiscal year thru June



WORSHIP TEAM

Has the Lord gifted you with musical, computer, audio/visual talents? Come use your gifts for the glory of God. Contact Austin to find out more.