56 Signers: The Rest of the Story

This message was preached on 2 July 2017 from the historic pulpit of the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel as “The Rest of the Story: 56 Signers”... based on 2 Chronicles 7:12-14. This sermon was one-of-nine in a sermon series – “The Rest of the Story.” It, along with over 500+ other titles, is available on CDs and DVDs.

The how and why of our beloved Republic is so much better known and understood than the who. The United States of America was born in 1776; but it was conceived 169-years before that ... in Jamestown, Virginia (1607). The earliest settlers had watered the new world with much sweat and had built substantial holdings for themselves and their families. When the time came to separate themselves from a tyranny an ocean away, at best it meant starting all over again after the ravages of war. Researching what you are about to hear gave a new dimension to my reverence for our nation’s first citizens. All others of the world’s revolutions (before and since) were initiated by men who had nothing to lose. But our Founding Fathers had everything to lose ... nothing to gain ... except one thing— their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

You may not be able to quote many lines from the Declaration of Independence: but from henceforth, you will always know at least one. It is in the last paragraph ... where you will recall, it says – “We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.” You recognize those impressive words; but let us examine who are among these 56-signers of the Declaration of Independence 241-years ago (July 4th).

In the Pennsylvania State House, that is now called Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the best of men from each of the 13-colonies sat down together. It was a fortunate hour (or by Divine Providence) in our nation’s history— one of those rare occasions in the lives of men when we had greatness to spare. These were men of means and well educated. Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Nine were farmers and owners of large plantations.

On June 11th, a committee set down to draft the Declaration of Independence. We were going to declare colonial independence from the British Crown. The document would be a list of charges against King George III— which aim to demonstrate that he has violated the colonists’ rights; and is, therefore, unfit to be their ruler. Below the dam of ruthless foreign rule, the stream of freedom was running shallow and muddy. We were lighting the fuse to dynamite that dam. This pact, as Burke later put it, “was a partnership between the living and the dead and the yet unborn.” There was no bigotry, no demagoguery in this group. All had shared hardships. Thomas Jefferson finished a draft of the document in 17-days (June 28th). Congress adopted it on July 4th, 1776.

So much for the familiar history. What’s the rest of the story?

On March 16, 1776, in preparation for that imminent separation, Congress wanted to make sure that America was “right with God,” and therefore called the people to prayer, explaining: “The Congress ... desirous ... to have people of all ranks and degrees duly impressed with a solemn sense of God’s superintending providence, and of their duty, devoutly to rely ... on His aid and direction, do earnestly recommend ... a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that we may, with united hearts, confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, and, by a sincere repentance and amendment of life appease His righteous displeasure and, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain His pardon and forgiveness.”

(Continued ... on page three)
President’s Corner

By the time you read this, living in this shut-down State will have changed, hopefully for the better. I am sitting in my office on May 27th writing this article. Masking and social distancing are being dictated by the State. Places of worship are just opening to 25% occupancy. Pastor Ken would like to open the Chapel to all, but we rent the Chapel from the State and must comply with their dictates.

The 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom of religion; but the State of Minnesota is contradicting our Constitution and allowing non-Christians to dictate who will attend and when to pray and take communion. Just yesterday, Ken stated there is no way I will pick and choose those 25% who can attend worship at the Chapel.

In my world—risk has always existed. I have never lived my life always waiting for “it to be safe” before I did something. If I had wanted total safety I would not have gone in the Army, married, had children or started a business. I suspect all of you would agree. Dictating “safety” is being used to control and suppress our freedoms; to obtain power so reminiscent of a Soviet, Marxist state.

We are a free people. Our freedoms are expressed in our Constitution. I suspect most of you would agree that our common sense will dictate how we interact with others. If our church would open—those who have compromised immune systems and others would certainly have the option to stay home and follow the worship services on Livestream. I am very much offended by the State mandating safety and contravening our fought-for freedoms.

My prayers for those affected by this virus and by these stay-at-home mandates. My prayers to open the Chapel as soon as possible and allow us to worship and fellowship as we see fit.

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Offering Envelopes … or Give On-Line

If you are blessed by this ministry ‘beyond the walls’ of the Chapel (i.e., Livestream, bi-monthly news-letter, CDs/DVDs, e-mails, and/or pastoral care), PLEASE consider calling our Foundation office at 952/888-1525 and request the pre-addressed envelopes to mail-in your plate offerings. Be sure to leave your name/mailing address so that we may send the envelopes to you.

OR—If you are home-bound, traveling, relocated or just appreciate this ministry, PLEASE consider making your contributions at our website at http://fortsnellingmcf.org/make_a_donation.php. Thank you.

—Your Finance Committee

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The Board welcomes input from members. If you have an idea or suggestion, please feel welcome to contact the appropriate Board person.

Scheduled Board Meetings in 2020:

Saturdays … @ Foundation Office
12 September (9:00 a.m.)
14 November (9:00 a.m.)
Sunday … @ the Chapel Sanctuary
20 December (1:00 p.m.)

If you would like a copy of the 2019 Annual Report, please secure one in the Fellowship Hall or call the Foundation Office at (952) 888-1525 and leave your name/mailing address that we may send you a copy of this impressive report.
(Continued ... from page one)

A few months later, on July 2, 1776, Congress voted to approve a complete separation from Great Britain. Two-days afterwards, the early draft of the Declaration of Independence was signed—albeit by only two individuals at that time: John Hancock, President of Congress, and Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress. Four-days later, on July 8th, members of Congress took that document and read it aloud from the steps of Independence Hall, proclaiming it to the city of Philadelphia, after which the "Liberty Bell" was rung. The inscription from Leviticus 25:10 encircling the top of that bell was appropriate to its ringing: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof." On July 19th, Congress voted to produce a beautifully inscribed copy of the Declaration on parchment, and on August 2nd, fifty-six of our Founding Fathers signed the famous version we now recognize.

King George III of Great Britain had denounced all rebels in the American colony as traitors. The punishment for treason was hanging. The names now so familiar to you from the signatures on that Declaration of Independence, were kept secret for six months—for each knew the full meaning of that last paragraph in which a signature pledged his life, his fortune, and his sacred honor.

56-men placed their names beneath that pledge; 56-men knew ... when they signed it ... that they were risking everything. They knew if they won this fight, the best they could expect would be years of hardship in a struggling nation. If they lost, they would face the hangman’s rope. But they signed the pledge. And they did, indeed, pay the price.

Five-signers of the Declaration of Independence were captured by the British during the course of the Revolutionary War. None of them died while a prisoner; and four of them were taken into custody ... not because they were considered traitors (due to their status as signers of the document), but because they were captured as prisoners of war while actively engaged in military operations against the British:

- **George Walton** of Georgia was captured after being wounded while commanding militia at the Battle of Savannah in December 1778; and
- **Thomas Heyward, Jr., Arthur Middleton, and Edward Rutledge** (three of the four Declaration of Independence signers from South Carolina) were taken prisoner at the siege of Charleston in May of 1780. Although they endured the ill treatment typically afforded to prisoners of war during their captivity (prison conditions were quite deplorable at the time), they were not tortured—nor is there evidence that they were treated more harshly than other wartime prisoners who were not also signatories to the Declaration. Moreover, all four-men were eventually exchanged or released. Had they been considered traitors by the British, they would have been hanged.

- **Richard Stockton** of New Jersey was the only signer taken prisoner specifically because of his status as a signatory to the Declaration, "dragged from his bed by night" by local Tories after he had evacuated his family from New Jersey, and imprisoned in New York City's infamous Provosts Jail like a common criminal.

Abraham Clark of New Jersey saw two of his sons captured by the British and incarcerated on the prison ship Jersey.

John Witherspoon, also of New Jersey, saw his eldest son, James, killed in the Battle of Germantown in October 1777.

Before the American Revolution, Carter Braxton of Virginia, was one of the minority of delegates reluctant to support an American Declaration of Independence. Having a considerable fortune invested in commercial enterprises, particularly shipping, he endured severe financial reversals during the Revolutionary War when many of the ships in which he held interest were either appropriated by the British government or were sunk or captured by the British. He suffered grievous financial losses. He had to sell off landholding assets to cover the debts incurred by the loss of his ships.

Among his many offices, Thomas McKean was a delegate from Delaware to the Continental Congress (of which he later served as president), President of Delaware, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, and Governor of Pennsylvania. In a letter he wrote to John Adams in 1777, he describes how he had been "hunted like a fox by the enemy, compelled to remove my family five times in three months, and at last fixed them in a little log-house on the banks of the Susquehanna ... but they were soon obliged to move again on account of the incursions of the Indians."

Interestingly, his name does not appear on printed copies of the Declaration authenticated in January 1777—so it is likely he did not affix his name to it until later. He did serve in a military capacity as a volunteer leader of militia.

Ellery of Rhode Island and Clymer of Pennsylvania; Hall, Gwinnett, and Walton of...
Georgia; Heyward, Rutledge and Middleton of South Carolina were among a number of signers who saw their homes and property occupied, ransacked, looted, and vandalized by the British (and even in some cases by the Americans). This was a common part of warfare. Signers homes were not specifically targeted for destruction — but like many other Americans, their property was subject to seizure when it fell along the path of a war being waged in the North American continent.

The Hessians seized the home of Francis Hopkinson of New Jersey.

Francis Lewis of New York had his home and everything destroyed; his wife imprisoned—who died a few years later.

Richard Stockton of New Jersey, was captured and mistreated; and his health broken to the extent that he died at 51. His estate was pillaged.

John Hart’s New Jersey farm of fields and gristmill were looted in the course of the Revolutionary War. For some time thereafter, he lived in forests and caves.

Thomas Nelson, Jr. of Virginia, raised $2-million on his own signature to provision our allies ... the French fleet. After the war, he personally paid back the loans, and wiped out his entire estate. He was never reimbursed by his government. In the final battle for Yorktown he (Nelson) allegedly urged Gen. Washington to fire on his (Nelson’s) own home ... which was occupied by British Major General Cornwallis ... who had taken it over to use as his headquarters in 1781. Other versions of the story have Nelson directing Marquis de Lafayette to train French artillery on his home. Whatever the truth, the Nelson home was not destroyed ... as it stands to this day as part of Colonial National Historic Park. Nelson died bankrupt at the age of 53.

Lewis Morris saw his Westchester County, New York, home taken over in 1776 and used as a barracks for Continental Army soldiers; the horses and livestock from his farm commandeered by military personnel. Shortly thereafter, his home was appropriated by the British, but Morris and his wife reclaimed the property and restored their home after the war.

Philip Livingston lost several properties to the British occupation of New York and sold off others to support the war effort; and he did not recover them because he died suddenly in 1778 ... before the end of the war.

John Hancock history remembers best due to a quirk of fate rather than anything he stood for. That great, sweeping signature ... attesting to his role as President of the Continental Congress ... towers over the others. One of the wealthiest men in New England, he stood outside Boston one terrible night of the war and said, "Burn Boston, though it makes John Hancock a beggar, if the public good requires." He, too, lived up to the pledge.

A common misconception is that the signing of the Declaration of Independence was that the event triggered the Revolutionary War, so the signers were directly responsible for whatever misfortunes befell them (and their fellow Americans) as a result of that war.

The war actually began more than a year before the signing

(Continued ... on page seven)
Seasons of the Faith—Pentecost

The Christian festival of Pentecost occurs 50-days after Easter Sunday and marks the end of the Easter season. Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit to God's people and was a turning point for the Apostles and the early Christian Church as described in the second chapter of Acts: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." It was at this moment that Peter stood up and explained the "coming of the Spirit" as prophesied in Joel 2:28, "In the last days, God says, I will pour out My Spirit on all people."

God poured out His Spirit on all people as He wanted to include all nations and tongues in the new covenant. Peter affirmed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and goes on to preach that Jesus is the long-expected Messiah—crucified, resurrected and exalted. The people in the crowd that day were "cut to the heart" and asked, "What shall we do?" Peter responded, "Each one of you must turn away from his sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38). During this season of Pentecost, let us thank God for His gift of the Holy Spirit and pray for wisdom and boldness in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ!

— Submitted by Eva Zorn

Fundamentals of the Faith — Prayer

Prayer is an important part of the Christian life and the way we communicate with God. Why do we pray? We pray because we are commanded to do so as indicated in the following scripture, "In the morning, Lord, You hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait expectantly..." (Psalm 5:3) and "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God..." (Philippians 4:6-7). Through prayer we renew our trust in the Lord's faithfulness and grow in our relationship with Him. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness..." (1 John 1:9). As we confess our sins and seek forgiveness, God's peace will come to guard our hearts and minds as a result of our communion with Christ Jesus. The best way to learn about prayer is to study the example of Jesus during His earthly ministry and His model for prayer known as The Lord's Prayer which is recited each week at the Chapel.

— Submitted by Eva Zorn

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.
Book Review

This book was written by a Marine corpsman who served in Korea from 1951-1952 as a Hospital Corpsman Third Class assigned to the First Marine Division. Surprisingly, the book resulted from a University writing class in which the author enrolled in 2011—more than 60-years after his military service in Korea. Similar to other veterans of foreign wars, Adreon did not talk about the war for decades and it was only when he enrolled in the writing class that he discovered other people cared about his wartime experiences and the realities of combat. *Hilltop Doc* is the story of an "unsophisticated, 17 year-old kid drafted into the Navy in 1944 ... before being recalled to active duty in 1950" to serve in Korea. The book is a narrative of Adreon's military experience from his initial medical training at Farragut, Idaho to his first experiences treating wounded soldiers in combat and along the main line of resistance. He tells the story from the perspective of a young corpsman propelled into combat to save lives amid the onslaught of the Chinese Communist Forces. The book reads like a diary with detailed descriptions of battlefield scenes including the anguish, fear and frustration experienced by soldiers in their day-to-day lives. Despite the grim theme of the book, Adreon shares some light-hearted moments such as "taking a shower with a bar of Marine-issued soap" and the fact that he was in the Navy but "couldn't swim!" The book does hop around chronologically which is a bit confusing at times as Adreon incorporates background from WWII with his Korean War experiences. But overall, the book is an insightful contribution to the first-person accounts of the
Revolutionary events involving armed conflicts such as the battles Lexington and Concord, the seizure of Fort Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen and his "Green Mountain Boys," the Battle of Bunker Hill, and the capture of Montreal by Gen. Richard Montgomery, all took place in 1775.

What should we take from all of this? The signers of the Declaration of Independence took a huge risk in daring to put their names on a document that rejected British rule; and they had every reason to believe (at the time) that they might well be hanged for having done so. That was a courageous act we should indeed remember and honor on July 4th amidst the picnics and games.

We should not lose sight of the fact that many men (and women) other than the 56-signers of the Declaration of Independence — some famous and most not — risked and sacrificed much (including their lives) to support the revolutionary cause. The hardships and losses endured by many Americans during the struggle for independence were not visited upon the signers alone, nor were they any less disastrous for people whose names are not immortalized on a piece of parchment.

I don't know what impression you had of the men who met that hot summer in Philadelphia; but I think it is important that we remember this about them — They were not poor man or wild-eyed pirates; they were men of means. Rich men (most of them), who enjoyed much ease and luxury in their personal living. Not hungry men; but prosperous men. Wealthy landowners; substantially secure in their prosperity.

The point is: They considered liberty so much more important than security ... that they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. And they fulfilled their pledge. They paid the price — and freedom was born.

Later in 1781, the American Revolution was effectively ended with the surrender of the British at Yorktown. However, even though British arms were laid down, it was not until two-years later that a formal treaty was finalized and signed in Paris by John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay. The opening line placed in the final treaty is still another indication of the spirit so often displayed during the American Revolution. The first line announces: "In the name of the most holy and undivided Trinity. Amen."

Like so many other official documents during the Revolution, the final document openly acknowledged God. When the announcement of official peace reached America, George Washington offered his resignation. He issued his final sentiments to the governors, to the officers, and to his troops in circular letters. In his circular letter to the governors on June 8, 1783, Washington, after gratefully acknowledging that we had won the war, urged the governors to remember— "... the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion; and without an humble imitation of Whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation." According to George Washington, if America did not imitate Christ, it could never hope to be a happy nation! From George Washington's first order through his last official correspondence, he maintained a constant Christian emphasis.

The Christian spirit behind the Revolution was apparent not only to those involved in it, but also to those who had observed it — including both domestic and foreign observers. Foreign observer Alexis de Tocqueville of France reached the same conclusion after he traveled across America in the mid-1830s, seeking to discover what made America great. He reported his findings in The Republic of the United States (now called Democracy in America).

De Tocqueville noted: "Upon my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention. And the longer I stayed there, the more did I perceive the great political consequences resulting from this state of things to which I was unaccustomed. In France, I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom pursuing courses diametrically opposed to each other. But in America, I found that they were intimately united, that they reigned in common over the same country." De Tocqueville concluded: "Religion in America ... must ... be regarded as the foremost of the political institutions of that country.

On March 27, 1854, Congress released a report which noted: "Had the people, during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution, and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged, [but] not any one sect [denomination]. ... In this age, there can be no substitute for Christianity .... That was the religion of the founders of the republic and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants." And two-months
(Continued ... from page seven)

after that report, Congress added: 
"The great, vital and conservative 
element in our system is the 
belief of our people, in the pure 
doctrines and the divine truths of 
the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Our Founders intended that this 
religious spirit not only be 
remembered, but also practiced 
whenever we celebrated our 
National Independence. It is 
amazing that on the day following 
the approval of the Declaration, 
Adams was already foreseeing 
that their actions would be 
celebrated by future generations. 
Adams contemplated whether it 
would be proper to hold such 
celebrations, but then concluded 
that the day should be 
commemorated—but in a 
particular manner and with a 
specific spirit. As he told Abigail: 
"It ought to be commemorated as 
the day of deliverance by solemn 
acts of devotion to God 
Almighty." John Adams believed 
that the fourth of July should 
become a religious holiday—a 
day when we remembered God's 
hand of deliverance and a day 
filled with religious activities when 

filled with religious activities 
when we recommitted ourselves 
to God in "solemn acts of 
devotion." Such was the spirit 
of the American Revolution as 
seen through the eyes of those 
who led it!

My friends: Perpetuating 
American liberty depends first 
upon our understanding the 
foundations on which this great 
country was built and then 
conseving the principles on 
which it was founded. May we 
not let the purpose for which 
America was established be 
 forgotten. The Founding Fathers 
have passed us a torch—let’s 
not let it be extinguished!

Let us pray. 
We bow before Your sacred 
throne, O God of our fathers, and 
confess, O Lord, that America 
cannot survive without Your 
watchful presence over us. Your 
statutes founded this blessed 
land; and we look to You, O God, 
to preserve it. May the words of 
the psalmist resonate in our 
hearts and minds—"Blessed is 
the nation whose God is the 
Lord." (Psalm 33:12) May those 
in authority (over us) govern and 
make decisions led by the perfect 
compass of your Holy Word ... 
which clearly discerns right from 
wrong. Convict us as citizens, 
O Lord, to turn from our individual 
sins and return to You ... 
declaring our faith in Your grace 
to forgive ... and heal our land. 
We pledge our sacred honor to 
exercise our God given rights of 
"life, liberty and the pursuit of 
happiness" ... and earnestly seek 
leaders—from the courthouse to 
the White House—who will 
govern by obeying and honoring 
Your Word. Now may You, O 
Lord our God, incline our hearts 
to walk in all Your ways—that all 
peoples of this nation may know 
that the Lord is God and that 
there is no other. Amen.

Serving God and Country, 
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The remaining Chaplain's articles for 
2020 in this "Rest of the Story" series include: 
Sep/Oct – "Martyrdom" 
Nov/Dec – "Handel's Messiah"

Above: On August 2, 1776 
56-Founding Fathers signed 
this copy of the Declaration of 
Independence on parchment. 

Left: Painted by John Trumbull 
(1756-1843) and hanging in the 
Rotunda of the US Capitol in 
Washington, DC.
Great Hymns of the Faith — “Nearer, My God, to Thee”

The hymn - *Nearer, My God, to Thee* is one of the most beloved of Christian anthems. The text for this hymn was composed by Sarah Flower Adams and published in 1841 in London, England as part of a collection entitled *Hymns and Anthems*. It was first set to music by Sarah's sister - Eliza Flower an accomplished musician in her own right. However today, the hymn is most commonly associated with a tune composed by American Lowell Mason and published in 1859 in *Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book*.

This hymn has been associated with several famous people and events since its publication. It is reported to have been a favorite hymn of Queen Victoria, her son Edward VII of England and of U.S. President William McKinley and his successor—Theodore Roosevelt. However, the most significant event associated with this hymn was the sinking of the *Titanic* on April 15th, 1912. Survivors of this terrible tragedy later recounted that the ship's string ensemble played *Nearer, My God, to Thee* as the vessel sank in the icy waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

The hymn text is based on the story of Jacob's dream found in Genesis 28:11-12, "When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it..." In these verses, we see Jacob's confidence in divine protection which enabled him to lie down and sleep upon a stone. This hymn is about the joy and comfort found in being close to God. Even when we cannot see or feel Him, the Lord never leaves our side. As we walk through each day, let us remember to call upon His name and give thanks for what Jesus did for each one of us on the cross!

> Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!  
> E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me;  
> still all my song shall be,  
> nearer, my God, to Thee;  
> nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!  

> Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,  
> darkness be over me, my rest a stone,  
> yet in my dreams I'd be  
> nearer, my God, to Thee;  
> nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!  

> There let the way appear, steps unto heaven:  
> All that Thou sendest me in mercy given:  
> Angels to beckon me  
> nearer, my God, to Thee;  
> nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!  

— Submitted by Eva Zorn

"Bethany" words and music by Adams and Mason  
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Children's Ministry

Jesus said, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not for such is the kingdom of God.” (Luke 18:16)

Well, while I am writing this, the State of Minnesota is just beginning to open up after the COVID-19 shut-down. For over two months we have been, more or less, locked in our houses: working from home if you can, kids doing distance learning rather than attending school, and businesses shut down! Haircuts are in real need and for some of us with stiff backs, we haven’t been able to reach our feet and need to get pedicures.

Children haven’t been allowed to play with their friends (unless it’s a sibling) nor have they been able to go to churches. Churches? They have been closed as well. And now that the State of Minnesota is opening up s-l-o-w-l-y, the Chapel will once again be open for worshipping our Lord. I, for one, am really looking forward to it. I do, however, have a concern.

There is a “new normal” for us, and unfortunately that includes NOT going to church on Sunday mornings! I pray that families will soon be in the pews once again! Sure, you may want to “social distance” for a little extra safety from the virus. But please bring your kids to Chapel with you. We had just begun a new series called Faith Foundations and we were really getting into it! Read the verse at the top of this page and plan to get to the Chapel when the DNR gives the okay and the Chapel opens up once again!

— Submitted Leslie Henschel, Children’s Ministry Coordinator

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Coronavirus Cancellations —

This year’s Independence Day is the most important in my lifetime. Many communities have already cancelled their annual Independence Day celebrations due to concerns over COVID-19. The Fellowship Committee regretfully has decided that we would not be able to comply with social distancing guidelines and have therefore canceled this year’s Annual Ice Cream Social. We hope that this will not deter you from celebrating God’s gift of liberty. Take time out to read the Declaration of Independence on this 244th celebration of our independence, it only takes 10-minutes. The recent COVID-19 experience has truly shown how fragile our liberties are. It is up to “We the People” to preserve them.

It is with sadness that the Fellowship Committee has been informed by the City of Richfield that they have cancelled our reservation for our Annual Chapel Picnic due to concerns over the Coronavirus. This has been a favorite event in the past and we were truly disappointed to hear of the city’s decision.

The Fellowship Committee has therefore decided to cancel this year’s Annual Picnic. We look forward to once again being able to return next year when hopefully this is all behind us and we can once again enjoy the “old normal.”

— Your Fellowship Committee

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Special Patriotic/Veterans Events...

Sun, 5 July 20 — Independence Day — celebrating the 244th birthday of our nation.


Sun, 13 Sept 20 — U.S. Constitution Sunday — remembering our founding document.

Sun, 20 Sept 20 — POW/MIA Remembrance — remembering those who are prisoners of war and those missing in action.

Sun, 27 Sept 20 — Gold Star Day — recognizing the families of those service members who paid the ultimate price on the altar of liberty.

Sun, 8 Nov 20 — Veterans Day Remembrance — recognizing U.S. veterans of all branches of the armed forces.

Sun, 6 Dec 20 — Pearl Harbor Remembrance — recognizing survivors … with the tolling of the ship bell for those who have passed away since last year.

Mark your calendar with these dates … and join us at 11:00 a.m.

— Your Worship Committee
Creation Corner

“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20)

DISPOSABLE BABY DIAPERS FOR BIRDS ... what?

The first time I came upon this subject, I could hardly believe what I was reading. Then when I searched the internet and found videos, I was even more amazed. In the words of the late singer, John Denver, this was: “Far Out!” It must be a horrible confrontation for a Darwinian evolutionist to come face-to-face with a behavior such as is displayed by nesting birds having the programmed nature to:

1) build a nest from scratch, and not just any nest, but the exact model of nest laid out in the DNA blueprint for that particular bird variety. (That very particular model is the only one in its brain catalog).

2) pad the nest with feathers or fluff, and perfectly round the basin to remove any sharp corners, so her thin-skinned babies won’t be injured while being nestled in mom’s home-made cradle.

3) Set up housekeeping, so the harmful fecal matter won’t contaminate the nest that her young’uns will have to live in until they can fly. BTW: I even discovered that bird moms periodically rotate the position of the eggs in the nest during incubation, for many scientific reasons, I’m sure.

To accomplish the housekeeping, she has been programmed in her DNA by her Creator to spend the days combing the local territory, hunting for insects and worms (mm-mmm-tasty!) and to return to feed the kids, who are programmed by their DNA, such that when they hear mom returning, make peeping melodies, with their necks extended and their seemingly oversized beaks and throats wide open (appearing to mom as red-orange targets rimmed with yellow). Well mom divides the morsels as evenly as possible among the tots, and then ... the strangeness begins: almost immediately after one of the babies receives its meal, it turns its bottom up toward mom and begins to produce its waste product very neatly bundled in a sac made of strong white mucus. The top of the sac is the last to come out, neatly cinched and ready for mom to grab with her beak ... then she heads out to dispose of the sac on her way back to hunt for more food. Some birds drop their sacs over land and some over water, depending on their programming (Crackles drop them over water, which can also include handy swimming pools and birdbaths!) If mom is away during the delivery of one of the sacs somewhere in the nest, she noses around until she finds it and takes it away on the next trip. (In the first few days of feeding, mom knows to eat the sacs, since the baby bird’s gut bacteria hasn’t built up yet, and since mom is the last one to eat, she can use the extra nourishment of the partially digested morsel. (I wasn’t able to find a royalty-free image, of a mom bird carrying the poop bag from the nest, but this picture of a stork with a similar-appearing bag should do in a pinch.)

Many nesting birds are programmed to use these “baby diapers,” while smaller birds, such as hummingbird babies simply scoop their back end upwards and “fire when ready” to parts unknown outside the nests in order to keep their nests hygienically clean. Sea birds and raptors also keep their nests clean by backing up to the edge and firing a white projectile outward and allow the next rain to take care of the final cleanup.

The actions described above can only come from intelligence that is blueprinted into the DNA of birds, to program their roles in life ... programmed intelligence involving, not just one, but two individual animals, a baby and a mom, interacting with each other as they perform the specific roles given them by their Creator.

Just as a watch that you find laying on a deserted beach did not make itself, or evolve from some unintelligent source, the bird’s programming did not come from “un-intelligence.” It was provided by a loving Creator.

I enjoy “searching for truth” as an adult ... after being “taught what to believe” as a child and adolescent.

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.” (Genesis 1:20)

— Submitted by: John Kruse
Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation

This is a non-denominational Christian church founded in 1967. We invite you to join us for worship each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at this historic Chapel.

The Fort Snelling Veterans Memorial Chapel is a unique Minnesota memorial — a splendid monument to the patriotism, the moral earnestness and the convictions of the people of this state — a shrine to commemorate those who have died for their country. Weekly Sunday worship is sponsored by the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation and is not subsidized by the state.

For Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation information call the Foundation Office at (952) 888-1525, or write to the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation 9031 Penn Ave So Bloomington, MN 55431

or e-mail to info@fortsnellingmcf.org or check our website at www.fortsnellingmcf.org

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The Snelling Spirit is a bimonthly publication of the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation. We welcome your input, your letters and your suggestions.

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| **Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation Staff**  
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| 5th Sunday after Pentecost  
Independence Day Sunday  
11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
Sermon: "How Firm a Foundation"  
Music: Reuben Ristrom Jazz Trio |
| 6th Sunday after Pentecost  
11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
Sermon: "The Blindness of Mixed-Up Priorities"  
Music: Glory Bound Gospel Trio |
| 7th Sunday after Pentecost  
Parent's Day  
11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
Sermon: "The Blindness of Self-Importance"  
Music: Scott & Robert Reeve, Trumpet/Piano/Flute |
| 8th Sunday after Pentecost  
11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
Sermon: "The Blindness of Narrowness"  
Music: 4-Givin Male Gospel Quartet |
<p>| 1 | 20th Anniversary of Chaplain Beale as Sr Chaplain |
| 2 | Independence Day |
| 3 | Chaplain Ken's Personal Day |
| 4 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |</p>
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