

PITMAN ROAD
CHURCH OF CHRIST

July 5, 2020
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500 Pitman Road
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www.pitmanroadcoc.com

PITMAN ROAD POST

Our Mission

Meet others where they are and together be transformed into the image of Christ.

A PEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

"UNITY IN DIVERSITY"



Joey Peacher
Preaching Minister

Take out a dollar and look at the back. Look at the seal on the right. Notice the words above the eagle: "E Pluribus Unum." A Latin phrase meaning, "from many, one." This weekend we celebrate our country declaring its independence from the British empire. A bunch of different colonies coming together for one purpose. It is amazing the American experiment worked. Rhode Island became a colony in dissent of New England's religious puritanism. Maryland was a haven for Catholics. Colonies had to lay aside religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences and unify for a common cause. Just as these United States struggled with growing pains, the church did too.

The early church struggled with different perspectives because it was filled with different people. That world was "ethnically diverse and richly textured by an assortment of cultures, languages and customs" and that world struggled with "prejudices against others based on their ethnicity, color of their skin or factors such as where they're from and how they speak." Barbarians were anyone who didn't speak Greek and were considered stupid. The diverse Corinthian church struggled with ethnic divisions among Romans, Egyptians, and linguistically-challenged Jews (1 Cor. 1, Acts 18). The early Jerusalem church nearly split over Aramaic Jewish and Greek Jewish differences (Acts 6). Even Jesus dealt with prejudice as a Nazarene (John 1:46), yet experiencing this and knowing the future struggle, Jesus did something amazing. He chose a diversity of intimate disciples.

Jesus chose fishermen, a tax collector, passionate men, stubborn men, quiet men, and encouraging men. Jesus put a tax collector and a zealot (someone who despised anything Roman) together in a room and told them to get along for His sake. The movement was a powder keg. Why choose men with such varying degrees of perspectives? Unity from diversity is more enduring.

Diversity opens up for us the richness of our Lord. It is the diverse church that best expresses Jesus' presence in the world—no one disciple can do or be all that Christ is. He was able to reach wealthy tax collectors, Gentiles in the military, peasant women, and Jewish religious leaders. Jesus' disciples will find different areas in which to serve and flourish, opening up different aspects of Jesus' character. Some appreciate best his open love, mercy, and compassion; others remind us of his high standards for discipleship and purity. Some remind us of the virtues of simple, trusting faith from the heart; others show us the importance of serious study and the need to search out the Father with our intellects.

We have a rich diversity of perspectives in the church. When we are together in person again, some of these differences could be more apparent. The combined chaos of the pandemic, social unrest, and upcoming Presidential election has enticed people to set up camp on one side or the other. Some are fearful, others not even slightly fearful. Some are angry and ready for change, others see history being sanitized. These divides are not easy to bridge, but Jesus's church is designed for this. The church is designed to be different, designed to be unified in diversity. Paul writes this to the Colossians:

In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us. (Colossians 3:11)

Paul continues to write for us to bear with each other, be patient with each, put on love which will bind us in perfect unity. He focuses on the peace of Christ and the message of Christ. When we, as the body of Christ, stay focused on Jesus, we are perfectly united. When we remember that we all come to His table dependent on His sacrifice and grace, our independent desires fade into the background. All of the things we differ on are important to some degree, but Jesus is all that matters. He is our common cause.

- Joey

FROM DANIEL'S DEN

SEEING JULY 4 AS A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY!



Dan Cooper
Connections Minister

On July 4, 1946 John F Kennedy, then 29 years old, spoke at the city of Boston's Independence Day Celebration. What he said is very telling!

Kennedy began by talking not about taxes, or about the British, or about the consent of the governed, but about religion. "The informing spirit of the American character has always been a deep, religious sense. Throughout the years, down to the present, a devotion to fundamental religious principles has characterized American thought and action"

For anyone wondering what this had to do with Independence Day, Kennedy made the connection explicit. "Our government was founded on the essential religious idea of integrity of the individual. It was this religious sense which inspired the authors of the Declaration of Independence: 'We hold these truths to be self evident: that men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. ' "

The Declaration of Independence issued from Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, included four separate references to God. In addition to "endowed by their Creator" line, there is the opening salute to "the laws of nature's God," and appeal to "the supreme judge of the world," and closing expression of "Firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence."

George Washington, announcing the Declaration of Independence to his troops on July 9, wrote: "the General hopes and trust that every officer and every man, will endeavor to live, and act, as becomes a Christian soldier defending the dearest rights and liberties of this country...knowing that now the peace and safety of this country depends under God solely on the success of our arms."

Much has been said and written in recent years about the importance of separation between church and state. I do get that. And, I am for it. But the separation of church and state is very different than what we are seeing on many fronts today. What we are seeing today, it would seem, is the total exclusion of church from state. The church does not rule the state, nor does the state rule the church. But, that does not mean that we are Antagonists, enemies, and opposed to one another.

I have visited St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia and been to the pew box where George Washington was a member. (I even attended their Christmas Eve service last year.) Washington did not hesitate to urge his soldiers to "endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier."

Did you ever think about celebrating July 4 as a religious holiday? Because of July 4, we Americans enjoy the freedom of religion. 244 years ago, we Americans were granted independence from Britain, but we were also granted the freedom of religion. On this July 4, I thank God that I can worship in the way that I see fit.

- Dan the Connections Man

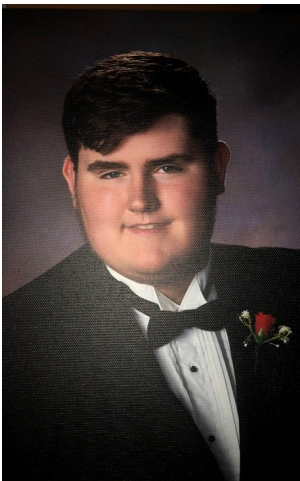




CONGRATS, GRADUATES!

You did it!

**TRUST IN THE LORD FOREVER,
FOR THE LORD,
THE LORD HIMSELF,
IS THE ROCK ETERNAL.
ISAIAH 26:4**



Trent Spencer

graduated (virtually) from Hammonton High School. He was a part of 2020 championships for Hammonton Marching Band and Atlantic Conference Honors Band. Trent plans to become an apprentice for IBEW 351 electrical workers.



Miranda Yanzuk graduated from Clayton High School as valedictorian. Miranda's accomplishments include scholar athlete awards for field hockey and basketball. She will be attending Widener University in the fall in pursuit of an accounting degree.



Taionna Rutledge

graduated from the cosmetology program at GCIT. While there, she played tennis during her last three years of school. Taionna is taking her state boards to get her cosmetology license in July. She is also

planning to enlist in the Air National Guard. After boot camp and military training, she plans to enroll full-time in college.



Hannah Rebekah Rodriguez, daughter of Rebecca and Justin Guy, graduated with the class of 2020 from DCF High School in Cherry Hill, NJ. Hannah is planning on pursuing a career as a Massage Therapist.

SILENCE BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW



Mark Finn
Collingswood
Church of Christ

WHAT DO YOU DO when God is silent? He is sometimes. The 400 years between the Old and New Testaments have been called the "silent years" because of the pause in the Bible between the final words of the prophet Malachi, and the arrival of Jesus in the Gospels. All sorts of events went on during those years. Nations rose and fell, kings came to power and then faded as others fought to the top. The world was worldly and the righteous were waiting, but there were no scriptural messages.

In the Old Testament, God had sent multiple messengers to reach our world: prophets, miracles, and spectacular history-changing events. Finally there had been enough talk and teaching and God was silent. What He had said stood.

In our prayers, there are "silent years." Times when communication seems to stop and you feel like you are in a desert, like Israel wandering in the wilderness, or Jesus facing his temptation alone. Your desert may be 2 or 3 weeks long, or even 2 or 3 years.

Satan tempts to defeat us, but God tests his people to strengthen us. The devil wants us to quit, but God is rooting for our success like a coach who challenges us to win.

Such times test our motives. Are we faithful because we love God, or because we love the goodies? Not even Jesus was exempt from such a test. The preacher Pete Scazzero noted that it wasn't the devil that led Jesus into the desert after his baptism, it was the Holy Spirit. Under that pressure we can lash out, grow bitter, blame God, blame other people. Jesus replied to each attack with scripture. The Hebrews writer said, **"Son though he was, he learned obedience by what he suffered"** (Heb. 5:8).

What was on the other side of the desert, the loneliness, the silence? For Israel it was the Promised Land. For the righteous people between the Testaments it was the arrival of Jesus. For Jesus it was three years of the most astoundingly fruitful ministry in history.

As you wait through your "silent years," hold to the scriptures, grow strong, keep praying. God is faithful and his greatest blessings await.

- Mark Finn

FAMILY PROMISE HOST WEEK

Sunday, July 12, 2020 - Sunday, July 19, 2020

The families will continue to stay at the Day Center, but we will be responsible for the meals and shopping for their pantry.

Please contact **John Ashton**, our coordinator, at **609-214-8522** for more information or to see how you can help!



**PITMAN
ROAD**
CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Our Vision) To be a place where God's love is experienced, known, and shared by all...

How?

...by **(Our Mission)** meeting others where they are and together being transformed into the image of Christ.



Love one another,
as I have loved you

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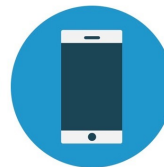


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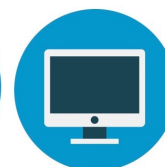
WAYS TO GIVE



In person
at the
worship service.



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