



HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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July 2023

In Christ, Every Day is Independence Day

Galatians 5:1 “Stand fast therefore in the liberty where with Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

I once asked someone if they celebrated the 4th of July in England and they responded “Of course not, that’s America’s day!”. They, of course, have the 4th of July but don’t celebrate their independence on that day. On the 4th of July we celebrate Independence Day in the United States. It is a day when we rejoice in the political and personal liberties granted to us as Americans. For 247 years the United States has been the beacon and champion of freedom around the world.

We have been graced with the freedom to worship the Lord. We are free to preach and possess His Word. We are free to pray in our homes and in public. I am not bragging about our country but, I am merely stating the facts.

While we take our liberties for granted, others in this world live under oppression and must worship in secret. Some preach in hiding. Some hide the Word of God. But in Christ, every brother and sister today, stands in freedom. Regardless of where you live today, rejoice in the loosed chains of sin that sit at your feet. Live in

the true identity you have in Christ, regardless of what others around you say about who you are.

The reality of sin is not able to stand against the reality of God. The reality of Satan cannot overcome the reality of God's presence in your life. Today is your day of liberty in Christ. When you're here at church, when you're at home or at work, when you're with family and friends, celebrate the victory and freedom you have in Christ Jesus. Yes, in this great country we celebrate our independence from tyranny and injustice.

But in Christ, every day is Independence Day from the power of sin, death, and Satan. We gain the constant victory through our dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessings to each of you and have a very happy Independence Day!

Randy

PASTOR'S CORNER

Hello Hope UMC,

July is upon us the year is half over. But even more amazing, I have been your pastor for a full year. I arrived last July 3rd for my first message here at Hope. What an amazing year it has been.

We have been able to restart **Sunday school**, we have formed a new **Youth group** and have had two fundraisers. We have become an **Agent of the Eastern Michigan Food Bank** and have conducted 3 **food distributions** so far this year, and we have a couple more scheduled with the July **Pop-Up-Food Pantry** being **Thursday July 27th**. We have started displaying our hymns and readings on the front wall of the sanctuary as a step toward getting a **permanent screen** installed up front. We've planted a **Community Garden** between the church and the fire-Hall... Our **monthly Pot-Luck** lunches are usually on the second Sunday after church. Typically, we don't hold them in the summer months but, I felt that we needed to have a few cookouts after church. The first one was Sunday June 25. Just **Hot Dogs, Hamburgers & Bacon** on Pastors Griddle after church. Greg Brady prepped and cooked and had everything ready to go at 12 noon... Others brought summer salads to pass and we ate outside. We'll have two more for sure **July 9th** and **August 13th** Bring a dish to pass (summer sides) the burgers, dogs, buns and fixings provided... Summer fellowship is important!!!

Amazingly ~ we have received 10 new members on Easter Sunday and we have been blessed in so many ways. Deb and I have come to love this small country church, and we can't imagine being anywhere else. We love the quietness of the area and the fellowship that we share every week.

My final Seminary Course of Study will be ~ July 17 through August 28 ~ Bible IV, this is a huge milestone to complete all 20 courses. I will have this completed as I enter my 10th year in ministry... This process has been difficult to say the least. I have learned so very much, but learning in your 50's & 60's is a tough gig. LOL...

Please encourage your friends to attend church. If not here at Hope UMC, they need to attend somewhere. If they don't have a regular church bring them along, I love to see new faces.

I read this recently on Facebook: "The enemy didn't tempt Adam & Eve to murder, steal or even lie... He tempted them to question the word of God... Just know his tactics haven't changed"!

Remember: **Jesus didn't say to 'follow Christians' He said 'follow me'...**

Enjoy this beautiful summer ~ do an occasional rain jig ~ we could still use a bit more moisture...

Remember always that Jesus loves you, no matter what some people might think.

Blessings Always,

Pastor Bill

THE YOUTH YARD SALE READY FOR CUSTOMERS



JULY BIRTHDAYS

2 Charlie Russian
11 Lois Devericks
13 Cheryl Paul
14 Lori Wilkenson
15 Betty Foland
15 Jan Holzinger
24 Rhett Maxwell

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

4 Linda Wendt
5 Amber Leuenberger
6 Donna Maxwell
11 Roseann Poag
15 Larry Hall
25 Tami Hock
28 Laura Shedden

JULY ANNIVERSARY

26 Dale and Laura Shedden

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

23 John and Melanie Mickle
25 Randy and Gale Hock

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