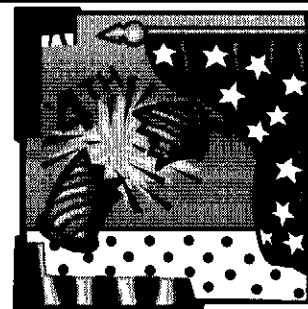


The Church Organ

July 2010/Volume 16 No. 7



From Your Pastor's Pen

Freedom

"Therefore, if the Son will set you free, then you will be free indeed."
(John 8:36)

"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" (Declaration of Independence).

The above words are probably familiar to every American citizen and most students in our schools, public or private. These words are so recognizable because most students are required to learn and memorize them from an early age. However, most probably could not tell you what was in the remainder of the Declaration of Independence.

The writers of these words believed that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are "unalienable rights" that were endowed on all men by God. The term "liberty" means "freedom." But freedom always has its limits, and any time it is related to government of earthly rule, freedom is always limited. Some have understood these words to mean that we are free to think and

act in any way we choose. But is that what was meant, and more importantly, is that something that society could endure?

The problem is that, theologically, man is not capable of acting in true freedom. Jesus made that clear in John 8:34 when he stated, *"Truly, truly, I say to you that everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin."* The natural man cannot act independently of his sin nature. Rather, he follows the dictates of his flesh, often to his own destruction. So, the man who is bound by his sin, although he may not act as badly as he could, acts in accordance to the power of sin over his life. That is why the words of the above Declaration, in the minds of the unregenerate, may signal to them the "right" to act badly and even perverse. We have ample examples of this both in society and in the courts.

However, Jesus explains that true freedom is found in the truth of who he is and the freedom he provides. It is the truth that is in Christ that sets us free. Sin enslaves, but Christ brings true freedom. But it is not a freedom to return to sin, for that would be a return to bondage. This was Paul's argument in Romans 6 where he explained that we have died to sin by our union in Christ and thus have been raised up not to live as slaves to sin, but rather to live to serve God in the likeness of Christ (6:10). As

believers, we have been set free from sin, and that has a purpose, that we might become servants of God, reaping holiness resulting in eternal life.

Government cannot, in the end, offer true freedom, because government cannot bring freedom from the sin that binds the human heart. Only Christ can set the individual free, and he calls on each one to stand in that liberty (Gal. 5:1). And we must understand what that means and what it does not mean. In Galatians 5:13 Paul states, *"You, brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, through love serve one another."*

Thus, God has set us free, not to indulge in sinful desires, but that we might better serve God and one another in that all-important characteristic of love. Our freedom in Christ is meant to be an opportunity for us to "lay down our lives" freely so that we might serve others, not ourselves.

Thus the author of Hebrews reminds us that our forgiveness in Christ was for a purpose. It was so we could enter into true worship through Christ, by whom we draw near to the Father by faith, and it was so we could build up a loving, serving community of faith. He still exhorts us today,

"Are you using your freedom in Christ to stir up one another to love and good deeds or to just stir them up?"

(Continued on page 5.)



Branches on the Oak Lake Family Tree

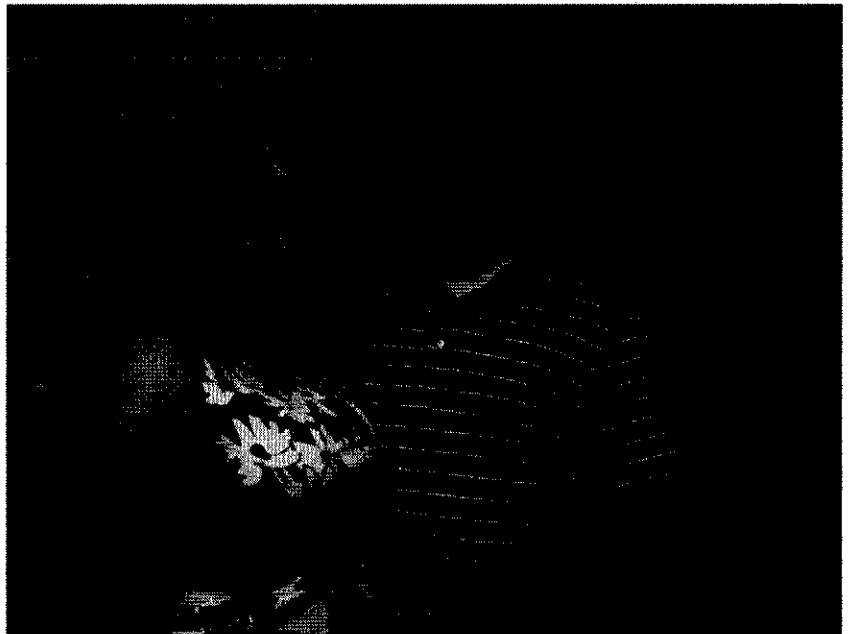
at Woods Brothers Industries putting together water softeners. Siarra graduated from the College of Hair Design. She now works full time as a hair dresser at Salon Bravo, a hair salon in the northwest part of Lincoln.

In June of 2009, this couple purchased their first home. They really like older homes, so they weren't even tempted to look at newer ones. Derick and Siarra think that the woodwork in older homes is beautiful and that the original construction can be sounder than today's homes. Their home, at 210 West "S" Street, was built in 1926.

Presently, they are involved in some remodeling projects. They recently built a shower to fit around their original claw foot bathtub. In the kitchen, they are currently stripping the paint off of their cupboards so that they can stain them to match the woodwork in their home.

Together Derick and Siarra look forward to going to the movies, camping, and spending time with friends and family. Derick especially enjoys fixing up cars. But their home wouldn't be complete without some furry creatures. So, we need to mention these little fellas. Their dog's names are Hunter, Bailey, and Snoopy. We don't want to overlook the one lone bunny named Thumper.

Siarra and her father-in-law, Lee, have enjoyed doing several things here together at church. For 2 years, they have been leaders in the Jr./Sr. high group of AWANA on Wednesday nights. Together they clean the sanctuary every other month. For the summer, they are working with Carol Steiner to team-teach the 3rd and 4th grade Sunday school class.



One of Siarra's favorite passages is I John which talks about love. She enjoys reading about how love should act and how these passages apply to herself and marriage. One of Siarra's other favorite passages for which she says, "I could go on about for days" is Proverbs 3:5-6. These verses say, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

(Continued on page 5.)

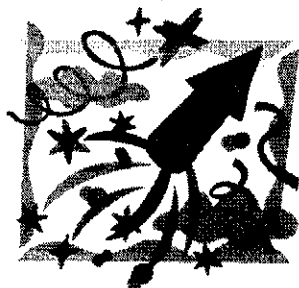
July 2010

Oak Lake Evangelical Free Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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11 Casey & Mary Austin - 2009	12 Heather Masten Nancy Reiser	13 Esther Study 7:00 PM Ladies' Bible Study 9:00 AM Laura Ceraolo	14 Prayer Meeting 7:00 PM	15 Investigative Bible Study 1:15 PM Food Distribution 3:00 PM	16 Men's Bible Study 6:30 AM Phares' Small Group 7:00 PM	17																																																																																				
18 John Haas Rebecca Lubber Paisley Steiner Russell & Terry Edwards- 1981 Ami & Jacci Sarkar - 2009	19 Elders' Meeting 6:15 PM Sherry Koenigsman Neal Thompson	20 Dennis & Cindy Wiens - 1974 Esther Study 7:00 PM	21 Prayer Meeting 7:00 PM	22 Investigative Bible Study 1:15 PM Food Distribution 3:00 PM Patrick & Sarah Tripp - 2006 Loren & Sherry Ubben - 1967	23 Men's Bible Study 6:30 AM Phares' Small Group 7:00 PM	24																																																																																				
25 Dennis Hartman Piper Steiner	26 ELL Monthly Meeting 6:30 PM Chad Steiner Zach Hartman	27 Ladies' Small Group 9:00 AM Esther Study 7:00 PM Mary Ann Higgins	28 Prayer Meeting 7:00 PM Irvin Briese Emily Pfeiffer	29 Investigative Bible Study 1:15 PM Food Distribution 3:00 PM Chad & Kacy Steiner - 2000	30 Men's Bible Study 6:30 AM Kacy Steiner Bryan & Julie Dahlberg - 1977	31 Daniel Seminar (MIQRA) 8:00 AM																																																																																				

Oak Lake Activities and Digest

July 4th Picnic At Church



How would you like to have the cool convenience of picnicking indoors here at the church on July 4th and enjoying the city fireworks at Oak Lake? Everyone is invited to do so on Sunday evening, July 4th. Please arrive early enough so that we may eat at 6:00 PM. We are asking that anyone with a portable grill consider bringing it along so that we can grill. (Please let Caroline Ribble know if you are bringing your grill [474-3078]). Bring meat to grill and a dish to pass. Tableware and drink will be provided. If you have an indoor or outdoor game to share with others, bring it along, too. When it is time to watch Lincoln's fireworks display at 10:00 PM, you may either do it from the church lawn, or you may walk over to Oak Lake for a closer look. (If you wish to drive over, see Pastor Dale for more details about where to park so that you can cross Cornhusker Highway safely.) Be sure to bring your lawn chairs or a blanket to sit on. See you at the picnic!

F R E E D O M

FREEDOM

By

Jim Hart

B R O T T S I R H C R D I M C V I S L R A N N
 L F R E A D R A O M C V I O L R A N N
 O C H R I S D S A M D D O O I N N L I G H T
 O S O A K E L A I E L O L L B E E V I F H T
 P T T E R E S L L B O A K I F D D
 P S H L R S R A N D O O L L A K E E E D
 R R U L E F I S S O R C D A L E H H O R
 A S I F V N N D S A S A S A S
 F E V R E S S O S O J I M E E V E R N N
 R I O O F F A H W W L L I V L I G H T A
 C F G C F G E E A A A R O A
 B R A H A N D D O R O R L L M M A A N I D
 L E R R T I M M Y O O U S O R E B T O R F
 E D S T I I L L S S F F A R R R
 D A D A G I N I R O A O E R E E R F O O R A
 N N H H O O G G A D V V B B R E R F M O U T
 A A T B R Y A N F O A E E L A M P R T
 F R E D O M T O N G D E I D E D E E R F F R O

Look for
 bold,
 capitalized
 words in
 the puzzle.

On July 4, 1776 we declared our **FREEDOM** from the British. Intense **FIGHTING** and much **BLOODSHED** freed us **FROM** British rule.

The **CIVIL WAR**, which started in 1861, **RESULTED** in the freedom of the **SLAVES**. Much blood was shed during this **FIVE** year war. Bloodshed led to the slaves freedom.

But **BEFORE** all this:

CHRIST DIED on the **CROSS** to **FREE** us from **SIN**. The **BLOOD** of the **LAMB** of **GOD** gave us our freedom. God **GAVE** his **ONLY SON** so that we **MIGHT** be **SAVED** and **FREED** from sin. Blood was **SHED** to set us free.

(Solution to the FREEDOM word puzzle is on the back page.)

(Activities and Digest continued on page 5.)

(Pastor's Pen)

"Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:22-23, ESV).

How are you using your freedom? Are you using it to encourage your brothers, or discourage them? Are you using your freedom in Christ to "stir up one another to love and good deeds" or to just "stir them up?" Further, are you using your freedom to retreat from your brothers and sisters in Christ, neglecting to meet together with them, or are you eager to share the love of Christ with one another?

Freedom means many things to many people. What does "freedom" mean to you? How are you using your freedom to serve the body of Christ and the Christ of the Body? God has set you free from your sin, your past, your sinful desires, so that you might freely serve him and his church. How are you using your liberty?

Happy Independence Day!

--Pastor Dale

(Branches continued)

Together Derick and Siarra like verses such as John 14:6, which says, "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" Another favorite is Romans 10:9 which says, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." These verses came true in Derick's life when he asked Christ to be his Savior when he was eight years old.

Thank you Derick and Siarra for letting us get to know you a little better.

(Activities and Digest continued.)

ELL Monthly Meeting

ELL will be meeting Monday, July 26, at 6:30 PM for our once-a-month meeting. Bring a dish to share and come prepared to be involved in conversation and English vocabulary building experiences.

To our dear family at Oak Lake,
Thank you for the prayers for our family. Thank you for the meals and the diapers for the baby. We are blessed to have you as an extension of our family, and we can't wait to raise Eric II, along with the girls, up in such a loving church. May God reap all the reward from the blessings He has bestowed on us.

Resting in Him,
Eric, Chris, Elise, Holly, and Eric (Cejka)

Email Address Correction:
Andrew and Lindsey Bartsch:
albartsch@aol.com

Solution to the FREEDOM Word Puzzle

By Jim Hart

F R E E D O M

B R O T T S I R H C R D I M C V I S L R A N N
 L F R E A D R A O M C V I O L R A N N
 O C H R I S D S A M D D O O I N N L I G H T
 O S O A K E L A I E L O L L B E E E V I E H T
 P T T E R E S L L B O A K I F D D
 P S H L R S R A N D O O L L A K E E E D
 R R U L E F I S S O R C D A L E H H O R
 A S I F V N N D S A S A S A S
 F E V R E S S O S O J I M E E V E R N N
 R I O O F F A H W W L L I V L I G H T A
 C F G C F G E E A A A R O A
 B R A H A N D D O R O R L L M M A A N I D
 L E R R T I M M Y O O U S O R E B T O R E
 E D S T I L L S S F F A R R R
 D A D A G I N I R O A O E R E E R F O O R A
 N N H H O Q G G A D V V B B R E R F M O U T
 A A T B R Y A N F O A E E L A M P R T
 F R E D O M T O N G D E I D E D E E R F F R O

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