

**“True Freedom”**

by Rev. Eli O. Klingensmith

In a speech to the Virginia Legislature, before the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Patrick Henry said, “Give me liberty or give me death.”

As you may know, July 4 2019 will be the 243<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence that was signed on July 4 1776. The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence contains some of the most moving words ever written:

*“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...”*

My friend, liberty or freedom is one of the greatest experiences that a person could ever have. Unfortunately, too often, we take it for granted. On the other hand, some define freedom as a life without any restraint. And what may be even worse is too often we forget to thank God for the freedom God has blessed us with.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel of John, Jesus is talking to His followers about true freedom. This is what is recorded, “To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’”

They answered him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?’

Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed,’” 8:31-36.

Friend, you know it’s great to be an American. I thank God for the way God has blessed this nation, and I am grateful for all the freedoms we enjoy.

But the Bible says the only way to true freedom is through Jesus. “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Real freedom is freedom from fear, where you’re truly free from guilt, from worry, from bitterness and from death. You are free to quit pretending because you are free to be yourself, the person God created you to be.

How do you get rid of those kinds of fears? By letting God love you through what God has done in Jesus Christ. John 3:16 reminds us that God so loved us He gave His one and only Son. The Apostle John stated it this way: “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives our fear ...” (1 John 4:18)

God’s perfect love was clearly demonstrated to us in giving us Jesus. So, when you realize how much God loves you, you will begin to live in true freedom. You will no longer have to live as a slave to fear, worry, guilt, bitterness or death. “You will be free indeed.”

That sounds like true freedom to me!

*Eli***CONTACT US:**

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Sunday - Luke Hawkins  
Monday/Thursday - Denny Adams  
Tuesday & Friday - Jeffrey Blankenship  
Wednesday/Thursday - Mike Karam

**CHURCH BUILDING HOURS:**

Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm



**June 10 Consistory Meeting Highlights**

- ◆ Consistory approved the resignations of Joe DiLauro and Rob Ramey from Consistory .
- ◆ Consistory approved, with regret, Rev. Stricklin’s resignation as Pastor to Youth and Young Adults. Consistory further congratulated him on his new position as pastor at St. Paul UCC in Chelsea, MI.
- ◆ Consistory approved a search committee to find the new Pastor to Youth and Young Adults. The committee will be Joey Cronin, Shirley Dobry, Brenda Green, Kurt Hawkins, Alycia Kakos, Jan Kirby-Kulma, David Theiss.
- ◆ The 2019 Quarter Auction was approved and will be held September 29th.
- ◆ A donation was received for a summer internship for updating the website and other graphics as needed. Sophia Llamas was approved for the internship.
- ◆ Consistory’s self-evaluation was reviewed and areas of concern were discussed.
- ◆ Memorial Education Committee’s request to have a fund-raising dinner on January 3, 2020 was approved.
- ◆ Rev. Klingensmith presented certificates of appreciation to the following members who have completed their term on Consistory: Deacons, Kurt Hawkins, Jeff Palmerton and Jamie McCleaster, Elders, Sharyn Green, Donna Brandau and Barbara Steinbauer.

Barbara Steinbauer, Consistory President

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**Stop the Bleed Kits**

As you walk around the church you will see Stop the Bleed Kits on every floor. Rob Ramey, Zion’s Health & Wellness Coordinator, has purchased, put together and placed all of the kits for easy access in case of an emergency. Thank you, Rob, for your effort in completing this project!

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***We reach out in love to our Church family and friends who have lost loved ones. May God’s blessing, comfort and peace surround you and your family.***

- ◆ Jim & Alice Shoop and Steve, Carrie Anne & Megan Shoop on the passing of Jim’s brother-in-law, Sam Hopkins, on May 27 in Osprey, Florida.

**The Benediction**

Almost every time I have led worship at Zion United Church of Christ over the last two and a half years, I have offered the exact same benediction to send us out from the sanctuary and into the world. I lift my hands and offer these words, *“Let us now go forth into the world in peace, being of good courage, holding fast to that which is good, rendering unto no one evil for evil, strengthening the faint hearted, supporting the weak, helping the afflicted, honoring all people, loving and serving God, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.”* These words of benediction are words that I first received in the church of my youth, we said them together as a congregation before leaving worship and the statement was known as the “Common Commission,” of our community of faith.

This benediction or commission has its roots in the Apostle Paul’s first letter to Thessalonian Christ followers, which you can read in the New Testament. It is a statement that Paul wrote to a very new community of believers, who had committed to following the socially and politically risky teachings of Jesus, and Paul intended for his words to encourage and sustain the faith of these new Christ followers in all circumstances. As Christians today there are many internal and external factors that have the potential to cause our faith in Christ to waver. While Christ taught his followers to love, and to unite, we are tempted toward hate and division. While Christ preached a Gospel message of sharing and freedom, we get tempted toward greed and isolation.

The challenges that exist to living out our faith rooted in Christ’s Good News for all people are all around us. We can’t fend them off by ourselves. That is why God calls us into community with the rest of the Body of Christ, to strengthen us for a shared faith journey in a world that will probably never make it easy for us. When we gather for worship, it is so that we may rest, replenish, seek God’s help, and encourage one another to live out our bold faith in Christ the rest of the week. Sunday worship, therefore, is not the end of our week in faith, but the beginning. Likewise, a benediction is not an ending, but an initiation or a commissioning for the journey ahead. Words like those that Paul shared with those early Christians in Thessaloniki remind us to stay strong, and to be bold in our Christian faith.

Friends, a time that we have had in mutual ministry here at Zion has come to an end, but a new opportunity to put into practice the lessons of faith that we have learned together is only beginning. In the days, weeks, and months ahead, as we reflect on the times and memories we have shared together there will surely be moments of sadness, but let us be strong and bold in the faith that we have and will continue to share. Let us remember those important words of benediction, so that they might serve not as an ending to our journey as fellow members of Christ’s Body, but so we might continue to live as believers of God’s Good News for all people. May it be so.

In Christ,  
Rev. Eric Stricklin

**Refuge of Hope**

We are headed to the Refuge of Hope on July 6 at 10 am to serve lunch. Their new home is located at 715 2nd St NE in Canton. For more information, contact Yvonne Indorf at 330.323.5677. Come help with this community outreach.

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**Vacation Bible School Thank You!**

A huge THANK YOU goes out to all the children who came to "Roar" VBS, adult volunteers, youth volunteers, people who donated items and made monetary donations for VBS, and the support and prayers of the congregation. Without all of you, we could not have had a more successful Vacation Bible School. Looking forward to VBS 2020.



A very special THANK YOU to Alycia Kakos and Rev. Eric for sharing their time and leading a wildly fun and fantastic VBS week.

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**Zion Lunch Away**



Join us on June 2 at noon as we head to Danny Boys. This is a great time to relax with your church family, have some great food, and share some wonderful fellowship.

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**Ecuador Mission Trip**

Alycia and Pam Kakos are headed to Ecuador from July 13-20. While they are there, they will share the Gospel, wash children's feet and provide them with new socks and boots. Their Commissioning is July 7. You may continue to bring in children's size 4 through adult's size 7 new socks and make monetary donations through that day. May God be with you on your travels.

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**Wedding Bells are Ringing**

**April 27:** Our new members Emily Holifield & Andy Streb were married in the Zion Sanctuary.

**May 18:** Jan Kirby & Glenn Kulma shared their vows at St. Jacobs Community Church in Cairo. Marvin & Kathy Kirby were married there in 1960.

**May 25:** Ashley Keenan & Jesse Wade Hawkins were married at St. Michael's Church. Ashley is a lawyer in Cleveland and Wade is a doctor at the Cleveland Clinic. Jesse's father is Dr. Wade Scott Hawkins. Grandmother is Dorris Hawkins.

**June 1:** Rachel Miller and Lance Varner were married in our Zion Sanctuary.

**Missions on the Move**

**ACME Community Cashback Program**

The Missions Team received a check for \$497.32 from this program to be used for missions and community outreach. The 2019 Community Cash Back Program will begin August 8, 2019. We want to thank you all for your help. Maybe we can break \$500 in 2019.

**Stock Zion's Food Pantry**

Thank you to all who contributed food to our pantry last month. We gave full bags of groceries to two families in June. In the month of July, the Missions Team is focusing on collecting the following items: canned tuna and chicken, meat products that do not need refrigeration, beans, rice, pasta, peanut butter, and crackers. We will also collect toothpaste and toothbrushes. You may place them in the blue bin in the Cloister. Thank you for helping local families in our community who are having a tough time!

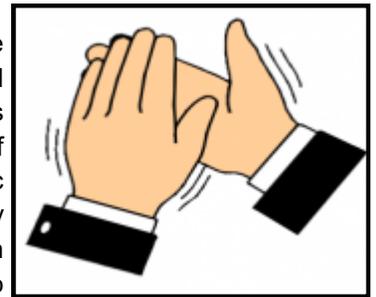
**Missions supported and received thank you notes from the following groups:**

Hammer & Nails	\$200
Hartville Migrant Council	\$200
YWCA, Canton	\$200

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**Congratulations, Victor Stefan!**

At the 2019 conference of the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association, Vic was one of two recipients of the Public Understanding of Technology and Engineering Education Award. The award is given to individuals who while working in their fields, have a sustained record of contributing substantially to the public understanding of technology and engineering and whose contributions have reached broad audiences.



Vic began teaching at Lake Middle School in 1978 where he taught computer science and technology until he retired in 2012. During his time teaching, Vic won numerous awards. But this international, prestigious award is as Vic shared in the Hartville News, "a dream come true." Vic is the 1st to win this award in the state of Ohio and the 5th of 6 to win it in the world.

What a fantastic accomplishment! Your church family is so very proud of you, Vic!

- 1st: Norma Ramsey
- 2nd: Mike McMinn, Tom Stephens
- 3rd: Dorothy Rambaud, Amy Stephens
- 4th: Bernice Yoder
- 5th: Geraldine Bowe, Jamie McCleaster,  
Homer Richards
- 7th: Joann Roush
- 9th: Mary Baab, Ron Karlo, Anne Shilling
- 10th: Robert Richards, Melanie Schwartz
- 11th: Teresa Haren, Charlene Warstler
- 12th: Paul Roush, Alyssa Schwartz, Kevin Tobin
- 14th: Carrie Anne Shoop
- 15th: Dan Howes
- 17th: Dan Haren
- 22nd: Jim Cross
- 23rd: Andrew Botschner, Sarah Popa, Shirley Sollie, Justin  
Warstler
- 24th: Carolyn Chellinsky, Luke Hawkins, Katie Maag, John  
Royer, Nancy Stimmel, Bill Warren
- 25th: Jean Class, Tami McMinn
- 26th: Matt Oatley, Jan Zartman
- 29th: Edlyn Theiss
- 30th: John Fleischman
- 31st: Becky Dahler, Matthew McMinn, Madison Okray



Zion,  
We would like to thank Rev. Eli for his many prayers, visits and calls while our dad was at Aultman, Woodlawn, and now, Windsor Medical Center. Thank you, too, Yvonne Indorf for your visit & vase of beautiful flowers. We also appreciated all the prayers, calls, cards, and the bulletins from Sherry, the Prayer & Praise Group, and other friends of Zion. Your kind expressions of care and concern are a blessing!

The family of Jim Sabo

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Dear Zion Memorial Education Committee Members,

Thank you very much for the scholarship award. The goal of your committee is to promote education and this scholarship will help me pursue two degrees for my future. Thank you for valuing students and their education.

God Bless you all! Megan Shoop

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Dear Zion United Church of Christ,

I would like to express my gratitude for your generosity in selecting me as one of the Zion Memorial Education Grant recipients. Receiving this award made me both overjoyed and grateful for your support of my post-secondary educational career.

After graduation from high school, I will be attending The Ohio State University as an engineering student. I plan on earning a medical degree following the completion of my undergraduate studies. The financial assistance that you have so kindly provided will be of great help, as it will allow me to dedicate more time to my studies and research; because of this, I will be a stronger student in my undergraduate experiences and have a more extensive pool of knowledge to draw upon in my doctorate studies, a vital part of being successful in medicine.

Thank you again for choosing to assist me in my future educational endeavors. My appreciation of your aid cannot be expressed through words and your support has shown me the importance of encouraging others to achieve their dreams, no matter how big they are. I am looking forward to giving back to my community in a similar manner to the exemplary way that Zion United Church of Christ has done.

Sincerely, Caitlin Cronin

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Shirley & George Daniluk	July 2, 1960
Nick & Karen Stock	July 5, 1997
David & Carol Young	July 5, 1959
Tom & Stephanie Stevens	July 8, 1989
Scott & Anne Krusemark	July 12, 1980
Tony & Bethany Okray	July 14, 1989
Michael & Kimberley Melin	July 16, 1994
Stacy & Brenda Green	July 18, 1998
Paul & Janice Huffman Webber	July 18, 1992
Sandra Merrill & Andre Asberry	July 19, 2004
David & Edlyn Theiss	July 22, 1967



Zane Kurt Hawkins graduated from High School in Winchester, VA. He is the son of Brenda & Kraig Hawkins and the grandson of Dorris Hawkins. He will attend Winchester Community College. Good luck, Zane!

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**"Stay hydrated. Be kind to one another. Get outside!"**

from Pack 1



**Quarter Auction FUN**

Zion's second Quarter Auction will be held Sunday afternoon, September 29. Last year's was so much fun you just don't want to miss it. Hope to see you there!