



The Saltshaker

July 2025

Kokomo Zion Church

Pastor Keith Chanley

Whenever I need to write a July newsletter article my thoughts usually turn toward the 4th of July celebrations and meaning. I believe one of the spiritual dangers we face in America is the conflating of patriotism and Christian faith. One does not have to be a Christian to be patriotic nor does being patriotic make you a Christian neither is patriotism linked to a particular brand of politics. While there are certain things about patriotism that find a parallel in Christianity they are not one and the same. Over a decade ago, I read this article from then Indiana Bishop Mike Coyner. While I may not be 100% in agreement with all he writes, I believe it gives us a moment to pause and think. While we do live in the greatest country which deserves our loyalty, I find it especially mindful that our greater loyalty is to the "country" of the cross. God's kingdom has first claim on our loyalty. While we celebrate our country's freedom and independence let us not forget the claim of the cross on our lives.

Blessings Pastor Keith

KOKOMO ZION CHURCH

Schedule of Services

Sunday School 9:00 a.m. / Worship 10:30 a.m.

Keith Chanley, Pastor

Matt Gerhard, Music Director

LeAnne Donson, Secretary

Sheila Lamb, Treasurer

Melissa Dalrymple, Family Ministries Director

Teri Lavengood, Custodian



The Cross and the Flag From Bishop Mike

I always have some mixed emotions around the 4th of July. I love our country, and I am proud to be an American. But some of the 4th of July rhetoric is really over the top. I do not espouse the rather simplistic thinking which says, "My country – love it or leave it." I do believe that one of the most important characteristics of patriotism is loyalty, but it is also important to love my country enough to want it to be better. So simply waving the flag and overlooking the failures of our nation is not a sign of patriotism. True patriots love their country enough to offer criticism, hope for a better future, and willingness to work for change.

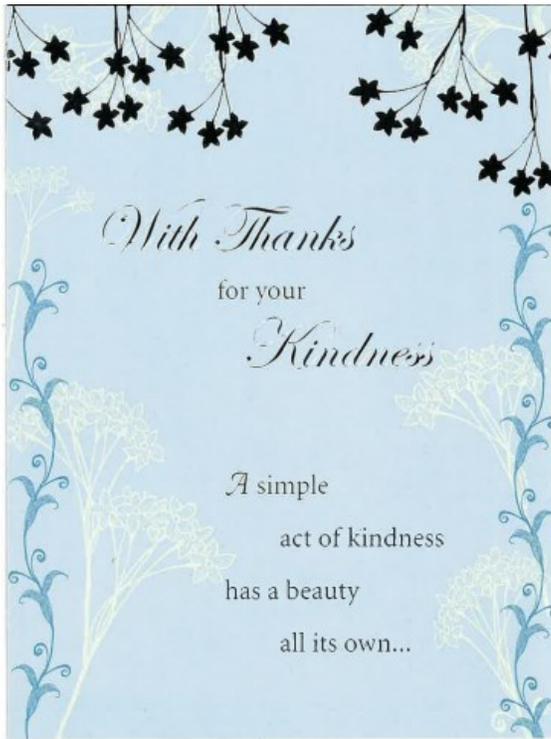
Likewise, true patriots give credit to the worthiness and positive characteristics of other nations. Just because we love the USA that does not mean we have to impugn the value of other nations. In my travels to over 25 countries, I have found much to appreciate in other nations. I am always glad to come home and be greeted by US Customs saying, "Welcome home," but that does not negate the positives that other countries have to offer.

I have also run into some of the typical "flag controversies" that have plagued some congregations. I remember one church I served where the sanctuary remodeling resulted in our moving the American flag and the Christian flag to a new placement – off to the side of the chancel and with a nice spotlight on the flags. Most people in that church saw the new placement as an improvement to having the flags on each side of the altar table, but some seriously objected and wanted the flag (mostly the American flag) back in the center of the chancel. We survived that disagreement, and in fact it provided a good opportunity to discuss the centrality of the Cross, rather than the centrality of the Flag in worship.

All of which leads me to affirm this week that I am so glad to live in a country where both the Cross and the Flag are important. The Flag reminds us of our loyalty to our USA, and that loyalty is something which the Scriptures affirm. We are urged by the Apostle Paul in Romans to pray for our nation's leaders, to submit to the government, to pay our taxes, and to be good citizens. That is important to remember as we celebrate the 4th of July. The Flag deserves our pledge of allegiance for what it symbolizes.

As Christians we have another loyalty – to the Cross – which calls us to another allegiance. We are not just citizens of the USA, we are also citizens of the reign of God. Most of the time those two loyalties are complementary, or at least not contradictory. Sometimes even here in America, those loyalties do conflict – and that calls us to remember our higher allegiance as Christians. Sadly, many Christians today live in places where simply to be a Christian puts them into direct conflict with their government.

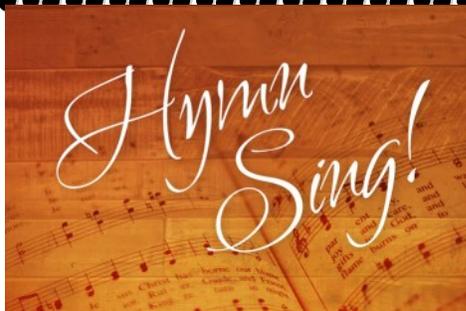
Living in the USA we can take for granted the wonderful blessing we have: we can pledge allegiance to both the Cross and the Flag. Happy 4th of July.



Thank You

Dear friends,
Thanks you so much for
all you did for us!
For all the cards, calls and
love shown to us.
We will never forget!

God Bless you +
your ladies
Judy + family



Matt's Concert

July 27th

3:00 pm

Invite all your friends

Scripture Sisters will meet July 7 and 21, 10:00 AM, Beamer Room, for a 2-part study on the "Sword" method of Bible study. See you then!

2025 HOWARD COUNTY 4-H FAIR

GREENTOWN MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION

WORSHIP SERVICE

SUNDAY, JULY 6 - 7PM

@ THE SOUTH GRANDSTANDS

MUSIC-

THE ZION CHOIR

GUEST SPEAKER-

RANDY OLLIS

Greentown Volunteer Fire Department Appreciation Breakfast

When: July 20th @ 9:30 am

**Where: Kokomo Zion Church
(5051 E 400 N)**



Join us for breakfast along with the Greentown Volunteer Fire Dept. to show our appreciation for how they serve our community.

Donations will be taken. All donations will go towards a turn out gear washing machine



Greentown VFD 2020

ON THE CALENDAR @ ZION

July

- 1 Ad Council Meeting @ 7:00 pm
- 4 The Church Office will be closed
- 6 Choir at How. Co. Fair @ 7:00pm
- 7-12 How. Co. 4-H Fair
- 7 Scripture Sisters @ 10:00 am
- 16 Trustee Meeting @ 7:00 pm
- 20 Vol. Fireman Breakfast @ 9:30 am
- 21 Scripture Sisters @ 10:00 am
- 27 Matt's Concert @ 3:00 pm
- 30 Missions Meeting @ 7:00 pm



September 27th

Zion's Fish & Loin Fry

**All the proceeds will go to the
Kokomo Rescue Mission**

OPERATION SHOEBOX CHRISTMAS: We were recently gifted a surplus supply of shoebox gifts from a Greentown church. On Sunday, July 20th, a table will be set up in the Fellowship Hall for you to begin your shoebox shopping. Boxes will also be available. Come enjoy breakfast as we celebrate and honor our first responders, then begin your Christmas shoebox shopping!



FAMILY MINISTRIES

partnering with families to create a culturally relevant, biblically sound, safe, and fun environment for children and youth to grow in their relationship with Jesus



We had 20 children at VBS last month. We also had a few extra families attend the VBS carnival/block party on Saturday which was moved inside due to the heat. We had a bounce house, petting zoo, games, and food. Six churches participated.

We did have several kids from the Good News Club; they were very excited to see Norm Lavengood, Pastor Keith, Pastor Brian, and Judy Good who were on our Good News Club team. We have scheduled a CEF 5-Day Club to be held at Northview Greentown (previously UMC). This again will be sponsored by the Greentown Ministerial Association. Kids are looking forward to attending.

Our "craft" item was combined with a mission project. The kids decorated a food safe bag and filled it with dry ingredients that will make a soup. They made 52 bags which will be delivered to the Kokomo Rescue Mission to hand out to those in need.



We are looking for some people to sit with the CEF kids at the Howard County Fair. If you are willing to help, please let me know.

Melissa Dalrymple
Director of Family Ministries
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