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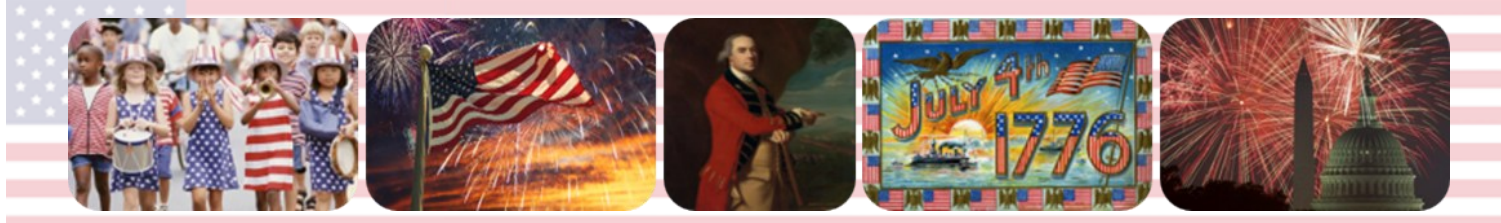


On **July 4, 2026**, the United States will celebrate 250 years of independence, marking the Semiquincentennial with nationwide events, historical commemorations, and community activities. The 250th anniversary, also known as **America 250**, commemorates the adoption of the **Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776**, when the thirteen American colonies declared freedom from British rule. This pivotal moment launched the American Revolution and established the foundation for a self-governing republic based on liberty, equality, and individual rights. The Declaration, drafted primarily by Thomas Jefferson and supported by leaders like Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, remains one of the most influential documents in world history, inspiring democratic movements globally.

**REFLECTION AND LEGACY**

The Semiquincentennial is a rare opportunity for Americans to reflect on the nation’s journey over 250 years, honor the sacrifices of those who secured freedom, and celebrate enduring principles that continue to guide the country. It emphasizes the spirit of innovation, civic engagement, and national pride, encouraging citizens to envision the next 250 years of American history.

By participating in these events, Americans not only commemorate the past but also contribute to a shared vision for the future, ensuring that the legacy of independence and democracy continues to inspire generations to come.



**July 4th Facts You May Not Know . . .**

- ★ There is a small and brief message written on the back of the Declaration of Independence. It’s upside down, too. It reads as this: “Original Declaration of Independence dated 4th July 1776.” It’s not clear who wrote this message...which sort of makes it an American mystery.
- ★ It’s technically a violation to wear the American flag as a clothing article. It’s pretty popular to wear American themed clothing on the 4th of July! Though, it might be worth noting that this is technically in violation of the **The U.S. Flag Code**, which says that “the flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery.”
- ★ There have been 27 different versions of the US flag.
- ★ The 50th star was added to the American flag on July 4, 1960.
- ★ Americans consume a lot of hot dogs on July 4th. About 150 million, to be exact!
- ★ July 4th wasn’t an official holiday until almost 100 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed.
- ★ In honor of July 4, 1776, the One World Trade Center in New York was designed to be 1,776 feet tall.
- ★ The American flag, also known as the Stars and Stripes, is a prominent symbol and around 64% of Americans own a USA flag.
- ★ Patriotism is out of this world! Six (6) American flags have made it to the moon!
- ★ The bald eagle, chosen as the national bird in 1782, represents freedom and strength.
- ★ The Statue of Liberty, a gift from France, symbolizes freedom and democracy.
- ★ Uncle Sam, a personification of the US government, became popular during the War of 1812.
- ★ The Liberty Bell has not been rung since 1846, but is tapped 13 times every 4th of July in honor of the original 13 colonies.
- ★ The Star-Spangled Banner became the national anthem in 1931.
- ★ The first public reading of the Declaration of Independence was July 8, 1776.
- ★ Both Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died on July 4, 1826.
- ★ James Monroe, the 5th president, also died on July 4, 1831.
- ★ Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president, was born on July 4, 1872.



**DISCOVERING JOY, BUILDING FAITH: Why VBS Matters More Than Ever**

Summer is officially here, and with it comes one of the most vibrant, high-energy, and spiritually impactful weeks in the life of our church: Vacation Bible School (VBS).

If you walk through our hallways during VBS week, you’ll hear the echoes of laughter, enthusiastic singing, and the unmistakable buzz of children discovering God’s love. But beneath the bright decorations, clever crafts, and delicious snacks lies a deeply strategic ministry. VBS isn’t just a fun summer tradition or a week of free childcare—it is a vital pillar of our church’s mission.

Here is why VBS matters so much to our community:

**1. A MASTERCLASS IN FAITH FORMATION**

For children, faith isn’t just taught; it’s caught. VBS takes profound biblical truths and translates them into an immersive, multi-sensory experience. Through hands-on science experiments, dramatic storytelling, and movement, the Gospel comes alive. Studies show that the concentrated, daily spiritual focus of VBS helps children retain these lessons long after the summer ends, laying a firm foundation for a lifetime of faith.

**2. RADICAL HOSPITALITY AND OUTREACH**

VBS is often the “front door” of our church. It provides a warm, low-pressure invitation for neighborhood families, friends, and classmates who might not regularly attend a Sunday service. When we open our doors for VBS, we are showing our community that we care about their children and want to provide a safe, joyful environment where they can thrive.

**3. INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTION**

Where else in the church do you see middle schoolers, college students, parents, and grandparents all working toward a single goal? VBS bridges the generational gap. Our youth learn the joy of serving as crew leaders, while our older members pass down their wisdom and love. It takes a village to raise a child in the faith, and VBS is our village at its finest.

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)*

**HOW YOU CAN PARTNER WITH US**

An undertaking this big requires the prayers and hands of our entire church family. Here is how you can get involved:

- **PRAY:** Pray for the hearts of the children attending, that they would encounter Jesus in a personal way. Pray also for our volunteers’ energy, safety, and patience.
- **INVITE:** Think of neighbors, co-workers, or relatives with children, and invite them to join the fun!
- **SERVE:** We still have open slots for decorators, volunteers, and group leaders. No experience is required—just a willing heart.
- **GIVE:** VBS is a financial undertaking that Enka is proud to support, so any extra you can give helps!

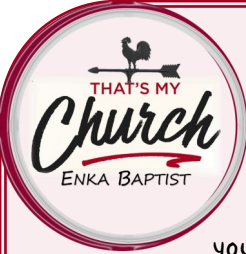
VBS is a powerful reminder that the Church is at its best when it invests in the next generation. Thank you for your continued prayers, generosity, and enthusiasm as we prepare to welcome these young hearts!

I love being your Pastor,  
Chris  
#GOD’SNOTDONE

*Missions across the street and around the world*

Our **JULY MISSION PROJECT** is to support our Rainforest Falls VBS (July 13-18) with monetary donations for the **Appalachian Backpack Ministry**, which provides children in need with school supplies. Our VBS kids are excited to bring their offering for this important mission project each night. It makes them proud to be “missionaries” to less fortunate kids. Your donation will really help them provide many backpacks to kids in need.

Please indicate on your offering envelope the amount you wish to give to the VBS backpack ministry.



**This is how you move forward in faith:**  
by remembering where God has taken you so far and staying open to where He'll take you tomorrow.

**This is how you show up:**  
by carrying your loved ones as you go, every hour, every day—not perfectly but faithfully, holding them in prayer.

**This is how you move beyond what's comfortable:**  
by loving sacrificially, doing right by everyone, honoring this life you've been entrusted with.

Even on the long days, the boring days, the wish-it-were-already-tomorrow days.  
Remaining steady, present with the people around you. Knowing God is carrying you through.

**WE'RE HERE FOR THAT JOURNEY. ALL OF IT.  
WE ARE YOUR CHURCH!**

# SING! TO THE LORD

*A great way to spend time with God*

Sometimes varying our routine can ready us to hear from the Lord in a fresh way. This month, why not approach your devotional time by singing — or reading — a few stanzas of a sacred song?

Many kinds of music can move the heart, but hymns are particularly effective at turning our thoughts in a worshipful direction. These songs of praise typically express scriptural truths through music and poetry—a combination that helps access deeper layers of divine wisdom.

Music is clearly important to God. His Word contains well over 1,000 references to melodies, singing, and instruments. And Ephesians 5:19 (NIV) encourages “speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.” What’s more, the rest of the verse tells us to communicate that way to God Himself: “Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord.”

**Experiment with the following exercise this month:**

- Before sitting down with the daily meditation**, try opening a hymnal or searching online for a favorite hymn. Briefly meditate on its words, looking for new insights about the Lord or praying some of its lines to Him. (Reading something that is usually experienced through song can help us “hear” the meaning in a new way.) Another day, take several moments with a less familiar hymn and consider how it adds to your understanding of the Lord.

**Tip:** For variation, scan the hymnal’s topical index for a subject related to your day’s devotion.


- To get started**, let these words from Mary Lathbury’s “Break Thou the Bread of Life” help you anticipate spending time in God’s Word:

*Break thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,  
As once you broke the loaves beside the sea.  
Beyond the sacred page I seek you, Lord;  
My spirit waits for you, O living Word.*

*O send your Spirit now, dear Lord, to me,  
That he may touch my eyes and make me see.  
Show me the truth made plain within your Word,  
For in your book revealed I see you, Lord.*

**Remember:** The Lord gave us music as a way of connecting with Him and meditating on who He is. And what He does.

Psalm 92:1 says: *It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High,*




“Have you noticed children love to sing? Perhaps one reason is that they haven’t become jaded or self-conscious. In Matthew 18:3, Jesus said we must ‘change and become like children’ to enter the kingdom of heaven. Over time, though, it’s possible for believers to lose that childlike humility—and even the joyful among us can be worn down by trials. Ask God to refresh you today. An unenthusiastic heart finds it hard to sing, but a humble one will do so gladly.” ~ Charles F. Stanley



## JULY BIRTHDAYS


05 ~ Frank Sentelle	19 ~ Doug Roberts
07 ~ Tommy Battle	25 ~ Hailie Vick
16 ~ Teresa Boyer	26 ~ Miriam Sharp
	28 ~ Chris Reese



### Heart of a Stranger:

*An Unlikely Rabbi's Story of Faith, Identity, and Belonging*  
by Angela Buchdahl

When I heard about a memoir written by a Korean American woman who is a rabbi I knew I had to read it. It did not disappoint. In fact, I'm recommending this book to anyone who is interested in the Jewish faith. As Christians we should have knowledge of the origins of our faith. Rabbi Angela Buchdahl's journey to becoming a rabbi of one of the most influential synagogues in the United States is fascinating. She traces her personal story of having a Buddhist Korean mother and a Jewish American father. Her reflections on the tenants of the Jewish faith are beautiful. This is a book I will read again. It blessed me. You can find this book at the Enka-Candler Public Library on Sand Hill Road. ~ Debbie Glaser

July 2026		Small Groups meet every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. (unless otherwise noted)
JUL 05 COMMUNION SUNDAY	10:55 a.m. 4:45 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Morning Worship Choir Practice Quarterly Business Meeting CIA / Youth
JUL 07		No Meetings Today
JUL 12	9:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday Celebration No evening service Join us for final VBS Prep
JUL 13-17	5:30 p.m. To 8:30 p.m.	Vacation Bible School No Group Bible Study on 14th
JUL 19 ABCCM SUNDAY	10:55 a.m. 4:45 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Morning Worship (VBS Kids) Choir Practice Family Night Adults on Mission /CIA/Youth
JUL 21	10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Group Bible Study Prayer Meeting
JUL 25	8:00 a.m.	 Men's Breakfast
JUL 26	4:45 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Choir Practice Bible Study with the Pastor CIA / Youth Church Council
JUL 28	10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Group Bible Study Prayer Meeting

## Word Find

### 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY

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

ADAMS	EQUALITY	JEFFERSON	REVOLUTION
AMERICA	FIREWORKS	JULY	RIGHTS
BARBECUE	FOURTH	LIBERTY	STATES
COLONIES	FREEDOM	NATION	THIRTEEN
CONGRESS	HOTDOGS	PARADE	UNITED
DECLARATION	INDEPENDENCE		

## CONSIDER THIS...

Our galaxy contains at least 100 billion stars—many of them invisible to us. If we can't fully see or understand the universe around us, how can we fathom the mind of God, who created it all?

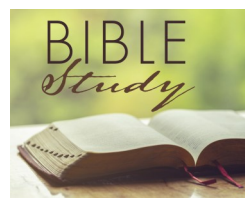
We can't. But Jesus changed that forever.

John calls Him the eternal Word, a member of the Trinity, one who was with God before the beginning of the world. But He also became fully human and experienced everything life offers—both the bitter moments and the sweet. He wept at gravesides, dined with outcasts, and celebrated at wedding feasts.

To understand what God is like, we only need to look at Jesus—who healed the unclean and returned them to community, who defended the weak and called them sons and daughters, who fed a crowd of thousands with the contents of a child's lunchbox.

The same God who spoke billions of stars into being came to us a vulnerable child and rested beneath one.

~ copied



### ATTENTION ALL "BIBLE STUDIERS"

(men and women)

*Are you restless in your spirit? Is your heart yearning to know if there's something more to this life? More purpose? More joy? More satisfaction?*

Anne Graham Lotz has known this struggle too. As she searched for answers, Abraham walked out of the pages of her Bible and into her life. Abraham's life was full of twists and turns, riches and losses, deceit and redemption, failure and success. Nevertheless, his story holds the key to satisfying a longing heart: *embracing a God-filled life.*

If you want to know God as Abraham did, join us on Tuesday mornings beginning **July 21 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall as we begin to study,

**THE MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION,  
Embracing the God-Filled life.**

Come and learn how to embrace a God-filled life, choice by choice and day by day. Despite struggling with compromise, fear, family, quarrels, doubt, and disappointment, learn to know God as Abraham did...as a friend.

God longs for a deep, intimate relationship with you but it's your choice...*You are His magnificent obsession!*

