

## America, A Christian Nation or a Religious One?

*“Whatever we once were, we are no longer a Christian nation – at least, not **just**. We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, a Buddhist nation, and a Hindu nation, and a nation of nonbelievers.”* Barack Obama, June 28, 2006. **(Bold added by me)**

Much ado has been spoken about the above quote. Was Obama suggesting that America was not “just” a Christian nation *anymore*, or was he suggesting that America *never* was a Christian nation to begin with. I would give the benefit of the doubt to believe it was merely an observation of the current day – America is made up of many people with different religious beliefs. Although, I cannot say for sure that there was not a hint of doubt expressed in the phrasing of his words that Christianity was not the only bedrock on which this country was built. That would be a tough sell for even most skeptics.

As we approach the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of America, it is worth a minute to pause and reflect on who we are...our identity as a nation. For the Christian, however, the answer to the question is not how many people claim to be Christian in national surveys, but more importantly what values these people hold.

The First Amendment to the constitution is powerful, but also vague. *“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”* Clearly restraints are given to the government so that “religion” has unhindered space to exist in society. The vagueness comes in the form of the term “religion”. Do religions other than Christianity ascribe to the same protections? The answer is yes.

The fact of the matter is that Christian beliefs do and always have existed in a world with non-Christian beliefs. Arguably, the first Christian church came into existence shortly after the 3000 converts following Peter’s sermon at Pentecost in Acts 2. It arrived in a world filled with every kind of pagan worship imaginable. Only through the sustaining providence of God has the Church survived 2000+ years. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, it will sustain through eternity.



To be clear, our role is not to convert everyone to *our* religion. Additionally, it is not to be on a rescue mission for the world. Jesus already rescued us on the cross. When He raised up on his nail-pierced feet and said, “It is finished” (John 19:30), the rescue was complete, at least, for those who receive Him as Savior. *“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12). Our role is to be light in a dark world that points to the Savior...the only Rescuer. *“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. **“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven”*** (Matthew 5:14-16).

So, in this mixed-up world of *religions*, America was and is no exception. (Sorry, but I agree with Obama on this one.) On the other hand, true Christianity is not “**just**” another religion. Rather it is a faithful devotion to a relationship with the Father of Creation through His only begotten son, Jesus Christ. As we draw nearer to “Our Father who is in Heaven”, our light shines a little brighter. Then it doesn’t matter how many religions America has. What does matter is that every blood-bought, bodacious believer is living a life that honors God in such a way that others, no matter what their religion, see Christ as their only Hope. They see the Light! This is the America we live in. So, happy birthday, America!

Loving God is more than celebrating a *freedom* of religion. During all the celebrations, may our LIGHT shine brighter than any candle on a cake or fireworks in the sky. After all, we have no excuse...the first amendment gives us that right. Why not use it?

*Pastor Robert*

## Happy Birthday America!!

This month we will celebrate Independence Day! That is our country's birthday. Infact the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. When we look at the flag. We can see the American Flag-. As you know, our flag is red, white, and blue. Have you ever stopped to think what those colors mean?



**Red:** Red stands for courage. Many men and women have had the courage to stand up and fight for our country. They have defended our country against our enemies and many have died in the service of our country.

**White:** White stands for purity. Purity means to do what is right. We hope and pray that our country will always stand for what is right.

**Blue:** Blue stands for justice. When we

pledge allegiance to the flag, we end with the words: "With liberty and justice for all." That means that in our country, everyone should be treated fairly and with respect.

The colors red, white, and blue remind me of our country, but those colors also remind me of Jesus.

Red reminds me of Jesus' blood that was shed when he died on the cross for my sin. That is very important, because the Bible says, "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22).

White reminds me that when I give my heart to Jesus, he washes me and I become as "white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). The Bible says, "you were washed, you were sanctified, (set a side special for Gods purpose) you were justified (made not guilty – washed



clean from all sin) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 6:10).

Blue reminds me of God's faithfulness. The Bible tells us that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and make us clean" (1 John 1:9). God is faithful to keep His promises.

Red, white, and blue. Yes, I am reminded of our great country, but more importantly, I am reminded of our great Savior, Jesus.

# JULY 2026

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

|                                                                                                                         |    |                                                                     |    |    |                               |                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                         |    |                                                                     | 1  | 2  | 3<br>Men's Bible Study 10 am  | 4<br>                          |
| 5<br><br>COMMUNION                      | 6  | 7<br>Worship Team Practice 5:30pm;<br>Men's/Ladies Bible Study 7pm  | 8  | 9  | 10<br>Men's Bible Study 10 am | 11<br><br>Twin Lakes 10am- 2pm |
| 12                                                                                                                      | 13 | 14<br>Worship Team Practice 5:30pm;<br>Men's/Ladies Bible Study 7pm | 15 | 16 | 17<br>Men's Bible Study 10 am | 18                                                                                                               |
| 19<br><br>Monthly Birthday Celebration! | 20 | 21<br>Worship Team Practice 5:30pm;<br>Men's/Ladies Bible Study 7pm | 22 | 23 | 24<br>Men's Bible Study 10 am | 25                                                                                                               |
| 26                                                                                                                      | 27 | 28<br>Worship Team Practice 5:30pm;<br>Men's/Ladies Bible Study 7pm | 29 | 30 | 31                            |                                                                                                                  |

COMING SOON



**Twin Lakes**  
**Saturday, July 11**  
**10am — 2pm**



**BOWLING**

**Sun., July 19, 5pm**



**SUMMERFEST**  
**FAMILY FESTIVAL**

**SAT., AUG. 1, 10 am -3pm**  
**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**  
**SEE LINDA TO HELP OUT**



SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY ON OUR WEBSITE! ONLY 2-3 SENTENCES NEEDED. SEE TRACY WOOD IF INTERESTED!



## GCC Birthdays This Month

Margaret Layne, Dennis Shook

## Foster Children Ministry

Male 10 years old 12/10/2015  
Male 1 month old 01/05/2026

If you would like to sponsor a child see Patricia Johnson

## Charlotte County Senior Needs

Grace is supporting local DSS by donating the following items: Depends sizes Medium/Large, Boost, Ensure. See Yvette for more information.

## Hospitality

Our fellowship meal is an extension of our service where we gather together to share the love of Jesus. The meal is served buffet style with guests and seniors going first. **VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED.** If you would like to help out see Diana Matthews

## Join Our Family

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Grace family, see Pastor Robert.

## Supplemental Bag Ministry

Each month GCC prepares and distributes bags filled with paper products, cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene items to members of our community. Help is needed to deliver bags as well as donation of items. For more info, see Patricia Johnson.

## GCC Online

Want to watch our sermons online? Go to [www.gatherwithgraceva.org](http://www.gatherwithgraceva.org). scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the watch or sermons link. This will take you to our YouTube channel, where you will find one years worth of sermons. Or if you prefer, go to our Facebook page at [facebook.com/connect2gcc](https://facebook.com/connect2gcc) to watch live every Sunday morning or whenever you like!

## July Fellowship Menu

July 5: Slow Cooker Sunday  
July 12: Mexican Fiesta  
July 19: Chicken Dinner  
July 26: Cook-out



The function of the Board of Grace Community Church is to support a Holy Spirit-led movement for all people to discover and demonstrate a growing relationship in Jesus Christ.

### Grace Community Church Board Members:

Robert Perrin, Pastor and Chairman of the Board; **Glen Matthews**, Church Representative, Facility and Maintenance Coordinator; **Tracy Wood**, Church Representative, Operations Coordinator; **JoAnn Carmen**, Treasurer; **Betty Shook**, Secretary. Please contact Tracy (434-825-9112) or Glen (434-664-5202) with any concerns or suggestions you would like the GCC board to address.



Awana's starts again on Sundy, August 23! If you would like to volunteer or register a child, go to [gatherwithgraceva.org](http://gatherwithgraceva.org), or see Betty Shook, Diector of Awana, Yvette Perrin, Awana Secretary, or Pastor Robert.