



BEECH STREET  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

JULY 2025

# CHURCH MESSENGER

MONTHLY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

● Sunday School: 9:30am ● Worship Service: 10:30am ● Wednesday Bible Study: 6:00pm



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## News & Events

The month of July is upon us, with all of the barbeques, family gatherings, and fireworks, Christians should take time to reflect on the Freedoms provided by God and to be thankful for them. During the summer months, many churches may notice a dip in congregational engagement as routines shift and attention is pulled in new directions. Never fear – July's wealth of beautiful weather offers numerous moments that let us connect with God, the community, and each other. Let's look at how we can make the most of July's special days and build stronger relationships to carry us through the rest of the year.

### Let Freedom Ring!

Let's focus on the differences between the world's view of freedom, to selfishly do whatever we want, and God's view of freedom, freedom from sin, death, addiction, greed, anxiety, and all the other worldly influences that weigh us down.

### Gratitude In Freedom

Christian gratitude in the context of freedom centers on recognizing that true freedom, the kind that lasts eternally, comes from Jesus Christ and his sacrifice. This gratitude extends to both spiritual freedom from the bondage of sin and, for some, gratitude for national freedoms that allow for the free exercise of our faith in Christ.



## A Message From Our Pastor

July presents an opportunity for us to reflect on our history and celebrate the freedom we have as citizens of the United States of America. Fireworks will light up the 4th of July skies, backyard barbecues will add a flavorsome smell to our neighborhoods and city streets, and beaches will be crowded with sunbathers, surfers, and shell collectors. About 250 years ago the first patriots of America had a different experience. Skies were lit up with gun fire exchanges between the revolutionaries and the British soldiers. The smell of burning gun powder filled the air in neighborhoods and communities. Beaches and waterways were strategic battle locations. Over 25,000 American Revolutionaries died to give us the freedom we now celebrate with music, laughter, and charcoal grills. We are grateful for the freedom our predecessors bled for and passed down. Freedom from Britain wasn't easy, but they believed it was worth the cost. Good people died to set America free. Our Savior died to give us an even greater freedom. The concept of freedom in Christ is one that has profound implications for those who embrace it. This freedom transcends mere liberation from physical or earthly constraints; it speaks of a deeper, spiritual emancipation that touches every facet of our lives. The journey to understanding and experiencing this freedom can be transformative, opening new perspectives on our existence and purpose as believers in Christ. At its core, our relationship with Christ makes it possible for us to be set free from:

- The Bondage of Sin. Jesus' death made forgiveness not only possible but promised to the people of faith.
- The Power of Sin. Without Jesus, sin will continue to bully us and overpower us. With Jesus the power of sin is obliterated.
- The Fear of Death. Jesus has taken away the devil's power to use death as a weapon against us. Death may sting, but it has been conquered.

Not only have we been set free from the slavery of sin's guilt, sin's power over us, and the fear of death, but we have also been set free to:

- Live Our Best Life. We have Jesus' example, and we have His Spirit within to create the best version of ourselves.
- Live With Purpose. Jesus chose to serve rather than be served. He has equipped us to live with purpose and direction as we serve one another.

These five bullet points are foundational to the Christian life and will be fleshed out each Sunday starting in July, in a sermon series entitled "Set Free." Whether you are new to the faith, a pre-Christian, or a veteran believer, this series will speak, challenge, convict, and empower you. I look forward to sharing with all of you as we embrace the freedom we have in Christ.

Blessings,  
Keith

# Taking God on Vacation

Well, summer is finally upon us! In the last couple of weeks, we have experienced the warmth that is what summer is all about. As we venture out to see new places or favorite destinations, God should still be the main focus of our lives.



Recently I was thinking about the fact that a lot of people take a vacation from God and Church during the summer, and so I want to give you this hearty challenge: Don't do it!

Now don't misunderstand what I'm saying here. Vacations, weekend trips, and summer camping with the family are all good, important, and valuable things to do. Just don't take the summer off from church attendance, worship, prayer, and Bible reading!

The Bible says: "Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24-25, NLT). In other words, God tells us to meet together, so we can encourage and bless one another!

We all want to get away during the summer whether it's to the beach, the mountains, trips to National Parks out west, or far away adventures. Some of us just want to stay at home to get things done around the house or to finally get to those projects that we've been meaning to work on all winter.

Whatever your vacation or staycation plans might be, we all need to remember that God does not take a vacation from us; therefore, neither should we take a vacation from God. Instead, take God with you on vacation.

Could you imagine if God took a vacation from us? We need to make room for God in our daily lives and remember to take God with us wherever we may go, including on vacations. More times than not, whether on the beach or in the mountains, these times of rest and relaxation provide opportunities for all of us to reconnect with Almighty God.

Vacation time gives us all the chance to appreciate the beauty of God in nature and the beauty of creation, not to mention the appreciation of the beauty of human life found in others close to us or in far off lands. Please take the time to slow down on vacation and thank God for all of the blessings we have in this life, in all those who we come into contact with, and all of the experiences we've had since the last time we had some down time.

Have a great summer of fun and relaxation and adventure, but please remember to put God in your everyday life, as well as, your vacation plans because you are always in His plans!

# Community Events

Community events are crucial for churches as they foster a stronger sense of belonging, build relationships, and extend the church's reach into the wider community. May these events provide opportunities for fellowship, outreach, and spiritual growth, both for existing members and those who may be exploring faith.

THR  
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## We Are Messengers

Contemporary Christian band playing at Ashland Summer Motion. Free Concert. 7:30pm.

[www.summermotion.com](http://www.summermotion.com)

FRI  
4

## Fireworks Downtown Ashland

Celebrate Independence Day with the largest fireworks display in the Tri-state. 10:15pm.

[www.summermotion.com](http://www.summermotion.com)

SAT  
12

## Maker's Market: Downtown Ashland

Shop local. Good food, entertainment, handmade goods: opens at 10am.

[www.visitaky.com](http://www.visitaky.com)

FRI  
18

## Ugandan Children's Choir

Old Orchard Christian Church at 6pm. Vibrant worship, dance, and storytelling, while raising awareness and support for orphaned children in Uganda.

# Let's Strike Up the Bands!

**-A Message from Michael Hannon, Director of Bands**

Great things are happening in our music ministry! Coming this fall to BCSS will be TWO student bands. The first will be a Beginner Band for elementary school students, and the second will be what I'm calling an Intermediate/Advanced Concert Band with a mix of middle and high school students. Throughout the summer months we will be getting instruments, instruction material, and selections for the concert band. We look forward to the sounds of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments coming from the Family Life Center this fall! Stay tuned for updates.



# Independence Day Message

The ultimate purpose of our freedom isn't self-fulfillment but Christ-exaltation. We're free to display God's glory and grace to a watching world. When we live in true freedom, we become compelling witnesses to the gospel's transforming power.

As fireworks light up the sky and the smell of barbecue fills the air, Americans across the nation come together to celebrate the Fourth of July. It's a day marked by patriotism, freedom, and the remembrance of our nation's history. For Christians, Independence Day holds a deeper significance, intertwining faith with the principles of liberty and justice. At its core, the Fourth of July commemorates the birth of a nation founded on the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice for all. These principles are not only enshrined in the founding documents of the United States but are also echoed throughout the Bible. As Christians, we believe in the inherent dignity of every human being, created in the image of God, and endowed with certain unalienable rights.

The Bible teaches us about the importance of freedom, both spiritual and temporal. In Galatians 5:1, we read, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." Through His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus Christ has liberated us from the bondage of sin and death, offering us the ultimate freedom in Him.

As we celebrate Independence Day, we also reflect on the blessings of liberty that we enjoy as citizens of a free nation. However, we recognize that true freedom is not merely the absence of external constraints but the presence of righteousness and justice. In Micah 6:8, we are reminded, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God." For Christians, the Fourth of July is an opportunity to express gratitude for the freedoms we have been granted and to reaffirm our commitment to live out our faith in the public square. It is a day to pray for our nation and its leaders, to advocate for the marginalized and oppressed, and to strive for justice and reconciliation in our communities. As we gather with family and friends to celebrate Independence Day, let us remember that our ultimate allegiance is not to any earthly kingdom but to the Kingdom of God. May we use our freedom responsibly, as instruments of God's love and grace in a world that is longing for redemption. May we never forget the words of Jesus in John 8:36, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."



## Welcome Generously

### Jesus Has Welcomed You into His Eternal Inheritance.

As Christians, we help each other remember that this world is not our final home. Right now we are in the body and away from the Lord as we walk by faith and not by sight. The day is coming when we will be at home with Jesus and see Him face to face (Matthew 25:34; 2 Peter 1:11).

Christ will welcome us into an eternity of perfection in His presence, and He gives us the guarantee of such a home in His Holy Spirit (Hebrews 9:15). Through Christ and being sealed by His Spirit, we receive every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, including His fruit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). All that is God's is ours through Christ (Ephesians 1:11).

What does this mean for our ability to welcome other believers? Because we have all we need in Jesus, we are free to be open-handed and generous with our time, energy, gifts, resources, and finances. Because this world is not our final home, we can gladly open our earthly homes as intentional mission fields, trusting that God will use this welcoming to make disciples and add to the number of those being saved. Even when we feel depleted, weak, and ill-equipped, we can trust that the Spirit will bear fruit in us for the work God gives us to do. We can welcome others generously.



### LOOKING AHEAD

God is looking for strong people at this time, so build resilience and you will be an encourager and strengthener for many to come. Can you turn the issues that are worrying you over to the Lord? What are you afraid of? You can trust Him today. You can lay it in His hands.

- Pray for guidance when you are in over your head (James 1:5)
- Increase your faith-talk when you are afraid (Psalm 56:3-4).
- When you feel alone, think of all those who have helped you and who love you and support you (Psalm 23:1; John 8:29; John 16:32; John 14:16-18)

## Gratitude In Freedom: God's Will For You

In a world filled with pressures, expectations, and the weight of past mistakes, the concept of freedom takes on profound significance, particularly in a spiritual context. Freedom in Christ offers believers liberation from sin, guilt, and the burdens that often hinder true joy and peace. By understanding the depth of spiritual freedom available through Christ, individuals can embark on a journey of renewal, embracing a life that reflects the light of His love and promises. For Christians, freedom is foundational. It's the good news that reminds us that our worth isn't dictated by our imperfections but by grace. This freedom empowers believers to navigate life's challenges with confidence, knowing they're wrapped in divine love. Scripture teaches that Christ's sacrifice grants us access to spiritual freedom. It's like receiving an all-access pass to a concert. Romans 8:1 tells us there's no condemnation, allowing us to step boldly into forgiveness.

Consider: Starting your day with a hearty dose of gratitude—thankfulness is like a spiritual detox! Spend a few moments in prayer and scripture. Remember, freedom isn't about perfection; it's about progress.

A Key Take Away: Sin weighs heavy, like carrying a backpack full of bricks. It suffocates the spirit, pushing us away from our true selves and from God. The good news? We don't have to bear that burden alone.