**July 2011**

**FREE INDEED**

This month the USA will again celebrate its Independence Day with picnics, parades and fireworks. Among our many treasured freedoms as Americans is freedom to worship as we choose. As with so many of our freedoms, we often take this one for granted. Other people groups don’t have that luxury.

In India, some of our E.C. pastors have been beaten and even attacked with machetes. In Mexico, many of our E.C. churches are located along the border where the drug cartels are warring. Some of our pastors and their families have been threatened. In Liberia, pastors, including our field superintendent Matthew Gueh, had to flee the country because they and their families were targeted by the rebels. In Nepal, one of our E.C. pastors was beaten by a group of hostile youth.

Yet where there is oppression, the Body of Christ grows. In spite of physical danger and hardships, the Church continues to make great strides in the countries listed above as well as others, but not without persecution and suffering. Progress is measured by the blood of martyrs.

In contrast, where there is apathy, the Church flounders. Perhaps that’s why the Church in America today struggles to be viable. We put our comfort and our desires above worshipping our Lord. As you celebrate Independence Day, thank God for your freedom to worship and use it. Remember the price that was paid so that you can have eternal freedom, and don’t take it for granted.

“Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about…destitute, persecuted and mistreated. These were all commended for their faith…. Therefore, …let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Hebrews 11:37,39a; 12:1

Pat Strain

## PRAYER CALENDAR

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  | 1 BJ & Rachel Whitaker – safe return to Spain after time in USA with family | 2 Marcia Hopler – cross cultural ministry in the Philadelphia area |
| 3 Jonathan & Kathy Wilson – beginning a year of furlough in USA | 4 Give thanks to God for freedom of worship | 5 VBS project – raise funds to replace the roof of dining hall at El Retiro | 6 Rev. Jack Murray – retired but still very active in CA | 7 EC Church of India – leaders, missionaries and teachers at Bible college | 8 EC Church of Japan – family camp, continued relief efforts in north | 9 Best wishes to Austin Graff and Theresa Burdick! |
| 10 Brian & Missy Wagner – teachers/ administrators at RVA, Kenya | 11 Brad & Maxine Waldman – in Trinidad for month of July | 12 Lori Pfeffer – summer day camp at Waldheim Park | 13 EC work teams to Camp LIWA, AK getting ready to leave | 14 Rev. Matthew Gueh, as he prepares to return to Liberia | 15 Gloria Smethers – praise for possibility of a good used vehicle | 16 David & Conce Roof – preparing for six months of furlough in USA |
| 17 Pray for those going on mission trips this summer | 18 EC Church of Liberia – 36 churches | 19 EC Church of Costa Rica – growth, leadership | 20 EC Church of Nepal – wonderful growth | 21 Becky Moser – retiree living in AZ | 22 Pray for directors, staff and counselors at our camps | 23 Pray for the leaders of our international EC churches |
| 24 EC Church of Mexico – danger from drug cartels operating in area | 25 Kitty Miller – postponed her furlough until October of this year | 26 Jim & Joan Farr – serving as Bible translators in Papua New Guinea | 27 Dan & Melinda Moury – need to sell house in PA so can move to FL | 28 Smooth transition for new EC Bishop Rev. Bruce Hill | 29 Jim & Janet Stahl – teaching native speakers to share the Bible orally | 30 Best wishes to Jeremy Kunkel and Kristen Wright! |
| 31 Pray for the GMC staff – Randy, Pat and Carla |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**HERE AND THERE – Randy Sizemore**

Most of the first half of July spent with Rev. Matthew Gueh

July 7 – GMC staff meeting – morning

July 10 – Hope Community E.C. Church, Sunday morning service

July 17 – Conestoga E.C. Church, Sunday morning service

July 22-31 – Herndon Camp Meeting

**Our Missionary Family**

* **Rev. Ron & Brenda Anderson** saw the last child officially leave the nest as son Mark graduated from college and got married last month.
* **BJ & Rachel Whitaker** spent most of June in the USA to visit with friends and family, while celebrating the marriage of Rachel’s brother, Mark Anderson. They also celebrated Rachel’s birthday, daughter Miriam’s first birthday, and their wedding anniversary while in the USA. That’s what you call multi-tasking!
* **Brad & Maxine Waldman** will be spending most of this month in Trinidad, working with a local church. A group of seven volunteers will join them for part of that time.
* **David, Conce, and Andrew Roof** will be returning to the USA at the end of this month to begin a 6-month home assignment in order to raise much needed support. While their Sundays are completely booked, they have a few weeknights available. Contact Carla at 800-866-7584 or [csizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:csizemore@eccenter.com) for a list of available dates.
* Congratulations and best wishes to **Jeremy Kunkel and Kristen Wright,** who will become man and wife on July 30th in Colorado, where they both live and work. Jeremy is serving with Engineering Ministries International in Colorado Springs, and Kristen is an accomplished violinist and music teacher.
* **Rev. Dan and Melinda Moury** were commissioned as EC missionaries on June 5th at Trinity E.C. Church, Lititz, PA. The Mourys will be serving at Wycliffe’s headquarters in Orlando, FL. They plan to move down there as soon as they sell their home in PA.
* **Rev. Nick & Lisa Lakatos** and family will be relocating to Mexico next month to begin their assignment with OMS International. The Lakatos family is currently in language school in Costa Rica. They will be graduating August 12th and head for Mexico the next day. No wasting time with this family!
* **Circle the date** – The Fall Family Missions Rally will be held on Saturday, October 15th. There will be separate tracks for adults, Mission Minded Kids, and youth. Watch for more details!

MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS

July 7 – Jim Ehrman

July 9 – Rev. Dan Dixon

July 13 – Kurt G.

July 15(1999) – Hannah Wagner

20 – Pat Strain

21 – Janet Baker \*

23 – Carla Sizemore

24 – Don Kunkel \*

August 1(2001) – JoAnna Abernethy

August 9(1994) – Caleb Abernethy

August 15 – John Miller

**ANNIVERSARIES**

July 14 – Dan & Mary Lynne Wills

July 25 – Randy & Carla Sizemore

July 27 – John & Carolyn Miller

July 29 – Nick & Lisa Lakatos

August 3 – Jim & Bonnie Bound \*

\* indicates retiree