

# Wenatchee Brethren Baptist Quarterly Newsletter

Representing a Church of the Brethren and an American Baptist Church, July / August / September Issue, 2024

## WAS JESUS POLITICAL?

Here are two things people have told me: “You can't talk about politics—Jesus wasn't political” and “Christianity is supposed to be a private religion; it's just between you and God.”

If you read the Gospels and understand their context, you quickly realize both of these statements are mistaken. We sometimes imagine that Jesus was “not political” because his confrontations were “only with the religious leaders.” But the religious leaders of Jesus' day were also the political leaders. First Century Israel, occupied and under the control of the Roman Empire, was a nation led by religious leaders. When the Sanhedrin met to decide Jesus' fate—and we all know their decision—they had to convince the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate to execute Jesus because their nation was under Roman military control. But the Sanhedrin had to convince Pilate because they *were* the political leaders of their nation. There was no separation between Israel's political and religious leaders—the Chief Priest and the other priests who made up the Sanhedrin were it. Even more complicated, the Roman rulers chose who would be Chief Priest! They were not about to have a revolutionary who wanted to overthrow Roman rule leading Israel. Picture the leaders of WWII era Vichy France, put in place by the occupying German military power.

In light of that context, consider this: John 11:47-48 “So the chief priests

and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council and said, “What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation.”

Now read John 11:49 “But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.’” Caiaphas had Roman support and the responsibility to keep the zealots and insurrectionists from rising up against Rome. Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of love and serving others, and Jesus' power to perform miracles, felt to Caiaphas like a threat that the Sanhedrin needed to stop.

Jesus *was* political, because he confronted the political leaders of his time with their unjust use and abuse of their power. Jesus didn't “stay out of politics.” Jesus was killed because he spoke truth to power and identified the evil and systemic injustice being carried out by Israel's leaders. You will hear people say “It was God's plan for Jesus to die” as if the leaders who chose to kill him, and their motives, played no part. God worked through and redeemed this horrific act of injustice. Jesus' crucifixion was followed by Jesus' resurrection, because God's love is stronger than human hatred and fear and overcomes them both!

If we follow Jesus, we seek to impact our own sphere—our family, neighborhood, church, city, nation, and even our world—through love. Jesus could have chosen violence in response to violence. He said so at his arrest (Matthew 26:53). He did not. As Jesus followers, we do not choose violence, hatred, and fear, even when we face these. You all know I have not been Brethren nor American/Evergreen Baptist very long. But when I say “I feel like I fit here,” I mean this. When Jesus taught us to welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, feed the hungry, visit the prisoner, give drink to the thirsty, he taught that doing that for those in need *is doing that for him*. We don't seek power and control as Jesus followers, as if we could force others to follow Jesus, too. We do these things Jesus describes in Matthew 25 and we speak against political systems that seek to harm some people for the benefit of others. We seek God's Kingdom by acting in love, speaking up for justice—*shalom*—and caring for the least of these.

“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:40)

Pastor Mike

### PLANNED GIFT INTEREST

We have received many wonderful thank you notes from the nonprofits that received money from the yearly interest generated from our Planned Gift Fund. What a wonderful opportunity to be able to help others.

Linda Vickery



The Church of the Brethren Mission offering is one of two special mission offerings WBBC collects each year. America for Christ offering is collected in the spring and goes to support the work of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies. This

year's CoB Mission offering will be collected on **Sunday, September 15**. This offering supports Brethren missions of evangelism and service around the world. We encourage you to give generously.



### FARMERS MARKETS

This is the season for Farmers Markets. Ours in Wenatchee is every Saturday 8:00am – 1:00pm at Pybus Public Market. Leavenworth has one, Cashmere, Chelan too, and many other communities. What's so great about a Farmers Market? Let me count the ways.

1. The food is fresh.
2. The food is local, supporting local growers and reducing transportation costs.
3. Fruits and vegetables are a big part of a healthy diet.
4. You can try produce you may not have eaten before.
5. You meet and mingle with friends and neighbors.
6. You are out in the fresh air.
7. There is often live music.
8. There are resources such as Master Gardeners and SNAP.
9. There are flower growers and local food and craft vendors.
10. This is Creation Care for your community, your health, and for the earth.

What's not to like?

Creation Care Team

### REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Our Shut-ins:

- Mary Kintner
- Carolyn Storme

### JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 1<sup>st</sup> Betty Radke
- 4<sup>th</sup> Mary Carter Pringer  
Jane Shell
- 10<sup>th</sup> Aria Rumley-Wells
- 11<sup>th</sup> Jim Hart
- 21<sup>st</sup> Alexandr Zaytsev
- 24<sup>th</sup> Tony Armstrong
- 27<sup>th</sup> Estelle Acord
- 28<sup>th</sup> Dayle Rushing
- 31<sup>st</sup> Mary Kintner  
Cheryl Short

### AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 10<sup>th</sup> Shawn Fletcher
- 20<sup>th</sup> Connie Mitchell
- 25<sup>th</sup> Maria Holland
- 27<sup>th</sup> Melissa Fletcher

### SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Dave Whitley
- 12<sup>th</sup> John Clevenger  
Avery Fletcher
- 24<sup>th</sup> Lael Vickery

### JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 1<sup>st</sup> Shawn & Melissa Fletcher
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Warren & Evelyn Eikenberry
- 12<sup>th</sup> Keith & Cathy Madsen

### AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 8<sup>th</sup> Alexandr & Tanya Zaytsev
- 14<sup>th</sup> Dan & Jan White
- 21<sup>st</sup> David Morin & Cheryl Short
- 25<sup>th</sup> Lael & Linda Vickery

### SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

No Anniversaries



**Happy Birthday to You**  
(sung to the usual tune)

Happy Birthday to you!  
To Jesus stay true!  
May all of God's blessings  
Rain down upon you!



### 2 CENTS WORTH OFFERING

**Sunday, August 25**

The 2 Cents Worth Offering is where every person sets aside 2 Cents for every meal every person eats in their home to go toward world hunger and the Heifer Project.



**What you take for granted,  
someone else is praying for.**

-Author unknown

**GladSong** will be singing at Columbia Grove on July 21 at 7:00pm for a fundraiser for Serve Wenatchee. Jan White is part of GladSong.

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## HELLO DEAR FRIENDS AND FAMILY

I am so thankful to you all who have been praying for my father Aleksandr, who recently traveled back from Ukraine. He made it home safely but did get a viral illness after coming home. Now, he is much better, and is already talking about going back :)

For those of you interested in hearing his report at your church, please reach out to me by replying to this email so that we can arrange a time.

### UPDATES AND PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Our missionaries are hard at work planning summer activities, including VBS, youth and children's camps. Summer is always busy. Please pray for safety as they travel to different locations with hundreds of children.

2. My brother Alex and the missionary family of Eugene Grinishin started a new church and a YoungLife club in Ivano-Frankivsk. Please pray for success and blessings in this new startup. They work a lot with refugees as well, and that work is typically very draining emotionally.

3. Our newer missionary Mark from Myrnograd recently got married. What a blessing in the midst of war! Please pray for the new family.

4. Please pray for Igor and Vera Tunik, our lead missionary family. They have been evacuating families from Myrnograd and surrounding cities and are at a crossroads themselves as the warzone is only 15 miles away. Pray for wisdom and discretion.

5. Mission VHF now has 3 more board members. Please pray for us as we continue our volunteer ministry.

6. We were able to purchase another vehicle - a pickup truck for our missionary Igor Skaletskiy who is also serving in the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The roads in the East of Ukraine are getting destroyed by the military vehicles. The vehicles that our missionaries drive are in need of repair often. We are doing our best to provide support for them to get fixed. Igor Skaletskiy needed a 4x4 vehicle, we were able to purchase one and it is currently being delivered

to Ukraine. Please pray for the process to be successful.

7. Please continue praying for our dear Ukrainians who are continuing to walk the hard journey as in the midst of war. May God help them!

Below, you will find a letter from the missionary family Val and Angela Sherban and their adoption prayer request!

Blessings, Olga Rybakov

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### American Baptist International Ministries Celebrates Juneteenth

In June communities across the United States prepare to commemorate Juneteenth, a celebration that marks the historical day when the news of emancipation finally reached the men, women, and children enslaved in the South.

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865, the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, with the news of the Emancipation Proclamation. Although issued by President Abraham Lincoln two and a half years prior, this is the day when many enslaved individuals finally learned of their liberation as General Gordon Granger demanded that Texas set free the state's 250,000 enslaved people.

In the years that followed, the African American Community observed this as Black Independence Day. Celebrations on June 19 included taking garments worn during enslavement and throwing them into the river, dressing up in fine clothes, and gathering together to remember the arrival of their freedom from bondage.

In 2021, Juneteenth was recognized as a federal holiday, ensuring that this day would remind us of the struggle for freedom and equality our nation faced, giving us an opportunity to reflect on those who have worked tirelessly for freedom, and encouraging us to continue in that fight.

George Liele found freedom in Christ while he was enslaved and was a pioneering figure in the history of Christian mission work.


**Have a Safe & Happy**  
**4<sup>th</sup> of July!**

