



## Pastor's Perspective — A Pledge of Allegiance

By Dr. Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

By now, you may be aware of the firestorm that has arisen over the NBC television network's omission of the words "under God" from a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance that played in the background of a patriot piece that aired on June 19 during its coverage of the US Open golf tournament that was played at Congressional Country Club, in the shadows of our nation's capital. What you might not know is that the network has long defended itself against the charge of having an anti-Christian bias. But the current charge is almost impossible to explain away. The words were omitted twice in the same piece. What's more, instead of just taking responsibility for their decision, the network has chosen instead to enlist our sympathy by pointing to things that were said or done by others over the weekend—things that NBC termed "bad decisions"—which "made for a tough slog when it comes to the campaign to get along in our public discourse."

Incredibly, one of the incidents that NBC took upon itself to label as a "bad decision" was a statement by Texas Governor Rick Perry to the Republican Leadership Conference urging the conferees to join him in returning to and championing the Judeo-Christian values that once undergirded our nation and defined its people. He said: "Let's speak with pride about our morals and our values....Let's stop the American downward spiral."

That NBC would deliberately omit the words "under

God" from a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and then seek to downplay it by suggesting that while it was a "bad decision," there were others (like Governor Perry) who also made "bad decisions" that weekend, is childish if not ingenuous. That the network would denominate the Governor's call for a commitment to moral clarity and uprightness as one of those decisions makes one wonder about the direction that NBC would have our nation to go, to say nothing of the discourse that they would like for us to have. Perhaps tellingly, the network's advertized 2011 fall primetime line-up will feature at least two programs designed to encourage the continued downward spiral. *The Playboy Club* will extol and commend that very lifestyle which arguably has contributed more than anything else to the decadence and brokenness of our day. The other program is *Free Agents*; an avowed "crooked comedy" about fornication in the workplace. Frankly, I don't see the humor in that, but I can show you ruined lives.

*If you've not written to NBC..., I would encourage you to do so."*

If you've not written to NBC to voice your disappointment and/or disapproval or opposition, I would encourage you to do so. My fear is that there are many Christians who will see nothing wrong with the programming and they will take it in as they take in so much else of our godless culture, without even recognizing it as such. To them I say: *Don't be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.* Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame. (1 Corinthians 15:33-34)

July Memory Verse ~ Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. ~ Ephesians 5:1-2

## Returning to Serving the People They Love

As they boarded the plane at Dulles Airport, Thursday, June 22, to leave the United States and head back to their mission field, Dave and Julie knew it would be different. They had made the trip before—they were not new missionaries. But, they were going back to their calling without any of their three children. When they came home on furlough a year ago, they anticipated the weddings of two of their sons, Jim and Matt. Jim married Wendy and Matt married Ashley. And their third and youngest son, Josh, started his university studies at John Brown University. All that was ahead of Dave and Julie as they began their state-side time a year ago. And now they were heading back to the field alone.

"It's going to feel strange," Dave said the day before they were to fly back toward the people they love. "I remember as a single guy praying for a wife to hold my hand as I flew to the mission field. And God gave me Julie. But this is the first time with no tribe of kids."

Editor's Note: For the safety of the missionaries referenced in this article, their last names and other personal information have been removed from this web version of the newsletter.

Although full of feelings, the one emotion they do not have in returning to ministry, is fear. Although Dave was in prison on the mission field for five months in 2005-2006, and although they both live on the field aware there are people who might wish to do them harm, and although they realize that every time they leave their friends and family it could be the last time this side of glory to see the loved ones, Dave and Julie are eager to return to the field to share with those there. Instead of dealing with fear, their most urgent prayer requests center on two things: God leading Dave and Julie to those open to the Gospel and to either be more gifted in evangelism' or for God to send a team to help with that responsibility.

Dave and Julie talked about their desire for the Lord to send them to "good soil"—referring to the parable Christ told as rendered in Mark 4. In that story, Jesus told of a farmer who went out to sow

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his seed. The seed fell in various places in the field. Some were eaten by birds, some were choked by weeds, some were trying to grow on too-shallow ground, but some fell on good ground and bore fruit. Jesus told his disciples the Gospel being shared was like the "seed". The "seed" sown on good soil is the picture of people who hear the Good News, accept it and produce a fruitful life.

"We need wisdom and God's guidance to help find people who are seeking God," Dave said. He added that although the people they serve are modern culturally—connected to the internet and the outside world—they lack the Gospel penetration that so many other nations have. He quoted Greg Livingstone, founder of Frontiers, in saying the people there may be the toughest Muslims to reach. They said the Lord is leading them to people, but the coming is so slow. "This is always true in the initial stages, but this is even slower," they said.

The second prayer request they have is that the Lord would give Dave more giftedness in evangelism or "a teammate or two or three more gifted in evangelism."

"I know a guy with a gift in evangelism and I would give my right arm and right leg to have half the gift of evangelism he has," Dave said. Dave's colleague, Somot, was one such gifted evangelist. Dave recalled their work together, saying Somot was "creative and bold in every way," while Dave had the ability to think strategically. They are hopeful Somot and his wife will be joining them in Malaysia.

Dave and Julie say they have been blessed by the believers at Fellowship Baptist Church. Mentioning the many detailed ways in which the believers helped meet their needs, they described Fellowship as being their "total help-meet". "The church has met our needs on every side," Julie said. "Fellowship Baptist has been our family."

Perhaps one of the best ways to be "help-meets" for Dave and Julie, as a family, is to support them in the way they have requested: by prayer. The British missionary to China, James Fraser, said, "I believe it will only be known on the Last Day how much has been accomplished in missionary work by the prayers of earnest believers at home...I do earnestly covet a volume of prayer for my ...work—but oh! For a volume of faith, too. Will you give this?" May we be able to confirm to Dave and Julie, "Yes! We will give this!"



**Vacation Bible School will be held Monday-Friday from 9:00 – 11:30 AM, July 25-29.**  
**To register online, visit [www.honoringGod.org](http://www.honoringGod.org). To register over the phone, or for more information, please call the church office at 703-569-5151.**

## Spring Outreach Festival

One hundred seventy-four people took part in the Spring Outreach Festival in near-perfect weather on June 4, 2011. While this number is substantially less than the previous year, we observed many families staying for long periods, and it seemed that everyone who came had a good time.

The most important word in "Spring Outreach Festival" is the middle one, and we had the wonderful privilege of sharing the gospel with several people. Several individuals were able to hear the good news from God's Word. We also shared the love of Christ through a spirit of unity among the volunteers that was evident from set up through clean up.



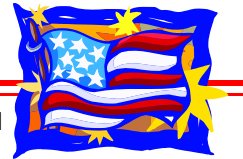
Speaking of volunteers, by God's grace we ended up with 43, only two short of last year, and we are thankful for each of them. Without a lot of hands and hearts, this outreach would not be possible.

## Money Matters

A love offering for Dave and Julie Ray was received at Fellowship the last two weeks of July. We praise the Lord for the generosity of His people, as a total of \$1,526 was received.

June Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$5,303
Weekly Need	\$5,291
Year-to-Date General Fund Giving	\$129,607
Year-to-Date General Fund Need	\$137,563
Year-to-Date "Together We Build" Giving	\$3,468

## Calendar



July 4	Fellowship at the National Mall (Independence Day)
July 12	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
July 15 or 16	Fellowship in Homes (Shepherding Groups)
July 25-29	Vacation Bible School (9:00-11:30 AM)
July 27	Quarterly Business Meeting (7:30 PM)

## Fellowship Baptist Church

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