

Memorial Methodist Church

105 East E St

SUMMER 2026

Thoughts on Freedom

(As America celebrates 250 years of the Declaration of Independence)

The concept of freedom is enshrined in the roots of American culture. The Europe from which we came was one of limitation, the limitations of culture: if your father was a bootblack, you would be a bootblack; the limitations of society: if you were born into the serf class, you were going to be a serf all your life; the limitations of politics; the kings and nobles governed everything. What a wonderful breath of fresh air to come to America, where it seemed the possibilities were endless. The only limitations were your own. Today that freedom has become an idol. If I want something, I have a right to it; if I want to do something, nobody has a right to stop me; if I think something, it is right and nobody has a right to correct me.

The trouble with that point of view is that it is a frightening form of bondage. I am in bondage to myself and my desires, and I can do nothing else. So, we have people demanding to be left "free" to do what they cannot help but do. A strange kind of freedom.

The Bible shows us true freedom, a freedom from bondage to desire, a freedom from the power of sin, a freedom to realize all the potential that a benevolent creator has placed within us. But it is a freedom realized because we recognize that we are dependent.

It is interesting to contrast the views of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Jefferson was sure that if individuals were properly educated and freed from restraint, they could be trusted to do whatever was best for themselves and those around them. Thus, there was no need for checks and balances in government. Adams did not believe that educated individuals free from restraint would always do what was right. He recognized that self-interest could be a corrupting force in human affairs, and that mechanisms had to be put in place to control it.

For the Christian, this is the power of the Holy Spirit. Like the railroad engine that is free to do what it was made for when it is constrained by the two steel rails, so the human is free to realize his or her human potential when constrained by the Biblical vision of life and guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

We don't have to be ruled by desire; we don't have to be dominated by what others think of us; we don't have to have the highest position or the most recognition. We are free, praise God, we are free.

Children's Ministries

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

-Psalm 23

At the end of May we welcomed 135 lads & lasses, from preschool age to those getting ready for 5th grade, to Ireland's Emerald Crossing for a fun-filled VBS week. We explored Psalm 23, how we can go from lost to found, from the wrong path to the right path, from fearful to peaceful, grumbling to grateful and lastly, from shaky to sure. Through it all, God is our shepherd, our leader, our comforter, our provider, and a promise keeper.

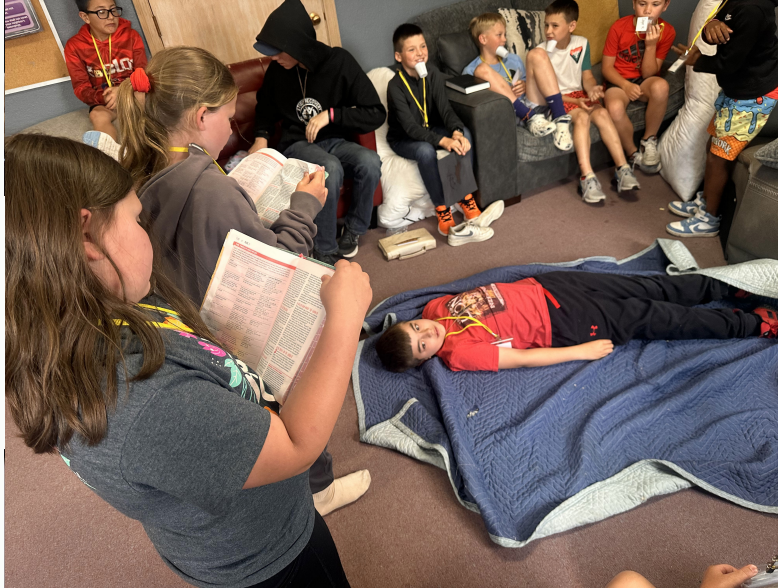
I can draw some similarities on that for the progression of preparing for VBS. It is so easy to get lost in the details, to feel the overwhelm and fear of the 'what ifs', there may have been some grumbling, however we never have to worry about any structures being shaky with our in-house carpenter. And then, God is revealed in the details. There is a sureness that we can count on. One teacher volunteers, a couple of parents sign up their older kids to help, someone offers their extra lumber lying around, kitchen help forms, power tools show up in the sanctuary, registration hits triple digits. Then before we know it, all the classrooms have teachers, helpers, supplies, decorations - and kids.

The sanctuary is transformed into a far away place. The vision has come to life. In the collective breath of the aftermath, a little reflection shows that we not only prepare to serve and share the lessons with the kids - but the entire time of preparation has provided to us, those same lessons. What a mighty, and awesome God we serve!

Songs and games helped get the wiggles out, snacks and lunch nourished their bodies, science and crafts tapped into their creative side, and classroom time planted the seed of God's love. The daily Assembly shared about children in need from around the world and right here in the United States during our Mission time, introduced Animal Pals with characteristics that remind us of God's promises, and a crowd favorite, a skit relating real-life worries and how growing in our relationship with Jesus helps. All topped off with a surprise visit from Pastor Jeff's Uncle who was searching for something that he lost; a bag of pipes! Countless high-fives were given, giggles were shared, a dozen or so band-aids placed, and excitement followed them home each day.

Sunday concluded our week of fun and excitement with the VBS families and congregation. We were able to raise \$2,947.77 for the Children's Hunger Fund! Thank you to everyone who brought quarters and donated. We were able to continue the fun with one last craft, popsicles and inflatables in the parking lot. It was such a joy to see everyone gathered, praising, and celebrating a fun week at Emerald Crossing.

-Julie





Methodist Food Booth

The Red Willow County Fair runs from Wednesday, July 22, through Sunday, July 26. As we look ahead to another year of the Methodist Food Booth, there are a few things to consider.

First, if you are willing and able, volunteering at the Food Booth during fair week is a tremendous help. Some may be thinking about not signing up for a shift this year because they no longer have a child or grandchild involved in our youth programs. Others may be recent high school graduates who feel their support is no longer needed. Still others may assume that plenty of people will volunteer.

I want to emphasize that every volunteer is vital to the success of the Food Booth. Even if you can only serve one shift, your help makes a difference. To put it into perspective, we need nearly 60 volunteers every day during the fair. Simply put, it takes many willing hands to make this ministry possible.

Second, if you are unable to volunteer, please consider making a donation to help cover the cost of supplies. The average McDonald's restaurant in America serves about 1,500 customers each day. During the fair, our Food Booth serves well over 2,000 customers daily. Meeting that demand requires a significant amount of food and supplies, and those costs directly impact our ability to support youth ministry. Your financial support plays an important role in the success of the Food Booth.

Finally, as we approach the Red Willow County Fair, remember that we have a wonderful opportunity to serve our community and the many visitors who come to McCook during fair week. It is important for us, as adults, to model what it means to serve others with humility and love. Throughout His ministry, Jesus often shared meals with people and used those moments to demonstrate God's love and grace. We have the opportunity to do the same through the Food Booth. Serving a cheeseburger may not seem like ministry, but it is—especially when it is served with kindness, generosity, and the love of Christ.

In the coming weeks, sign-up opportunities will be available on our website and in the Friendship Room for both volunteering and donating toward supplies. Would you consider helping with the Food Booth this year? Your time, talents, and gifts truly make a difference in the lives of our youth and in the ministry of our church.

Thank you for your support, and may God richly bless you.

Youth Ministries

MEMORIAL METHODIST SCHOLARSHIPS



Dylan Kollmorgen
Karen Hartman and
Wendy Goodenberger Scholarship



Isaac Crayton
Karen Hartman and
Wendy Goodenberger Scholarship



Reese Gillespie
Ellis and Lola Hanthorn
Scholarship



Isaiah Crayton
Van Pullen
Scholarship



Dylen Trehal
Youth Advisory Board
Scholarship



Cole Walter
Youth Advisory Board
Scholarship



Little Blessings Preschool

“Every child is a gift from God, and this year has been filled with precious memories, joyful learning, and countless blessings we will treasure in our hearts.” Here are some memories we hold from this school year.



We do have a few openings for our classes starting in September.
Please call 345-6335 for more information.
Have a Great Summer!
Blessings,
Traci

Guest Musician: Benjamin Fries

Join us on July 5 at our 10:00 AM service as we welcome guest musician Benjamin Fries.

Benjamin Fries (18) is a recent high school graduate from Laguna Hills High School, CA, after transferring there from Kearney High School, NE. He has played piano for 12 years, performing in recitals and competitions, including a second place finish at the 2025 Concordia Music Competition with a winner's recital at Carnegie Hall. Ben started learning the organ about a year ago, and instantly loved it, performing in multiple local churches, and receiving a study grant from the Orange County Guild of Organists. Most recently, Ben got first place at the Southern California Junior Bach Festival in San Diego. Benjamin will start at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in the fall, majoring in Organ Performance and Instrumental Music Education.

Journey of Hope

Mark your calendars for July 4th and 5th as the church will be hosting the Journey of Hope bike riders! Church volunteers will be providing supper on the 4th and breakfast on the 5th along with accommodating the riders overnight in the Fellowship Hall.

If you're able to contribute, please sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090C4DA9A82EA0F85-64483202-journey#/>

Every summer, around 50 Pi Kappa Phi men take on one of the most unforgettable adventures of their lives — a coast-to-coast cycling journey unlike anything else. With two routes launching from the West Coast and covering more than 8,000 combined miles, the Journey of Hope is more than just a physical challenge — it's a mission to build relationships, raise awareness and celebrate the abilities of all people. Along the way, you'll connect with individuals in the disability community whose strength and spirit will inspire you every step of the way. The experience culminates on the steps of the U.S. Capitol — but it transforms you long before you get there.

To learn more visit www.abilityexperience.org





MEMORIAL METHODIST

Praise

IN THE PARK

SUNDAY JULY 12TH
10:00 AM AT NORRIS PARK

Bring a chair or use the park bench and
join us at Norris Park for worship!

Sloppy Joes will be served following worship.
Bring a side dish or dessert to share!

Contact the church office with questions!

Praise in the Park

On July 12th at 10:00 am we will gather for worship at Norris Park! There will be music, communion, baptism, food and fellowship! Bring a chair or use the park bench and plan to worship with us! Following worship, the church will be providing sloppy joes, water, lemonade and paper products; we invite others to bring a side dish or dessert to share! If you are interested in baptism or remembering your baptism or you are willing to help set up or serve at Praise in the Park please contact Kelli Jensen at the church office.

A Lasting Legacy of Faith and Love

Would You Like to Honor a Loved One's Memory?

If your loved one was a dedicated member of our church family, consider honoring their memory and continuing their legacy of generosity by supporting Memorial Methodist Church and its mission. There are several ways to support the ministry of our church and help preserve our faith community for future generations.

1. A Gift to the Endowment Fund

A gift to the Endowment Fund of Memorial Methodist Church provides a lasting memorial for a loved one or a meaningful way to honor someone living on a special occasion, such as a birthday, anniversary, or other milestone.

The Endowment Fund is maintained separately to support the long-term health and growth of the church. Donors may designate gifts to areas that reflect a loved one's passions, including facilities, missions, new ministries, Christian education, and scholarships.

The principal of the fund is generally preserved, while the interest and dividends earned are used to support projects that fall outside the church's annual operating budget.

2. A Gift to Our Legacy Account

The Memorial Methodist Church Legacy Account is managed by the McCook Community Foundation Fund, an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation. Income generated from the fund is distributed annually to support the church's greatest needs.

Established by generous donors and church members, the Legacy Account provides a permanent source of income to help the church respond to special opportunities as they arise. Because the account is designed to last indefinitely and continue growing, it offers a meaningful way to provide long-term financial support for the ministry of Memorial Methodist Church.

Checks may be made payable to McCook Community Foundation / MMC.

3. A Gift Directly to Memorial Methodist Church

Memorial Methodist Church continues to operate primarily through the pledges and contributions of its members and friends.

A direct gift in honor or memory of a loved one to the Memorial Committee of Memorial Methodist Church supports the church's ministry and mission beyond the annual budget. Donors may designate gifts to music, scholarships, youth education, or leave them undesignated.

Unlike the endowment funds, the principal of these gifts may be spent. These funds are overseen by the Memorial Committee.

A Lasting Tribute

Regardless of the type of gift chosen, all donations are fully tax-deductible. Gifts of \$1,000 or more are recognized with an engraved leaf, including the donor's name and year, displayed on the Legacy Tree located in the Friendship Room.

Memorial Gift Recognition

- Bronze Leaf – Honor and memorial gifts
- Gold Leaf – Endowment gifts

U p c o m i n g E v e n t s

SUNDAYS

Worship Services | 8:45 & 10:45 am
Nursery | Infants-PK | 8:30 am-12 pm
Sunday School | 9:50-10:40 am | Sept 13
Adult Sunday School | 10-10:40 am
3Sixteens | 6-12th | 6 pm | TBD

MONDAYS

Praise Band Rehearsal | 7 pm

WEDNESDAYS

Men's Bible Study | 6:30 am
Women's Bible Study | 9 am
W.O.W. | PK- 8th | 6-7:30 pm | Sept 9
W.O.R.D. | 9-12th | 7 pm | TBD

THURSDAYS

Community Supper | 5:30 pm

SATURDAYS

Men's Bible Study | 7 am

MEETINGS

July 2 | Trustee Meeting | 7pm
July 14 | Care Team | 9:30 am
July 14 | Ad Council Meeting | 5:30 pm

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

Newsletter Articles Due

INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 4

JOURNEY OF HOPE

July 4 & 5
Help provide meals for the bikers

ONE SERVICE

July 5 | 10 am

PRAISE IN THE PARK

July 12 | 10 am
Norris Park

FOOD BOOTH

RED WILLOW COUNTY FAIR

July 22-25

BLESSING OF BACKPACKS

3RD GRADE BIBLES

August 9 | 8:45 & 10:45 Services

Thank you for reading!

MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH



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