



Faith Connections

United in Faith Helping
People In Need

Volume 5, Issue 8

August 2022

Our Mission: Bringing together an ecumenical coalition of Quad City area churches to help feed the hungry, offer emergency assistance to those in crisis, and provide a transitional housing program for women and children who are victims of domestic violence or human trafficking.

One Nation Under God? Part Two: One, Two, Or Fifty?



In my July article, I concluded it by saying: We citizens are caught in the squeeze. Suppose we, as Christians, want to be subject unto the higher powers. Who are they? To which of the conflicting voices shall we listen? The Bible gives us some help. Paul directs Christians to submit to the supreme Roman officials—those who had the power of the sword and who collected taxes—rather than to the Jewish leaders. Almost everyone agrees that these are times of increasing tension, and that something needs to be done.

At the same time, ironically, many people immediately criticize a person who tries to do something or even to say something directly on the subject.

One, Two, Or Fifty?

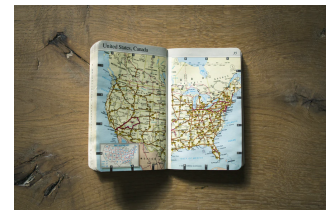
By saying that America is a kingdom divided against itself and that you and I are caught in the middle, I mean that there is a clash between the concepts of states' rights and of federal government. Basically, we need to decide whether we are to be "one nation, under God," or two (if not fifty). We cannot be both. It almost infuriates some of us to hear someone say that, because we want desperately to have the advantages of both; the thought that we cannot is terribly frustrating. Moreover, we hate to look the matter squarely in the face lest the answers that emerge be other than those we want.

I do not say these things to make anyone uncomfortable, or to take advantage of friendship or of freedom of the pulpit. I say these things because I care—because I care about you, about the people of our state and nation, and about the testimony of the Christian Church. I say these things because something needs to be said, solutions need to be sought and found. If what is said does not commend itself to your best knowledge of God's will and Word, then it can be discarded and other approaches made. Let us at least think.

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We need to decide whether we are first of all Americans, or first of all citizens of our individual state; whether in cases of conflict we follow United States law or state law; whether in matters of interpretation we follow Supreme Court rulings, or local rulings, or our own personal opinions; whether those chosen by the people at large to represent Americans represent us, or whether we are going to be an alien part of America, viewing others with suspicion and being looked upon by others as not a part of the whole.

The executive secretary of the General Council of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., in speaking to a stewardship conference several years ago, pointed out an intriguing and perplexing problem. He said that a man who is trusted in his own town and his own presbytery immediately becomes suspect when he is called to serve on one of the denominational boards or agencies. How true this is. Men who would be beloved pastors of local churches are distrusted when they begin to represent the General Assembly.

The same thing is true in civil affairs. Men who would be highly honored for their work in a local community are viewed with suspicion and often bitterly criticized when they bend the same efforts in the service of the nation. The reason may be that in order to serve a whole nation they cannot be partial to any one section of it and thus do not entirely please anybody.

There is also more than a tendency among some people of our area to view our national leaders as—of all things—our enemies! This, I submit, must be a case of mistaken identity—unless we do not consider ourselves Americans, or unless we presume to declare the rest of the country un-American. For the sake of illustration, what about the nurse's aide who said of the death of President Kennedy, "He got what was coming to him"? Or the students and—did I hear it wrong—teachers who cheered when they got the news? Or the college students who grabbed each other and danced with glee? Was there a state legislator who clapped in a public meeting? A repairman said in my home, "I am not surprised that it happened, because there are so many people who hate him." What kind of twist caused a university student to publish, on the very day of his death, "Every thoughtful American should hate Kennedy"?

People in national offices were chosen by a majority of Americans to be our leaders. If we do not acknowledge them as our leaders, we cut ourselves off from a majority of the American people. We do not need to approve everything they do, any more than the Old Testament prophets approved all their leaders did; but we do need to acknowledge that they are, in fact, our legitimate leaders. We should bend every effort to sway them in the right direction through letters and prayers. But when we cut ourselves off from them, we have a kingdom divided against itself, and we are then forced to decide between state and nation.

We are never helped, however, to see the distinction clearly. No one lines up before us all the advantages of being an entity unto ourselves as over against all the advantages of being a part of the nation. We are led to assume that we can have both. We want the military protection, the federal subsidies, the postal system, the TVA, the social security program, and all the rest; and yet, we want to govern ourselves. We are like a dependent son trying to shake off all parental control before he is able or willing to support himself. It is a common problem, very trying in a family but tragic in a nation. Furthermore, the history that is being written day by day is demonstrating to us that such dualism will not work.

*Blessings,
Mel*

Thank You!



Pictured are donations collected by Marcia Cook and the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Moline.

Thank you to the organizations who collected donations through our Thanksgiving in July program. We are grateful for the support from our community.

The Canadian Pacific Holiday Train is returning to the Quad Cities



We are elated to announce that the Canadian Pacific Holiday Train is making a stop in Davenport. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Hunger Ministries of Churches United. Details are being finalized. We'll have more information in upcoming newsletters.

Zion Lutheran Church Meal Site Needs Groups to Serve



We still have openings for groups to serve at our meal site at Zion Lutheran Church in Davenport for September through December.

Work has also begun on the 2023 meal site calendar. If you have a group that is willing to provide and serve a meal or meals at our meal site, we'd like to get you onto the calendar. If your group would like to serve on a regular basis in 2023 and you have days that work best for your group, now is the time to let us know.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Betsy Vanausdeln at 563-332-5002 or by email at bvanausdeln@cuqca.org.



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Give Today to Churches United

Online at <http://www.cuqca.org/donate.php>

Call us at (563) 332-5002

Mail or drop off your gift:
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Thank You!

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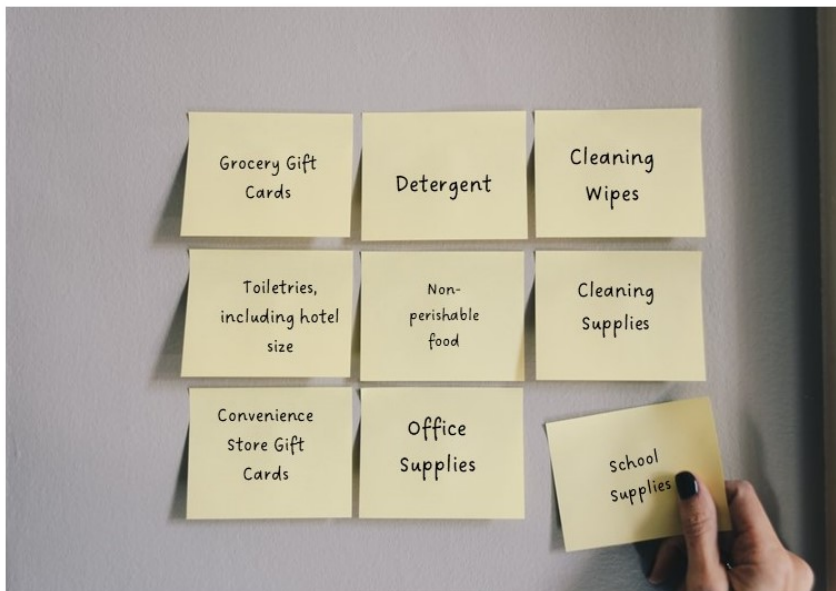
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August 2022 Needs List



Our clients at Winnie's Transitional Housing often leave domestic abuse situations with very few possessions and no money. We are also seeing an increasing need for basic goods from those in the community coming to us for help through our meal site and pantries. Donations of gift cards, household items, and food help those who are struggling tremendously. Our job seeking clients can benefit from office supplies and the children who live in our shelter often need school supplies

If you would like to donate, please drop off your donations at our office or mail them to us.