

Falls Fellowship



Free-spirited Baptists Helped Form Our Country

Independence Day, as it is officially called, is celebrated on July 4, and is colloquially called the Fourth of July. The day commemorates the Declaration of Independence declared by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. Officially the colonies severed ties with King George III and declared they were “united, free and independent states.” We are all familiar with the significance of the day, but did you know Baptists played a pivotal role in securing America’s freedom?

Baptists have always been a free-spirited group of people. Our ancestors were called Separatists because they chose to separate from

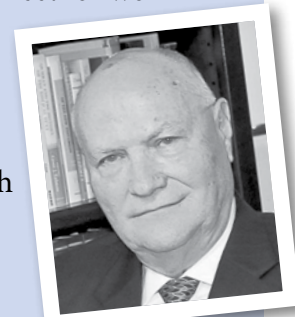
the Church of England. They were also called “Ana-Baptist” because they believed in a “second baptism.” That is, they had been baptized as infants in the Church of England, but they later believed that baptism was invalid. They believed true baptism follows a person’s willful repentance of his sins and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the early apostles of Believers’ Baptism was John Smythe. Smythe was an Anglican minister who broke with the Church of England over the issue of freedom of conscience and believers’ baptism. When King James I took the throne of England he forced everyone to conform to

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We’re Now Open Sundays

We are open on Sunday mornings! That’s good news.

We did not meet for worship at our building on Fonville Road between March 22 and June 7. We used modern technology to bring our people together for worship and Bible Study. First, we worshipped together via a service we recorded each week and then broadcasted on Sunday mornings. That was made possible by the team work of Frank Powell, Kevin Barham and Daniel Ripley. Next, we moved our Wednesday Bible studies to video conferencing on Zoom. Then, we added live streaming of our service over Facebook and our Webpage when we returned to the sanctuary on June 7. We have received many positive comments about this new way to connect on Sunday mornings.



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Free-spirited cont' ...

the tenets of the Church of England or flee the country. Smythe chose to leave England. He and some of his followers fled to Amsterdam where Smyth baptized his followers after baptizing himself. Some people refer to John Smythe as the first Baptist.

Among those who Smythe baptized was Thomas Helwys. Helwys returned to England from Amsterdam and established the first permanent Baptist church in England. Helwys preached “freedom of conscience” as the right of every person to make his own decisions about religious matters and the state had no right to interfere. For his beliefs, Helwys was imprisoned in Newgate Prison in 1612, a prison reserved for the worst offenders. Helwys and Smythe are often referred to as the founders of the Baptist faith.

In colonial America, Roger Williams was undoubtedly influenced by Smythe and Helwys. He led in the formation of the first Baptist congregation in the colonies around 1639. He had been forced to leave the Massachusetts colony and established the colony of Providence for “those distressed of conscience” and founded Rhode Island on the principles of religious liberty for all and separation of church and state. These are two of the basic tenets ascribed to by Baptists today. Some people see in Roger Williams the principles which became foundational to our country. One supporter of Williams’ influence on American democracy, Oscar Strauss, said, “Perhaps much more than we have realized Roger Williams became the real founder of the new Republic (America)...” Certainly Williams ideals, like separation of church and state, and the freedom of conscience, contributed to the ideals of America. The first amendment to the constitution prohibits



“the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Thomas Jefferson wrote in a letter in 1802 about “building a wall of separation between Church and State.” Jefferson’s words are often cited in arguments about the separation of church and state.

Baptist ideals helped shape the political philosophy of America. Some Baptists, like Roger Williams, Isaac Backus, and John Leland were at the forefront of fighting for freedom of conscience and separation of church and state. Jefferson’s famous letter speaking about a wall of separation between church and state was addressed to one of the churches founded by Leland.

When you celebrate on Independence Day the freedoms we enjoy as a nation, remember some of your Baptist forefathers and foremothers who helped to forge our freedoms. I will write more on this subject at another time.

— Tom Jenkins

Event Calendar

July 5 — Deacons Meeting 3 PM

July 7 — Nominating Committee Meeting 7 PM

July 21 — Nominating Committee Meeting 7 PM

July 26 — Quarterly Church Conference 12 PM

July Birthdays

5	Herman Choplin
6	Johnny Ray
12	David Young
21	Alan Watkins



Nominating Committee meeting now

Our nominating committee is meeting during the month of July and soon will be calling members to see if they are willing to serve on various committees during our upcoming 2020-2021 fiscal year.

When, not if, you are called, please give serious consideration to serving our church. We have ambitious plans to grow and spread God's word through our areas and we need everyone to help!

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Open continued ...

Currently, Frank Powell is using his iPhone to stream the services. We are researching the cost for purchasing new equipment to provide a higher quality broadcast of our services. One of our generous church members said he will help us with the cost. I am happy to report God continues to bless us. When the door closed on our services in the sanctuary, another door opened for us to continue worshipping together.

Thank you for your financial support of Falls during this difficult time. We have been able to meet our expenses through people sending their contributions to the church. Some have elected to give online through Facebook or our Webpage. God is blessing us and providing the resources for us to continue our ministries. The Coronavirus will not stop the ministries of Falls. We will continue to worship God through our services in the sanctuary or live streaming. We will continue to support missions and engage in mission projects. We will lovingly provide for the needs of our members and we will do all to the honor and glory of Jesus Christ.

We will not have our annual July 4th celebration. However, at our morning worship service on July 5th we will remember our nation, its birth, its blessings from God, and its current crises. We cannot have fireworks in the sanctuary, but we can make our service a time of jubilee, which for our needs today is better than fireworks.

— Tom Jenkins



Worship Precautions During July

The church is taking several precautions to make attendance as safe as possible during this Covid-19 pandemic. Even though we are not aware of anyone in our congregation who has the virus, we are aware you could have the virus and be without symptoms. Therefore, we are requesting that all follow these guidelines:

1. If you are ill, please do not attend until all your symptoms have disappeared.
2. Maintain 6 feet social distance except for family members living in the same household.
3. Use furnished hand sanitizer or wipes as you enter the church.

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Deacons

Linwood Barham, Chairman	919-418-1162
Hubert Jenks, Vice Chairman	919-270-8765
Alan Watkins, Secretary	919-793-5548
Kevin Barham	919-618-4214
Brandon Long	252-903-4662
Mike Harris	919-746-5697

Worship Precautions cont' ...

4. Pew Bibles and hymnals have been removed. Order of service and hymns will appear in your individual program bulletin.

5. Use your own face mask if you desire or disposal masks will be available for those wishing to use them.

6. Pews will be cleaned before and after each service.

7. Boxes to receive tithes and offerings are placed at the doors so we do not have to handle offering plates.

Some members fall into the category of having underlying conditions which make them uncomfortable to be in groups. We understand if they are not willing to attend now. Hopefully, this pandemic will soon pass and we can truly get back to normal worship services. During the month of June and July we will ONLY have 11 AM services in person. Wednesday Bible study will continue on Zoom.

We will reevaluate everything near the end of July and pray we can resume Sunday School and Wednesday meals in August.

— Linwood Barham



Newsletter articles needed

We have had a newsletter each month for the past 2 ½ years.

But, we need news and articles from all of our committees to let everyone know what you are doing and when you are doing it.

Our website is generating interest and bringing people into our church. Please bookmark it at www.fallsbaptistchurch.org. In addition, our mobile app is in use by 92 people in five countries at this writing — China, Japan, Nigeria and Puerto Rico in addition to the United States! It is available for Apple and Android devices, so search for Falls Baptist in your App Store or you can use the link on our website.

Communication is very important, so send your news and articles to Frank at fbpowell@mac.com
Thanks!

Church Conference is now scheduled for July 26



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