

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Alice In Wonderland" 6/29/22

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. (Ps 33:12)

God loves us and longs to bless us. The Psalmist tells us, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." How does the world know God is our Lord? Micah tells us, we are to be a people who love mercy, work for justice, and walk humbly with Godself

This is not an if – then. Not an if you do this, I'll do that. But these are instructions, guidelines for how we are to live – as individuals, as a church, as a community, as a country. This is a time of unrest, indecisive leadership, wars and rumors of war, backbiting, power struggles, what's new? It sounds like the history of the world. We've read it, studied it, and are living it.

Just as humanity remains the same, so does God. God is still present with love. His Word is still available to create, to guide, to instruct, to encourage, to bless. No matter how difficult our life, how dangerous our way, how uncertain our future, God remains God and asks us to turn to Him, to see the many blessings He has bestowed upon us, and to have His peace. Fear not, God tells us, He has called us by name and we are His. The fire will not destroy us, the waters will not overwhelm us, God remains at our side.

It's almost not acceptable to love our country, we are told to see only her faults, to be held accountable for her sins, bad actions. There is no forgiveness, no rejoicing in what she's done well, or right, just condemnation for her failures. I am proud to be an American. I love my country. I ask God to bless America. She has tried, maybe hasn't always succeeded, but has tried to offer freedom, liberty and justice for all. But she is made up of humans, and we don't always do what we should, why throw the baby out with the bathwater.

I'll admit I'm a little naive, I wear blinders and wave my flag. I have hope we can and will do better, so I wave the stars and stripes – for what they stand for. Even for our failures, we continue to try to offer a safer place, a better way. Both sides of the aisle are working for this goal, they have different ideas on how to get there. We can't imagine the other guy really thinks their way will work, but we continue to move forward. To forge a new way, to fix an old way, to make the thing work – for the good of all. After all, "this is what we got," we have to keep it afloat.

From around the world many want to come to America – they think we offer a better way. Meanwhile we are told over and over again we are not great, nor should we mistakenly think we are. Who is correct? My sister met a young lady a few months ago. She was from the Donbas in Ukraine and had come to America several years ago. She'd started a business, was married and had a little girl. Joan asked her what her daughter's name was and the gal told her, "Alice. "Like in *Alice in Wonderland*?" Joan asked. "Yes," she replied, "Because America is a wonderland."

May we see our country as those with a dream of a better life see her. May we strive to be the land of the free. Where there is justice for everybody, no matter their color, their religion, their political party, their address, their gender, their education, their employment – or lack of employment, their mode of transportation, their view of this country. May we be a nation under God, seeking God's blessing, and following His command to love one another. America truly is a wonderland, where we are free to believe, to accomplish, to worship, to get ahead, to choose to have God as our Lord.

Prayer: God, bless America. We pray for our leaders, may they seek Your way, make decisions which reflect Your words of instruction. We pray wisdom and compassion for those who guide this country, our justices, and our military leaders. May we seek Your peace in our land and in our world. Strengthen us to be a nation whose God is the Lord. **Amen.**