



*Hello  
May*

# Faith Matters

## Becky's Billet-doux *Freedom*

*"<sup>13</sup>For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. <sup>14</sup>For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ~ Galatians 5:13-14*

"Freedom" is an interesting concept. Everybody wants freedom: Children, teens, adults, the elderly. No one wants to be controlled, everyone wants to be free. But, what does it mean to be 'free?' What are the freed free to do? What are they freed to not do?

When we are young we yearn to grow up to be free. What we don't realize, in our youth, is that adult responsibility prevents running free with unbridled abandon. We make choices to trade our "freedom" for responsibility. We accept a job, we give up some freedom. We marry, we give up some freedom. We have children, we give up a lot of freedom. We willingly trade in our freedom.

But what is "freedom?" The Oxford dictionary defines it as, "the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint." Do you ever have that? Can you ever act however or say whatever you want without restraint? In public, at least, the answer is "no." In the church, the answer is "no." So what freedoms do you have? The entire concept begins to seem illusive. Adam and Eve were free, well... except for that one little rule, that one fruit to not eat. They did the one thing they were not free to do. Luther, in 1520, wrote, "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." This is a great statement. At first glance it seems simple enough. When you start to ponder it,

however, the simplicity gives way to waves of complexity.

Finally, is a Christian free or not? The answer is "YES!" The Christian is free, at long last, free indeed. Your debt has been paid. You are free. Sin and death no longer determine a grim fate. You are free. Everything is freedom. Luther's point is this: Now that you are free from sin, death and the devil (though they still haunt you in this life, they cannot take you away from God or his love for all eternity,) you no longer are enslaved to the task of saving yourself. Jesus has already saved you, period. And he left no part of your salvation for you to do. You are freed from all that struggling and failing, and struggling and failing. You are free.

What are you to do? With all this freedom, what are you to do? Go to the second sentence of Luther's statement. You are free to serve your neighbor. You are free to serve the man down the street and the woman struggling to get her groceries in the car. You are free to humble yourself before the person who accuses you of wrong doing. You are free to worry about the people that are overlooked or underfed. You don't have to worry about getting your life right, or about saving yourself, or even about what anyone else thinks of you. You are freed from yourself, to serve someone else. You are freed from worrying about yourself, so you can help a friend or a stranger. You no longer have to establish your position before others, or dress to make a desired

impression, or play silly games to fit into someone else's mold. You are free in Christ and He lives in you. You are not whole because you made yourself whole.

You are whole because HE lives in you and HE makes you whole and HE makes you free. Go, in your freedom, and serve the Risen Lord.

*Pastor Becky*

## Prayer of the Month

Gracious and Holy Lord, thank you for your love and your constant concern for our personal wellbeing. Thank you, also, for guidance and direction for our congregation. Build us strong to be in service to you. Teach us to love one another and to love our neighbors. Help us to be all that you have created us to be. In Jesus' holy name we ask, Amen.

## Prayer Requests

- † Adams, Calvin (Angie Gullett's dad, prayer for salvation; health; eye issues)
- † Ard, Farrell & Kellie (Healing)
- † Arnold, Dale (Praise, cancer free!, rec. from surgery)
- † Brown, Donna (healing)
- † Boring, Jo (healing)
- † Brown, Bonnie (rec. from broken pelvis)
- † Burditt, Larry (Angie Gullett's brother-in-law, Parkinson's & his dad for healing)
- † Byerly, Evelyn (pneumonia)
- † Candace (mom), Avyn (son) in NYC- Avyn has mass behind intestines, surgery 4-29)
- † Collerd, Tyler
- † Cox, Wanda (Angie's sis-in-law, health, life choices)
- † Eilers, Melvin (healing)
- † Estrada, Mary
- † Pr. Fisks, Paul (healing)
- † Fowler, Ginnie (treatments)
- † Fowler, Jerry
- † Gonzales, Lisa (healing)
- † Gullett, Angie (eye injections, health)
- † Gullett, Lula (aunt, in last stages of life)
- † Pr. Kaskela, Jerry (healing)
- † McClelland, Lee (Sally's nephew)
- † McGee, Helen (issues with left hand)
- † Merritt, Gertrude (Physical Rehab)
- † Moore Family (loss of Frances)
- † Mullins, Ellie (5 yr old on kidney transplant list, dealing with high blood pressure issue)
- † Nance, Bodhi (Watson's grandson)
- † Otwell, Joyce (health)
- † Pierce, Richard (healing from burns)
- † Perez, Marsha (health)
- † Reno, Sherita (healing)
- † Robertson, Sam (ranching accident, recovery)
- † Scott, Abe (cancer, for healing)
- † Scott, Becca (for son and grandson, Dillon and Lincoln - custody issue)
- † Shipley, Sharon (Bobby Watson's sister, health)
- † Silhan, Charlie (Linda Wright's son's father—inlaw—health.)
- † Southard, John (congestive heart failure)
- † Strickland, Gary (salvation)
- † Tschauner, Jerry (Praise! Jerry left hospital, returned to hospital with Kidney stone issues)
- † Turner, Ruth (rehab; broken hip)
- † Vencil, Naylan (healing)
- † Watson, Marlene (health)
- † Watts, Patricia (healing)

**Sympathy** - to Calvert & Pearl Hennig; Robert & Pastor Becky; George Hennig; Derlin & Roberta Hennig; Pat Barrow; in the loss of Pearl's brother, Kenneth Hohertz

**Homebound** - Larry Minor, Phyllis Dudley, Helen McGee, Charles & Shirley Garrett, Charles & Charlene Miller, Barbara Ridge, Dan Womochel, Jo Hafer, Evelyn Byerly.

**Nursing Homes** - Grover Charsha Rm. 406, Jack Tarter Rm. 703, Billie Carr (Betty Lively's sister) Rm. 616 (Parks); Marsha Perez Rm. 805 (Lincoln Tower); Frieda Theesfield (Madison

Medical Resort) Rm. 203; Ronda Scott (Angie's cousin) Rm. 303 Sienna ; Freddie Wheeler- Cowden Cottage Rm. 11A (Manor Park—Midland) Merry Gay Mesker (Granbury), Marilyn Batson (Dallas); Rosemary Browning (Dallas); M'Liss Schneider (Knopp in Fredericksburg)

**Prayers For Our Military Service Men & Women** (Please let us know of any individuals who are currently serving in a combat area) Jake Waddell (Shearers' grandson, US Army)



Sponsored by Faith Fellowship

May 23 (12:30 PM—2:30 PM)

Hot Dogs & Lemonade will be served.

We need donations from members:  
Food, balls or money to purchase balls.

Flyers will be passed out in the neighborhoods around the church, inviting them to the event and giving them information about our upcoming VBS.

Each child will receive a ball according to their age group, and they and their family will be served hot dogs and lemonade.

## Schedule of Events

- ⌚ Ladies Bible Study - Tuesdays - 10:00 - 11:00 AM
  - ⌚ Wednesdays - Theology Study at 6 PM; Lectionary Readings on Facebook. Sunday School for all ages - Sundays - 10:00 AM
  - ⌚ Worship Service - Sundays - 11:00 AM
- .....●
- ⌚ May 1 - Augustana District Convention in Hutchinson, Minnesota/ virtual - Pastor Becky will travel to Minnesota Friday and return Sunday for AD District Convention.
  - ⌚ May 2. T Ron will lead worship - Thank You Ron!
  - ⌚ May 4 - Safety Team Meeting at 6:00 PM May 9 - Mother's Day; Brecken's Baptism
  - ⌚ May 18 - Board Mtg. at 6:00 PM
  - ⌚ May 23 - Pentecost Sunday; Ball Giveaway Event
  - ⌚ May 30 - Trinity Sunday
  - ⌚ May 31 - Memorial Day Holiday; Office closed

Please visit the church calendar on the website for more information at <https://faithfellowshipodessa.org/church-calendar/>



Our Mission is to Gather God's people, and to Grow in faith and Service to Christ

Thank you to Blooming Rose Florist for providing us with altar flowers for Sundays.



Blooming Rose Florist  
302 E University Blvd  
Odessa, TX 79762 (432) 337-7673  
Business Hours:  
Monday - Friday 8am - 6pm  
Saturday - 8am - 5pm



Did you know that there are many ways to serve at FF? You can sign-up to host a fellowship event, usher, greet, help in the office, Sunday morning reader... please sign up on the clipboard outside the Sanctuary if interested.

We would like to pre-plan fellowship luncheons. The next one to be planned would be in August. (It does not mean you are required to do all the work.) If you would like to coordinate this fellowship please call Billy at (432) 770-5801.



She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness, is on her tongue. Proverbs 31:26

We helped seven families in March & April!

If you have vegetables or fruits from your garden, please bring them to sell after worship.

You can put them on our Harvest Table in the Narthex. The proceeds will go to our Food Pantry.



## Church Directory

Office Email ..... office@faithfellowshipodessa.org

Office Tel ..... (432) 362-2549

Office Fax: ..... (432) 362-0573

Website ..... https://faithfellowshipodessa.org

Address:

1603 North Grandview Avenue

Odessa, TX 79761

### Pastor's Hours

Sunday 8:00-noon

Monday 1-4:00 office, 5-9:00 Doctoral class

Tuesday 8:45-5:00

Wednesday 9:30-7:00 (

Thursday - Midland for Hope

Friday Flex hours for Work and Study

Best times to catch her in the office are Tuesday mornings (9 to noon) and Wednesdays (9:30 to 6:00). Home visits are made, typically, on Tuesday afternoon.

### A Month of Psalms



Let's make a June a Month of Psalms! You are challenged to Pray Five Psalms each day during June.

There are 150 psalms, if you read five a day, you've read all the psalms in a month. The challenge though, is to not just read the psalms, but PRAY them. You may want to chant them, speak them, or pray them silently. Bookmarks are available to help keep you straight.

Do you accept the challenge? Can you do it? On June 1st, pray Psalms 1-5.

## Classifieds

We are offering ad space for \$5 donations in our Newsletter. If you have:

- a business you want to promote;
- something you want to sell;
- someone you need to hire;
- or are looking for recommendations

Please fill out a form, or email the office and we'll put it in the next Newsletter.



## Tid Bits

### What is the meaning and use of liturgical colors?

**For Pentecost Sunday,** Red as the color of fire is used on this day when we remember the tongues of fire descended on the crowd in Jerusalem. In contrast to the color of scarlet, Pentecost's red is a bright color.

**The Holy Trinity Sunday:** White is appointed, the expression of joy in the mystery of the Triune God.