

DEAR FRIENDS OF LIBERTY,

It's a joy to communicate with you after some months since our last newsletter. During this time the Providence Forum has continued to be very active. We strive never to lose sight of our mission to assure that the vanishing voice of American liberty is rejuvenated. We believe we are playing a part to make sure that the cracked and silent Liberty Bell with its message to "proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" continues to be heard through the lives, writings and actions of our ministry so that "We the people of United States" might ever remember we are intended to be "one nation under God."

As has been well said, "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance". The cost of liberty was well written by President Abraham Lincoln's famous and earnest letter to Mrs. Bixby that said, "...I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

A costly sacrifice on the altar of freedom is often required to preserve the union of a free people. While so many have paid the ultimate price, we as citizens are called to do our part to remember and sustain the utterly unique experiment of liberty found in America.

George Washington said this so well in his first inaugural address, "And since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."

As we strive to remember that faith and freedom are intimately related, The Providence Forum seeks to put this into practice in various ways:

Planting liberty trees through our bud grafting program which has blessed veterans suffering from PTSD, in combination with the ministry of 4-H clubs. We also plant these trees in historic areas.

We are excited to be on the cusp of releasing **our new Faith and Freedom Tour App** of historic Philadelphia and Valley Forge. We hope that people all across the country will be able to take the tour of Philadelphia from wherever they have access to the Internet.

Over this last year, we've led **several trips** with groups from across the country to remind people about the interplay between faith and freedom as is discovered in the story of Philadelphia.

We continue to rejoice that **George Washington's Sacred Fire is still in print** and being purchased and shared across the country and internationally. One of the fruits of this book that has now been in print for almost 15 years, **a new children's version** based upon it and created by Rob Westman of Abilene, Texas: **George Washington Providence**. It is now available as a beautifully illustrated family version of the much larger work GW's Sacred Fire.

Speaking events have taken our team to the prayer breakfast at West Point, to a Bible study at the War College in Carlisle, Penn, the Colorado Christian University to deliver a C-SPAN broadcast lecture on Washington's faith, the celebration of the new children's George Washington book in Abilene Texas, as well as other historic places with liberty tree plantings.

We are very grateful that the Providence Forum continues to see new friends join our work. The **Rev. Dr. Steven Grant** from Bonita Springs, Florida, is now our executive director and is developing the Southwest Florida chapter of the Providence Forum. **Rev. John Kenyon**, retired Chaplain and Lt. Colonel from the Air Force, has helped us substantially with strategic planning. We are delighted that the **Rev. Rob Pacienza**, **Larry Musick** and **David Rogers** have all joined our board of directors as well.

It's clear that **the Lord has been kind to us in so many ways**, enabling us to do far more than ever we thought possible. However, we continue to face the reality that the support of a nonprofit organization, even with such a wonderful mission as ours, is difficult. This means that your support is absolutely essential.

Only with your help can we faithfully proclaim liberty throughout the land and strive by God's grace to do our part to ensure that the American vision of the union of faith and freedom will not be lost in a country that up until now at least has as its motto "In God We Trust". Let's each do our part to ensure that we will remain "one nation under God"!

Sincerely in our Lord's service,

Dr. Peter a. Fillock

President

A NEW WAY TO THANK A VETERAN

Written by: John Kenyon, Board Member

Recently I was standing inside Independence Hall in Philadelphia while listening to the park ranger speak of the work the founders of our nation did in crafting The Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution. As he concluded his talk he made a startling statement that took me by surprise. He stated that those in the Armed Forces and the President of the United States take oaths to one thing only, the Constitution of the United States. This promoted me to do my research and I found an article by Matthew Spalding, titled Support and Defend: Understanding the Oath of Office. In this article you read the following:

Under current law any individual elected to an office...in the civil service or uniformed services, except the President, shall take the following oath: "I, [name], do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter." (33 U.S.C. § 3331.)

The President has a different one but reflects the same thinking. The taking of an oath is binding, dare I say a sacred binding, as one appeals to God or affirms "that [he/she] will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which [he/she is] about to enter."

Yet, we have seen in the past attempts to redefine or diminish our Constitution rights. The use of "freedom of worship" for "freedom of religion" by a previous administration is an example. The best, I believe, is seen in the confirmation hearings for nominees to the US Supreme Court. Walter E. Williams, in his article, It's Our Constitution—Not Kavanaugh establishes this well.

"If confirmed, Brett Kavanaugh will bring to the Supreme Court a vision closer to that of the Framers than the vision of those who believe that the Constitution is a "living document."

For many the battle is being fought over the idea of whether the Constitution is a "living breathing document" or one that is "etched in stone". Once again I was given a 'eureka' moment by our own Dr. Peter Lillback. In a conversation with him on this issue, he stated the founders answered this question when they established the procedure to amend the Constitution (27 amendments have be added since its inception [the 21st repeals the 18th]). The process by which to change the document has been set and changes need to be done within the framework given by the founders of this nation.

In many ways we are at a crossroads concerning this document. A recent ABC Nightline segment highlighted the problem when reporting on a student movement at a



university in Utah to keep Ben Shapiro from speaking at the university. In the interview with the student leader of the protest, the reporter stated the students' actions was directly prohibiting the First Amendment rights of Mr. Shapiro. The student answered, "I don't care" and when pressed by the reporter this was a Constitutional right was told,

"I don't think that's a, like a relevant document right now.

This year is the 100 year anniversary of the end of World War I. The count of those who died in combat from that war to the present now numbers over 430,000. These individuals took the oath "to uphold and defend the Constitution" and died living out that oath. Yes we need to thank veterans for their service that ensures our freedoms but probably the best way is to once again embody the Constitution we served to defend. To support those in public office who live out their oath and to hold accountable those who do not. To ensure the citizens of this nation can exercise their constitutional right even when we disagree with them. Yes, we served to enable a citizen even to desecrate the symbol (flag) that we fought to defend; the symbol that draped the coffin of those who gave that "last full measure of devotion".

NEW LIBERTY TREE PLANTINGS

- Camden Battleground site, South Carolina
 - Charleston, South Carolina
 - Swamp Fox, South Carolina
 - Morristown, Tennessee
- White Sulphur Springs Conference Center, Manns Choice, Pennsylvania

"We believe we are playing a part to make sure that the cracked and silent Liberty Bell with its message to proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof continues to be heard."

RECENT UPDATES

In June, Dr.
Lillback provided a
day of lectures for
the endorsing
agency of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains
and Military Personnel annual
training conference. There were
84 chaplains in at-



tendance that received his "Encouragement for Chaplains from the Arsenal of Faith in a Time of War." He concluded with the following words, "We have a tremendous arsenal of encouragement that's our blessing. If we put it to work, we will persevere and we will not lose heart because our God is reigning." The following words were given by the endorsing agent Jim Carter as he thanked Dr. Lillback for his impact on the lives of the chaplains and his support and belief in them. He also concluded with the following, "... as a man on the front lines, who is literally a lion for the cause of the gospel ... you embody what we are seeking to do each and every day."



In July, Dr. Lillback had the opportunity to share in the celebration of 40 years of ministry by White Sulfur Springs Conference and Retreat Center, the Eastern Conference Center for the organization Officers' Christian Fellowship. The mission of this

organization is to bring biblical truth into the lives of active duty and retired military members and families.

Dr. Lillback presented them with one of the remaining pieces of wood from the last standing revolution era Liberty Tree. This tree located at Annapolis, Maryland and finally fell in 1999. This piece of history will be displayed at White Sulfur Springs and there are plans to plant a bud-graft of that same tree on the Conference Center grounds in the near future.

In collaboration with
Tree Research and
Education Endowment Fund
(TREE Fund) and
their annual Tour de
Trees (a bicycle tour
fundraising event)
sponsored by Davey
Tree Expert Company, has once again
planted a Liberty Tree
at a State capitol. This



past August, a tree was planted and given the Tour des Trees' blessing in Columbus, Ohio. The special addition for this planting was the introduction of the Liberty Tree exhibit in the museum on the ground floor of the capitol building.

Most recently, Steven Grant (Executive Director) hosted an **evening with George Washington** at First Presbyterian Church Bonita Springs, FL. With over 800 in attendance, George Washington (Dean Malissa) wowed the audience with his reenactment. Recording artist Lindsay Graham sang beautifully and Dr. Lillback introduced attendees to the mission and vision of The Providence Forum. This event was the first of many for the future southeastern chapter of Providence Forum.



"The Providence Forum is still proclaiming liberty throughout the land so that we remain one nation under God."

-Dr. Peter Lillback, President-

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