

## Anticipate Fireworks

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### First United Methodist Church

Did you know that there is approximately the same amount of gunpowder in a firecracker as in a rifle shell? But the firecracker is unfocused. It just makes a big noise. The rifle shell, on the other hand, focuses that power in a specific direction and delivers an enormous punch. One makes a lot of noise. The other gets results. It's a matter of focus. It's a matter of what's needed or what's desired.

We can be a firecracker Christian or a rifle shot Christian. One makes a lot of noise. The other gets results. The third option is to be a fireworks Christian. Fireworks begin by focusing power to get them to a desired location and then explode with all kinds of ways to catch people's attention and amaze them in all kinds of wonderful ways.

I still believe in the USA. Something still happens to me when I see people waving flags and when I hear patriotic songs being sung. Call me optimistic, but I still believe in one nation under God. In God I still trust. And I still celebrate the Fourth of July and anticipate fireworks as part of that celebration.

I want to tell you that I still anticipate fireworks out of my faith as well. There is too much to be done here in our corner of God's world for us to quit taking risks and stepping out on faith. I don't want us to be slaves to the past, afraid of the risk of what it may mean to be in ministry in this community, in this nation, and even in this world at this time. I don't want us to be afraid to go forth into the world with the authority that we receive from God.

You see, I still anticipate fireworks. I still anticipate miracles. I still anticipate excitement and enthusiasm, healing, and conversion. I expect fireworks to happen every time God calls us and sends us out. I expect my faith and my church to make a difference in my world. And I want you to expect it, too!

There is more that I can do. There is more that you can do. There is more that you and I can do together. As we celebrate this month of our declaration of independence as a country, I invite you to renew your declaration of dependence upon God. I invite you to bring an offering of a hope, a dream, a prayer, or perhaps an offering of a vision you have and offer it at the altar to the God who calls us and sends us, who claims us and names us, and who fills our minds with visions of liberty and justice and possibilities that burst like fireworks in the nighttimes of our journey through this life of ours. Anticipate fireworks.