"Bricks" are conservative. "Bricks" are liberal. Sunday (D.V.) I will reflect on the 250th year of our republic and why it is biblical to be conservative. On July 11 I will make the case for liberal education which is likewise foundational to our church identity.

RED BRICK CHURCH

June 30, 2026

Dear Bricks:

Sunday I will continue the series "Wearing Christ." The central point is that the lives and culture of God's people should self-consciously reflect the gospel. This series is about explaining why we do as a church what we do.

Last week, in beginning the series, I illustrated something inappropriate to wear. I made the case that while an Illinois wrestling t-shirt is perfect for mowing the yard it is inappropriate to wear when preaching, unless the preacher is illustrating a point.

There are two ditches where clothes are concerned. After the service, someone told me a story about a church where an intern was chided for not wearing a suit coat when praying at a church picnic. Such legalism is not only cringy, it's wrong and inconsistent with the gospel. Adapting Emerson, it is a "foolish consistency" that is "the hobgoblin of little minds."

Future sermons in this series will consider how the gospel should shape weddings, funerals, and other major aspects of church life.

But this Sunday (7/5/26) we will consider how the gospel should inform how we think about our republic. The sermon will consider Deuteronomy 6:20-25 (cf. Prov 22:28, 23:10) and the case for being conservative where theology, culture, the family, and politics is concerned. There will be no t-shirt in the pulpit this week. Rather, I plan to illustrate the right sort of conservatism by reminding our congregation of how the central claim of the Declaration of Independence was famously applied to our country's darkest hour.

On Saturday, I pray that each of you enjoys the 4th of July celebration. There would be many great places to detonate a firecracker, whether Freedom Hall in Philadelphia, the Lincoln Memorial in D.C., the beaches of Normandy, or at the site of the Nazi death camp my father in law serving in the Second Armored Division helped liberate in WWII. But as great as any of those settings for singing "American the Beautiful," they are no better than Ogle County. Here, in the middle of the best farm ground in the world, we can look towards Stephenson county and think about Lincoln's speech at Freedport. Looking beyond Freeport, we might picture U.S. Grant leaving Galena for his duties, or we can look downriver towards Dixon where President Reagan was a lifeguard before he gave the Soviet's Gorbachev the command to tear down his totalitarian wall. I am so thankful I get to watch fireworks in Illinois.

See you Sunday,

Pastor Chris Brauns

When your son asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the LORD our God has commanded you?' Then you shall say to your son. . . Deut 6:20-21