

## **The Message – July 3, 2022 “We Have Come This Far by Faith”**

**Rev. Lucy Brady**

July 4th is the day we celebrate our Independence from England and the love for our country.

Our forbearers came to this land to be free to worship as they desired. They didn't want a new Monarchy and they did not want to be under what they considered the tyranny of English rule.

At the same time, that we celebrate Independence Day 1776, we also know that great Injustices have been done to indigenous people. Although there are 574 sovereign tribal nations with a nation to nation relationship with the US government-treaties have been continually broken. Last year at this time, we heard the horrifying discovery of 3100 unmarked graves of children who were forced to attend the Canadian/US border government boarding schools.

Most of us aren't even aware of the many contributions of the influence that helped our Forbearers as they learned how to farm this new land and as they deliberated upon a new way of government.

Although not all historians and archaeologists agree that the Iroquois Confederacy of six nations was an influence for our forebears in forming our government, there are those including the oral tradition of the six nations of the Iroquois Confederacy that affirm they were. At the 1774 Lancaster Treaty conference one of the Chiefs of the Iroquois Confederacy, Canassatego, gave this advice from his people. “We have one thing further to say, and that is :We heartily recommend Union and a Good Agreement between you our Brethren. Never disagree, but preserve a strict Friendship for one another, and thereby you as well as we, will become the stronger. We are a powerful confederacy, and, by your observing the same Methods our wise Forefathers have taken, you will acquire afresh, Strength and Power; therefore, whatever befalls you, never fall out with one another.”

We also know that our forbearers brought people from Africa here to live as slaves.

Frederick Douglass was an enslaved man in Baltimore. He escaped to the North and later became an abolitionist.

In 1852 he was asked to speak in Rochester New York on the Fourth of July. His famous speech, "What to the slave is the Fourth of July?" is still very difficult to read, but it ends in hope. This is the conclusion of this memorable speech.

"Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation, which must inevitably work the downfall of slavery. "The arm of the Lord is not shortened," and the doom of slavery is certain. I, therefore, leave off where I began, with hope. While drawing encouragement from the Declaration of Independence, the great principles it contains, and the genius of American Institutions, my spirit is also cheered by the obvious tendencies of the age."

July 4, 1852 Frederick Douglas

As we join the Fourth of July celebrations this year, As we eat hamburgers and hotdogs crabs and ribs as we join with family and have ice cream and watch fireworks we will remember while we celebrate Independence Day, our true dependence is on God who because we are free, we worship this day.

--