

Hope Presbyterian Church
Adult Faith Formation Sermon-Based Bible Study

August 2, 2026

“A Christian Nation?”
#3 in the series *You Asked for It*

Scripture Texts (NRSVUE)
1 Peter 2:9-17



Note: Congregation members were asked to submit topics for this sermon series. This week's sermon addresses the question "Is the United States a Christian nation?"

1. What stood out to you about the message?
2. The sermon's topic question points us to key aspects of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.
 - Adopted on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence's main purpose was to announce and justify the 13 American colonies' separation from Great Britain.
 - The U.S. Constitution addresses religion primarily through the First Amendment and Article VI to guarantee absolute religious liberty, prevent government-mandated religion, and maintain a clear separation between church and state.
 - How do these documents provide an important context to understand the intents of our country's founders regarding religion?
 - What factors likely influenced the founders' position on religious liberty?
3. **Read 1 Peter 2:9-10.**

Peter writes to encourage Christians living in various regions of the early Christian world.

 - How do you interpret the meaning of his descriptions of these Christians as a "holy nation" and a "chosen people"?
 - What common experience unified "God's people" who were not living in the same geographical areas?
4. **Read 1 Peter 2: 11-17.**

Peter acknowledges the religious and social challenges faced by those to whom he is writing but urges them to live their faith with integrity while also honoring their neighbors and those in authority over them.

 - How is Peter's advice relevant today? How is it challenging?
5. Given the Constitution's guarantee of religious liberty, some strongly support the political ideology of Christian Nationalism, which holds that the government should preserve and promote this specific religious identity.
 - How does Christian Nationalism collapse the distinction between church and state?
 - What are the negative ramifications, from a spiritual and a social perspective, of Christian Nationalism?
6. How can we pray for you?