

THE OBSERVER/ENTERPRISE

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Without a proper frame of historical reference, it all sounds so dire. Let us momentarily set aside the many eras of national division that threatened to tear our country apart - Vietnam, the run up to World War II, and the populist backlash to the Gilded Age, and the time when our country DID tear itself apart in civil war, when over 600,000 Americans were killed. Instead, let us take it all the way back to 1796.

Even in 1796, Washington was concerned about the unity of the new republic. He was concerned that the American people were dividing themselves based on sectional differences. He was concerned that actors with ill-intent, both foreign and domestic, attempted to divide the American people based on their differences in economics, politics, or culture. He was concerned that some claimed America was too large to govern as a single republic.

Just to recap...America is too large, too varied in its cultural differences, and too geographically different to be governed as one body? Those claims sound troubling and novel in 2020, but Washington had already heard them 224 years ago!

There is nothing new under the sun. When times are good in America, we tend to think we've got everything fixed. We put it on societal cruise control and ignore the marginalized voices who remind us that there is much work left to do. Then, when confronted with challenges, we look up in a panic and conclude our world is falling apart. In reality, neither of those approaches is incorrect.

America has never and will never have everything "fixed." We're a nation created by, led by, and forever comprised of flawed, sinful human beings who are living in a fallen world. Over the years, our people have tried to do right and succeeded. They've tried to do right and failed. They've done terrible wrongs and our country has suffered the consequences.

Washington and his contemporaries knew this. In the aftermath of a hard-fought independence, the new nation suffered through an inept government prior to ratifying a new Constitution. That Constitution was the product of rancorous in-fighting over the centralization of government, representation of different geographic areas, and great compromises over sectional differences and the national sin of slavery. Even after the Constitution was enacted, in the years leading up to Washington's farewell address, Washington himself used military force to put down an armed insurrection over taxes (the so-called "Whiskey Rebellion").

It was precisely these ongoing challenges that led Washington to focus so heavily on national unity. Some saw irreconcilable differences, but Washington saw the reality: *"With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in*

a common cause fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings, and successes."

Next week, I'll talk more about that unity, but for now, remember: no matter what social media and cable news might tell you about our irreconcilable cultural differences, Washington knew better in 1796 and so should we.

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor in Stamford, Texas, and the creator of the forthcoming "West of '98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.



June 2020

The following reports were made by Coke County Sheriff's Office for the month of June 2020.

- Burn Ban Violation Citations - 2
- Death Investigation - 1
- Vicious Dogs - 1
- Theft of Electricity - 1

Obituaries



McAdams

Bettye Sue McAdams, age 83, passed away peacefully Sunday, July 12, 2020, at a local nursing home.

Graveside Services for Bettye were held at 10 am, Thursday, July 16, 2020, at Robert Lee Cemetery in Robert Lee. Arrangements were under the direction of Blaylock Funeral Home of Brownwood. Online condolences for the family are

welcome at www.blaylockfuneralhome.com.

Bettye was born on October 21, 1936, to Clarence and Annie B. Mitchell. She was a long-time resident of Fredericksburg. Bettye married William "W.T." McAdams. She served as Assistant Vice President for Pioneer National Bank until her retirement.

Bettye is survived by daughter, Vickie Dutton and husband Danny of Early; son, Glenn McAdams of San Angelo; 3 granddaughters, Angela Montgomery of San Antonio, Leslie Morris and husband Corde of Mason, Jennifer Aaron and husband Tony of Early; 4 great-grandchildren, Taytum Morris, Spencer Morris, Brenna Gist, and Haven Aaron; and her sister, Diane Hambright and husband Elwood of Kerrville. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

She was preceded in death by her husband, W.T. McAdams; her parents; and grandson, Chris Dutton.

02-1tc

Technology makes our life more fast-paced than ever before. It makes everything seem "more": more urgent, more frantic, more troubling.



Slight Shades of Difference

by James M. Decker

In 1796, as George Washington's second term as President wound to a close, Washington wrote a letter to the American people, reflecting on his service to the nation and contemplating its future. I've written of Washington's farewell address in the past - it is the source of his warning against the danger of political parties. It remains remarkably timely in other areas as well, particularly in the concept of national unity.

If you believe cable news and social media, the United States is facing unprecedented national division. The malevolent intent of [insert chosen villain here] threatens to tear us apart like never before! Our country is on fire! Our people are too different to live in harmony! Something must give! Or so they say.

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Area Churches Invite You to Worship

Bronte

Bronte Church of Christ
 PO Box 346
 118 S. Jefferson • Bronte
 Sun. 10 am & 6 pm, Wed. 7 pm
Central Baptist Church
 324 S. Franklin • Bronte
 (325) 473-4811

Dale Patterson, Pastor
 Sun. 10 am Sunday School
 11 am & 5 pm Worship

First Baptist Church
 424 S. Washington • Bronte
 (325) 473-2331 • Pastor George Cooper
 Sunday 9:45 am Sunday School,
 10:55 am Worship, 6 pm Bible
 Study & Worship
 Wednesday 6 pm RA's & GA's,
 6:30 pm Youth & Adults

First United Methodist Church
 Corner of Washington & Holmes
 Bronte
 (325) 473-3281

Rev. Stacy Sprinkle, Pastor
 Sun. 10:00 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship

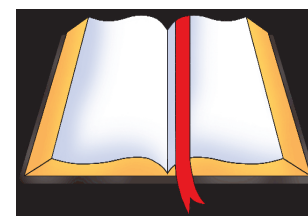
Forgiven Ministries
 117 W. Main, Bronte
 Russ Frasier, Pastor
 Sun. 10 am

Tuesday 6 pm Table Time
St. James Catholic Church
 215 N. Washington, Bronte
 (325) 365-2687

Rev. Yesu Mulakaleti, Jr., Pastor
 Sunday Bilingual Mass 8 am
4C Cowboy Church
 Texas Theater, Downtown Bronte
 Interim Pastor Robert Lemmond
 Sunday, 10:30 am

Coke County

Pecan Baptist
 PO Box 542 • 12 miles West of
 Robert Lee on Sterling City Hwy
 (325) 453-2065, Bill Hood, Pastor
www.pecanbaptistchurchrl.com
 Sun. 10 am, Sunday School
 11 am & 7 pm, Worship



Robert Lee

Bible Baptist Church
 PO Box 938 • 9th & Austin
 Sunday 10 am Sunday School, 11 am and
 5 pm Worship, Wed 5 pm Bible Study
Emmanuel Pentecostal
 PO Box 794 • 1004 Hillcrest
 Pastor Brantly Robertson
 (972) 841-2009
 Sundays 10 am, Wednesdays 7 pm

First United Methodist Church
 PO Box 144 • 9th & Chadbourne
 Robert Lee • (325) 453-2417
 Cyndi Weidner, Pastor
 Sun. 10 am Sunday School
 11 am Worship, 5 pm Choir Practice

Iglesia Bautista Betel
 101 Houston • Robert Lee
 Sun. 9:45 am • Sunday School
 11 am Service • Bible Study Wed. 6 pm

Southside Church of Christ
 PO Box 698 • 8th & Houston
 Robert Lee (325) 453-2176
 Recardo Reyes, Preacher
 Sun. 10 am, Sunday School
 11 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Worship
Northside Church of Christ
 PO Box 508
 9th & Chadbourne • Robert Lee
 (325) 453-2685, (325) 763-2118 or
 (325) 473-1053

Services: Sun. 10 am
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
 601 W. 10th, Robert Lee
 (325) 365-2687

Rev. Yesu Mulakaleti, Pastor
 Saturday Vigil Mass 5 pm
Robert Lee Baptist Church
 PO Box 493 • 22 W. 11th
 (325) 453-2724

Chris Walls, Pastor
 Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
 11 am & 7 pm, Worship
 Wed. 7 pm, Prayer Meeting
Victory Assembly of God
 (325) 453-2208, PO Box 638
 6th & Houston, Robert Lee
 Rev. Irving Smith, Pastor
 Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
 10:45 am & 6 pm, Worship
 Wed. 6 pm, Bible Study

Tennyson
Tennyson Baptist Church
 Hwy 277 • Tennyson
 (325) 473-2040
 Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
 11:00 am & 6 pm, Worship
 Wed. 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting