

Happy Birthday America!

July 4, 2026, will be a time to celebrate and be proud of our country. The Bible supports a healthy love of country. It is both our duty and our privilege to pay taxes and obey laws. We are to pray for our nation and to honor and love our country. Even when leaders are not the ones you personally chose, we are to respect them.

I am personally honored to be able to celebrate this upcoming birthday of our nation, as so many my age will not have this opportunity. Believe me, it is rare that I admit there is something good about growing old. But when you think about Methuselah's age, I am just a baby—right?

1 Timothy 2:1–2 urges us to pray for our leaders so that we may live in peace. We should also seek God's wisdom for our nation. Romans reminds us, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

I enjoyed a recent newspaper editorial about North Dakota's growth. As I researched it, I found it to be true that our state consistently lost population from 1930 to 2000. Much of the growth we see today appears to be tied to the discovery of massive oil reserves in western North Dakota. Since that discovery, our state has continued to grow, according to each census that has been taken. From 2000 to 2020, North Dakota grew by 15.8% to 770,094, the highest population in state history.

Based on estimates from January 2026, some predictions suggest we may soon reach nearly 800,000 people. Since 2010, our state has grown by about 19%. Migration and births are exceeding the death rate, and we have more opportunity than ever to encourage our young people to stay and thrive. We have so much to be proud of—and it really is amazing when you stop and think about it. So, let's blow up the balloons, bake the cake, put the candles on it, and celebrate like we've never celebrated before. Our American Legion family can help lead the way in this parade.

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