



Fair Queen Jen Mickley
and Pastor Bob

*Pastor Bob's remarks and invocation given
at the opening of the Allentown Fair 2012.*

I bring you greetings from 1762. Not only does the city of Allentown celebrate its 250th birthday this year, but at the Liberty Bell Church where I am pastor we also are celebrating our 250th anniversary as well.

Marking anniversaries is a helpful way to remind ourselves of the importance of institutions in our community. The Lehigh County Agricultural Society is one such institution, celebrating 160 years in 2012. Institutions like yours help form the bedrock of a community not only because of fun events like the Allentown Fair but because you embody values that date back to our roots as an agricultural community... all the way back to our founding in 1762.

As we gather tonight for this opening program, I know many different faith traditions are represented by the people here. But all of those faith traditions also are anchored in values that we all hold dear, so I invite you to join in this prayer of thankfulness. Let us pray:

Blessed are you, God of creation,
for you have given us the world to keep and to till.
You have given us all the creatures of the earth
to care for and to enjoy.
We are thankful to be together in celebration and
we pray that you bless the farmers, gardeners and homemakers;
the vendors, entertainers and educators;
and all who have helped make this special event happen.
Bless, too, all those who come to experience the Fair,
so that truly it is an occasion for learning and recreation,
for fun and friendship,
and that it may promote a better appreciation
for all we have as a community in this County.
Blessed are you, God of creation, giver of all good gifts. Amen.

Note: this year's Allentown Fair Queen is a descendant of John Jacob Mickley whose wagon brought the Liberty Bell from Philadelphia on its journey to Allentown for safekeeping during the American Revolution!