

Monday, May 25, 2020

Dear Members, Friends, and Guests of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

A very blessed Memorial Day to you all. I started the day putting up a new flag holder so I can put our flag up at noon. My next-door neighbor from our old neighborhood has already sent me a photo of his flag. He and I have an ongoing contest to see who gets our flag up first on all national holidays. He tells me that now there is only one flag in the cul-de-sac.

I am reading *Gettysburg* by Stephen W. Sears. When Julie and I visited Gettysburg two years ago, a docent at the Visitor Center said that I should be sure to read Sears' book. I'm finally reading it and it is excellent. There were 51,000 casualties at Gettysburg which includes dead, wounded, and missing. Was this a waste? Absolutely not. What did it accomplish? It saved the Union and led to the abolition of slavery. On November 19, 1863 President Lincoln stood at Gettysburg and delivered a 269-word speech. On this Memorial Day, the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII, the last sentence of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address resonates:

“It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Our President has called for a Day of Prayer, asking that flags be at half-staff until noon. At 11 am we join in prayer for permanent peace and at 3 pm we have a Moment of Remembrance to remember the fallen. I'm so grateful to God for every life that was given for freedom and liberty so that we all can enjoy this day in peace and prayer.

Please read President's Trump Proclamation on Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 2020.

Blessings,

Pastor Martin