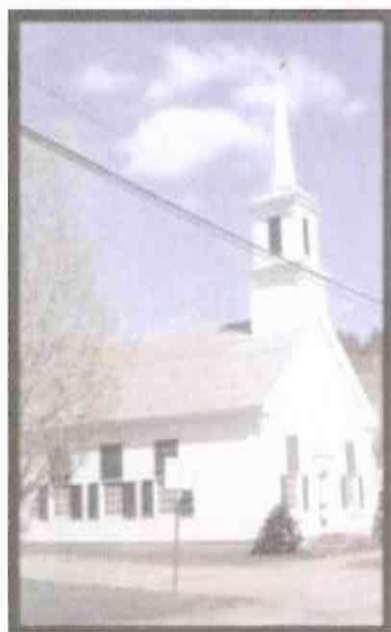


The Village Steeple

From the Pastor's Desk:

Memory and Hope



Earlier this week I spent some time walking in the cemetery behind Wilmington Congregational Church. I was struck by the number of American flags decorating the graves this week and, on closer inspection, I saw that many were marking the final resting places of Civil War veterans. I was awed at how even now, 135 years after the close of the Civil War, we never fail to remember those who served.

As on Mother's Day, pastors sometimes feel a little uncertain about acknowledging Memorial Day in the church. It is not a liturgical holiday, but rather a national one, so some feel it should rightfully be celebrated in the community and not the church. I understand the

argument, but I ultimately believe that it is important for us to remember Memorial Day as a community of faith.

We do this for several reasons. First, we value each life lost as that of a child of God. Second, our own congregation has lost members to war and, no matter how distant they may now be in our memory, we remember that they once sat in the same pews we now occupy. And finally, we acknowledge that those who served did so not because they loved war, but because they believed they had to stand up for greater principles. While as Christians we always try to first choose non-violent means of change, we also (cont.)

This Week's Lectionary Texts

Trinity Sunday

Proverbs 8:1-31

Psalm 8

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

May 28 – Rebecca Schoonmaker

June 02 – Alan Jones & Sharain Moivich

May 28 – Kelly Murphy

May 29 – Nell Domina

PASTOR'S NOTE (CONT.)

understand that there have been times in our nation's history where that choice was not an option.

There are several theories about the origins of Memorial Day, but this one resonates with me in particular. In 1865 a group of freed slaves is said to have decided to give Union dead who had previously been buried in an unmarked, mass grave a proper burial. It was their gratitude for the soldiers' sacrifice, along with their general sense of decency, that created this holiday.

It is a lesson not lost on us as Christians. Living a genuinely Christian life often means standing up for what is right, and offering our gratitude to those who have

suffered for it. Service members are prime examples, but we can all think of many others as well. What we rightfully do for our veterans on Memorial Day can serve as an example of how we should remember all who stand for the greater good.

Many of the theologians I have read contend that the Christian life came down to two things: memory and hope. We remember what God has done for us, and we hope that God's will may ultimately be done here on earth.

The same is true for those who fight and die. May we remember their sacrifice, and may we hope and pray for a day when God's peace is so present here on earth that it is no longer needed.

Church Sale on May 29th!

Don't forget to tell your friends and neighbors to join us this Saturday. Donations of items are pouring in, and lots of baked goods are being prepared right now! Special thanks to Mindy Childs for her hard work organizing this event!

This Week's Link:

Military, Family and Community
Network of VT



The MFCNetwork aims to connect VT veterans and their families with community resources, particularly around deployment times. VT has the highest percentage of deployed personnel of any state, and this group connects our service families with the resources they may need.

<http://www.uvm.edu/~vtmfcn/>

Calendar

Sunday, May 30

Worship at WDCC, 9am
Coffee Hour, 10am

Tuesday, June 1

LKG, 4pm

Wednesday, June 2

Coffee Hour at WDCC, 8am
Pastor's Drop-in Hours, 1-3pm

Thursday, June 3

Deacons, 8am
VT Conference Annual Meeting
(Through Saturday, Emily away.)

Saturday, June 5

A.A., 8pm

STAYING CONNECTED

Your pastor is available to you at all times of day and night, and particularly in emergencies.

If you or a loved one are sick, hospitalized or in crisis please call (802) 258-1143 at any time.

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