

Sunday, June 14, 2020

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

Today is Flag Day. Early this morning I was making coffee when Julie reminded me that we had to get our flag up to beat our former next-door neighbor Randy, in being the first one to have a flag out especially on patriotic days. I took a picture and sent it to him at 6:15. Five minutes later I got a text, "Got me, I got too lazy." He beat me on Memorial Day so now we are even. I told him that last week in California there were people who said that they would burn down any house where they saw a flag displayed. My friend said, "Let them come and try it." Then I texted, "God Bless America." He immediately returned with, "God Bless America."

The flag has become a symbol of racism for some. It isn't that for me. To me, it is still a symbol of freedom. I've done hundreds of funerals and have watched the flag ceremony and color guard and the presentation of a folded American flag to the family. I was at the graduation of two sons after boot camp, one a Marine and one a Coast Guardsman and I teared up with the arrival of the color guard and flags with everyone standing. To be clear, I don't worship the flag and I don't worship America, I worship my Lord Jesus Christ. But I live in America and I am deeply troubled by what I see.

Flag Day is not a national holiday. It celebrates our flag and was established on June 14, 1777: "Resolved, That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

I guess the country will do what it wants. For Julie and me, we will fly the flag and keep asking God to bless America, 'representing a new constellation', not the bad parts, but all the good parts.

Blessings,

Pastor Martin