



# The Federated Church of Hyannis

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**Reverend Derek L. White, Pastor**

## **Special Message and Sermon Notes for May 30, 2021.**

The Church had a wonderful first Sunday back with in-person worship. It was the perfect Sunday to gather together in fellowship. Each day is now a new journey forward in faith and hope as we serve the Lord together.

This Sunday will be a special service of remembrance as we honor past members of the church who have served in the Arm Forces. The names of the veterans in the church cemetery will be read aloud and the bell will be tolled one time for each veteran after the service. We plan to gather on the sidewalk in front of the church for the tolling of the bell. We recognized that there are many members of the Federated Church who have served. To all the Gold Star Families in our community, we lift you up in prayer.

The Church Reopening Committee and Parking Lot Committee are working on the transition plan from COVID restrictions to resuming normal operations for the church again. More details will be given soon from those committees. For the most up to date information, please call the church office.

On June 23rd & 30th there will be two church suppers with the book group at the church. Kent Keith, the Author of “Do It Anyway; The Paradoxical Commandments”, will join the group on June 30th for a live discussion via Zoom at the church. Please call to RSVP a spot for the supper.

Rev. Derek L. White  
Pastor, The Federated Church of Hyannis

## **SERMON NOTES: “Standing in the Gap”**

**SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 22:23-30**

### **Introduction**

The term “Standing in the Gap” refers to those who take an oath to secure and defend against opposing forces that seek to do harm. They hold the ground so that no advance can be made in the areas that may be vulnerable. It means a line has been drawn, and in order to hold the line it requires those willing to take a stand and defend it from being breached. But “Standing in the Gap” also refers to those who act to preserve peace and justice for all, because if the line should fail, the Lord’s wrath may ensue.

This Memorial Day we recognize and honor all those who have stood in the gap. War is always a tragic endeavor. But even more tragic at times, is to remain silent to injustice. And from time to time some must stand in the gap to oppose such injustices that would exploit and deny the natural rights given by God such as life, liberty, and the protection of property and prosperity (the pursuit of happiness).

### **PART I.**

There is a story of King David and Nathan the prophet. Nathan comes to David and says there is a man who had hundreds of sheep, but when his guests arrived for dinner, he took the one sheep his neighbor owned and killed it to serve to his guests. David becomes enraged by the report of the man who slaughtered his neighbor’s sheep. Then Nathan explains to David that what he did by stealing Bathsheba is no different than the man who stole his neighbor’s sheep. Bathsheba was married to a man named Uriah who was a Hittite serving in David’s army. After David committed adultery with Bathsheba, he gave orders to his generals to have Uriah in the center when the fighting was the hardest in battle and then pull everyone back to leave him exposed. Uriah died in battle because of this. What David did was wrong.

### **PART II.**

The world is not so different today than it was during King David’s time. Good people can easily make terrible choices.

The tradition of Memorial Day goes back to the Civil War. It was originally called Decoration Day because families from both the Union and Confederate soldiers would gather and decorate the graves of those who had died in the war. It took decades to recover and a lot of grace to reconcile from the bloodiest war in American history. Here we are over a hundred and fifty years later and some would argue the healing process is still on-going.

This past week I was able to place flags in the cemetery out back with Pam Brown, Bill Donle, and Donna Donle. The majority of our veterans buried in the church cemetery are from the Civil War. The truth is the North and the South were entrenched in opposing views regarding slavery. And in order to stop the evil practice of slavery, it required volunteers willing to stand in the gap. Volunteers willing to hold the line.

### **PART III.**

To all who have had to make the difficult choice of taking a necessary stand because terrible decisions have been made, we honor their courage and bravery. The reality is that decisions were made that ultimately spiraled into chaos. And when that happened, we know some made the ultimate sacrifice to restore order and balance.

It requires courage to stand in the gap and hold the line until escalation of force can be de-escalated. In order for there to be justice, there must all be those who would oppose injustice. In order for there to be peace, there must be those who would oppose actions that lead to unrest. In order for there to be security there must be those who would oppose hostility. There will always be a need for those who would stand in the gap.

### **Conclusion**

There is always the opportunity to listen, to be compassionate, and to seek reasonable solutions. But we live in a world where reason is easily ignored, and that often leads to escalation. It requires courageous souls to hold the line until such time that a solution can be found to de-escalate conflict.

To all those who have stood in the gap, we remember their sacrifice this Memorial Day. And to the Gold Star families in our community, we lift you up in prayer. Amen.