

June 14, 2020

“Old Glory”

Prayer of Illumination: Prepare our hearts, O Lord, to accept your word. Silence in us any voice but your own; that, hearing, we may also obey your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (The Worship Book, 1970, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.))

Scripture Reading: Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 9:35-38, 10:1

Devotion:

During the American Revolutionary War, our national leaders of the Continental Congress realized the need for a distinctive American flag. After much discussion, the first *Stars and Stripes* was adopted on June 14, 1777. The flag resolution states: “That the flag of the thirteen United States to be thirteen stripes, alternately red and white, that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.” (David Crouthers, Flags of American History, 1973) The *Stars and Stripes* was born in the midst of combat; it was a banner of people in travail, giving birth to a new nation founded upon liberty and freedom. General George Washington has been claimed to say, “We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty.” (Crouthers, 1973)

Flag Day, today, June 14th, allows us to see *Old Glory* flying proudly. Nothing has really changed about our nation’s flag except the number of stars added to the canton, the union of the flag. The flag still flies for a people of travail, the United States of America, who are living through civil strife to correct two inherited national wrongs: racial inequality and injustice. Our country’s history tells us we were founded upon correcting national wrongs whether it be in war or in civil strife. On March 5, 1770, *Old Glory* did not exist, but a concept of a new nation was conceived in America’s womb in the rumble and tumble on the streets of Boston. Some historians pick the civil strife and riot known as the Boston Massacre to have been the actual starting point for the American Revolution. A total of six Americans died in the Boston Massacre including the leader of the American mob, Crispus Attucks, who was the first to be killed. Crispus Attucks was a former slave. His father was an African slave and his mother was Native American. No doubt, the meaning of *Old Glory* lived in Crispus Attucks’ soul.

Our nation continues to be enlightened and shaped by what it means that all men and women are “created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Crispus Attucks and the countless others of African and Native American descent have blessed our nation. Our nation is changing for the better and Old Glory is in the midst of it. Civil strife is in each American's DNA. We are a people who strive to correct wrongs to make things right.

Amen.

Prayers of Intercessory and Supplication: (Ask people what they wish to pray for today, briefly inquire about it, and pray for them. Ask them to join in your prayer.)

The Lord's Prayer: (Say the prayer in unison.) Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Blessing: "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord be kind and gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26)