

Dear Fellow Members,

A warm and partially sunny day today marks the beginning of the summer season with Memorial Day weekend, although a partial pandemic cloud remains with us. I trust that despite that we may all see some of the sunshine in the partial reopening of our Franklin County next Friday, meaning that very soon we'll be gathering again at church according to the guidelines of the yellow phase as outlined in Bert's message on Thursday. It will be so good to see you, even at a little distance and wearing our masks.

Well, that's some progress, and after months of wondering whether there could even be graduation ceremonies, this week Shelley and I were overjoyed to receive the invitation to attend the modified graduation ceremonies for our granddaughter, Chloe, in Johnstown, and our grandson, Ethan, in Mechanicsburg. Just as soon as we closed out the email memories of my own high school graduation flooded my mind, and I found myself pulling the 1965 yearbook with my name on the front of the shelf for a trip down memory lane.

The next morning when I saw "Old Glory" briskly waving in celebration of our annual Memorial Day to honor those who gave the supreme sacrifice in service to our country a profound memory of three of those classmates in our yearbook who are among this esteemed group returned to me.

Joseph H. "Jose" Brubaker, Jr. was a commercial student who enjoyed the outdoors and belonged to the Sportsman's Club. He lived in Blue Ridge Summit and you may recall stopping at the "Gas Mart" at the top of the mountain on the left just before Happel's Meadow to buy some snacks and gas from the owners, his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph, Sr. Joe served as a USMC helicopter crew chief in Vietnam and he gave all on Feb. 4, 1969, leaving his beloved family and friends.

Stephen B. "Steve" Pugh was a general program student who excelled as an athlete. He was a member of the Indian Club, lettering in football, track & wrestling, and participated in the Sportsman Club, intramurals, and the class project. Steve lived on Marsh Road with his parents Ralph & Dorothy Pugh and his two brothers Bryce & Doug. He was married to Kathy L. Kendall Pugh. Prior to joining the service he was employed at Doubleday Publishing in Smithsburg. Steve served as a USMC helicopter crew chief in Vietnam and on September 29, 1968 he gave all, leaving his wife, Kathy, 4-month old son, Sean and the rest of his beloved family and friends.

Ernest L. "Ernie" Rowe was a general program student who lettered in soccer his senior year after playing for two years under coach Bob Stum. Ernie wrestled as a junior and participated in the Sportsman's Club as a sophomore. Ernie's parents, Mr. & Mrs. John W. Rowe, Jr. and brother, Randy resided at RD 1, Waynesboro. Prior to joining the service Ernie had worked at Grove Manufacturing of Shady Grove. Ernie served as a

US Army Specialist 4C in Vietnam and on September 25, 1968 he gave all, leaving his beloved family and friends.

Each Memorial Day as words of sacrifice and honor are spoken and we bow our heads and prayers are offered for our service men & women who gave their lives, I have a very special and fond remembrance of Joe, Steve and Ernie.

I trust that you, too, have those that you think of this weekend, and remember fondly. It always gives me some comfort as I think of them, especially on Monday.

Please remember that 3:00 pm on Monday, Memorial Day 2020, and every Memorial Day, Americans everywhere have the opportunity to stop, pause, and join together for the “National Moment of Remembrance” by joining our hearts and minds around the world in a moment of silence for our fallen heroes.

The weather forecast for next week sure looks great and I hope you'll be able to get outside to enjoy it! In addition to seeing you at worship and resuming our other activities, I'm really looking forward to our summer outside services and special events, such as the canoeing, kayaking & fishing trip!

I leave you with this Xavier University prayer for Monday: *“On this Memorial Day we pray for those who courageously laid down their lives for the cause of freedom. May the examples of their sacrifice inspire in us the selfless love of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Bless the families of our fallen troops, and fill their homes and their lives with Your strength and peace.”*

Take good care,  
Bob