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**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Pastor's Weekly Email

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" John 15:13

This coming Sunday, August 26th, we will be dedicating the Field of Flags, during our morning worship.

The Field of Flags was begun by the Somers Congregational Church in October 2005 as a visible tribute to remember those Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan . The flags were placed both to honor those who have died and to remind all those who view this living monument that these persons are remembered in the course of our days.

Since its beginning in Somers in 2005, the Field of Flags has been on display at over 50 locations. The flags will be in place at First Church until September 14th.

During the dedication portion of this in our service on Sunday, Ms. Luanne Crosby will sing a song she has written, entitled Field of Flags, which was inspired by this living monument. We are pleased to have Ms. Crosby with us in worship this Sunday. We are also pleased to announce that Mr. George Apel, Mayor of Vernon and a long time member of First Church , will be with us to bring greetings from the town.

Many thanks to Linda Shivers and Brad Leonard for their efforts in arranging for the Field of Flags to be here. The flags will be set up during the morning of August 24th. Many thanks to all those who are volunteering to assist with this set-up.

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Next Sunday, September 2nd, during our morning worship, we will share in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Last week, I watched a very moving film, Of Gods and Men. This is a DVD which is available through Netflix and (hopefully) RedBox. I can't recall a movie which has moved me as this one did. I was inspired (although not a feel-good inspiration, more like a "Wow, what would I do?" inspiration) and haunted by this film. It is the story of a group of Trappist monks in Algeria in the mid-1990's. They are serving as a medical missionary outreach to a largely Muslim population during a time when that nation was embroiled in a civil conflict and as Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism is beginning to take hold. Their struggle is whether to stay or leave the country in a time of increasing threats to their safety and well-being.

In my sermon that day, I will be using some illustrations from the movie. God willing, the message will be meaningful for anyone who has not seen the film, but I hope that for those who have seen or are able to see the film before then, the message will have deeper meaning.

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Rally Day--September 9th

Two teachers are needed September-May--one for grade 3 year/4 year/K and one for grade 6-8. Please contact Linda Shivers or Cindy Madden for more information.