



### Trail Guide for week of May 17:

The third Saturday in May is known as Armed Forces Day. The last Monday in May is known as Memorial Day. The first honors those men and women who are currently serving in one of our nation's armed forces. The second honors the memory of those men and women who have died while serving in the military. They have given the ultimate service.

The subject of our scripture reading yesterday was a man named Stephen. He answered the call to serve his Lord and his community of faith in the early church. His service? Waiting on tables in order to make sure that all of the widows – the most vulnerable – would be cared for equally. He is remembered as man “full of grace”. How's that for an identity? How many people do we know of whom it could be said, “She is full of grace. He is full of grace.”?

His second memorable attribute? Power. Not power as in Power Rangers; but power as in Holy-Spirit-power. Power to witness. Power to serve. Power to do the kind of things Jesus did. In his spare time, God used this full-of-grace-and-power individual to do some amazing things. We're not told what exactly these were, because Luke in writing was more concerned with the result, which was an opportunity for this individual who was *not* anyone especially notable, to give testimony, to bear witness, to the power of God throughout history.

Stephen, who answered the call to serve Christ and the early church, paid the ultimate price of service, giving his life while bearing witness to Christ. In fact, the Greek word for “witness” is *martyros*. You guessed it – it's the same word from which we get martyr – one who gives her life/his life for the cause of Christ. As you read this week, consider your witness in word and in deed. A witness simply points others to the work of God in Christ, that they heard or saw, or that is seen or heard in their lives. That's all. We're each called to be witnesses – not prosecutors, not defense lawyers, and certainly not judges. Just imagine.

- Mon, 5/17**      Judges 11:10 – Our call to witness flows from the grace of God who acts as witness to our faith, to our response, to our service, to our trust in God's healing and helping grace. How does this awareness bring comfort, hope, strength?
- Tue, 5/18**      Isaiah 43:10 – God “declares” – God doesn't “suggest” doesn't “recommend”. No, God “declares” that you and I are witnesses – *God's* witnesses. God has no one else. Imagine an innocent person desperately waiting, fervently hoping, that someone will have the courage to come forward and bear witness to for them...
- Wed, 5/19**      Isaiah 44:8 – God says, “Do not tremble. Do not be afraid.” Just think, how is an invisible God made visible?
- Thu, 5/20**      Luke 7:18-23 – the witness Jesus pointed to? The witness of healing grace to transform lives.
- Fri, 5/21**      Acts 1:8 – Why do we need power? Not simply to witness with words, but to be – to embody – the healing, saving grace of God in action.
- Sat, 5/22**      Acts 5:32 – To be a witness is to observe, to experience, firsthand that of which we bear witness. what firsthand experience do you have of Jesus, and to which you might give witness?

10:00 am – Streaming our worship ([www.leesburgumc.org](http://www.leesburgumc.org))  
or Facebook ([Leesburg United Methodist](#))  
11:00 am – LUMC sanctuary, in-person; Livestream  
(*please [pre-register online for in-person worship](#)*)