

An Open Invitation for Churches on the 75th Anniversary of D-Day

This summer marks a major milestone: the 75th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy, France known as D-Day, June 6, 1944. The Allied invasion of Normandy, code-named "Operation Overlord," was the largest seaborne invasion in the history of the world, landing on a 50-mile wide (80-kilometer) stretch of sand divided into five sections: Gold, Juno, Sword, Utah and Omaha beaches on the shores of Nazi-occupied France.

The night before, more than 24,000 American, British and Canadian airborne troops parachuted behind the enemy lines into France to secure bridges and landing zones as well as to protect the invasion's flank. Due to heavy fighting by D-Day plus one, only two beaches were linked up. The towns of Carentan, St. Lo and Bayeux remained under German control, and Caen, a major objective, was not captured until two weeks later on July 21.

Casualties that day were over 10,000, with 4,414 confirmed dead.

At Pointe du Hoc, a rocky 100-foot cliff point protecting a German artillery battery of 155 mm howitzers reinforced with 88 mm guns between Omaha and Utah beaches was assaulted by the 2nd Ranger Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. James Earl Rudder. The battle raged for another two days up and over the cliffs to secure the enemy positions. Of the 225 men who began the assault, only 90 were able to continue fighting. The remainder were killed or wounded.

Anniversary Celebrations

This summer marks the 75th Anniversary of the landings on D-

Day, in which grand celebrations and remembrance ceremonies will occur at the American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-mer, France with President Trump, French President Macron, British Prime Minister May and Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau along with other heads of state and VIPs attending. A full state visit of President Trump, the queen and U.K. Prime Minister May will coincide with the anniversary celebrations.

We are asking you to join with us in remembering the sacrifice of the many brave men who landed in Normandy, those who died and also all of the veterans who fought in WWII. This summer most likely will be the last time D-Day veterans will be alive to commemorate the historic landings at Omaha Beach at the American Cemetery in Colleville-sur-mer, France.

Join Us!

We are asking you to join with us to honor and celebrate the courage, sacrifice and achievement of the greatest generation. We owe them a debt of gratitude that never can be repaid.

Throughout this spring and summer, the 75th Anniversary of D-Day will be celebrated in Europe with emotion, grandeur and pride. An unprecedented program of events will occur across the Continent with military parades, church services, fireworks, concerts, reenactments, television programs and times of reflection.

We are inviting churches to join with us remembering and celebrating D-Day. Churches across Europe with the Resistance played a vital role in D-Day and WWII. This June, special church services and events will occur the week before, during and after D-Day in Europe and elsewhere.

There is no special church or event format. We leave the creativity, multimedia format, the energy and planning in your hands to honor those D-Day and WWII veterans near you and across the nation.

D-Day information presentation for churches

Here is a presentation with some information that will help you plan your church services and events here.

Thank you for joining with us, for praying and participating on this great occasion. And as SHAEF Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower said that fateful morning: "Good luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking."