

Love, Sacrifice, and the Spirit that Binds Us

As we move through the month of May here in Lillian, Alabama, the coastal breeze seems to carry more than just the scent of spring; it brings a beautiful progression of faith, love, and remembrance as we celebrate four profound moments: Mother's Day, The Day of Pentecost, Memorial Day, and Trinity Sunday.

On May 10, we focus on the Heart of a mother. We honor the women who first showed us the meaning of unconditional love. A mother's care is often our first earthly glimpse of God's own nurturing heart. Whether through a quiet prayer, a shared meal, or a steady hand, mothers reflect the patience and "deep love" that sustain our families here in Lillian.

On May 24, we celebrate the Day of Pentecost, the official birthday of the Church. It is the historic day when the Church received the Fire of the Holy Spirit that equips us to replace our fear with boldness, giving us the courage and the right words to share God's love with others. Like a "refiner's fire," it purifies our hearts, burning away old habits and refining our character to be more like Christ. Pentecost provides us with supernatural energy and specific spiritual gifts, which enable us to help, lead, and care for our neighbors in ways we couldn't do on our own. We remember the day the Holy Spirit descended like tongues of fire, empowering believers to speak across boundaries the message of New Life and Resurrection Power.

On May 25, with grateful hearts, we honor the Sacrifice of the Fallen on Memorial Day. While other holidays celebrate those who served, this day is set aside to honor those who never came home. That weight is felt in our acknowledgement that our daily liberties were "bought" by the lives of others. It is a day that shifts our focus from personal liberty to communal gratitude. This day calls us to a different kind of solemnity. We rightly pause to honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Their selflessness reminds us of the biblical truth that "greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

On May 31, we end the month Celebrating the Holy Mystery of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—on Trinity Sunday. This is a day to marvel at the mystery of our "one God in three persons." It teaches us that at the center of the universe, there is a relationship, a perfect unity that we are all invited to join. The Trinity is our way of experiencing the one true God that created us, became one with us, laying down His life and defeating sin and death through Jesus, and never leaving or forsaking us through the presence of His Holy Spirit. God, our creator, redeemer, and sustainer, is with us always.

If we look for a common thread through these four days, we find it in the words of Jesus in John 15. He speaks of a love that nurtures, a sacrifice that saves, and a Spirit that connects us to the Father. Whether we are honoring a mother's hug, a soldier's service, or the mystery of the Divine, we are ultimately celebrating the same thing: a God who loved us enough to stay with us, in every form and every season. From the love of a mother and the sacrifice of our heroes to the power of the Spirit and the unity of the Trinity, may this season remind you that you are never alone. In John 15:12-13, 26, Jesus tells us, *"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends... When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me."*

We invite you to join us at Lillian Methodist Church as we celebrate these milestones together during our Sunday morning worship services at 8 or 10 AM, May 10 for Mother's Day, May 24 as we celebrate The Day of Pentecost and remember the fallen on Memorial Day weekend, and May 31 on Trinity Sunday.