



# The Twig Bender

May 2021

## Pray For:

### Our Nation

Those Affected by COVID19

Our homebound and

Shut-in members

Our church leaders

Lacye Ryan

Porter Schermerhorn

Jaden Shuler

Dana Springinklee's Family

Connie Via's Family

## God as Mother?

By Steve Stalnaker

This month we observe several important occasions: Ascension Day (May 13; page 3), Day of Pentecost (May 23; page 2), Trinity Sunday (May 30; page 4), Peace with Justice Sunday (Also May 30; page 6) and Mother's Day on Sunday, May 9.



Just as God is  
our Father, so  
God is also  
our Mother.

— Julian of Norwich

While we should be honoring God every day, we might not usually think of Mother's Day as an

occasion to pay special tribute to our Lord. This is because we generally refer to God as "Father." But doesn't God sometimes act like a mother?

Jesus addressed and referred to God as "Father," which is good enough for me. In the non-PC world of the First Century Roman Empire, writers (the Apostles) and orators (Jesus) probably didn't see the need to use the modern "he/she" combo when referring to someone in the third person. These days that may be popular with some writers or speakers, but I'll leave that discussion to folks who find such

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# What is Pentecost?

By Linda Walker

Pentecost is celebrated this year on May 23 in the United Methodist Church. Have you ever wondered “What is Pentecost?” I did some research and learned a lot I’d like to share with you.



Pentecost is the day that God sent His Holy Spirit to breathe life into His church so the church would be all that God intended for it to be. Before God sent His Holy Spirit, the church was lifeless. The church was not witnessing or telling people about Jesus.

The story in Acts 2 describes a powerful wind and tongues of fire as the Holy Spirit was poured out on people from all over the world who came to Jerusalem to celebrate a Jewish feast. At the first Pentecost, over 3,000 people were baptized, creating the first church. This is why Pentecost is known as the birthday of the Christian church.

The word “Pentecost” comes from a Greek word meaning “fiftieth.” The Jewish Festival of *Shavuot* (meaning “weeks” in Hebrew) falls on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the Passover. On that day, God gave the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Christian festival of Pentecost falls on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the resurrection of Jesus.



*Wear Red for  
Pentecost*

The color red is historically associated with Pentecost. Red is a visual reminder of the “tongues of fire” that empowered the apostles and others to proclaim the good news of Christ’s resurrection.

Please take a few minutes to read Acts 2 in the Bible. I hope to see you, dear reader, at Greenwood United Methodist Church’s worship service on May 23 **wearing red** to remind us of the fire of the Spirit.



# Ascension Day

*By Joe Iovino of United Methodist Communications; first published in 2017.*

Forty days after Easter — May 13 this year — is just another Thursday for many of us as we go about our ordinary weekday routines. The event it celebrates, Christ's Ascension, is however, an important episode in the life of Jesus that the church has regarded highly through the years.

Our United Methodist worship resources explain, "The language of Ascension is, primarily, language of enthronement. It is Jesus ascending to His full authority."

Luke tells the story of Jesus' ascension both at the end of His Gospel (*Luke 24:50-53*) and the beginning of His writing about the early church (*Acts 1:9-11*).

Our creeds affirm the Ascension as a central doctrine of the Christian faith. The Apostles' Creed reads, "he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty." The Nicene Creed similarly states, "he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father."

Our United Methodist forebear, John Wesley, emphasized the day by including it as one of three non-Sunday holy day observances included in his *Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America* — a forerunner of our *Book of Worship*. The other two such days are Good Friday and Christmas Day.

Our *United Methodist Hymnal* contains the Charles Wesley hymn "Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise" (312). The lyrics for this hymn, an adaptation of Charles's "Hymn for Ascension-Day" published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), offer insight into the importance of this day.

While much of the world may see Ascension Day as just another Thursday, United Methodists can celebrate. With John and Charles Wesley, we remember that Jesus ascended to heaven where He took His rightful throne as Lord of the whole earth. Though He is not bodily present, He continues to love us, and longs to receive us into the presence of God to dwell with Him throughout eternity.



# Trinity Sunday

*Compiled from the UMC Lectionary and other resources*

Trinity Sunday, May 30 this year, is the first Sunday after the Pentecost. It is the beginning of a long season that takes us all the way through the rest of the liturgical year until we reach Advent next Nov. 28.

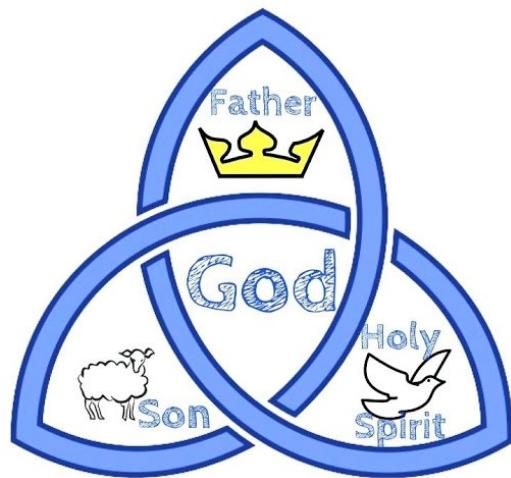
On Trinity Sunday we begin a lengthy journey chronicling an important part of the church's story. The first half of the liturgical year, from Advent until Pentecost, is Jesus' story. On Pentecost the story becomes how the followers of Christ seek to live out Jesus' call to discipleship and how we keep Jesus' commandments.

We begin that story not with a reflection on our humanness but on the unique nature of God as we have come to experience God's presence. We turn to our Creator first. This is partially a reminder that we are who we are because of Who God is. Our identity is in God. Our story is wrapped up in "God's Story."

We should resist the urge to find the perfect metaphor to explain the concept of Trinity: God in Three Persons. I wrote about God wearing three "hats" in a previous newsletter. Other metaphors that come to mind include the three-leaved clover or the three states of water.

Unfortunately, any metaphor we can come up with reduces the immensity of God into something comprehensible, and therefore something less than the true nature of God.

On this Trinity Sunday, let's concentrate, not on defining God in Three Persons, but on how we can carry out Jesus' great commission: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19 — NIV).



# Aldersgate Day

Downloaded from [Ask UMC](#), a ministry of United Methodist Communications

Aldersgate Day is celebrated on May 24 to commemorate the day, in 1738, when John Wesley experienced assurance of his salvation.



John Wesley

Wesley had reluctantly attended a group meeting that evening on Aldersgate Street in London. As he heard a reading from Martin Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*, he felt his "heart strangely warmed."

Wesley wrote in his journal that, at about 8:45 p.m., "while he [the reader] was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Only a few days before, Charles Wesley had also had a conversion experience in a building that still stands on an adjacent block (John Bray's house on Little Britain). We do not know whether the building where John Wesley's experience took place still exists, nor exactly in which building on Aldersgate Street it may have been, if it still stands. A monument at the London Museum on Aldersgate Street marks where some believe the building may have been.

Over time, Aldersgate Street has been shortened by common Methodist usage to simply Aldersgate. The word has come to represent both the place and John Wesley's experience.



*Our May  
Communion Offering Goes to  
CARITAS*

# Peace with Justice Sunday

*Downloaded from the UMC Lectionary*

In a world plagued by war and terror, violence and destruction, people of faith have a clear call to build peace. Scripture calls for followers of Christ to love our enemies (*Matthew 5:44-45a*), to forgive others their trespasses (*Matthew 6:14-15*), to overcome evil with good (*Romans 12:21*), to seek and pursue peace (*Psalm 34:14*). Peacemakers are blessed and called the children of God (*Matthew 5:9*).

The *United Methodist Social Principles*, ¶165.C puts it this way:

"As disciples of Christ, we are called to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as reconcilers of conflict. We must insist that the first moral duty of all nations is to work together to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them."

Peace with Justice Sunday on May 30 is one of the special giving Sundays of The United Methodist Church. On the first Sunday after Pentecost each year United Methodists celebrate efforts across the connection that are building peace.

Because of the Peace with Justice Sunday offering, the people of The United Methodist Church are able to make a difference together by sowing the seeds—and the yielding fruit—of peace.



## Got Graduates?

Know anyone — kids, grandkids, god-children, neighbors and so on — graduating from someplace significant like high school, college, Marine boot camp or elsewhere?

By May 28, send us the grad's name, where they're graduating from, their relationship to you and where they're going. Then we'll list that info in the June edition. You can email the church office ([admin@gumcva.org](mailto:admin@gumcva.org)) call the editor (804-755-6767) or drop your information in the offering plate.

## *With Love to All Our Mothers — Biological and Surrogate Things My Mother Taught Me*

My mother taught me to APPRECIATE A JOB WELL DONE: "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning."

My mother taught me RELIGION: "You'd better pray that will come out of the carpet."

My mother taught me about TIME TRAVEL: "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"

My mother taught me LOGIC. "Because I said so, that's why."

My mother taught me MORE LOGIC: "If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the store with me."

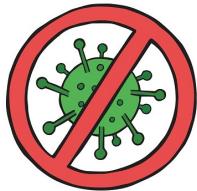
My mother taught me FORESIGHT: "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."

My mother taught me IRONY: "Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about."

My mother taught me about THE SCIENCE OF OSMOSIS: "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."

My mother taught me about CONTORTIONISM: "Will you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!"

My mother taught me about STAMINA: "You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone."



## *Pandemic Protocols Update*

As we go to press, further loosening of coronavirus-related restrictions on businesses and social gatherings are being announced.

Beginning May 15 sports and entertainment venues may offer expanded capacity, and social gathering limits will be increased. The state's existing mask mandate will not be lifted.

How this will affect in-person worship and other gatherings at Greenwood and Laurel Park is not yet determined. The Virginia Conference UMC protocols are not yet updated. Once they are, Greenwood's Healthy Church Team (HCT) will evaluate what we can and can't do. Watch the *Quarantine Quips*, your email and the church website for up-to-the-minute news. And keep praying, too.

## Food Donation Connection

We are looking for someone to pick up on every other Thursday. Lewis had to stop because of changes in his work schedule. Give Adamarye a call at 266-6364 if you would like to volunteer. It takes around one hour to pick up and bring the donated food items back to church.

### ***May Pick Up Rotation***

Wednesday, May 5: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, May 6: Susan Johnston; Friday, May 7: Carolyn and Ray Smith.

Wednesday, May 12: Charley Banks; Thursday, May 13: Susan Johnston; Friday, May 14: Adamarye and Riley Patteson.

Wednesday, May 19: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, May 20: Susan Johnston; Friday, May 21: Adamarye and Riley Patteson.

Wednesday, May 26: Charley Banks; Thursday, May 27: Susan Johnston; Friday, May 28: Carolyn and Ray Smith.

Wednesday, June 2: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, June 3: Susan Johnston; Friday, June 4: Adamarye and Riley Patteson.



## Greenwood's Women's Circles

**The Ruth Circle** will meet Tuesday, May 4 at 2 p.m. in Adamarye's home. We will be assembling school kits to give to Longdale Elementary School. This is taking place instead of kits for conference.



**The Willing Workers Circle** held a combined April-May meeting last month. We are continuing to recognize the "Teacher of the Month" at Longdale Elementary School. We feel like this is a particularly important ministry with the restrictions that teachers are having to deal with. We are planning on honoring mothers, and those women who are surrogate mothers to us, this month on Mother's Day, May 9.

# God as Mother?

(Continued from page 1)

things important.

Yet throughout the Bible there are instances of God showing attributes of motherhood, attributes to which all mothers should aspire. Some of these include:

"As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you." *Isaiah 66:13 NRSV*.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." *Deuteronomy 32:11 KJV*

"... now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant." *Isaiah 42:14-15. NIV*

Jesus told the parable of the Mother Hen in *Matthew 23:37* and *Luke 13:34*.

So is God Father or Mother? What difference does it make? *God is the all-loving parent*, Who, among other things, presents examples to which all mothers and fathers should strive.

Remember that God, the good Parent, will always be there for us: "The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." (*Psalm 121:8 NIV*). And God's own Son, Jesus the Christ, added "... I am with you always, to the end of the age." (*Matthew 28:20 NRSV*.) So our good Parent and our good "Big Brother" both *have our backs*.



**GREENWOOD'S ON FACEBOOK:**  
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GUMCVA](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GUMCVA)



# Enjoy the Outdoors?

Do you like being in the great outdoors? Like fresh air and sunshine? Then Greenwood has a wonderful opportunity for you! Join our grass cutting and weed eating detail. If you would like to volunteer for this uplifting opportunity call Bob Stapleton at 804-672-8408 or email [rbrtstapleton@yahoo.com](mailto:rbrtstapleton@yahoo.com).

## May Grass Cutting Detail

Your Trustees have established a volunteer rotation for cutting the grass on the church grounds this summer. This month's schedule is:

- Week of May 3: .....Bob Stapleton
- Week of May 10: .....Lewis Daniel
- Week of May 17: .....Harry Shuler
- Week of May 24: .....Bob Stapleton
- Week of May 31..... Lewis Daniel



## Pre-Packaged Communion Elements

Pre-packaged, already-consecrated Communion elements are available for those not planning to attend in-person Communion services.

Pick up elements Wednesday through Friday at the Greenwood church office, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. during the last week of each month for the next month's Communion.



## Sign Up for Altar Flowers

Don't forget the 2021 flower calendar posted in the back hall. You're invited to donate altar flowers in memory of or in honor of, those you'd like to remember.

Cost of the altar flowers is \$20; please pay in advance.



## A Prayer to Eradicate the Coronavirus

Father God, in the mighty Name of Jesus, we come to You asking for forgiveness of our sins and healing of hearts and minds all over this world.

We are standing and trusting in Your promise. You said in Your Word that by Your stripes we are healed. We ask for the coronavirus to be eradicated from our bodies and land.

Father God, we pray for all the leadership in the world including the President. We ask You to touch the minds and hearts of our leaders. We humbly ask that Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We pray a special blessing of protection over the ones who are on the front lines, risking their own lives to help others. And bless those who are reading this prayer and passing it on to others.

We humbly ask for Victory in the Name of Jesus. AMEN.

—Contributed by Nancy Lloyd



## Tax Day Postponed to May 17

*From the IRS:* Individual taxpayers can **postpone** federal income tax payments for the 2020 tax year to **May 17, 2021**, without penalties and interest, regardless of the amount owed. Individual taxpayers do not need to file any forms or call the IRS to qualify for this automatic federal tax filing and payment relief.



## Greenwood Stewardship

Despite COVID quarantines and restricted gatherings, Greenwood's expenses still must be paid. Giving is down from last year. We need \$2,424 per week to meet expenses. Here's how we're doing:

	<i>Giving Towards Budget</i>	<i>Percent of Need</i>
April	\$6,219	64%
Year So Far	\$24,746	60%



### Sunday Virtual Worship

Every Sunday at 11 a.m. at Greenwood  
And on Zoom ([click here](#)) or dial 301-715-8592  
Meeting ID: 829 5710 1589; password: 929829



Also on Facebook Live

### Tuesday Prayer Call

Every Tuesday, 8 to 8:15 a.m. on Zoom ([click here](#)) or dial 301-715-8592  
Meeting ID: 851 1374 4202; password: 452446

## Be Prepared – Read the Scriptures

### May Lectionary Readings

May 2	Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8.
May 9: Mother's Day	Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17.
May 16	Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 47; Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53.
May 23: Pentecost	Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15.
May 30: Trinity Sunday	Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17.



# Greenwood Church Family Birthdays

Izabel Stalnaker .....	5/2	Lathan Shuler .....	5/13
Bob Stapleton .....	5/4	Mary Walker .....	5/19
Kendra Thomas.....	5/7	Bob Smith.....	5/28
Patricia Rios .....	5/7	Steve Stalnaker .....	5/30
Jeremiah Frazier .....	5/11		

## Anniversaries

Adamarye & Riley Patteson .....	5/2
Bobby & Jackie Schultz.....	5/8



*Don't see your birthday or wedding anniversary in The Twig Bender and would like to have us publish it? Send your dates to [admin@gumcva.org](mailto:admin@gumcva.org) or call the church office at 804-266-5341; likewise, let us know if you'd like your birthday or anniversary removed.*



## Twig Bender

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Lay Leader:

Lewis Daniel

Phone:

804-238-9318

Jackie Schultz

Email:

[josettefranklin@vaumc.org](mailto:josettefranklin@vaumc.org)

Acting Music Director:

Steve Stalnaker

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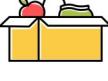
804-266-6668



# Greenwood United Methodist Church

## May 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH</b>						
2 Communion Sunday 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship	3 World Press Freedom Day 	4 Star Wars Day Nat'l Teacher's Day 2 p.m. Ruth Circle 	5 <i>Cinco de Mayo</i> 	6 Nat'l Day of Prayer 8 a.m. Prayer Call Nat'l Nurses Day 	7 6 p.m. Food Distribution 	8 VE Day Nat'l Train Day 
9 Mother's Day 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship 	10 Nat'l Clean Up Your Room Day 	11 8 a.m. Prayer Call 	12 Nat'l Third Shift Workers Day 	13 Ascension Day 	14 6 p.m. Food Distribution 	15 Nat'l Learn to Swim Day 
16 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship	17 Revised Tax Day 	18 8 a.m. Prayer Call 4 p.m. Finance Com. 4:30 p.m. Church Administrative Council	19 Boy's Club Day 	20 Pick Strawberries Day 	21 Twig Bender Deadline 6 p.m. Food Distribution 	22 Nat'l Maritime Day 
23 <b>Pentecost</b> 11 a.m. Worship  Peace with Justice Sunday	24 Aldersgate Day  30 Memorial Day (Obs.)	25 8 a.m. Prayer Call 	26 Nat'l Senior Health and Fitness Day 	27 Sun Screen Day 	28 6 p.m. Food Distribution 	29 Int'l Jazz Day 

# Mark Your Calendars

June 18 — 19.....	Virginia Annual Conference (Online)
June 20.....	Father's Day
July 4 .....	Independence Day
Sep. 6.....	Labor Day
Oct. 11.....	Columbus Day
Oct. 31.....	Halloween
Nov. 1.....	All Saints Day
Nov. 25.....	Thanksgiving Day
Nov. 28.....	First Sunday of Advent

## Our Mission

*The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

Matt. 28:19



## Our Vision

*Loving  
Growing  
Serving*

