Memorial Day

Excerpt from Psalm 31
"My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."

Reflection by Lillian Daniel
Memorial Day began after the Civil War as an effort toward reconciliation between the families of veterans in the North and the South. After the war, there was already a tradition in the North of decorating soldiers’ graves, called "Decoration Day." But in 1868 an organization of Northern war veterans decreed it ought to be a national holiday. May 30 was carefully chosen as the date because it was not the anniversary of a specific battle, and therefore would be a neutral date for both sides.

Memorial Day did become a time to remember all veterans, a time to visit the graves of family and friends, and to remember their lives. In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill moved three holidays off of their specific dates and onto Mondays, in order to create three-day weekends. Memorial Day came to be associated with the beginning of summer, as well as the Indianapolis 500.

Today, let us remember the spirit in which the day was conceived, as a way to bring together those who had once been bitter enemies. After the fighting is over, the loss and heartbreak are shared throughout the human family. God’s mercy pours out over all God’s children, with no respect for the borders of nation states, which are awfully temporary, from the perspective of eternity.

Prayer
On this day, we pray for comfort for all those who have lost a loved one to the ravages of war. We pray that the peace of Christ, which passes all human understanding, will knit together this weary and war-torn world.

Amen.

-written by Rodney Mundy