

Worship Service: MOTHER'S DAY (Sunday or closest day)

Welcome: Welcome! It's so good to be together to celebrate faith and community today. My name is ____ and I'll be leading our worship time today. Happy Mother's Day (today or coming up)! Who here is the child of a mother? Who here has cared for children during her life? We celebrate you today, a day of remembrance for our own family and our role in the family of God. Please join me in prayer as we open.

Opening Prayer: Great and loving God, we ask that your Holy Spirit bless our time together and to refresh us with your presence. In the midst of a world full of trouble and strife, we thank you for watching over us, guiding us, and especially forgiving us. Enable us to enter your presence joyfully and reverently, and let us depart today with the assurance that our sins are forgiven. Fill us, O God, with the peace which passes understanding. Amen.

Opening Hymn: Doxology, p. 1

Statement of Faith: Let us affirm our statement of faith by reciting Psalm 23 together:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Hymns:

For the Beauty of the Earth, p. 2

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us, p. 3

Amazing Grace, p. 4

First reading: Isaiah 66: 12-14

For thus says the Lord:

“Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,
and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream;
and you shall nurse, you shall be carried upon her hip,
and bounced upon her knees.

¹³ As one whom his mother comforts,
so I will comfort you;
you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

¹⁴ You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;
your bones shall flourish like the grass.

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

Hymns:

Holy, Holy, Holy, p. 5

Jesus Loves Me, p. 6

Second reading: Mark 3: 31-35

³¹ And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. ³² And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” ³³ And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴ And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

Hymns:

Softy and Tenderly, p. 7

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms, p. 8

Interactive Homily: Let’s talk more about mothers and what they mean to us.

- What are some words you’d use to describe your mother? any mother?
- What sorts of things did your mother teach you?
- What did your mother do around your house? in your community?

- But is motherhood only biological? That is, what about women who care for children that they didn't actually give birth to?
 - foster moms, adoptive moms, neighborhood moms, teachers, older sisters ... and don't forget single moms who are raising kids alone
 - There is such a thing as *spiritual maternity* – what makes that kind of motherhood special?
- Where do you think this quality of spiritual maternity comes from? Who is our heavenly parent?
 - We often attribute parental names to God: Father and Mother – because God embodies, even originates, these qualities: caring, loving, nurturing, safety, discipline, and guidance.
 - Jesus says whoever *does the will of God* is part of God's family, is under the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. Why is that? What does it mean when you're part of a family?
 - You act like one of the family!

... Let's take a moment to silently pray and reflect on blessing of mothers.

(Silent Prayer) ... Lord, in your love and mercy, hear our prayers. Now let us say the Lord's prayer together:

Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

Hymns:

This is My Father's World, p. 9

It is Well with My Soul, p. 10

Standing on the Promises, p. 11

Third Reading: Thoughts on Mothers

A teacher gave her class of second graders a lesson on the magnet and what it does. The next day in a written test, she included this question: "My full name has six letters. The first one is M. I pick up things. What am I?" When the test papers

were turned in, the teacher was astonished to find that almost half the students answered the question with the word Mother.

A little boy forgot his lines in a Sunday school presentation. His mother was in the front row to prompt him. She gestured and formed the words silently with her lips, but it did not help. Her son's memory was blank. Finally, she leaned forward and whispered the cue, "I am the light of the world." The child beamed and with great feeling and a loud clear voice said, "My mother is the light of the world."

A four-year-old and a six-year-old presented their Mom with a house plant. They had used their own money and she was thrilled. The older of them said with a sad face, "There was a bouquet that we wanted to give you at the flower shop. It was real pretty, but it was too expensive. It had a ribbon on it that said, 'Rest In Peace,' and we thought it would be just perfect since you are always asking for a little peace so that you can rest."

G.K. Chesterton described mother's work as being surrounded "with very young children, who need to be taught not so much anything but everything. Babies need not to be taught a trade, but to be introduced to a world. To put the matter shortly, a woman is generally shut up in a house with a human being at the time when he asks all the questions that there are, and some that there aren't ... Our race has thought it worthwhile to cast this burden on women in order to keep common-sense in the world."

Hymns:

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, p. 12

Shall We Gather at the River, p. 13

Fourth Reading:

To My Mother, by Wendell Barry

I was your rebellious son,
do you remember? Sometimes
I wonder if you do remember,
so complete has your forgiveness been.
So complete has your forgiveness been
I wonder sometimes if it did not
precede my wrong, and I erred,
safe found, within your love,

prepared ahead of me, the way home,
or my bed at night, so that almost
I should forgive you, who perhaps
foresaw the worst that I might do,
and forgave before I could act,
causing me to smile now, looking back,
to see how paltry was my worst,
compared to your forgiveness of it
already given. And this, then,
is the vision of that Heaven of which
we have heard, where those who love
each other have forgiven each other,
where, for that, the leaves are green,
the light a music in the air,
and all is unentangled,
and all is undismayed.

Hymns:

Blest Be the Tie that Binds, p. 14

I Need Thee Every Hour, p. 15

Closing Blessing: (Strike bell as you say the word “Lord”)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and grant you peace. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Doxology, p. 23