

SA, SL, TS and DSM United Churches

Mother's Day Sunday – May 12th, 2024

Prelude: – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning! Thank you for your support of all our services, which are posted on our websites - Southbuxton.ca and Talbotstreet.ca .

Thank you to Christie Coatsworth for our music this morning. Thank you to Tracey Major for putting together the Power Point slides.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Eric: Gather round all people who seek God's word and who have a love for God's creation.

People: **As we gather on this Sunday celebrating Mother's Day, we find joy in the loving relationships among us.**

Eric: In worship, we give thanks for those who bless us with their caring and concern.

Opening Hymn: VU 559 "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing"

Come, O Fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing your grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing
call for songs of endless praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it,
mount of God's unfailing love.

Here I pause in my sojourning,
giving thanks for having come,
come to trust, at every turning,
God will guide me safely home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wandering from the fold of God,
came to rescue me from danger,
precious presence, precious blood.

O, to grace how great a debt
or daily I am drawn anew!
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
bind my wandering heart to you.

Prone to wander, I can feel it,
wander from the love I've known:
here's my heart, O, take and seal it,
seal it for your very own.

Opening Prayer:

Free us, loving God, to perceive your whispers of direction. Open us, motivating Spirit, to act with compassion saturated with love. Equip us, living Christ, to go into the world to make a difference in your name. In all we learn, in all we embrace, and in all we do, may we know we are not alone, for you are with us always. Amen.

Children's Story:

Children's Hymn: "I Have a Friend..."

I have a friend who loves me,
who loves me, who loves me.
I have a friend who loves me
and Jesus is his name.

I have a friend who helps me,
who helps me, who helps me.
I have a friend who helps me
and Jesus is his name.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 1

The Way to Happiness

God blesses those people who refuse evil advice and won't follow sinners or join in sneering at God. **Instead, they find happiness in the Teaching of the Lord, and they think about it day and night.** They are like trees growing beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves.

Those people succeed in everything they do.

That isn't true of those who are evil— they are like straw blown by the wind.

Sinners won't have an excuse on the day of judgment, and they won't have a place with the people of God.

The Lord protects everyone who follows him, but the wicked follow a road that leads to ruin

Scripture: John 17: 6 - 19

You have given me some followers from this world, and I have shown them what you are like. They were yours, but you gave them to me, and they have obeyed you. They know that you gave me everything I have. I told my followers what you told me, and they accepted it. They know I came from you, and they believe you are the one who sent me. I am praying for them, but not for those who belong to this world. My followers belong to you, and I am praying for them. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine, and they will bring glory to me. Holy Father, I am no longer in the world. I am coming to you, but my followers are still in the world. So keep them safe by the power of the name you have given me. Then they will be one with each other, just as you and I are one. While I was with them, I kept them safe by the power you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost, except the one who had to be lost. This happened so that what the Scriptures say would come

true. I am on my way to you. But I say these things while I am still in the world, so my followers will have the same complete joy that I do. I have told them your message. But the people of this world hate them, because they don't belong to this world, just as I don't. Father, I don't ask you to take my followers out of the world, but keep them safe from the evil one. They don't belong to this world, and neither do I. Your word is the truth. So let this truth make them completely yours. I am sending them into the world, just as you sent me. I have given myself completely for their sake, so they may belong completely to the truth.

Message: "A Mother's Truth!"

Psalm 1 is a wisdom psalm, reminding us to reflect upon God's wisdom shared with us, and to rejoice in God's ways. God's ways are like trees who are nourished by streams of water. Those who are foolish and wicked are like chaff blown about in the wind and will not stand. Living into God's ways make us happy and blessed – otherwise we will fall away and be lost.

In John today, Jesus prays for his disciples. You may find it interesting to reflect upon Jesus' final discourses after we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Yet in this season of Easter, we as the disciples, are being taught together what Jesus has shared with the disciples and ultimately with us. Jesus prays for God's protection to be with the disciples, as Jesus will return to God after the resurrection.

Jesus prays that we will be one, as Jesus is one with God. Jesus has sent us out into the world with God's word. The world may not think the best of us, yet we are of the world, but Jesus says, "We do not belong to the world, we belong to God." Jesus also prays that we will be blessed in the truth, therefore being protected. Jesus shares these words of wisdom and truth knowing his own betrayal, arrest, and death are coming.

As we think of these words shared by Jesus – these words to keep us on the straight and narrow, we may reflect on another person in our life who shared similar words of truth and wisdom. They may also share words that help us to stay safe and protected in life. Do you remember your mother sharing words of truth and wisdom? I can think of all kinds of things my mother shared that we in turned shared with our own children and even with our grandchildren. Families share and look after each other.

John consistently uses "Father" as Jesus name for God, especially in these four chapters as Jesus is praying to God. Calling God the Father reminds us of a close, familial relationship. God is as close as our own earthly father or mother. Many of our mother's wonderful and cherished qualities are close to God's. Our mothers

protect us. Our mothers tell us the truth. Our mothers want us to tell them the truth. In sharing the concerns of this world, our mothers remind us we are living in this world, but we are more than this world. Therefore we can choose how to live. We have this close and familiar relationship with our mothers. Calling God “Father” is not so much about God’s gender, but God’s closeness.

As John shares Jesus prayer, it reads like Jesus is by himself and praying to God as in person and asking that God take care of his disciples after Jesus is gone. Maybe much like a mother prays that God looks after her children when they leave home or when she herself is leaving this earthly world. Our mothers never really leave us to our own devices. Mothers know we will need a nudge here and there, and that God through the Holy Spirit can give us that nudge.

These four chapters share by John were so valuable to the Early Church Christians, as well as they are so valuable to us Christians today. These verses share that God is close and familiar to us, and that God will be with us; through the good and the bad.

Jesus refers to those who will come to believe based on the original disciples’ testimony. So these words of protection, wisdom and truth, were for all of us - Jesus’ disciples later in the first century as they heard the words from Jesus’ disciples, for those in this text was written and shared in John’s community. It also serves us today as we have read and shared Jesus’ words and prayer today, and we have also heard the story - the testimonies of the disciples in Acts, Romans and the Epistles.

As we, as Jesus’ disciples live in the word and the truth, we are living the substance of what God does for us in Christ and what we experience in being sent into the world as messengers of the Word and the truth.

Put that into your mother’s perspective. As we live out the words and truths shared by our mother, her memory, her words and her truth, are the very things that helps us to live a full life with the respect and honour of our community. Living out the words and truth allows us to share her words and truth to our children and grandchildren. We may also share our mother’s words and truth with those we meet in the community, maybe even the world.

Jesus knew the disciples could let the ways of the world take over their lives. Jesus reminded them they do live in the world, but they are not part of this world.

Living in the world, allows the world to tell us how to live. Not being a part of the world allows us to live as mom told us to – as God, through Jesus is telling us to live. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 580 “Faith of Our Mothers”

Faith of our mothers, daring faith,
your work for Christ is love revealed,
spreading God's word from pole to pole,
making love known and freedom real:
 faith of our mothers, holy faith,
 we will be true to you till death.

Faith of our sisters, brothers too,
who still must bear oppression's might,
raising on high, in prisons dark,
the cross of Christ still burning bright:
 faith for today, O living faith,
 we will be true to you till death.

Faith born of God, O call us yet;
bind us with all who follow you,
sharing the struggle of your cross
until the world is made anew.
 Faith born of God, O living faith,
 we will be true to you till death..

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving:

Eric: Today as we celebrate Mother's Day – we celebrate Communion.

People: In Communion we are gathered together in the presence of God, by the Holy Spirit, and by the gifts offered by the Son of God.

Eric: In Communion we are gathered with those around us, those sharing communion from our faith community, and those around the world. The Holy Spirit allows us to share with those saints gone before us – many we have met today, in pictures and stories.

People. It is great to gather together with our mothers on this special day.

Eric: Gathered in this place of rainbows, reflected in the light of heaven is the bread and wine of promise; the body and blood of covenant; the symbol and action of love.

People: Promise-maker: they are waiting here to be broken and shared for this world, itself broken in warring, in prejudice, in hatred, in loneliness, in arrogance, in power. Yet this world is continuously healed by the love of Christ and our mother's love.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: Let us offer our gifts as in the faith of our mothers. Let us give in love!

Offertory: VU 540 “Grant Us, God, the Grace of Giving”

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.

Offertory Prayer:

People: Thank you God for the gifts of our mothers. Take our gifts today to make our world a loving and caring place. In our giving, may we offer “motherly” values to those we share our gifts with. In Jesus’ Name, we pray. Amen.

Chorus to Prayer: VU 665 “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour”

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour, hear my humble cry;
while on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.
Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry;
while on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Pastoral Prayer:

Remembering Jesus at the Table:

Eric: We speak to these places as we remember that night when Jesus took bread and broke it (*hold up the bread*), took wine and shared it (*Hold up the cup*), took promise and opened it; and we speak to these places as we journey with all the angels singing:

**Holy, holy, holy
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Eric: We speak to all these places as we break and share the food of heaven.

As we partake the bread together:

Eric: The body of Christ,
People: the bread of life.

As we partake the drink together:

Eric: The lifeblood of Christ,
People: the cup of blessing.

Prayer After Communion:

Thank you, O Christ, for this feast of life. We are fed by your love; we are strengthened by your life. We are sent forth into this world to live your way and share your joy. Our mother’s love also feeds us and strengthens us to go forth out into the world to live and share the love we have received. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 380 “She comes Sailing on the Wind”

*She comes sailing on the wind,
her wings flashing in the sun;
on a journey just begun, she flies on.
And in the passage of her flight,
her song rings out through the night,
full of laughter, full of light, she flies on.*

Silent waters rocking on the morning of our birth,
like an empty cradle waiting to be filled.
And from the heart of God the Spirit moved upon the earth,
like a mother breathing life into her child. (to Verse 2)

Many were the dreamers whose eyes were given sight
when the Spirit filled their dreams with life and form.
Deserts turned to gardens, broken hearts
found new delight,
and then down the ages still she flew on. R

To a gentle girl in Galilee, a gentle breeze she came,
a whisper softly calling in the dark,
the promise of a child of peace whose reign would
never end,
Mary sang the Spirit song within her heart. (to Verse 4)

Flying to the river, she waited circling high
above the child now grown so full of grace.
As he rose up from the water, she swept down from the sky,
and she carried him away in her embrace. R

Long after the deep darkness that fell upon the world,
after dawn returned in flame of rising sun,
the Spirit touched the earth again, again her wings unfurled,
bringing life in wind and fire as she flew on. R

Blessing:

Eric: We remember those who have shown us the way, and who invite us to live as part of the family of God each new day. As we go, let us know we are part of the family of God, now and forever more.

Closing Chorus: "Go Now In Peace"

Go now in peace, never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude: – Christie Coatsworth

Prayers: - Please include these people in your prayers this week.