

Westminster United Church

Order of Worship

May 13, 2018

We Celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism on Mothers' Day

(* invites people to stand as they are able;
people's part in **bold type**)



Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Entry Into Celebration

Today we thank God for the gift of mothers and mothering across the world. The prophet Isaiah wrote that God is a mother to us, comforting and carrying us in her arms: As one whom a mother comforts, so I will comfort you – Isaiah 66:13.

**Gentle, patient God –
thank you for your tender care.**

Isaiah also wrote that God will never forget us, and knows each of us just as a mother knows her own children: Can a mother forget her baby at her breast, feel no pity for the child she has borne? Even if these were to forget, I shall not forget you – Isaiah 49:15.

**Gentle, patient God –
thank you for your tender care.**

Ancient Israel's King David wrote that in God's presence, he was quiet and at peace, trusting his God like a child safe in its mother's arms: Now I hold myself in quiet and silence,

like a child in its mothers arms – Psalm 131:2.
**Gentle, patient God –
thank you for your tender care.**

Jesus spoke of himself as a mother, longing to wrap his arms around us like a mother-hen gathering her chicks under her wings: How long have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings – Matthew 23:37.

**Gentle, patient God –
thank you for your tender care...**



SILENCE

A Mothers Day Prayer of Approach (by Nick Fawcett in Prayers for All Seasons, 1998)

Gracious God, as a mother loves her children so you love us. For that great truth...

We praise and thank you.

We owe our very lives to you. You have watched over us from birth, tenderly nurturing us, showering us with love. When we have needed you, you have been there. For that great truth...

We praise and thank you.

You have given us strength in times of need, comfort in times of distress, encouragement in times of despair, and guidance in times of uncertainty. For that great truth...

We praise and thank you.

Gracious God, we have not always appreciated your love, often ignoring what you would teach

us, disobeying your instructions, taking you for granted, and wandering far from your side. Yet through it all, your love has remained constant. For that great truth...

We praise and thank you.

Gracious God, caring for us more than you care for yourself, sacrificing your all for our sake, loving us with unquenchable love, you have called us to be your children. For that great truth...

We praise and thank you.

SILENCE

Sharing the Peace (Responsive)

May a heart of peace rest with you.

And also with you.

* **Opening Hymn VU 556**

“ Would You Bless Our Homes and Families ”

Having someone to love is

Family

Having somewhere to go is

Home

Having both is a

Blessing

A Biblical Litany for Mothers

Eve our first mother...

Thank you for stepping out and being the first to understand the complexities of life.

Sarah, Hannah and Elizabeth – thank you for your patience and courage in waiting for a miracle.

May all longing for children be strengthened by your stories and comforted in their pain.

Hagar – thank you for your resolve in the face of exile.

May all mothers who are forced to flee or are forgotten be given hope in you.

Rebecca – thank you for your flexibility.

Let us remember all mothers who have to raise their children in a different country or far from their relatives, or feel isolated.

Rachel – you carried the burden of grief and wept for your children.

Hold the hands of all those mothers who weep for their children – children who have gone missing, who have died, or have been lost to them in other ways.

Jochebed – you used wisdom and insight to protect your children.

Give to all mothers this wisdom and insight in bringing up their children, especially in vulnerable times.

Naomi and Ruth – you showed that love can conquer all trials.

Help all mothers to love constantly when life seems impossible and despair weighs hard upon their souls.

Mary – your “yes” to God changed the world forever.

Thank you for your faithful, sheltering and protecting love and tender care of Jesus in whose name we gather, even today, in this sacred place.

May we never forget that in your giving is our receiving – of the gift of life wrapped in a manger and in a tomb.

**May we know the true cost of relationship
by holding our faith deep within our hearts,
as you once held Jesus within your womb.**

So may it be. Amen.

WE CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

The Narrative (Minister)

And now, as we prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism, let us listen to the words from the stories of our faith:

People brought little children to Jesus, for him to lay his hands on them, and to say a prayer.

The disciples turned them away; but Jesus said, “Let the little children alone, and do not stop them coming to me, for it is to such that the reign of God belongs”.

And he would put his arms around the little children, and bless them, and lay his hands on them. (based on Mark 10:13-16, Matthew 19:13-15, Luke 18:15-17)

Baptism is the church’s way of celebrating and naming the grace of God living in every one of God’s children.

Baptism is the way we initiate new members into the life of the universal community of faith.

And baptism marks the entry point into the life-time pilgrimage of following the Way of Jesus of Nazareth.

First Baptism Hymn MV 161

“ I Have Called You by Your Name ”

(parents, the candidate for baptism, sponsors and a representative of Westminster’s Board come forward at the beginning of verse #3)

The Lighting of the Baptismal Candle

As we prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism, let us light a candle as a reminder of the ‘light of God’ within each ‘child of God’.

Westminster representative lights the baptismal candle.

Introduction of the child to be baptized, his parents and sponsors (by Westminster representative)

Candidate for Baptism

Evan William Ballermann,
son of Amanda (Barkhouse) and Eric Ballermann,
born August 13, 2017.

Sponsors

Rose and Fred Barkhouse (maternal grandparents)

The Parents’ Vows and Promises

Minister: Amanda and Eric, I ask you before God and those assembled here: Do you profess your faith in God, made known by the faith of God’s servant, Jesus of Nazareth?

Parents: Yes, we do.

Minister: Do you believe the living spirit of Jesus is active in the world and will direct and strengthen you?

Parents: Yes, we do.

Minister: Will you raise Evan in the knowledge and love of God, teaching him the truth and duties Jesus taught?

Parents: Yes, we will.

Sponsors' Vows and Promises

Minister: Rose and Fred, you are Evan's sponsors for baptism. Therefore, I ask you before God and those assembled here: Do you promise to help Amanda and Eric to raise Evan in the way of faithful living?

Sponsors: Yes, we do.

* The Congregational Pledge (the people will stand)

Minister: Members and adherents of Westminster United Church, in the Sacrament of Baptism you receive Evan Ballermann into the way of faith taught by Jesus of Nazareth. Will you accept Evan, support him and his parents with constant love, wholesome example, truthful teaching and faithful prayer?

Congregation (in a loud voice):

Yes, we will, God being our helper.

Minister: This is a great responsibility. Are you willing to accept so great a responsibility?

Congregation (in a loud voice):

Yes, we are willing, God being our helper.

(The people are seated)

The pouring of water



The sprinkling of the water in the name of the Triune God.

Baptismal Blessing

God bless this newly baptized child. May Evan always know that the Source-of-All-Love lives and comes to unique expression in him.

Amen.

God bless Amanda and Eric, this child's parents. May they always show their gratitude for the new life given to them by loving and caring for Evan.

Amen.

God bless Fred and Rose Barkhouse, Evan's grandparents and sponsors. And God bless all the faithful people gathered at this sacred time, in this sacred space. And may we continue to draw encouragement from the faith which connects our loving with the mystery we call "God".

Amen.

This is a day of great celebration.



Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Presentation of Baptismal Candle to Evan's Parents

Amanda and Eric, we give to you this baptismal candle to remind Evan throughout his life of Jesus, who opened people's hearts and minds to see the 'light' of God within. I urge you to use this candle to help you tell Evan the story of his

baptism, as you light it each year to remember this day.

The Westminster representative gives the candle to Evan's parents.

The minister presents the child to the congregation.

Presentation of the Baptismal Certificate to Evan's Parents – by Westminster representative

Second Baptism Hymn VU 340

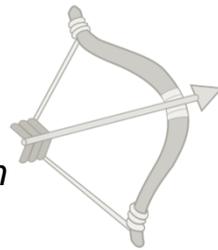
“ Jesus, Friend of Little Children ”

parents, sponsors
and Westminster representative
return to their seats

READINGS

From the New Testament
Acts 16: 16-33

From the “Now” Testament
On Children by Kahil Gibran



Praying This Morning's Readings

Let us recognize the seeds of wisdom in these readings.

May those seeds of wisdom be planted in the fertile soil of our hearts and minds.

May it be so.

Amen.

Sermon

Rev Del Stewart

“ A Few Random Thoughts on Baptism and Mothering ”

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession for Mothers Day and Baptism Sunday

We thank God for giving us others to share our lives.

For parents, and the love which brought us to birth...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

For mothers who have cherished us and nurtured us...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

For fathers who have loved and supported us...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

For brothers and sisters with whom we have shared a home...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

For children and parents...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

For relatives and friends, who have been with us in our hopes and joys, and in our times of sadness...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

For Jesus of Nazareth and our family of faith...

**We praise you, O Lord,
and bring you thanks.**

SILENCE

Especially today, we hold in our hearts and thoughts those for whom Mothers Day is a time of heartache rather than celebration.

SILENCE

We pray for those who have never known their mothers or whose mothers have died.

May they be blessed with love.

For those who long to be mothers but have not yet had children.

May they be blessed with love.

For those who struggle with the way their adult children have chosen to live.

May they be blessed with love.

For those who have a difficult relationship with their mother.

May they be blessed with love.

May they have the comfort of knowing that your love for them is constant, your understanding is perfect, and your compassion is never-ending...

SILENCE

The Lord's Prayer (Unison)

**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,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen**

Presentation of Gifts and Offerings**Offertory Hymn VU 537**

“ Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands ”

Offertory Prayer

Loving God, as we present these gifts and offerings we give you thanks for...

Those who have cared for us, encouraged us, forgiven us, supported us, challenged us and helped us grow. Amen.

*** Closing Hymn VU 644**

“ I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry ”

*** Mothers Day and Baptism Sunday Blessing**

May God who brought us to birth by his Spirit,
Strengthen us to follow the Way of Jesus.

May God who provides for our needs,
Sustain us day by day.

May God whose steadfast love is constant as a mother's care

