

# Westminster United Church

Order of Worship

Sunday, May 12, 2019

**We Celebrate Mother's Day  
on the 4th Sunday  
in the Easter Season**



Wishing you the  
very best this  
Mother's Day!

**Gathering Music**

**Welcome and Announcements**

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

**Entry Into Mothers Day Celebration**

(based on Matthew 11:28-3,  
on re-worship.blogspot.co./2011/05, adapted)

And Jesus said, "Come!"

To all mothers and their children: he said, "Come!"

To the motherless and the childless:

he said, "Come!"

To all who long to be mothered: he said, "Come!"

"Come unto me all who labour and are heavy-laden,  
and I will give you rest."

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,  
for I am gentle and humble of heart  
and you will find rest for your soul."

*Quiet Reflection*

**An Act of Awareness for Mothers Day**

(The Practice, Willow Creek Chapel, 5/10/15, adapted)

God is Spirit and does not have a gender.

Rather, God transcends gender but still chooses  
to include gender. In God's image, God created  
both male and female. This means that in the  
images of both men and women, we see the

likeness and image of God. We often focus on the  
likeness of God as Father, which is true;  
and yet this morning, in light of Mothers Day,  
we shall honour the divine and feminine  
images of God.

*The singing bowl is sounded three times*

**Opening Prayer**

(The Practice, Willow Creek Chapel, 5/10/15, adapted)

God our Father, giver of our daily bread,  
blessing our hands, and shielding our heads,

**Hallowed be thy name.**

God, our Mother, leading us into peace,  
drawing and comforting all those in need.

**Hallowed be thy name.**

Jesus, our brother, our companion on life's journey,  
the One Whose Way is the way of loving  
compassion and justice, inspire us and lead us;

**And may Your Way**

**become the way of all women and men  
who dwell upon the earth.**

Amen.

★**Opening Hymn VU 580**

*" Faith of Our Mothers and Fathers "*

**A Short Biography of Julian of Norwich** (Responsive)

*" Revelations of Love "*

by Julian of Norwich, Chapter 26 (circa 1373)

Again, our Lord showed himself to me,  
this time more glorious than I had seen him before.  
I learned that our soul will never find rest until it

comes to the fullness of Christ's joy.  
So Christ said, again and again,  
"I AM the one, I AM the one,"

**"I AM the one most honoured."**

"I AM the one you love."

**"I AM the one you enjoy."**

"I AM the one you serve."

**"I AM the one you long for."**

"I AM the one you desire."

**"I AM the one you yearn for."**

"I AM the one who is everything."

**"I AM the one whom the holy church  
preaches and teaches."**

"I AM the one who showed myself to you."

"There were so many words, I couldn't understand them all. But the joy I had in listening to those words went far beyond anything I could think or desire. I won't try to explain them, but as the grace of God gives you love and understanding, you will know what God means".

★**Hymn MVU 179**

vs. 1&3

*" Sisters Let Us Walk Together "*

(written to honour the women killed in the Montreal Massacre of 1989)

**A Mothers' Day Litany**

(The Practice, Willow Creek Chapel, 5/10/15, adapted)

O God, Source of Strength and Courage,  
you are as a mothering eagle,  
hovering over her nest (Deut. 32:11-12).

You grant us refuge in the shadow of your wings  
(Psalm 57:1).

You descend upon our enemies as a mother bear  
robbed of her cubs (Hosea 13:8).

**Give us grace to trust and stay by your side.**

O God, loving and comforting, Caregiver,  
You comfort us as a mother,  
who comforts her child (Isaiah 66:10-35).

You desire to gather us, your children, together  
(Luke 13:34),

Like a hen gathers her brood under wings  
(Matt. 23:37).

**Grant that we may rest  
in the comfort of your wings .**

O God, compassionate and patient Nurturer,  
You gave birth to us,  
and have carried us from the womb.

You have been carrying us on your back  
from the day we were born.

You always have, and you always will be there,  
carrying us, saving us (Isaiah 46:3).

**Fill us with thanks for your steadfast love.**

O God, Tender Sustainer of Life,

You value and seek us out as a woman tirelessly  
sweeping for her lost coin (Luke 15:8).

You nestle and nurture us in your bosom  
(Numbers 11:12).

You nurture and satisfy us at your breast  
(Isaiah 49:15).

**Help us to find our value in your embrace.**

Let us commend ourselves, and all those we love,  
to the maternal love and care of our God.

*Quiet Reflection*

## Sharing the Peace

May a heart of peace rest with you.

**And also with you.**

## Choral Response VU 320

(seated)

*“Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth”*

## Readings for Mothers’ Day

From the Gospel of Luke

Luke 8: 1-3

Luke 24: 1-5a

## Contemporary Reading

Reflections: Woman

“You Are Good”

(a poem on ‘RevGalBlogPals’ A Place for Prayer)

## A Responsive Reading for Mothers Day

(Jann Aldridge-Clanton, based on Genesis 1,  
posted on BPFNA, adapted)

One: In the beginning our Divine Mother gave birth to the universe.

People: **She gave birth to light, and she said, “That’s good!”**

One: God gave birth to the earth,

People: **And She saw that it was good.**

One: She gave birth to the grass and the trees, and plants of all kinds

People: **And she said, “That’s good!”.**

One: Our Mother gave birth to all the fish, both large and small that swim in the oceans, and to all the winged birds that fly above the earth.

People: **And she said, “They are good”.**

One: God gave birth to the cattle and to all kinds of animals,

People: **And She saw how good they are.**

One: Then our Divine Mother gave birth to female and male human beings, with responsibility for the earth and all other living beings that She had birthed.

People: **We come to celebrate all these gifts from our Divine Mother.**

One: We come to learn again what it means to be entrusted with these gifts.

People: **We join together with our Mother and with one another in giving birth to beauty, peace and kindness.**

One: We join Her and one another in nurturing the earth and all living creatures.

People: **Our Mother gives us all power to give birth and nurture life.**

One: God, our Mother, you continually give life to us. Nourish us and teach us to become all you created us to be in your divine image.

People: **Help us to receive your power and love so that others may draw life from us.**

One: May we join you in giving birth to new life

People: **And in nurturing creation.**

One: May it be so. Amen.

From the Gospel of Mark

Mark 11:15-17

## Reflections on This Morning's Readings

May these Mothers' Day readings  
fire our imaginations, inspire new insights,  
renew our hope,

**Restore our faith, and lead us  
in the way of loving compassion and justice...**

**Choral Response MVU 21** (sung twice)

*" Open Our Hearts "*

## Centering Silence

**Sermon** Rev Del Stewart

*" Cleansing the Hallmark Temple "*

## Mothers Day Prayers

(Sister Joan Chittister, OSB, adapted)

Creativity-God, creator of women in your image;

**Jesus of Nazareth, born of a woman  
in the midst of a world half women;**

Whose message has been carried by women  
to mission fields around the globe,

**And made known by women  
to all the children of the earth:**

Give to the women of our time  
the strength to persevere, the courage to speak out,  
and faith beyond all patriarchal systems  
and institutions

**So that your face on earth  
may be seen in all its beauty,  
so that men and women become whole,**

So that the church may be converted to your will  
in everything and in all ways...

## Quiet Reflection

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)

## Presentation of Our Gifts and Offerings

★**Offertory Hymn VU 537**

*" Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands "*

★**Offertory Prayer**

★**Closing Hymn VU 595** *" We Are Pilgrims "*

★**Parting Words** (M. Leaming, adapted)

The time has come for us to leave this sacred  
space. As we depart may we embrace the  
challenges of our living and the world; and in our  
leaving let us remember too that the universe is  
larger than we can comprehend so that we have the  
resolve to wonder, to open our minds and  
illumine our lives...

*The singing bowl is sounded three times*

★**Words of Blessing** (R.S. Gilbert, adapted)

And now may the rhythms of our gathering together,  
the melodies of our Mothers Day worship and  
celebration and the harmonies of our farewells,  
make musical our living – soothing our spirits  
and uplifting our souls – this day and  
into the beckoning future...

★**Choral Response MVU 214**

*" May God's Sheltering Wings "*

## Postlude