



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

May 4-10, 2020

Sermon by Rev. Kelley Lane

5th Sunday of Easter

MOTHER'S DAY

Sermon Title: "Transitions: *Redefining Motherhood*"

Notes from sermon on 5/3:

Things to Pray For This Week:

Family Focus Questions (before sermon):

What makes a family? In other words, how do we define family?

3 Questions for small groups (after sermon):

1. Can you name people outside of your traditionally defined family that you consider to be family? Why?
2. Have you ever been a teacher or mentor (official or unofficial) to someone – did this role give you joy? What other emotions did it evoke?
3. Where/how have you experience God's creating, redeeming, and sustaining you this week?

Monday, May 4: Read Genesis 1:1-8, 31-2:1

What does it mean to be a mother? In this week leading up to Mother's Day, Mothers may be in the forefront of our minds: the ones sequestered whom we have not hugged in over a month, the ones at home struggling to work and home school small children, and the mothers we have lost. But what about the other "mothers" in our world? This week we will explore the images of motherhood in the Bible, and be challenged to take a broader look at what it means to be a mother and redefine that role in society.

In today's familiar scripture found at the very beginning of our Bible, we see God's power to create life. We are all children of the same Mother Father God, who protects, nurtures, and sustains us, calling us to do the same for one another. We will read this week how images of God as a loving mother appear throughout the Bible, calling each of us to look for the places in our lives where we have benefitted from a

mother's love, in all its forms and from many sources. What "mothers" have existed in our lives? Where can we be more of a mother to others?

Tuesday, May 5: Read Matthew 23:37-39

As he walked into Jerusalem, ready to pay the ultimate price for our sins, Jesus cries out to his beloved city, "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" The mother in all of us, whether we have biological or officially adopted children or not, can instantly empathize with Christ's desire to protect and love someone who refuses to listen. Teachers know this feeling. So do health care workers whose patients refuse to take care of themselves, and police officers who protect neighborhoods, only to lose precious young ones to violence and drugs. As humans, we rebel and disappoint. As children of God who are created in God's image, we protect, nurture, and sustain life...as a mother hen gathering her brood.

Wednesday, May 6: Read Hosea 13:5-8

Today's scripture from the prophet Hosea isn't easy to read due to the violent imagery describing God's anger at Israel as comparable in strength to a "bear robbed of her cubs." This singular, powerful rage against anything threatening "our own" is a feeling that transcends comprehension for those of us who have felt it. How amazing to know that God feels this same way about us. That God gave us this primal urge to protect our own...and we are all God's own and belong to one another. This anger against injustice, poverty, inequality, domestic violence, and self-destructive behavior is something we can all feel on behalf of others, and God calls us each to fight for one another with a mother bear's love.

Thursday, May 7: Read Deuteronomy 32:10-12

Today, we read of God as a loving mother eagle, "hovering over its young...the Lord alone guided him." Whom in our life has God used to mother us, guiding us in ways that help us spread our wings? Who are the teachers, coaches, neighbors, mentors, aunts, family friends, youth counselors, pastors, parents, grandparents, and siblings who have served as mother eagles in our lives? When has God been able to use us to be the same to others? Is God calling us to do that now?

Friday, May 8: Read Isaiah 66:10-13

A mother is one we run to when we need comfort. We go to a mother for nourishment; for consolation. We also run to a mother to "rejoice in joy," knowing a mother will celebrate our victories with us begrudging nothing and wanting only the best for us. God is described in all of these ways in today's passage, and our calling to be God's image on earth calls all of us to be mothers to one another in these ways. Do we rejoice when others rejoice, and mourn when they mourn? Do we greet our hungry, hurt, frail, and vulnerable with open arms? This Sunday, let us celebrate all who have served as mothers to God's children, in all the ways we have explored this week.

Saturday, May 9: PRAYER READING from Italian nun and mystic Catherine of Siena (c. 1347-1380)

"Dear Lord: It seems you are so madly in love with your creatures that you could not live without us. So you created us; and then when we turned away from you, you redeemed us. Yet you are God, and so have no need of us. Your greatness is made no greater by our creation; your power is made no stronger by our redemption. You have no duty to care for us, no debt to repay us. It is love, and love alone, that moves you. Amen."

Sunday, May 10: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of

Common Confession: *Holy God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we confess that we often put both You and one another into boxes, limiting our understanding of what it means to be God and what it means to be fully human. Open our hearts and minds to the truth about You, the beauty of all humanity, and the unlimited possibilities for reflecting your image. Empower us to share your great love with all the world. In Your Son's name, we pray. Amen.*