



35A EASTER 5 MOTHER'S DAY

I am the way

Abstract

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

John 14:1-14

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SUNDAY, MAY 10, 2020 | EASTER | FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | MOTHER'S Day
YEAR A

First Reading Acts 7:55–60
Psalm Psalm 31:1–5, 15–16
New Testament 1 Peter 2:2–10
Gospel John 14:1–14ⁱ

John 14:1-14

Jesus reassures his disciples that they will be with him. He explains that he is the way, the truth and the life and that anyone who has seen him has seen the Father. He promises that he will do anything asked in his name.

This week's resources explore: Jesus explaining to his disciples how he will remain with them.

	<p>Pre-Service</p> <p>This is the day</p>
	<p>Greeting</p> <p>May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all</p> <p>and also with us</p>
	<p>A calling to mind</p> <p>We will begin, not with a Call to worship, but with a Calling to mind ...</p> <p>Call to mind someone you love. Close your eyes and imagine: the shape of their eyes, the curve of their smile, the sound of their laughter ...</p> <p>Call to mind ... the way they smell, the way they feel – and the look they give you that says 'I've had enough' ...</p> <p>If you can hold that face, that feeling, that love, then consider this: One hundred trillion cells, seven million years of evolution, forty weeks of gestation, years of love and lessons and laughter –</p>

	<p>tears too no doubt – have gone into that person you recalled</p> <p>The person who holds your heart –what a wonder. Think on it ... And now, think on this: The planet holds over 7 billion souls – every single one a unique one-off never-to-be-repeated-ever creation: the creative imagination of the divine is reflected in every face. The Spirit of God is in every first and last and in between breath.</p> <p>Mother God, thank you for our family – as vast as the ocean, as intimate as a face, a smell, a touch, a look, a feeling ... (Pause)</p> <p>Body of Christ', 'Family of God', 'Brothers and sisters in the Lord': These are not just words. on this Mother's day we remember what these words mean, and we are called never to underestimate the deep desire with which God created this vision: it is so important that the world remembers that no one is an only child.</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> Dear Lord, as we gather in your name, listen to us and bring us peace; be our rock and our refuge, that we may be made strong; let your face shine upon us, that we may show your love to those you love.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/song TIS #111 – "Praise to the Lord the almighty"</p>
	<p>Welcome Hello, my name is Jim and this is number 8 in a series of online worship services that are our answer to the Social Separation of the COVID-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>It does ask a question though what happens after the isolation is there a point to keeping going in some way. I don't know.</p> <p>So today is Mother's Day here in Australia and some other parts of the world. In my mind it is right to celebrate mothers today but I recognise not everyone will think that for many valid reasons.</p>

In our world of blatant commercialism
 Mothers Day as a concept it could be said to be a tainted.
 In our world of changing norms and complicated families for some
 it raises painful memories.
 But in that complicated world we live in,
 full of stress, hurts and modern pressures,
 the concept of a mothers love is still a concept
 that I hope all of us can understand and relate to.

So today is Mothers Day You betcha !

In some traditions we call it
 "Christian Family Sunday' or Mothering Sunday
 but the fact remains that today is a special day in our world,
 a day to honour our families as a whole
 and our parents and Grandparents especially and usually,
 more specifically the mother figures in our lives,
 - whether they are young - or old
 - or even gone to heaven
 like the mothers of many of the older people here.

Here is a more humorous look at what some may think being a mother means.

Video

Here is a more humorous look at what some may think being a mother means.

So today is about much more than Mother's Day
 and our readings today include a huge statement.
 I am the way.

Let us pray

Together, Lord, we come to seek the 'Jesus way'.
 May your truth fill us with wisdom to see your presence
 in all that we do.

And may we receive new life, that we may serve you
 in all that we are.

Amen.

Readings

John 14:1-14

<https://youtu.be/1Oedf79Rbds?list=PLcJVluhI8isK1RYcLxYOL929cnN3vALi8>

Jesus the Way to the Father

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

	<p>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”</p> <p>Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”</p> <p>Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”</p> <p>Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. ⁱⁱ</p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord Thanks be to God</p>
	<p>Hymn/song/video</p> <p>For the Beauty of the Earth</p>
	<p>We say Sorry</p> <p>Forgive us, loving Lord, that we have strayed from your way.</p> <p>Forgive us for the times our lives have not been shaped by your truth.</p> <p>Forgive us for denying your life in us and in others, by the way we have lived.</p> <p>In the name of Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, we pray.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/Song TIS #246 – “Christ is the world’s light, he and none other”</p>
	<p>Response</p>
	<p>Hymn/song TIS #624 – “Christ be my leader by night as by day”</p>
	<p>Prayers for all people <i>Imagine you have a stone, for a few moments, think about Jesus as our rock.</i></p>

*Feel the rock on the palm of your hand; it is solid and strong
– God gives us strength; his love is solid and steadfast.*

*Press the rock between your hands
– following Jesus is not always comfortable.*

*Move the stone from palm to palm
– wherever we are, whatever we do, God is with us; his love never fails.*

Show us your way;
 help us to know your truth,
and to live your life.

In a world where there is warfare and violence,
 many people live in fear of the bullet and the bomb;
 many have had their lives and livelihoods destroyed;
 many grieve for loved ones who have been killed.
That they may know your strength and peace, loving God:
 be for them a rock and a stronghold.

In a world where harvests and employment have failed;
 where there have been a pandemic, droughts and floods;
 many do not have money to pay for food and power;
 many are reaching the end of their tether.
That they may know your strength and peace, loving God:
 be for them a rock and a stronghold.

In a world where many people are alone;
 many do not know where to look for comfort and encouragement;
 many see no purpose or future;
 some cannot see the point of anything.
That they may know your strength and peace, loving God:
 be for them a rock and a stronghold.

In our lives when we struggle and doubt;
 when we don't know what to say or do;
 when life overwhelms us and we turn to you.
That we may know your strength and peace, loving God:
 be for us a rock and a stronghold.

In the name of the living Lord Jesus,
 our Saviour and companion.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer
Lord's Prayer

	<p>Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. AMENⁱⁱⁱ</p>
	<p>Hymn/song One more step along the world I go</p>
	<p>We are sent out</p> <p>May God bless us, guide us and direct us. May God give us strength and the assurance of his love. May God fill our lives with his presence – today and always.</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	<p>Benediction TIS #669 – “Jesus is the Rock”</p>
	<p>Thank you</p>

The Secret to Happiness

John 14:1-4, John 14:5-14

This week we celebrate Mother's Day
and even in this world where gender and role profiling is frowned upon
we still want to honour all our Mums
whatever your mother figure may be.

We are more grateful to you than you can imagine.
Our message for today is on the "Secret to Happiness."
I believe that I could say without fear of contradiction
that one of the secrets to happiness is to have a good Mum.
I hope you have been blessed in that way.

That's not always possible,
but for those of us who have been so fortunate,
we can say that it is one of the great blessings of life.
And so today we salute those people who have loved us and poured their lives into ours.

In 1816, a small group of miners claimed
to have mined a large amount of gold.
They hid their find and swore each other to secrecy.
Most they kept their secret.
But one of the miners wrote a letter pinpointing the exact location of the gold and silver.
The only catch is, he wrote this letter in code.
No one has ever been able to crack the code.

Mining folklore is full of people searching for the hidden treasure secreted by others.
Some of us might envy these treasure hunters;
others probably think they're crazy
for spending their time, energy and money chasing a dream.
Most treasure hunters get a reputation for being kind of kooky,
until they find the treasure. Then we change our tune.

Of course, many of us spend our lives searching for treasure in the form of happiness.
We organize our lives around maximizing our happiness.
But we all define that happiness differently.
At least people searching for treasure have a map or set of clues to follow.
The rest of us have only our own ideas about happiness to follow.

To some people,
happiness means having the perfect family life,
whatever that means for them,
or an enviable career, a big bank account,
a list of accomplishments, or the respect of others.^{iv}

But here's my question:
has anyone found the secret to happiness in this life?
Has anyone really cracked the code?
And let's be honest—most of us are exhausted by the hunt.
We do a good job of hiding it.
We would rather confess to almost any sin or failing than this one:
we are deeply unhappy, and we don't know why.

We don't know what we're missing
and we feel like we are the only one that feels this way.

Our Bible passage today is from John 14.

The Book of John chapters 13-19

all take place on the last night of Jesus' life before his arrest and crucifixion.

Jesus tells his disciples that he will be betrayed.

His disciples are upset and don't understand.

So he tells them that he is going to his Father's house

to prepare a place for them

and he will come back to take them to their new home in his Father's house.

In fact, Jesus won't just show them the way to his Father's house;

he declares that he is the way, the truth and the life,

and that no one comes to the Father except through him.

Philip catches this glimmer of hope, and asks,

"Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

What a wonderful statement that is:

"Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

"Enough" is really the hidden treasure that all of humanity is seeking.

The Hebrew word "Shalom" is usually translated "peace" by us Gentiles.

But it embodies a state of tranquillity

that comes from peace, fulfillment and completeness

in other words, enough.^v

One of the greatest gifts on earth is shalom, enough.

There was a cartoon that showed two paddocks separated by a fence

with a mule in each whose head stuck through the wire,

eating the grass on the other side, even though it was hard to reach.

Of course the mules' heads became caught in the fence.

The cartoonist wisely described the situation with one word: "Discontent."^{vi}

So much of human history is driven

by seeking happiness, significance and security

rather than in God's plans and God's provisions.

If it were possible for us to find happiness and significance in God,

then why haven't we?

Why don't we have enough?

Maybe there is one question at the heart of everyone

that drives our search for enough.

Maybe we are still asking, "Does God exist?"

Because if there is a God,

then all our meaning and purpose and identity and destiny

flow from the character of God.

Philip knew that.

That's why he said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

There are of course implied questions in Phillips query.

Jesus answers this question by saying

He is the answer to the questions, "Does God exist?" and "What is God like?"

Jesus answers Philip,

"Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time?

Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.

Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?

The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority.

Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."

In Jesus, we see a God who understands us.

God has tried to communicate with us

and have a relationship with us from the beginning of time.

Through promises and prophets,

God tried to reach out and bring us back to His original plan for us.

And when none of that worked,

God came in human form in the life of Jesus.

He grew up in a poor family.

He worked hard for his daily bread.

He lived under an oppressive Roman government.

That's why Jesus knew what was in his disciples' hearts.

That's why, just hours before his own arrest,

Jesus was comforting them.

He understood their situation. He understands our situation.

In Jesus, we see a God who speaks our language.

In Jesus, we see a God who has a plan for us.

Jesus begins this Bible passage by saying,

"My Father's house has many rooms;

if that were not so,

would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?

And I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

You know the way to the place where I am going."

We need to understand a little more about ancient Middle Eastern culture
to get what Jesus is saying.

In Jesus' day, extended families often lived together in the same house.

When a young couple was betrothed to be married,

the bridegroom would go back to his father's house

and build on some extra rooms for his new bride.

Once the building project was complete,

he would come to claim his bride

and take her back to his newly-expanded house.

The wedding would take place

only after the bridegroom had completed the building project

and prepared a new home for his bride.

When Jesus says that he is going to his Father's house to prepare a place for us,

he is talking like a bridegroom to his beloved.
He is making a promise to return for us and bring us to our new home
eternal life with God.

Only he can make this promise because he is,
as he told his disciples, the only way to God.

From the beginning of Creation,
God had a plan to make us a part of His family.
God planned for us to be a part of His life forever.
That's why God came in the form of Jesus to show us who He really is.
He came to show us how much He loves us and
show us that He has always had a plan for us
to prepare a place for us in His eternal home,
and to bring us back to be with Him someday.
And the way to this place of eternal life with God
is through accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

"Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."
If you are still searching for meaning and purpose in your life,
then know that you can find all these things in knowing the Father
who knows you,
who speaks your language,
and who has a perfect plan for your life.

Then for the first time in your life you will be able to say with great happiness,
"Enough."
Amen

ⁱ Lectionary Reading {References: `BibleNIV:Jn 14:1–14`; Title: "Gospel" }

ⁱⁱ [*The New International Version*](#). (2011). (Jn 14:1–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

ⁱⁱⁱ English Language Liturgical Consultation, 1988

^{iv} "15 Real-Life Hidden Treasures That Haven't Been Found Yet" by Lauren Cahn, Reader's Digest,
<https://www.rd.com/true-stories/hidden-treasures-havent-been-found-yet/>.

^v "The True Meaning of Shalom" by Doug Hershey, Fellowship of Israel Related Ministries,
<https://firm.org.il/learn/the-meaning-of-shalom/>.

^{vi} Keith Wagner, http://www.lectionary.org/Sermons/Wagner/NT01matt/Matt_21.1-11_Rules.htm.