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MAY 2018

***Thank God for our families***

*[Jesus was dying on the cross.] When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”* **-John 19:26-27**

On the second Sunday of this month we celebrate the mothers and mother figures in our lives, and then in June we celebrate our fathers and father figures. What a wonderful opportunity to honor the strong bond between parents and children. How strong? The first use of the word “love” in the Bible, Genesis 22:2, describes the connection between Abraham and his son, Isaac.

Family isone of our most valuable gifts from God, and one that, as all holy gifts, we are entrusted to treasure, love and nourish. As parents, we are responsible for nourishing children to become healthy adults. And as children, we are responsible for caring for parents as they age.

Jesus indicates in the passage above that there need not be a blood connection for a parent-child relationship (as any family with adopted children can attest). In Matthew 12:46-50, Jesus actually redefines family, saying that all who love and follow him are mothers, brothers, sisters, fathers. So, all of us are parent, child and sibling to one another. Now THAT’S some family!

As we honor the mother and father figures this spring, we can also challenge ourselves to be better stewards of the family bonds God has given us.

* Explore through Scripture what it means to be a family, including a faith family.
* Work with your congregation promote healthy family connections.
* Supportand accompany families that are in crisis or paralyzed by dysfunction.
* Learn about foster-parent programs and support foster families.
* Exploreand support Big Brother and Big Sister programs.Be a mentor to a child or youth.
* Befriend a senior citizen who may not have children (or children nearby).
* Remember that not all family relationships are positive. Avoid judgment and listen thoughtfully to those whose experiences may differ from yours.
* With your congregation, explore ways to live as brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers to one another.

God ordained families to be the fundamental unit of human life. We can be good stewards of family relationships by caring for one another and helping everyone to grow into the faith family God intends.

*--Rob Blezard*

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