Mother’s Day Sermon

May 11, 2025

4th Sunday of Easter

Morning Prayer

Sherri Matthew

Today is Mother’s Day! We are all mothers, whether we have kids or not… cats?! Dogs?! Some of us (myself included), may be grieving Mom, if she has departed this world. My own mother died at home with us, on hospice, on Easter Sunday morning, April 12, 2020.

This was the start of my own entry to the Episcopal church… Faith and belief were always there. My commitment was now to a church, and to a church family that I could truly call my own, as my biological family, my parents, (my last living relatives) departed this physical world.

Grief and loneliness are universal, as is losing our parents: people are attached to this material, physical realm that we know and inhabit.

People also have false beliefs or narratives getting in the way. For example, they think that death is “the end”. Well, it *is* the end of the physical, corporeal body we inhabit, but not the end of our spiritual selves.

Jesus gives us His answer in John 10:22-30.

He describes being a member of His family as similar to the sheep under the care of a shepherd. They recognize his voice the same way a child knows the voice of a parent. Because people are for the moment unbelieving, they are yet to join God’s family and so know His voice.

So, what we need to do is, accept His invitation to Eternal Life and follow Him. What does following Him look like?

Imagine the before and after in an animal’s life when you’ve adopted him/her….

George and I just recently adopted ten-year-old Benjamin Kitty from Rutland County Humane. He’s orange, eats a lot, is putting on weight fast and loves to spend time with George at his piano as he plays Bach and Handel… a vastly different world from days spent waiting in the shelter for someone to come and take him home!

In a way, Jesus’ pastoral world of sheep can be compared to our world of cats and dogs!

Or, a child, if you’ve adopted, or are sponsoring worldwide…

Joining a friendly church community…

Taking a fallow piece of land and turning it into a productive garden.

(That’s in this world!)

It’s the family, the caregiving and the loving reciprocity of the community.

The ultimate reward in the future is, that you will live in eternal joy free of earthly cares.

In God’s spiritual family, the concerns of this world are less of a burden when we know that there is support and nourishment for us in the present, as well as in the hereafter. The worries and concerns may still be there while we live, but we know we have a support system to provide guidance. In the next life we are assured of joy and being surrounded by our family of God.

God will give us Eternal Life if we follow Him. This is eternal life: the love and strength and support of our heavenly Father, as He is with us day to day, hour by hour, from now unto death and beyond.

From this world to the next: perpetual life and joy!

Hymns:

199 Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain

645 The King of Love my Shepherd is

184 Christ the Lord is Risen Again!