

A Reflection for Mother's Day 2026 by Jennifer Irving

Our scripture reading from John today reminded me of just how important it is to have someone to show us the way in this life we live. For me, as I shared last week, that person, showing me the way, has often been my mother. On this Mother's Day I give thanks for the things she has taught me and the ways she has shown me how to love! She has been and continues to be an absolute blessing to me in my life.

But I know this isn't the case for everyone. For some, your mother wasn't able to provide this kind of good loving, for whatever reason – and there are as many different reasons as there are people here in these pews today. So on this day, we celebrate all those who filled that role of mothering you—who did not leave you orphaned but rather showed you the way to love and be loved. And we acknowledge and give thanks that sometimes, that person was a church like this church.

On this day, I want to extend the call and the encouragement to each one of you to mother one another! To mother everyone who comes through those doors as though they were the child of your own heart, for through Jesus, that is what they are!

I've heard the story of how years ago, this congregation used to go to Camp Simpresca for a weekend each year in the spring! While there, every child knew that if they were hurt or needing something, they could call out on any adult there and that person would kiss their scraped knee, wipe away their tears, tell them to get their elbows off the table, or help them buckle up their life-jacket. And every adult offered love and care to every child—regardless if it was their child or not! I really wish I could have been here for those trips! There, the amazing African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" was made real.

This was something that I experienced growing up in Honeywood, only there it was "It takes a church to raise a child". I wouldn't be the person I am today without the loving care of every single member of that congregation—reminding me to stop running through the basement before I knocked someone over, encouraging me to put on my choir gown every once in a while since it wouldn't dim my individuality one bit, inviting me to offer words of wisdom even while I was still in high school—who listens to a teen-ager from the pulpit and make them feel heard and loved? Well, the United Church in Honeywood did.

And Centennial does.

I believe with all my heart that Churches are here to "mother" one another. To help each and every child of God recognize the "divine" within them. To celebrate and hold up each and every child of God! Showing each child love and in doing so showing each child "God" because "God is love".

Jesus promises "I will not leave you orphaned" and he leaves us this amazing a beautiful "Church", one body in this one Lord!

Here, in this place, we give one another strength and support when otherwise we might feel lost and alone. We find a family, we find mums and dads, we find brothers and sisters in Christ. The spirit works through us! No one, not one is left alone.

Thanks be to God! Amen.