

Mother's Day Services

"Honoring the Feminine" or "Generations of Women"

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ORDER OF SERVICE

Prayer of Dedication

We welcome everyone to this service on Mother's Day—a special day of honoring our mothers and honoring the feminine and the contribution of the feminine energy in the world. We dedicate this service to that energy and to all of life. Let's close our eyes.

Allow yourself to become fully present to this moment, present and available to the living, loving spirit of the feminine as we dedicate our time together. We give thanks, Great Spirit, that in your infinite creative wisdom you understood the need for balance in our lives. You brought us forth from both the feminine and masculine energy so in partnership we could together create life in the fullest on this planet. As we honor that creation today, we call forth from each heart the coming together into the oneness and the fullness of all that is. We dedicate this service to the beauty, joy and harmony that is possible. We dedicate this service to the spirit of the living, loving god that dwells in each person on the planet. We dedicate this service to every person who has come here to share in this day. We give thanks for this allness in the oneness. And so it is. Amen.

Honoring the Feminine

Select a woman to represent each of the following qualities. Call each woman forth one-by-one to light a candle as you recognize their contribution. After lighting a candle, have them stand with you until all women are represented.

Givers of Physical Life

Thank you for agreeing to become a vessel to bring forth new life on this earth. Thank you for caring for children lovingly, providing a spiritual base, recognizing and nurturing their unique being and individual path, accepting the lifetime commitment of love and care and recognizing that your children will always be a part of your life. We honor you.

Caregivers and Nurturers

As mother, teacher, nurse, counselor, minister, you care for the health and well-being of others from the goodness and generosity of your heart. You nurture their growth, their connection to spirit. You support their learning in daily life and during times of challenge. You have chosen this path of contribution. We honor you.

Pursuers of Knowledge and Intelligence

With a marvelous willingness to ask questions, you boldly seek information,

search out answers, open yourself to new perspectives and greater knowledge. You don't hold back. You go ahead and explore uncharted territory, challenge current wisdom and create new understandings that open the world for the rest of us. We honor you.

Earth Mothers, Gardeners & Soil Caretakers

Honoring the earth that brings forth the abundance and beauty of life around us—the flowers, trees, fruits and veggies—is core to your nature. You understand the gift that the earth is and recognize all it brings to our life. You treasure it, watch over it and remind us of its sacredness. We honor you.

Protectors of the Waters

Water is life-giving, life-producing, nurturing and cleansing. With bodies composed of 90% water, from our earliest moments each of us was nurtured by and in the waters of the womb. The oceans, lakes, rivers and streams cover most of the surface of our world. You recognize water as a force of nature that supports us and supports life. We honor you.

Visionaries

You look forward, perceive opportunities, recognize the vastness and limitlessness of the skies, the magnificence of the sun and the moon and the stars. You perceive the invisible as real, bring forth fresh insight like a cool breeze that expands our world. We honor you.

Wise Wild Women

With many years of experience, challenges and triumphs, you have the courage to trust the voice within and act from this inner wisdom. You listen and perceive, receive others as they are. You speak truth, act from your heart and let your soul be seen. You dance with exuberance and live to the fullest. We honor you.

Meditation

Let's begin our time of meditation together by closing our eyes and feeling centered and grounded as we breathe. Feel your breath bringing the Light into your being. With every breath we bring in Light and we breathe out any heaviness, distraction or darkness. So with every breath we take, we increase and expand the Light within us that touches our own Light. Feel that expansion and that blessing within...

Today is a time of honoring your own unique contribution to life, of honoring and celebrating your belonging, of honoring your place in the whole amazing mystery of life. Experience the Light abundant within you and around you and around all of us here today. Light that is you, that is me and that connects each of us to all the wonderful beings here together this morning. Breathe in and experience the vibrancy of the Light...

And as you breathe, look at the challenges you have faced, the choices you have made in life, the path you have traveled as an individual, as a unique being in this life... Allow yourself to see these choices, this path, with a sense of gratitude for what has been and where you have come to in life, all the gifts that you have been given, the skills you have received and honed and honored as yours, and your way of contributing in life...

And as you breathe, look at the major choices you made in your life, the choices that really determined the path that you are on, your path of contribution. Remember the challenges you faced where the path you had to choose was uncertain and perhaps difficult. Acknowledge the learning that came as a result of those challenging choices—and the learning that came in facing the challenge and moving forward.

As you name those challenges and those learnings for yourself, honor yourself for each step taken. Some you handled better than others perhaps, but honor yourself for walking your path, for making choices where choices were available, for being who you are in this life, for growing, listening to that wise voice within you that leads you from Spirit, from that Light within.

Look at how you've been able to handle things that came your way that wouldn't have been your choices. Know that how you handled them was your choice. And as you trace your step on this path that you're on, that you have traveled, this path you are traveling now, acknowledge the Spirit that has always been with you, that has helped you move along this path, that has helped you explore your path and expand with it, that has enabled you to look forward with vision.

It is time now to forgive yourself for any actions or choices that you may have made that you wish you hadn't, but that was the best you could do at the time. As you breathe in, feel your breath filling you with light, nurturing you and bathing you with light. In that bathing and nurturing Light, experience your forgiveness. You did the best you could at that time... Breathe out and release any remaining pain, sorrow, grief or regret. As you continue to breathe, acknowledge that it was all on your path, it was all part of the journey of your life. At each step you took, you were guided. Bless all those in your life who nurtured you and walked with you on your path.

Know that you belong and you are whole and you are here and you are blessed. Know that you are a contribution to those in your life. Feel the blessing of the Light throughout your being filling you, nurturing you and let it be so. Sit in the silence of the blessing and allow the music to support you.

For all you are and all you are yet to be, we give thanks. Amen.

Mother's Day Message

Every time a child is born, there is an opportunity to teach that child a sense of well-being, a feeling of worth, a belief in their ability to accomplish great things in their lives. Each person the child comes in contact with during their growing-up years has the opportunity to influence the child's perception of his or her own innate value and worth. This includes parents, teachers, spiritual leaders, neighbors, childcare providers and community members.

One of the most accurate statements ever made about the raising of children was that, "It takes a village to raise a child." For children raised in remote areas, the family, along with some neighbors, is the "village." The size of the village increases for children who grow up in more populated areas. In these larger areas, the variety of influence expands. Each of these people has the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child and, through that connection, an opportunity to be part of the enhancement of society.

This is Mother's Day and we honor those women who provided the nurturing, physical, intra-uterine environment in which we each began our journey toward taking our place in the world. Mothers are incredible gifts to us all and, since we each had one, they are a blessed necessity. We honor the women who brought us into life and mothered us. We honor the women here who have brought forth life and nurtured their children.

Along with mothers, there are wonderful, creative, nurturing women and men who, either by choice or circumstance, did not become parents, yet they took the opportunity to be with children in some of the capacities I have mentioned. Their support and guidance can add incredibly to the parenting of children. For those in our childhood and in our children's childhoods, we feel gratitude.

It is so important for a child—and we were all children at one time—to have a supportive community of people who assist, nurture, care for, pray for, teach and entertain. There is an old saying: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." I prefer to say: "The hands that rock the cradle can change the world, making it a better place for all."

We all belong to a community village and on this day are choosing to honor not only mothers, but all who play an important role in the life of that community and its children.

I ask all women to stand, *(following to be read by a woman)*

Be a queen. Dare to be different.

Be a pioneer. Be a leader.

Be the kind of woman who in the face of adversity

will continue to embrace life and walk fearlessly toward a challenge.
Take it on! Be a truth seeker and rule your domain,
 whatever it is – your home, your office, your family – with a loving heart.
Be a queen. Be tender.
Continue to give birth to new ideas and rejoice in your womanhood...
My prayer is that we will stop wasting time being mundane and mediocre...
We are daughters of God – here to teach a world how to love...
It doesn't matter what you've been through, where you come from,
 who your parents are – nor your social or economic status.
None of that matters.
What matters is how you choose to love,
 how you choose to express that love through your work,
 through your family, through what you have to give to the world...
 by Oprah Winfrey at the Spelman College Commencement in 1993.

“Look at us! We are all Queens!
Let us own our power and our glory!”
Feel your power and glory as you sit down.

Belonging: Individual Voices

<p><i>Pre-selected women and men from the congregation stand, one-by-one, speak their statement, then sit down.</i></p>

I am a creative being and I belong.
I am spirit embodied and I belong.
I am supported by the universe and I belong.
I am seen and accepted for who I am as I am and I belong.
I am filled with Light and I belong.
I am supported and nurtured by this community and I belong.
I nurture others and I belong.
I am love and I belong.
We are all one in spirit and we belong.

Belonging: Community

MINISTER: Everyone stand and read from the insert in your bulletin.

EVERYONE: *name of your church* is a spiritual community where I am accepted for who I am as I am with love and caring. I celebrate my belonging.

MINISTER: We stand for peace in the presence of conflict; for love in the presence of hatred and for forgiveness in the presence of injury. We honor the many names of God, the many paths to God, the many ways to worship God; for there is only one power and presence of God and that God loves each of us equally.

EVERYONE: This is my spiritual community in which I participate. Knowing we are all one in spirit, I celebrate my belonging to this community of spiritual beings. I, my name, belong in name of your church.

MINISTER: Take this into your heart as you sit down. Now I ask all men to stand.

Honoring the Masculine

MINISTER: God created both women and men as part of the whole. We honor your presence and your contributions to the lives of women, for bringing children into this world and for your support and nurturance of women and children and family and community. Regardless of your lifestyles or how you choose to express who you are, the energy you bring to the planet is balancing energy. Each of us has both female and male energy in us. Stand tall and proud in your maleness and in your feminine. Like *yin* and *yang*, your wholeness supports and encourages the wholeness of us all. Bless you. You may sit down.

Honoring Your Mother

Close your eyes and bring forth an image of your own mother, the woman who brought you into this world and loved you. Feel your gratitude for all she did for you, for the ways in which she nurtured you, for the many things she taught you, for the ways in which she encouraged you to be your best. Hold her in your heart and give her love. (*pause for silence*)

In closing, we give thanks for the mother energy that nurtures and supports and guides and cares for life.

Special Music – Offering – Community Circle: Prayer of Protection & Peace Song

Generations of Women (Alternative to Honoring the Feminine)

Select a girl/woman to represent each of the generations. Call each girl/woman forth one-by-one to light a candle as you recognize their generation. After lighting a candle, have them stand with you until all generations are represented.

0-10 Years Thank you for your willingness to be on the earth at this time and this age. You represent innocence, hope, pure intent and excitement about life. Those of us who are older have much to learn from you about being in the moment, curiosity and adventure. We are touched by your beauty, your joy in even the smallest things, your smile and radiance. You bring forth our joy and we thank you.

11-19 Years You are emerging from childhood into your teen years, such a

challenging time of life. These years are a time of transition from being a child to becoming an adult, and new experiences that can bring forth daring, awkwardness, exuberance and exhilaration. As you blossom forth, we begin to see the woman you will become. We support your exploration and growth and wish you a smooth and joyous journey.

20's & 30's You are taking on adulthood and independence and life looms large as you begin to try on your dreams and follow through on commitments. You are making choices and taking action that will define your life's path, and may involve motherhood. There are so many options and opportunities and each step you take adds to your experience of who you are. We are here to support you even as you move further into your own life.

40's & 50's Time has moved swiftly and your family is changing. You may find yourself evaluating what you have already done, looking at what still fits and what no longer fits, what else you want to do, who you really are, separating out what you are still willing to do and what you are no longer willing to do. It is often a time of transition. You can delight in all that you have already done in your life.

60's This is a time to enjoy all that you have created, the many things you have brought forth, the many ways you have contributed to your world and how you do belong. It is also a time to commit to fulfilling your dreams and visions. It's no longer "someday," but rather "if not now, when?" You may begin to experience the emergence of the wise, wild woman who knows her passions and follows them.

70's & 80's Time is more abundant for relationships and connection with yourself and others. You cannot believe how many years have passed and how much you have experienced and how much you have to share. You see life in a broader scope as you lose family and friends while, at the same time, welcoming new life. Freed from the "must-dos," creativity can gush forth in new and different ways and we can treasure the flow.

90's We have given so much and nurtured so many and this is a time of receiving, of being nurtured and cared for by ourselves and others. We can honor our journey and celebrate life. The details of life are not important. May you enjoy the moment and the people and the love and the beingness, treasuring each moment and all that it encompasses.

Excerpted from <i>Honoring Missed Motherhood, Loss, Choice and Creativity</i> by Kani Comstock in collaboration with Barbara Comstock. Willow Press 2013
