



Worship at St. Stephens Williamstown

September 6 2020 – Pentecost 14

Bible readings for this week: Exodus 12:1-14, Psalm 149,
Romans 13:8-14, Matthew 18:15-20

Leaders Service prepared by Ted & Elaine Peck

Call to worship

God told his people:

honour your father and your mother,

so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

**We pray that this day might bring honour to our fathers,
healing to broken hearts**

and glory to you, our heavenly Father. Amen

Song: One day at a time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOfPQReS6vU>

1. I'm only human I'm just a man/woman

Help me believe in what I could be And all that I am

Show me the stairway I have to climb

Lord for my sake help me to take One day at a time

Chorus...

One day at a time sweet Jesus That's all I'm asking from You

Just give me the strength to do ev'ryday What I have to do

Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus

And tomorrow may never be mine

Lord help me today show me the way

One day at a time

2. Do you remember when you walked among men

Well Jesus you know if you're looking below it's worse now than then

Pushin' and shovin' crowding my mind

So for my sake, teach me to take One day at a time

Chorus...

The origins of Father's Day

Many people look on Father's Day as an invention by greetings card manufacturers to convince customers to give them even more money. However, it originated as a church service in America. There are debates over the origins of the idea of setting apart the third Sunday in June as a special day to honour fathers, but the strongest claim is focused on the selfless love and care of a father in Washington USA who brought up six children on his own.

William Jackson Smart was an American Civil War veteran, who lived on a rural farm in eastern Washington. He was widowed when his wife died giving birth to their sixth child. One of his daughters grew up to become Mrs Sonora Dodd, and while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909 at her church in Spokane, she realised all the sacrifices her father had made for her and her brothers and sisters. She approached her minister and some friends about having a church service dedicated to fathers on 5 June, the anniversary of her father's death. That date was too soon for her minister

to prepare the service, so they spoke a few weeks later on 19 June and, from that first service in Spokane, the state of Washington has celebrated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. It was adopted as an official national holiday in the USA in 1972. Since then it has spread across the world as the specific day on which fathers should be honoured by their children.

Bible Reading

Romans 13:8-14

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desire.

An opening prayer of confession and thanksgiving

God, who is both a father and a mother to us,
we thank you for your love to us from before we were born;
your guidance and protection as we have grown;
your wisdom and strength when we have sought to be parents to others.

We give thanks for all that our fathers have done for us,
all that they have been to us;
we thank you for the good times we have shared together
and for bringing us through hard times together.

We acknowledge that there are those for whom memories of their fathers are painful,
and some who have no memories at all.

Heavenly Father, may we find in you a loving embrace that more than makes up for
the inadequacies of our earthly fathers.

Gracious Lord, no human father is perfect and we who are fathers today confess our failings.

We pray that you will help us to love our children as you love us,
giving generously with wisdom and forgiving freely with justice.
In the name of your Son, our brother Jesus, we pray. **Amen**

Song; TIS O God of love <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVw4jp96Elw>

O God of love, whose heart is every yearning
that fixed on you, our wayward thoughts may be,
now grant us grace to live as in your presence,
and help us all our erring ways to see.
May love subdue the ill in every nation,
and all to you as subjects bow the knee.

2. O Father God, moved ever by compassion
for children crushed by sorrow's heavy load,
be swift to aid the downcast and the cheerless,
lift up the fallen on life's thorny road.
Give calm and strength to overcome with patience,
and safely bring them to your blest abode.

Ted reflects on his perception of the changing role of fathers

The role of fathers has changed a lot in my lifetime. For many of us, as young children, fathers could be a bit scary and silence had to be observed when the Age newspaper was read after mealtime or when the news was being heard on the ABC.

Fathers were serious people who went to meetings, and knew what the Council had done wrong and what the Government was up to and fathers were people who had fought in wars.

When I became a father things had changed a bit and fathers had become Dad's and it was O.K. to play with your children on the weekends, providing it didn't interfere with your work too much. But most of the serious rearing of children was left to the wife as was most housework.

By the time I became a grandfather things had changed a bit more. Women were in Council, in Government and preaching in churches. Men could cook and do housework, could change babies (nappies) and wash clothes; tuck children into bed and tell stories, could ride bikes and skateboards and play all sorts of games and even to be present at the birth of their children.

Now I am soon to be a great-grandfather. Things have changed some more. Some fathers are primary carers of children in the home or at least have a greater shared role in the day to day lives of their children.

I think being a father must have changed a lot. It is great to see so many young men out with the pusher, the kids and the dog, jogging along to keep up with little bikes and scooters. There seems to be a lot of young families around our way now and it is good to see them out and about with the children even more so during our Corona virus lockdown.

Anyway, I like the new role of fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers. I think some of us missed out on a lot of good stuff!

A prayer of intercession for Father's Day

Lord God, it's not easy being a father today, and so we pray:
for fathers in a society that is constantly redefining their role;
for fathers who stay at home and look after children;
for fathers who have been forced out of their families or away from their children;
for fathers with adult children who must relearn what it means to be a parent.

We pray also for families with fathers who are inadequate, violent, lazy or unkind;

for families where there is no father present at home;
for families in which there seems to be a succession of different 'fathers', making it hard for the children to build lasting relationships or know their true identities.

Whatever their circumstances,
may every family find wholeness and help
as they look to God, the loving Father of us all.

Amen.

Song: "Try a little kindness"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOfPQReS6vU>

If you see your brother standing by the road
With a heavy load from the seeds he's sowed.
And if you see your sister falling by the way
Just stop and say you're going the wrong way.

Chorus: You got to try a little kindness
Yes show a little kindness
Just shine your light for everyone to see
And if you try a little kindness
Then you'll overlook the blindness
Of narrow minded people on the narrow minded streets.

Don't walk around the down and out
Lend a helping hand instead of doubt.
And the kindness that you show every day
Will help someone along their way

Chorus:.....

Blessing*

May the Father's hand keep you from stumbling,
the footprints of Jesus give you confidence to follow,
and the fire of the Spirit keep you warm and safe
in your walk with God this day.

* Copyright John Birch 2016