

# Welcome to a Year of Celebration!

**Week 18-19: May 1-14, 2022**

## **Celebrate May Day & Mother's Day**

This year, we are focusing on who God is and how we can celebrate him and the life that he offers to us. We will draw deeper into a relationship with the Lord through examining his nature and desire for personal intimacy with us as his people, and we are going to do so in such a fun way! We are going to journey in 2022 through practical ways to celebrate various holidays! We will look at many of your favorite celebrations: Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day and much more. We will explore the historic, liturgical holidays of the year, learn about the Jewish festivals of the Bible days, and even consider some of the celebrations of other religious faiths. I'm so glad you will be on this journey with us.

In this packet, you will find some ideas for you to grow closer to God, your family, and others. Nothing is required. It is all for fun and your personal enjoyment and growth. There are enough activities that you could do one or two per day during the week if you want. If you don't want to do something, skip it. If another idea comes to mind, do it. Watch for God's abundant goodness and celebrate it.

Come Join Us as We  
**CELEBRATE GOD!**



**“They celebrate your abundant goodness  
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.”**

*Dr. Patrick Wilson*

**(Psalm 145:7)**

*2022*

# Video Devotional

Go to Patrick Wilson's YouTube page and watch the video devotional for this week: Celebrate May Day & Mother's Day. Then, consider and discuss with your family/friends the following questions:

- What attributes do you admire most in mothers?
- How have mothers, grandmothers, and mother-like people influenced who you are today?
- Why is it important to know people and what is going on in their lives when you pray for them?
- What are things that each member of your family enjoys? Are you willing to make sacrifices to enjoy these activities with them?
- How sincere are you with your spouse, (grand)kids, and close friends? Are you willing to openly admit your struggles and mistakes?

## Craft: 3D Paper Flowers

1. Fold cupcake liners in half. Fold in half a second time. Fold in half a third time.
2. Cut the tops of the folded liners in a rounded half circle to look like a flower petal. Unfold to show eight, connected petals.
3. Repeat steps one and two for five liners (per flower).
4. Put a dot of glue in the center of one cut liner.
5. Place the second liner on top of the glued liner, staggering it with the petals on the first one. Repeat for the remaining liners.
6. After the glue dries, fluff the liners to make the flower three dimensional.
7. Affix the flower to floral wire, to a card, or simply use them as table decorations.

### Supplies:

- Cupcake Liners (pastel)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Floral Wire (optional)



# Foods to Prepare

May Day is celebrated with various food traditions in different parts of the world. Consider these traditions listed by [epicurious.com](http://epicurious.com):

“Kids in Greece may get the best treat of all--they get to eat cake for breakfast....Greek Vasilopita Cake is usually flavored with anise seed or mahlab (the ground pit of a Mediterranean wild cherry).” Make a day to eat cake for breakfast.

“In France, drinking warm milk directly from a cow is customary on May 1st. Get thee to a farm ASAP or make your own updated non-dairy take.” Get a fresh gallon of milk this week and enjoy it together.

“Heart-shaped decorations made out of rice are all the rage in Germany but they're not edible.” Instead, fix your favorite rice dish.

“Key parts of the celebrations in Finland are Sima, a mead-like drink made with honey and water that kids and adults love, and funnel cake. These Fried Dough Balls are especially awesome dipped in chocolate sauce.” Try your hand at making some or pick up donut holes at the local donut store.

If these foods are not your thing, simply ask a mom for her favorite meal. Make it together as a family or pick it up from mom's favorite restaurant (It doesn't have to be on Mother's Day. Moms are worth celebrating every day!)

## Dancing Around the Maypole

Another springtime tradition associated with the Celtic holiday of May Day is dancing around the Maypole. Customarily, a pole is erected in the center (symbolizing a tree), ribbons are draped down from the top of the pole. Each person (especially children) take the end of a ribbon and dance around in a circle.

If you'd prefer to not make a Maypole, you can simply give rods or sticks to children and affix a ribbon at one end of the pole. They can dance around with their own miniature Maypole or wand.

Consider playing some Celtic music as you dance and enjoy time together.



# Movies to Watch

If you are movie fan, pick out a favorite movie to watch alone or with family/friends. Here are some of the many movies that speak about motherhood, but you certainly are not limited to this list. Pop some popcorn, curl up on the couch, and enjoy the show!

## Activity: Planting Flowers/Gardening

Spring is in the air, and that means it is time to plant. If you are into gardening, get going on this year's garden. If not, consider getting the entire family to help plant flowers in the beds outside your home or in baskets. You can get flowers at the local store or nursery, or you can consider planting seeds to water and watch grow.

Here are some favorite springtime flowers to consider:

- Pansies
- Marigolds
- Sunflowers
- Daisies
- Zinnias
- Poppies
- Black Eyed Susans
- Sweet Peas
- Nasturtiums
- Petunias
- Gladiolus
- Hydrangeas
- Morning Glories

### Motherhood Movies:

- Steel Magnolias
- Mom's Night Out
- Stepmom
- Cinderella
- Mrs. Doubtfire
- Hope Floats
- Freaky Friday
- The Blind Side
- Mamma Mia!
- Terms of Endearment
- Serial Mom
- Mommie Dearest
- Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood
- Lady Bird
- Mermaids
- Dumbo
- Because I Said So
- Bad Moms
- Mother's Day
- Akeelah and the Bee
- Little Women
- Brave



# Bible Study

“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever” (Isaiah 40:8).

As spring begins, we see the continue signs of growth. The grass in our yards begin to grow and has to be mowed regularly. The trees bud new leaves and flowers. The wildflowers bloom in the fields and along the highways. It is time to begin our gardens and to plant flowers in the flower beds. Yet, as Isaiah reminds us, all of these signs of life are short lived. They do not last.

In contrast to the grass that later withers in the scorching sun of the summer or the bitter cold of winter and the flowers that bloom in season and wither up thereafter, God’s word is everlasting. Whatever God says is true and timeless. God has the final say on all matters. He is eternal, and his word lasts forever.

I oftentimes quote or paraphrase Dallas Willard who says in *Hearing God*, “...while the Bible is the written Word of God, the word of God is not simply the Bible.” Any and every “word” that comes from God is the “word of God.” The original word from the Lord to the biblical writers is certainly God’s Word, but so is whatever he speaks to us through whatever means he speaks it. We need to be sure that we are hearing from God (not ourselves, others, or the enemy) and that we harken to his life-giving, eternal word for our lives.

## Prayer Time

Consider the mothers in your life and sphere of influence. Here are a few things you can pray for them:

- Restoration for Broken Family Relationships
- Wisdom and Discernment in Marriage and Family
- Rest Amidst the Many Demands and Expectations
- Personal Faith and Relationship with God
- Self-Care for Personal Wellness and Prosperity
- Freedom to Say “No” to Secondary Things
- Sisterhood with Other Women for Support
- Compassion to Love Others Well



# Service: Give a May Basket to Someone

One tradition that is associated with the festival of May Day is called a “May Basket.” People make baskets or cones out of paper and place cut flowers inside. Sometimes a handle was placed on the May Basket, so it could be hung on the doorknob. It was popular in the 19th and 20th centuries for people (especially children) to deliver the flowers to someone, knock on the door, yell “May basket,” and run off before the door opened.

As a service, think of someone that might be especially sad, lonely, or isolated. This might include someone whose mother recently passed away or to a mom that’s kids are far away. It might be to include someone who never got to be a mom. You might want to consider a young mother or even someone who is not a mother (i.e., your child or grandchild). You could even simply do this for a neighbor, church member, or friend.


Go and cut or purchase a bouquet of flowers. Wrap them in a cone-shaped sheet of colored paper. Write a small note letting the person know that you are thinking about her. You can sign it or leave it anonymous. Deliver your flowers and leave them on the doorstep or hanging on the doorknob sometime between May Day and Mother’s Day.

## Connect: Barefoot Walk

May Day is traditionally when children would go barefoot outside for the first time of the year. Weather permitting, ditch the shoes and go for a walk without shoes on. If you live near the beach, this would be great place to go for a walk. If not, consider walking through the grass in your yard or at a local park.

Take a dog with you on your walk. Invite a friend to join with you. Bring the whole family along. Give thanks for the world God created and for the senses that enable you to enjoy its beauty.

You might even consider playing an outdoor game of tag barefoot.



# Worship

Carve out some time to listen to worship music, hum or sing along. Here are some great songs to get you started. These songs focus on the importance of mothers and their love as a blessing from God. Look them up on YouTube if you don't have them in your music repertoire.

Pick your own songs and spend time worshipping and celebrating who God is to you and all the ways that he has blessed your life.

## Mother's Day Worship Songs:

- Priceless
- This Amazing Love
- In My Arms
- A Mother's Love
- Find Your Wings
- Everything to Me
- Call Her Blessed
- Faith of Our Mothers
- One Heartbeat at a Time
- Don't Forget to Remember Me
- When You Come Home
- The Blessing

## Challenge: Picnic

Dust off the old picnic basket and pack up a lunch to share together as a family. If you don't have a picnic basket, just assemble Tupperware filled with favorite foods. If you are short on time, slap together some sandwiches, chips, fruit, and cookies. If all that seems too complicated, drive through and pick something up.

Head out to a local park and find a good spot to enjoy time together. Consider bringing a quilt or blanket to sit on or find a picnic table or pavilion. Don't rush through the meal. Take your time. Enjoy, and breathe in the fresh air of spring.

“Youth fades; love droops; the leaves of friendship fall; A mother's secret hope outlives them all.”

—Oliver Wendell  
Holmes



## BONUS CONTENT:

Since this Church at Home packet is intended for two weeks, I want to provide you some additional ideas to help you celebrate May Day and Mother's Day.

### Gift Ideas for Mom

On Mother's Day this year, do something extra special for Mom. Here are some ideas. If your mother is no longer living, consider doing something special for another motherly figure in your life.

- Take her to the spa or nail salon.
- Take her out for a favorite meal.
- Serve her breakfast in bed.
- Have a family picnic.
- Go for a long walk with her.
- Help her with a project at home.
- Go shopping with her.
- Watch her favorite movie with her.
- Have a family photoshoot.
- Go for a family drive in the country.
- Make a homemade card.
- Watch the kids for a night out.
- Visit a museum with mom.
- Drive through a state park.
- Attend a painting class together.
- Buy cut flowers.
- Cook dinner together.
- Work a puzzle together.
- Stream an online concert.
- Plan a future trip to take.
- Make a (digital) scrapbook.
- Watch old home videos.
- Read a book as a family.
- Clean part of the house.

### Barrenness

Some women would really like to have children but are unable to have kids. The Bible lists six women who could not have children for extended periods: 1) Sarah, 2) Rebekah, and 3) Rachel (all in Genesis), Hannah (1 Samuel), anonymous wife of Manoah (Judges), and the Shunammite (2 Kings). Read about one of these and consider how they coped with their barrenness.





# Extra Bible Study

Throughout the Bible, God is described through both male and female metaphors. While we oftentimes follow the patriarchal model of speaking of God with male pronouns, the following verses refer to God with mothering terms. Read the passages and consider what they tell us about God and how the Lord relates to us.

“You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you; you forgot the God who gave you birth” (Deut. 32:18).

“As the eyes of a servant looks to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to you, YHWH, until you show us your mercy” (Ps. 123:2-3)!

“For a long time I have held my peace, I have kept myself still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor, I will gasp and pant” (Is. 42:14).

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you” (Is. 49:15).

“As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem” (Is. 66:13).

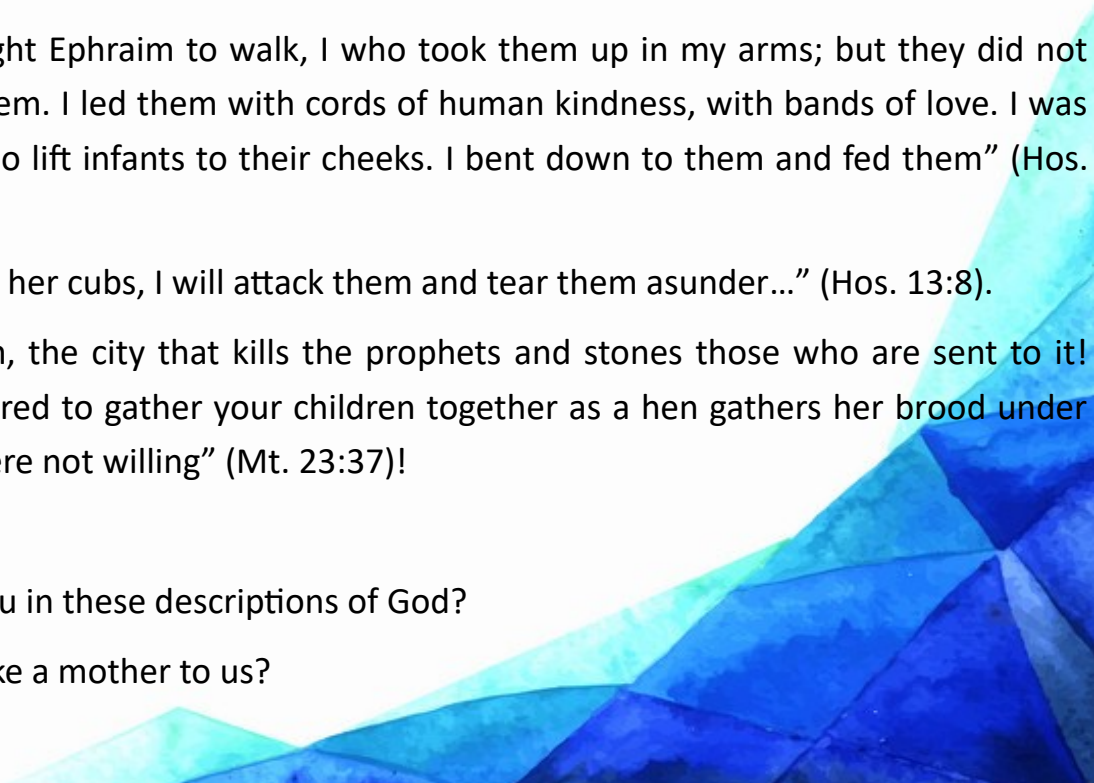
“Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I who took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them” (Hos. 11:3-4).

“Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and tear them asunder...” (Hos. 13:8).

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing” (Mt. 23:37)!

What stands out to you in these descriptions of God?

In what ways is God like a mother to us?





# Prayers for Mothers

Consider these prayers for mothers (from [crosswalk.com](http://crosswalk.com)) in various situations and let them guide you in intentional prayer for mothers in such circumstances today.

## Prayer for Hurting Mothers

Dear God, Some days feel too hard. We're hurting. Struggling. Fighting fear and worry at every turn. Thank you in the midst of it all, you haven't left us to fend for ourselves. Forgive us for doubting you are there. Forgive us for thinking you've forgotten. Forgive us for believing we somehow know the better way.

You are fully trustworthy. You are All Powerful. You are Able. You are Lord over every situation no matter how difficult it may seem. You are Healer and will never waste the grief we carry today. You will use all things for good in some way. Anything is possible with you. Nothing is too difficult for you.

We pray for those who grieve today. We ask for your comfort to surround those who weep. We pray for the peace of your presence to cover our minds and thoughts, as you remind us, the enemy can never steal us out of your hands. He never has the final say over our lives. We are kept safe in your presence forever, whether in life or in death.

We thank you that your ways are higher than our ways and your thoughts are bigger than our thoughts. We lay it all down at your feet, every burden, every care. Believing that is the safest place for it to be. We love you Lord, we need your fresh grace. In the Powerful Name of Jesus, Amen. - Debbie McDaniel

## Prayer for Single Mothers

Father God, we thank you for each and every woman you have blessed with the privilege of motherhood. We thank you that each single mother is a Godly steward of each of their children and that they raise them in the ways of the Lord. Father, we pray and ask that You continue to give them the grace to walk out being a single parent with kindness and generosity. We pray that every single mother has a relationship with You, and worships You in spirit and truth. (continued on next page)

The background of the page is a vibrant blue geometric pattern composed of various shades of blue and cyan, creating a modern, abstract design. The pattern consists of overlapping triangles and polygons of different sizes and orientations, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors range from deep, dark blues to bright, light blues and cyan, with some areas appearing more saturated than others. The overall effect is a clean, contemporary aesthetic that frames the text.

# Prayers Continued...

Help each of your precious daughters to remember that although they are parenting alone, You have not left them nor forsaken them. We thank You that You see each of them and love them. Lord, if they are weary, we pray and ask that You send them a Godly sister in Christ to hold up their arms in the battle, just as Aaron did for Moses. Lord, thank you that You care about every big or small thing that concerns them. Place a hedge of protection around every single mother and her children, Father. We thank you that You alone are their Provider. Where there is lack, Father, we pray that be it Your will You bring abundance. We pray and ask these things in your name, Amen. - Jennifer Maggio

## Prayer for Those Waiting to Be Mom

Lord, I pray for my friend who is still waiting to be a mother. Would You touch her with special encouragement and strength today? Father, let her know You see her struggle and care about her grief. Give her faith to believe You hear her prayers; reassure her that you have plans to bless her and give her a hopeful future.

Would you reveal Your great compassion to my friend today? Pour out Your love into her heart and heal the wounds she carries inside. Remind her that You treasure her and hold her in Your hand. You have promised to show her steadfast love and faithfulness. Lord, open her eyes to the greatness of Your power. You are able to do abundantly more than all she can ask or imagine. Give her the grace she needs to seek You first today. Help her to cultivate a strong relationship with You and reassure her that You will complete your purposes in her life.

Father, I ask that You show mercy and grant the desire of her heart for a child. Help her to acknowledge her desire before You and lay it at Your feet, trusting that you will grant it in your timing and in your way. Let her live in surrender to Your plans and purposes for her life. Lord, have mercy.

Draw her close to Yourself today and renew her joy. Open her eyes to daily blessings. Give her a steadfast heart, that she might continually look to You and Your love. Show her that the truest joy comes from your presence and give her the grace she needs today. In Jesus' name, amen. - Betsy De Cruz