

*Readings for May 12, 2024*

*United Church of Stratford In Person and Zoom Service*

**Unison Reading**

**Mother's Day Proclamation, 1870 Julia Ward Howe**

Arise then...women of this day!

Arise, all women who have hearts!

Whether your baptism be of water or of tears!

Say firmly:

“We will not have questions answered by irrelevant agencies,  
our husbands will not come to us, reeking with carnage,  
for caresses and applause.

Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn  
all that we have been able to teach them  
of charity, mercy and patience.

We, the women of one country,  
will be too tender of those of another country  
to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs.”

From the bosom of a devastated Earth a voice goes up  
with our own. It says: “Disarm! Disarm!

The sword of murder is not the balance of justice.”

Blood does not wipe out dishonor,  
nor violence indicate possession.

As men have often forsaken the plough and the anvil  
at the summons of war,

let women now leave all that may be left of home  
for a great and earnest day of counsel.

Let them meet first, as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead.

Let them solemnly take counsel with each other as to the means  
whereby the great human family can live in peace...

Each bearing after his own time the sacred impress, not of Caesar,  
but of God—

In the name of womanhood and humanity, I earnestly ask  
that a general congress of women without limit of nationality,  
may be appointed and held at someplace deemed most convenient  
and at the earliest period consistent with its objects,  
to promote the alliance of the different nationalities,  
the amicable settlement of international questions,  
the great and general interests of peace.

*readings continued on the next page*

*Excerpts from Philippians 2 and the Writings of John*

Be of the same mind, having the same love... Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself...

Jesus said, "Those who love me will keep my word, and the one who sent me will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.... Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and love is perfected in us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are not telling the truth... Those who love God will love their brothers and sisters also.