



**Welcome to Unity's Interactive
Worship Service**

Today's Topic: Love In Action

Power Point notes available at:
www.unityofbakersfield.org

Love In Action



Did you know that Mother's Day dates back to the Greek and Roman spring festivals? In the beginning the celebration was to honor their female gods. The Greeks dedicated their festival to Rhea, the mother of many deities; while the Romans honored the Great Mother of Gods, Cybele.

Love In Action



Later the early Christian Church chose the 4th Sunday in Lent to honor Mary, the mother of Jesus. Then centuries later England expanded the holiday to include all mothers and called it Mothering Sunday.

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Today in the United States the second Sunday of May is the day set aside to honor all mothers thanks to Anna Jarvis, who in organized a church service to celebrate her mother and her life long works. She handed out carnations, the first Mother's Day flower.

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Six years later, on May 8, 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed a Joint Resolution designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. It read: "*Now, Therefore, I Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by said Joint Resolution, do hereby direct the government officials to display...*

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...the United States flag on all government buildings and do invite the people of the United States to display the flag at their homes or other suitable places on the second Sunday in May as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country."

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The writer of Genesis 1:26-27 understood the divine nature of God being both masculine and feminine when he wrote:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

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As the Daily Word reminded us today:

A mother can be anyone who takes on a role of caring for a child...for the most important aspect in being a mother is to love and care for a child unconditionally with patience and compassion as the mainstays of expressing love in action.

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Today in Unity churches throughout the country we are not only celebrating our earthly mothers and what they represent to us on the physical plane, but also the divine feminine, the creative, loving, nurturing, forgiving presence of God in all of us and what it means to manifest these attributes in our lives. Here are some stories from a Reader's Digest collection of *Love In Action*:

Love In Action

Love In Action:

Two Simple Words by Abigail Wortman, West Long Branch, New Jersey

On the first day of first grade, I stood by the front door with butterflies in my stomach. I voiced my biggest concern to my mother: "How will I make friends?" Crouching in front of me, she handed me advice I carry with me to this day: "Be Switzerland."

Love In Action

Love In Action:

Be friends with everyone. Treat everyone equally and fairly. For all of my 20 years, I have lived by these words. Soon I will graduate and become a part of the real world. And on that first day, nervously facing new responsibilities, I know I will whisper two words to myself: "Be Switzerland."

Love In Action

Love In Action:

My Little ST. Nick by Brenda Bokor Wismer, Pinedale, Wyoming

My six-year-old son, Nicholas, sat in the grocery cart as I perused the canned vegetables. "How about this one, Mommy?" he asked, and handed me a can of asparagus. "I love asparagus!" I told him. "Asparagus is my favorite vegetable, but it's just too expensive."

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Love In Action:

I put the can back on the shelf. Three months later, I opened a crudely wrapped present from under the Christmas tree. It was a can of asparagus. Nicholas beamed in delight as he explained how he had saved his pennies to buy me the best Christmas gift I'd ever received.

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Love In Action:

A Stand-Up Woman by Robin Hynes, Slingerland, New York

My mom had a great sense of humor and a knack for making everything fun. One thing that resonated with me, even as a small child, was how much she seemed to enjoy her own company and found ways to entertain herself. As a kid, I remember her giggling while paying bills.

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Love In Action:

What was so funny about bill paying? She would put humorous notes in the reference section of the check: For the electric bill, she might put "You light up my life," and for the mortgage she'd write "Four shingles closer to owning it all."

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Love In Action:

The Hardest Choice by Andrea Cortinas, El Paso, Texas

Thirty-five years ago, when my mom was 22, she became a widow and a mother within the same month. The life she had imagined was stolen in a heartbeat. She tried to move on, but was lost. She gave me to my father's family to be raised in the United States. Some called her weak; others called her selfish.

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Love In Action:

I could be mad or bitter. Instead, I'm grateful for the life I have and to have a mother who sacrificed our relationship to give me a chance at a better life. She is courageous. She is my mother.

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Love In Action:

Memories In Verse by Pat Witty, Fairmont, Minnesota

The day I was dreading had arrived—it was inevitable. I had seen it coming but had chosen to ignore it for as long as possible. My very capable, intelligent mom had started forgetting to pay her bills, and it was time to take over her finances. As I looked through her wallet, I made a remarkable discovery.

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Love In Action:

Tucked away in a tiny compartment were four Mother's Day poems I'd written for her in the 1960s. She had saved and cherished those simple gifts for 50 years. What a happy surprise!

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Love In Action:

Might As Well Face It by Beth Kailukaitis, Kalamazoo Township, Michigan

Coming home from work one day, I found my mom dancing to Robert Palmer's "Addicted to Love." I watched, enthralled, as she moved and sang along, her hips twisting to the beat, big smile plastered on her face. It had been a long while since I'd seen her dance, so this display of pure joy was infectious.

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Love In Action:

She died unexpectedly in her sleep a few weeks later. I have many memories of her that I'll always cherish, but none quite as happy and carefree as her dance that day. It's definitely the simple things—thanks, Robert Palmer!

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Love In Action:

A Scarlet Symbol by Priscilla Hartling, West Allis, Wisconsin

My mother was my best friend. She loved cardinals, the male red ones. When she got sick with pancreatic cancer and knew death was near, she told me to always look for the red cardinal—that would be her. I never paid too much attention to that statement; I was too busy becoming an adult.

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Love In Action:

Twenty-five years later, every time I feel at my wits' end, there is a cardinal flying past me or in a nearby tree. Is it coincidence, or my mother, all these years later, letting me know that everything will be OK? I'll take the latter.

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As the Daily Word stated today, Patience and compassion are mainstays for the expression of love in action. This last story illustrates how they can be put into practice:

A man observed a woman in the grocery store with a three year old girl in her basket. As they passed the cookie section, the child asked for cookies and her mother told her "no."

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The little girl immediately began to whine and fuss, and the mother said quietly, "Now Ellen, we just have half of the aisles left to go through; don't be upset. It won't be long."

He passed the mother again in the candy aisle. Of course, the little girl began to shout for candy. When she was told she couldn't have any, she began to cry. The mother said, "There, there, Ellen, don't cry. Only two more aisles to go, and then we'll be checking out."

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The man again happened to be behind them at the checkout, where the little girl began to clamor for gum and burst into a terrible tantrum upon discovering there would be no gum. The mother patiently said, "Ellen, we'll be through this checkout stand in five minutes, and then you can go home and have a nice nap."

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The man followed them out to the parking lot and stopped the women to compliment her. "Ms., I couldn't help noticing how patient you were with little Ellen during your shopping."



"Thanks," replied the mother, "However, my daughter's name is Tammy... I'm Ellen."