

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

May 8, 2024

Association Minister Message

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WITNESS. TESTIMONY. (Jesus said,) *“I have made your name known to those who you gave me from the world. They are yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.”* (John 17:6). This coming Sunday is a special day on the calendar: *Mother’s Day* and/or *Festival of the Christian Home*. Those of us who have been blessed to know the love of special women (biological, adopted, or friend), certainly give *TESTIMONY* to a special relationship of love that nurtures and cares for us as God’s beloved. Erma Bombeck, an American humorist who wrote a newspaper humor column and 15 books describing suburban home life from 1965-1996, wrote, *“When your mother asks, ‘Do you want a piece of advice?’ it’s a mere formality. It doesn’t matter if you answer yes or no. You’re going to get it anyway.”* We are blessed by persons who *WITNESS* to God’s presence among us in relationships of our hearts, minds, and spiritual endeavors. They care and God’s grace embraces us in the good times and troubling times. Through them we experience God’s love.

It is the love of God known in Jesus, the Christ, that nurtures us and cares for us with miracles of love that *WITNESS* to resurrection faith. Our lives have principles, purposefulness, and perseverance as reflections that we are created as and in the image of God. During this time of vanity, self-love, self-centeredness and self-admiration, relationships are tenuous, fractured, and destroyed. Narcissism limits the indwelling movement of God’s Holy Spirit as it seeks power, success, and financial gain. Jesus was a *WITNESS* to the transforming power of love *“that they may be one, as we are one.”* (vs. 11). We give bold *TESTIMONY* to a way of life that is sacrificial and inclusive.

It is Jesus’ love *“that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.”* (vs. 13). Fred Kaan’s hymn, *“For the Healing of the Nations,”* declares, *“You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind; for our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind, that by our response and service earth its destiny may find.”* Let us give *TESTIMONY* to God’s *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*