

May 13, 2018

John 2:1-12

Anna Jarvis, Methodist Church, Grafton, West Virginia, 1908

Singular, each family was to honor the sacrifices of their mother

Ann Reeves Jarvis, Anna's mother

Mother's Day, National Holiday 1914,  
Woodrow Wilson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in May

By 1920, Anna fought against the holiday

But mothers days have been celebrated around the world for almost ever, often connected to women's movements, such as, suffrage and peace

Issues of justice

All these things were swirling around in my head as I sought to focus on this Mother's Day, when I attended a conference on poverty in our state, nation, and world this past week

Somehow I knew I must connect issues of justice with Mother's Day

It came together when Leslie Simonson said there is no way we can pay back the love we

have received from one who mothered us (in the godly sense).

The debt is too enormous

What is left us is to pay the love forward

Paying my mother's love forward is best done striving to usher in God's justice

Tell about Mother

- grew up poor, in south
- strong connection to church
- married clergy, intentional minister's wife
- frugal
- is the definition of "live simply so that others may simply live"
- involved in justice issues – peace, civil rights, poverty – to many things to list

My faith work and my justice focus is grounded in and challenged by her

I honor my mother, when I speak up and out on justice issues

Attending poverty conference a way to be informed, to support, and be led to action

Poverty Conference's speaker, Rev. Traci Blackmon, Executive Minister for Justice and Local Church Ministries, UCC

Rev. Blackmon talked about power of prayer, but not dormant prayer, because prayer requires action

Frederick Douglass – “ I prayed for twenty years but received no answer until I prayed with my legs.”

Today, to honor my mother, I am going to challenge you with some justice issues in which you might involve yourselves

- Poor People's Campaign – next 6 Monday afternoons at R.I. State House
- End Housing Discrimination bill – fill out postcard
- work on Rainbow Doors
- take part in Pride Fest and Parade

Caring for the least among us, striving to free the oppressed, challenging unjust laws and systems, these are the very best way to pay love forward.

God's love has been described as a mother's love; God's love is like Mary's love, which

pushed her son to use the talents he had been given to help another

A mother's love is a comforting ideal and I am aware not everyone here is fortunate enough to have had a mother's love that comes close to that ideal, but I know you have – sometime in your life – been held in God's love by someone else, otherwise you would not be here this morning.

How do you plan to pay the love you receive forward?