

Sermon Outline - Sun, May 9, 2021- God as Mother

Overview: There are many celebrations this month that we are weaving together – AAPI Heritage Month, Pentecost and today Mother's Day. I am grounding my sermons in the work of Asian American feminist theologian Kwok Pui Lan who has done work of re-imagining Christianity both theologically and pushing the envelope on how we practice. This afternoon we work from the topic, God as Mother, seeing that motherly qualities within the Godhead.

Story Exegesis

I want to start by giving a real shout out to Kwok Pui Lan, Delores Williams, Rosemary Radford Reuther, Suijin Pak and many other feminist theologians whose work and legacy is part of why New Roots is able to exist. I want to celebrate women leaders within the church Jarena Lee, Anna Howard Shaw, my own mother Gloria White-Hammond. The fact that this community is even able to exist is because they pushed the boundaries, sometimes at great personal cost so that you could have a Black woman preacher and that not be crazy. They made it possible to talk about seeing God beyond a rigid patriarchal notions. They were willing to name the ways that patriarchy in particular has shaped our image of God.

***Disclaimer about gender roles, the shifting and the pushback on its rigidity. We also know that no human is perfect so seeing God through the lens of a human is tricky and in many

Why does it matter how we see God –

- Our understand of God shapes our understanding of who we are
- Our understanding of God shapes how present or distant we believe God is
- Our understand of God shapes how we see each other (competition vs. collaboration)

Reimagining God As Mother (

- **God as Life Giver** – Throughout the Scripture God and particular images of the Holy Spirit are associated with giving life. In Genesis, God gives life through the Holy Spirit breathing into, moving as wind through. These are images of creativity and allowing the beautiful to emerge
- **God as Concerned Parent** - God is watching not simply to call us. God sees us as the greatest concern, the joy of their life and us getting it right is God's greatest hope.
- **God's Deepest Concern – Are you Getting Along with your siblings?** – So much of the scripture is about how we are getting along. God is deeply concerned with how we move in relation to each other.

Questions –

1. Does reimagining God as Mother change your image of who God is? In what ways is that liberating or not, where do you have questions?
2. If you truly embrace God as a concerned parent, how is your relationship with God. How do you want it to be stronger, where are there spaces for improvement in that relationship?
3. If Mother God cares about your relationship with your siblings, where do you need to lean into restoring your sibling relationships (either with blood siblings or anyone else you are in relationship with.)?