

Sermon Outline - Sun, May 12, 2024 – Calling of the Mayflies – Mama Mayflies
(Psalm 127; James 4:13-15)

Overview – This is the 2nd Installment in a two part series – The Calling of the Mayflies. Inspired by Rahn’s writing which we got to hear. May adults live from a few hours to at most a few days and so as we think about what we are called to, we look to them for what God can teach us in their lives.

Recap

- At Each Life Stage they Live with Intention – Time is limited so they focus on the key things
 - 4 stages – egg (few days - wks); nymph (2 mos -2 yrs); subimago adult – wings but not sexually mature (few hrs to 2 days); full adult (few mins to 72 hrs)
- Mayflies are a Movement Species – they move in packs – recognizing that the most productive things we do are done cooperatively
- They are small but feed bigger things – Nymphs feed on dead/decaying things and help clean the water. They are a source of protein for fish, birds, humans

Exegesis –

- Last week we looked at how the book of James reminds us that we don’t know how long our lives will be so while we should have a long-term orientation; we should also live with intention
- Psalms scripture reminds us that that one of our biggest contributions is to nurture the next generation. We have broadened the language to include all the ways that folks parent
- On Mother’s Day we look at the female mayfly to learn her lessons on mothering

Key Points –

1. Adult Female Mayflies are very clear in their purpose – Males are also focused but they can mate multiple times. Once a female is pregnant she switches to the egg-laying stage.
2. Mama Mayflies stay close to the life source – They stay close to the water because that is where they will deposit their eggs. Male mayflies do more exploring and die on the land.
3. They try to give their eggs the best fighting chance for survival – They will not be there to nurture their young so they try to deposit their eggs in ways that maximize their chance for survival – (some focus on helping them sink to the bottom fastest, some try to hide their eggs, some produce a lot of eggs to maximize the chance that some will live)

We can be tempted to pretend like our mothers are/were perfect. To brush over the fact that we may have disappointments from them, or regrets about our own mothering. We may experience pain or shame around miscarriages, abortions, infertility or the choice not to be a mom. I want to encourage us to be okay with the fact that the nurturing and supporting of future generations does not have to be a solo act nor about perfection. We can both learn the lesson of the Mayfly Mom and recognize that as humans we have options to do more by continuing to function in a cooperative mentality and that the chance to nurture children is a gift that we can also share collectively.

We can all choose to be concrete in our choices to contribute to the next generation, we can stay close to our life source, and do what we can to give the next generation a fighting chance for survival. These lessons from the Mama Mayfly are available to every one of us regardless of gender or life stage.

Reflection Questions

1. Who are the specific children that you are called to intentionally nurture and support? If you don't have an intentional child/children, who can you come alongside? How can you deepen those relationships and make intentional space to contribute to their lives?
2. In what ways are you called to stay close to the life source of God and to nurture children around that life source? How can you deepen your own spiritual walk as an example to younger people or what ways might you contribute to children's spirituality at New Roots or another space?
3. How are you called to make our world a safer, more sustaining space for our children? What ecosystems are you called to clean or nurture in order that they might have a better environment in which to thrive? How can you do that work in more direct accountability with younger generations?