

Strength in Service

Celebrating Sevika Sanghom Sunday

Opening Prayer

P: Creator of all, we come together in your presence today to thank you for the spirit and mission of the Sevika Sanghom members of the Mar Thoma Church, nationally and internationally. We are thankful for their boundless grace and unshakeable faith that has carried many generations through good times and bad. It was a historic moment in 1919 when Sevika Sanghom was born. As we look back on the journey we've walked and the grace we've received, help us to dedicate ourselves to the path ahead. May we as a Church cherish and uphold our women and girls and empower them to be pillars of strength and virtue in this ever-changing world. Lord, help us as a community to foster meaningful relationships with you and among ourselves so that we may reflect your love, peace and hope, today and always. Amen.

Opening Hymn

Hymn

All the way my Savior leads me.
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt his tender mercy,
Who thru' life has been my Guide?
Heav'nly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in him to dwell!
For I know, whate'er befall me,
Jesus fashions all things well.

All the way my Savior leads me,
Cheers each winding path I tread;
Gives me grace for ev'ry trial,
Feeds me with the living Bread.
Tho' my weary steps may falter,
And my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo! A spring of joy I see.

All the way my Savior leads me;
Oh, the fullness of His love!
Perfect rest to me is promised
In my Father's house above.
When my spirit, cloth'd immortal,
Wings its flight to realms of day
This my song thru' endless ages:
Jesus led me all the way.

Fanny J Crosby

Kauma

P. †Glory be to the Father our Creator, to the Son our Redeemer and to the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us.

C. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

P. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.

C. Blessed is He that has come and is to come again in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

P. Holy art thou, O God.

C. Holy art thou, Almighty Lord.

P. Holy art thou, Immortal Lord.

C. O Lord, the Messiah who was crucified for us † have mercy on us.

(To be repeated thrice)

P. O Lord, have mercy on us.

C. O Lord, have mercy on us and bless us.

P. O Lord, accept our prayers and worship and have mercy on us.

C. Glory be to you, O God.

P. Glory be to you, O Creator.

C. Glory be to you, O King the Messiah; who has mercy on us sinners. Bless us, O Lord.

(Let us sing together the prayer that Jesus taught us)

All: *Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is done in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

(Cong. to be seated)

1st Lesson: Judges 4:1-9

2nd Lesson: Acts 9:36-42

L: Stories of Women from the Bible that were part of God's plan in Unconventional Ways

Miriam

Exodus 2:1-10; Exodus 15:19-21; Numbers 12:1-16, 20:1; Micah 6:4

We first meet Miriam as a girl, standing on the banks of the Nile, watching over her baby brother Moses, who was placed in a basket in the river in hopes of hiding him from certain death. When Pharaoh's daughter finds the baby, Miriam bravely speaks up and offers to find a nurse for him.

The Exodus narrative continues to follow Moses' life, but when we fast forward 80 years, we meet Miriam again. This time, she is standing on the banks of the Red Sea, having helped her brothers lead the Israelites through its parted waters as they escape Pharaoh's army and slavery in Egypt.

In celebration, Miriam, who is known as a prophet among her people, leads the other women in songs of worship.

Yet, Miriam had her imperfections. At one time, in prejudice and jealousy, she spoke against Moses as God's chosen leader and his choice of a wife. Because of her sin, she was punished, and because of God's grace, she was forgiven.

In Micah, God names Miriam right alongside Moses and Aaron as the one, He has sent to lead His people out of slavery and into a new life of freedom.

Zelophehad's Daughters

Zelophehad had 5 daughters and no sons. At the time of his death, none of his daughters were married. This was during a time when the inheritance was traditionally passed from father to son.

Yet this didn't stop the daughters from going to Moses and the other leaders, saying, "Why should our father's name disappear from his clan because he has no son? Give us property among our father's relatives."

So Moses brought their case before the Lord, and God replied, "What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance and turn their father's inheritance over to them."

Because of these women's boldness, they received their inheritance, and God gave the Israelites new laws that would provide for future women who found themselves in similar situations.

Martha & Mary of Bethany

Martha and Mary were sisters who often get compared to each other. But I think we're better served not to look at them in relation to one another, but to instead look at their relationships with Jesus.

Scripture speaks of Martha as a woman of generous hospitality, who regularly opened her home and served meals to Jesus and His disciples. When the stress of hosting got to be overwhelming, Jesus affirmed that He saw Martha in her frustration and worries and reminded her that he didn't need perfect performance; her presence with Him was enough.

Mary was commended by Jesus on two occasions for her devotion: once when she defied cultural expectations to sit at His feet and listen to His teaching; and once when she poured out her best perfume to anoint Jesus' feet in worship and adoration.

Both women received comfort from Jesus when their brother died, and both witnessed Jesus raise that same brother to life again.

Mary Magdalene

The Bible doesn't tell us much about Mary Magdalene's past, but we do know that after Jesus freed her from the seven demons (this could mean literal demonic oppression or symbolize some form of illness), she became one of His followers. She is named among other women who financially supported Jesus out of their own means.

Along with other women, Mary stayed near the cross as Jesus died, saw His body buried, and went to the tomb to anoint His body on the third day, finding it empty with the stone rolled away.

Mary Magdalene was the first person Jesus appeared to, after He rose from the dead, and He entrusted her with sharing the good news of His resurrection with His other disciples.

Lydia

We meet Lydia only once in the Bible, when she meets Paul and his companions. These men have traveled to Philippi and go to the river looking for a place of prayer. They begin speaking with the women who had gathered there, sharing the gospel.

One of those listening is Lydia. She is a dealer in purple cloth - a businesswoman, and more than likely a successful one.

Her heart is receptive to the gospel, and after she and her household are baptized, she opens her home to Paul and his companions, and her home becomes the gathering place for the new church in Philippi.

These women encountered the love and power and grace of God, and by His love and power and grace they participated in His body and made a difference in His Kingdom.
And by His love and power and grace, *so can you*.

www.theoverflowing.com

Hymn

[Verse 1]

I'm only human, I'm just a woman
Help me believe in what I could be and all that I am
Show me the stairway I have to climb
Lord, for my sake, teach me to take one day at a time

[Chorus]

One day at a time, sweet Jesus
That's all I'm asking from You
Just give me the strength to do everyday
What I have to do
Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus
And tomorrow may never be mine
Lord, help me today, show me the way
One day at a time

[Verse 2]

Do You remember when You walked among men?
Well, Jesus, You know, if You're looking below, it's worse now than then
Cheating and stealing, violence and crime
So for my sake, teach me to take one day at a time

One day at a time, sweet Jesus
That's all I'm asking from You
Just give me the strength to do everyday
What I have to do

Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus
And tomorrow may never be mine

Lord, help me today, show me the way
One day at a time

Christy Lane

Becoming A Woman Of Excellence

A woman of excellence
Is what I long to be,
Filled with your godly wisdom
So it is part of me

A woman of integrity
No matter what I face,
Standing up for righteousness
And for your saving grace

A woman of destiny
Living out your plan,
Knowing where you'd have me walk,
Being guided by your hand

A woman of promise,
Standing on your word;
Holding on to all the truths
While carrying out your work

A woman of compassion
For the ones in the dark,
Those that do not know your love
And have darkness in their hearts

A woman that will never
Compromise the faith
With what the world may offer,
But will keep the narrow way

A woman who loves Jesus
And will only follow Him;
Gladly to give up the world
So His light can shine within

Lord, this is my earnest prayer
As a daughter by your grace,
Grow in me these qualities
As I walk with you in faith.

M.S.Lowndes

Prayer of Confession

Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

L: Empowered by Christ, the Samaritan woman became the first proclaimer of the gospel in Samaria. Although we meditate on Your Word, we acknowledge that we often live in indifference, failing to become proclaimers or implementers of the transformation Christ brings. Jesus said, "Leave her alone, she has kept this perfume for the day of my burial". Mary Magdalene who lived on the path of suffering was able to easily recognise the suffering of Jesus. Let us meditate on the memory of Mary Magdalene, who deeply understood the mystery of Christ. "Woman, great is your faith; let it be done to you as you will." The Canaanite woman, unshaken by harsh words and behavior, demonstrated remarkable determination and faith. Let us meditate on

her fighting spirit, which even influenced Jesus' approach.

C: We realize that our behaviour and actions need to be changed and seek your forgiveness for what we have done to each other. We ask that you help us build an inclusive community accepting of all people so that everyone may experience life to the fullest. Help us to love and cherish the remarkable women in our lives and uphold in memory, the women who have been silenced and forgotten. Transform our hearts so that we may reflect your love, peace and justice to each person we come across. Amen.

Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

Intercessory Prayers

L: Dear Lord, help us to be filled with the passion to be part of the Great Commission and to continue the rich legacy we have received from Kandamma Varghese Kochamma, who birthed the idea of this great Women's Ministry now known as the Suvishesha Sevika Sanghom. We remember the Churches on the path of mission, particularly our Church, led by the Most Rev. Dr. Theodosius Mar Thoma Metropolitan, Suffragan Metropolitans, Episcopas, and the President of the Sevika Sanghom Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos Episcopa, Priests, Evangelists, and Ascetics. Lord, we are grateful to You for all the office-bearers of Sevika Sanghom at the Kendra, Diocese, Centre and Parish levels. Let us pray for the Diocese, Zone, Centre and Sakha Office-bearers, Young Women Fellowship and every Sevika Sanghom Member.

C: To be sung

O soul, are you weary and troubled?

No light in the darkness you see?

There's light for a look at the Savior,

And life more abundant and free!

***Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.***

L: Today, we remember the women living in dangerous situations. We remember the women and young girls whose bodies have been violated by rape and degradation, for those who are bought and sold as commodities. We remember the women of Palestine and Israel who are foraging for food, shelter and water. We hope that you will answer their prayers and attend to their needs. We submit into your care the women of Nepal, who are living in a reality we cannot even begin to fathom.

We remember those whose lives are plagued by uncertainty and anxiety. We pray for those who yearn for children, expectant mothers and new mothers who are struggling to care for their children. We pray for women who struggle with their roles in society, help them to know that finding their individuality is most important. We pray for them when they are tired and discouraged, when they feel futile and small and ridiculous, when it is tempting to shrink back and give up, we pray for rest, we pray for renewal, we pray for faith, for fearlessness, for boldness, for new courage, for new vision, for new life to come to them in ways that surprise them and bless them.

C: To be sung

Thro' death into life everlasting,

He passed, and we follow Him there;

O'er us sin no more hath dominion--

For more than conqu'rors we are!

***Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,***

***And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.***

L: We acknowledge the pivotal role of Sevika Sanghom in empowering women and fostering qualitative growth in the human potential of women. We pray for its 1014 branches across 14 dioceses, and all activities at the Sakha, Center, Diocese and Kendram levels. We remember institutions like Balika Bhavan, mission fields, Kandamma Memorial Study Center, and other endeavors striving for the creative growth of women. We also remember the dedicated Volunteers who have committed their lives to serving Sevika Sanghom. We also remember Vanitha Mandiram commemorating its centenary, Salem Bhavan, KG & UP School and Nursery Teachers Training Institute. We pray that all involved in the ministry of the Kingdom of God may be equipped for fruitful service. We pray especially for the Hostel for Working Women at the Galilean Centre that is being run by our Sevika Sangham and we pray that you will continue to bless their Services to our Church and the community. We pray that our Church continues to provide more opportunities for women to rise and shine.

Dear God, we submit the women from all walks and stages of life into your loving arms. We ask you to let them know that their lives need not always be lived for others, but can be led with dreams and hopes of their own too. Let their innermost needs be granted, may their relationship with you be strengthened. We pray that women both young and old, find solace in the fact that you are a God who provides and nurtures, a God that sustains and never forsakes.. We pray that every woman in this congregation and this world finds their place in the big story of redemption, rescue and renewal that God is weaving together.

C: To be sung

**His Word shall not fail you--He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell!**

***Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.***

Helen Howarth Lemmel

Gospel Reading

P: †Peace be with you all.

C: May the Lord make us all worthy to listen to His Word.

P: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which proclaims life and salvation to the world as recorded by **Evangelist Luke**.

C: Blessed is He that has come and will come again. Praise to the Father who sent him for our Salvation. May His blessings be ever upon us.

P: In the days of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Word of life, God incarnate of the blessed Virgin Mary, it happened in this way.

C: So, we believe and affirm.

Luke 20:19-26

(After reading the Gospel, the priest says, †'Peace be with you all')

C: With you also. We thank you, Lord, that you have given us your gospel which is indeed the light of the world, that we may be drawn closer to you through the living words from your gospel which we have now heard.

The Nicene Creed – To be sung

We believe in the one true God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven, Maker of earth,

We believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all world;

God of God, Light of Light, Of all things invisible, and all in light.
God of God, Light of Light, of all things invisible and all things right.

Being one with the Father, by whom all things were made,
who for our salvation, came down from heaven,
Incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin and was made man.

In the days of Pilate, He was crucified,
He suffered and died and was buried.
The third day He rose again, ascended into heaven,

He will come again for the living and the dead
and of His kingdom there will be no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life;
together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified;
God of God, Light of Light,
who spoke through the prophets and the apostles.

We believe in one Holy Church,
One baptism for the remission of sins;
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the new life to come.
Amen

(Cong to be seated)

Birthday, Wedding Anniversary & Thanksgiving

Yesu en swantham halleluyya
Ennudey bhaagyam chollikoodaa
Pazhayathellaam kazhinjupoi
Kandaalum sarvvam puthiyathai!

Enikku paattum prashamsayum
Daiva Kunjaadum than kurishum

Yesu en swantham halleluyya
Theernnu en andhyam neengi raavum
Iruttin paasham aruththu thaana
Jeeva prakaasham kanhunnu njaan! -enikku...

Yesu en swantham halleluyya
Thuranna swarggam kaanhunnithaa
Paapam thaana neekki rakthaththinaal
Daiva kunjaakki aathmaavinaal -enikku...

Yesu en swantham halleluyya
Ee snehabandham nilkum sadaa
Maranhatthôlham snehichchu thaana

Nithyathayôlham snehikkum njaan -enikku...

Yesu en swantham halleluyya
Nintey sambaadhyam njaan rakshakaa
Nee en karththaavum snehithanum
Jeevadaathaavum sakalavum -enikku...

Blessed Assurance - Fanny J. Crosby

Announcements

Offertory

She only touched the hem of His garment
As to His side she stole,
Amid the crowd that gathered around Him;
And straightway she was whole.

*Oh, touch the hem of His garment,
And thou, too, shalt be free!
His healing pow'r this very hour
Shall give new life to thee!*

She came in fear and trembling before Him,
She knew her Lord had come,
She felt that from Him virtue had healed her,
The mighty deed was done.

He turned with "Daughter, be of good comfort,
Thy faith hath made thee whole";
And peace that passeth all understanding
With gladness filled her soul.
George Frederick Root (1820-1895)

MESSAGE

Closing Prayer

P: Our Heavenly Father, as we celebrate Sevika Sanghom Day, we surrender ourselves completely and unconditionally into your loving hands. Lord, cleanse us from all our weaknesses and help us to walk in purity and integrity of heart.

C: Lord, help us to be peacemakers in our homes and in society. May we be strong in our faith and be grounded and rooted in the Word. Help us to be men and women of prayer. We surrender and recommit ourselves totally to you to fulfil your purpose in this generation. Amen.

Benediction

P: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forevermore. Amen.

Doxology and Kiss of Peace

When Mary poured a rich perfume on Jesus' weary feet,
Her caring filled that humble room; the fragrance there was sweet.
But full of anger, Judas said, "We could have used this more!
Why was her gift not sold instead and given to the poor?"

The Lord replied, "Leave her alone! She bought it for this day. This caring love that she has shown is faithful to God's way. The poor will always be with you, but you will not have me." He blessed her and he thanked her, too, for giving lavishly.

O Christ, what can your people bring to show you thanks and love?
You need no fragrant offering; for now you reign above.
Since there will never cease to be the poor throughout the land,
May we, your church, serve faithfully by offering them our hand.

Tune "I Sing the Mighty Power of God"; Text: Copyright © 2001 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

[illegible]