

We Are Family



- Theme:** We are the brothers and sisters of Jesus. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost
- Object:** Song: "The Family of God"
- Scripture:** "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." Mark 3:33-35 (NIV)

What is a family? One definition I found in the dictionary said a family is "A group consisting of parents and children living together in a household." That is, no doubt, one way to define a family, but a family can be much more than that, can't it? A family can be any group that is brought together by common interests, beliefs, and love for one another. One of the best examples of this kind of family is the Church. The church is a family bound together by love for God, their Heavenly Father, and for one another. There is a song written by Bill and Gloria Gaither that describes the Church as the family of God.

"The Family of God"

I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God,
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the family,
The Family of God.

You will notice we say "brother and sister" 'round here,
It's because we're a family and these are so near;
When one has a heartache, we all share the tears,
And rejoice in each victory in this family so dear.

In our Bible lesson today, Jesus was together with his disciples in a house. When Jesus' mother and brothers arrived at the house, they sent someone inside to look for him. They told Jesus, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

Jesus looked around at the people seated around him and answered, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

Did Jesus love his real mother and brothers? Of course he did, but he also realized that he had another family. It was a family made up of those who loved his Heavenly Father and wanted to do his will.

You and I love our families, but we also have a wonderful family of faith made up of brothers and sisters who love God and love one another. It is wonderful to be a part of "The Family of God."

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our families and we thank you for our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Theme: Being a part of God's Family (Proper 5 / Ordinary 10 / 2nd Sunday after Pentecost)
Object: A large picture of a family
Scripture: Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." Mark 3:34-35 (NIV)

Have you ever been to a family reunion? You know what that is, don't you? It is a time for all the members of a family to get together — grandpas and grandmas, moms and dads, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and lots and lots of cousins. Most of the time it will include playing a lot of games and eating a lot of food, but the main reason for a reunion is to help family members to stay in touch with one another. Many times family members become scattered and live in different towns and different states far away from one another. They may keep in contact by email or by phone, but nothing beats a family reunion to help a family to stay in touch.

We should never overlook the importance of family. In the very first book of the Bible, God established the family. He created Adam and Eve, blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful and multiply." God intended for family members to be there to care for one another in times of need. Family is there to help us when we are sick. When we are young, our parents and grandparents look after us. As our parents and grandparents get older, that sometimes changes and we become the ones to take care of our parents or grandparents. That's what family is all about.

You might not realize it, but when we put our faith in Jesus, we become a part of another family. We become a part of God's family. In our Bible reading today, Jesus looked at a group of people seated around him and said, "See my mother and my brothers. Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." When we put our faith in Jesus, we become a part of a family of believers — the church. Just as the members of our earthly family have a responsibility to love and care for one another, members of our church family have a responsibility to love and care for one another.

What are some ways we can show love to our brothers and sisters in the family of God?

Pray for those who are sick.

Feed those who are hungry.

Give clothing to those in need.

Give shelter to the homeless.

Comfort those who are sad.

Be a friend to those who have no friends.

Family is important — our earthly family and our spiritual family. Never take them for granted.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our families. Thank you for grandparents, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters. We also thank you for our church family. Help us to love and care for one another as you have taught us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

FAMILY PICK UP: This game can be played like hide and seek or like the game of tag. Either way, one person will start and find or tag another person to JOIN THE FAMILY. They will hold hands each time one is caught and continue to find or tag more and hold hands until the whole class is holding hands and running together.

FAMILY OBSTACLE RUN: Set up a simple obstacle course and have the children all hold hands or stand behind one another and hold on to the shoulders or waist of the person in front of them. The children will run through the obstacle course together without letting go of the person in front of them.

FAMILY COLLAGE: Give the children strips of construction paper to make a border around the edges of a piece of poster board. Have the children cut out pictures from some old magazines to make a family collage with pictures of adults and children. Write words from today's Bible verse or lesson at the top of the picture collage.

FAMILY HUNT: Hide the letters of F-A-M-I-L-Y around the room and tell children to go and find the FAMILY!! When a child finds a letter, they will glue their FAMILY letters vertically on a poster board and create an acrostic about GOD's FAMILY writing a word for each letter of F-A-M-I-L-Y.

HAPPY FACE FAMILY: Provide children with large happy face stickers to stick onto a piece of construction paper or a bright colored recipe card. Children can draw arms and legs on their happy face stickers and write GOD's FAMILY... or write names of their own family over the top or under the happy face stickers.

FAMILY CLOTHES PINS: Give the children several wooden clothes pins to decorate as a "person"... sharp point markers for facial features; small piece of material to glue around as a shirt or dress; and yarn to glue on the top as hair or a cut out piece of felt, etc and cut as a hat. Let the children use their "family people" to tell a story about their family.

FAMILY CUTOUTS: Give the children a piece of construction paper which they will fold back and forth accordion style four times. On the top piece of the folded paper, draw an outline of a person whose hands extend to touch the folds of the paper. Carefully cut around the person, making sure not to cut where the hands meet the folds so that when the "people" are unfolded, they are connected at the hands as a FAMILY. Hang on the families on a classroom wall!

FAMILY TREE: Have the children draw a large tree on a piece of poster board or construction paper. The children will then write the names of people that they know who belong to the FAMILY of GOD. Label their drawing at the trunk of the tree as the FAMILY OF GOD. Add flowers, birds, grass, or flower stickers, etc, as desired.

SING A SONG: IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT; I'M HAPPY ALL THE TIME.