

# Worship Resources



*Supporting the health and well-being of women empowers and strengthens entire communities.*

*Use this resource to help your church learn about the importance of supporting mothers and children in vulnerable circumstances. These resources can be incorporated into your worship service, whether meeting in person or livestreaming. Email these resources to families in your church so they can learn about our community health programs. Your support means vulnerable mothers and children can thrive.*

## A Story to Share: Little Things, Big Changes

We may forget the importance of little things: clean, safe water; a toilet; availability of fresh fruits and vegetables; education.

Shilpi, a young mother in Bangladesh, struggled to care for her children. They were often sick. But she also felt other challenges. Shilpi and her family were often excluded from the community and friends didn't want to visit.

When Shilpi joined a World Renew women's group, things started to change. The group shared the importance of sanitation and hygiene. And, Shilpi recognized that she had to make it a priority to build a latrine on her property. Without a latrine, the family used a small area of their property as a toilet; the same area where their chickens and ducks scratched and flies buzzed incessantly.

It seems like a small thing, but when Shilpi finally had enough money to build a latrine, her family's health improved. For the first time the family had a private space, free from flies and animals. More than that, their water well was protected from becoming tainted by fecal matter.

Women's groups around the world are helping mothers care for their families. Mothers are encouraged to breastfeed their infants as long as they can. They also learn which foods are best for infants and toddlers and how to protect their children against disease.

This Sunday, we celebrate mothers. Our support for mothers during pregnancy and for the first 5 years of a child's life transforms communities.

**Today 810 women will die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.**

Here are just a few statistics to help you understand the breadth of the issue:

- 94% of deaths as a result of pregnancy and childbirth occur in low-resource settings.
- Pregnant girls (10-14) are at high-risk to experience complications.
- In 2021, conflict, climate crisis and COVID-19 threaten the lives of mothers and their children.

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## Focus on God's Word:

### Proverbs 31:25-28

"Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness."



## Litany for Maternal Child Health Sunday

### God of creation, bless mothers and their young children

May their faith give them the courage to face their struggles  
May they hope in you even in trying times  
May they love beyond reason, as you have loved us

### God of mercy, protect mothers and their young children

In times of poverty, may they look to you for provision  
In times of disaster, may they be confident of your care  
In times of violence, may they find peace in your love

### God of hope, encourage mothers and their young children

May they find joy in the laughter of their children  
May they find peace as they feel their unborn children move in their wombs  
May they find strength to care for their family

### We praise You for the women of our community

We honour their faith as they care for us  
We praise You for the strength of women to lead in their communities  
We honour their wisdom as they fight for change

### We praise You for motherly love

We honour the courage and determination of the women among us.

**Together: We praise you for the gift of motherhood.**





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## St. Francis of Assisi's Prayer

Francis of Assisi left his life of wealth to serve God. His prayer, written in the 12th century, reflects the prayers of many mothers. Through World Renew, in communities worldwide, you can support mothers and women who sacrifice so much for their children and communities. Their leadership, focused on building a better place for their children, is a motivating force of change within their communities.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.  
Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.  
Where there is discord, let me bring union.  
Where there is error, let me bring truth.  
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.  
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.  
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.  
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.  
Master, let me not seek as much  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love,  
for it is in giving that one receives,  
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,  
it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,  
it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.  
Amen.

