

Julia Ward Howe and Mother's Day #2

Did you ever hear the song the battle hymn of the Republic? It was a famous song from the civil war written by Unitarian Julia Ward Howe.

Julia Ward Howe was a writer, a poet comma and a speaker. She fought for fair laws for women. She fought against slavery of black people. She was a tiny red haired peppy person who cared about people.

We Unitarian universalist's have a special reason to be proud of her period she started the very first Mother's Day over 100 years ago, but it was not like the Mother's Day celebrations that you are used to. She made it a day in which women in countries all over the world would work for peace period piece was the real reason for Mother's Day in the beginning, but most people don't know that, today.

In 1870 the Franco Prussian war broke out in Europe Julia Ward Howe was horrified by this war, because she said it was fought over a pop problem that could easily have been settled without killing people. There needn't have been a war at all.

She thought to herself, "Mothers should step in to these matters of war. It is the mothers who have the babies and who raised the children, and they do not want to waste human lives. Women have a responsibility to try to get leaders to use peaceful ways of settling conflicts".

In those days most people thought that women should stay out of politics comma and leave such things to men. That didn't stop Julia Ward house from trying.

She wrote a paper calling the women of the world to unite and work for peace. She had it translated into French, Spanish, Italian, German and Swedish. Then she went to London to organize a Women's Peace Congress. She wanted to speak at peace meetings in London and Paris, but the men who ran the meetings said, "No! You can't give any speeches at our meeting because you're only a woman".

She didn't give up. She rented a meeting Hall and held her own meetings. Not many people came. She was disappointed Anne returned to the United States, but she carried out another idea. She started a festival which she named Mother's Day. A special day when women the world over would speak out for peace. She chose June 2nd as the date for Mother's Day, because the weather would be good at the time of year for holding big rallies outdoors comma and it would be in the midst of the flower season.

For many years after that, Mother's Day was celebrated on June 2nd as a day for peace in Boston New York, Philadelphia and other cities in the United States. Also in England, Scotland and Switzerland.

Then in 1906, a woman named Anna Jarvis proposed that Mother's Day be celebrated on a different date and in a different way. She wanted it to be a day for honoring mothers, and she chose the 2nd Sunday in May , because that was the anniversary of her mother's death. Congress settled the matter by voting in 1913 for Anna Jarvis is plan, making the 2nd Sunday in May a national holiday to honor mothers.

Julia Ward Howe's idea of a day for peace was soon forgotten. Her idea seems to have been too modern for her time. Yet her spirit lives on, because today, all over the country, women are organizing for peace and justice.