

St Peter's Church, Lutton Place

**A Service for Mothering Sunday
2020**



Welcome!

The Welcome and Introduction

Although scattered through present circumstances we each come as a member of the community of St Peter's Church to meet with God.

Let us recognise his presence with us all.

(Silence is kept)

God's grace, mercy and peace be with you. Amen.

Welcome to our Mothering Sunday Service for 2020. Today we are giving thanks for the glimpses and understanding of God's care and nurture for us as we experience them through the love and dedication of mothers and of all those who have our best interests at heart.

We shall look at the qualities that underlie the stories of five remarkable mothers from different times and cultures and consider how we might reflect these qualities in our own relationships. In Christ we are all called to encourage and support each other.

Kristee has written a meditation drawing together the common strands underlying the responses of the mothers to their very different situations. And then as separate attachments to the service there is a page of information for each of the women. There are also bookmarks that you might like to download and do some meditative colouring in! Had the service been in church these pages would have been presented as posters round the church . Each of us would have been asked to write the names of special people in our lives who exhibit similar qualities and to thank God for them. This is something that each of us can still do in our own homes.

In our prayers we shall recognise the different emotions that Mothering Sunday can bring and we shall acknowledge the anxieties and uncertainties of our present situation.

But above all we shall thank God for his love and strength which will sustain us through the coming weeks and months. We shall commend each other to that love and look forward in hope that the seeds of his kingdom will grow in us and in the world.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God,
your Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your presence.
Give us new hearts and constant wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Confession and Absolution

As brothers and sisters in God's family,
we come together to ask God's forgiveness:

We have failed to nurture the needy,

Lord, have mercy.

We have failed to make space in our lives for the broken-
hearted. **Christ, have mercy.**

We struggle to forgive those who have withheld their love from
us. **Lord, have mercy.**

Merciful Lord, you know our struggle to serve you:
when sin spoils our lives and overshadows our hearts,
come to our aid and turn us back to you again;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Collect

God of compassion,
whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross, drew the whole human family to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence
to bind together and to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen

Reading: Exodus 2 : 1 - 10

In this passage we see the love, courage and enterprise of three women..the mother of Moses, his sister and Pharaoh's daughter

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses because she said, "I drew him out of the water"

Mothering Sunday Reflection *Kristee Boyd*

My mother has given us strict instructions for her funeral, when the time comes: We're not allowed to sugar-coat who she was as a person. We're free to share as many good stories as we like about her caring, thoughtful, fun-loving character...as long as we promise to have a laugh about the not so great stuff too. She wants to be remembered for the full extent of who she was when she lived, not a make-believe version. Her reasoning? If we pretend she is perfect, we'll lose some of the best memories of who she was and how she raised us.

The mothers of greeting cards and poetry are often unrecognisable as the ones we grew up with. Case in point, this quote by Stevie Wonder that I came across recently: *"If love is as sweet as a flower, then my mother is that sweet flower of love."* This kind of idealisation of motherhood pretends that mothers don't get sad and angry, resentful and frustrated and – dare I say it - *mean* at times. It can be a dangerous idealisation. In her book, *Rage Becomes Her*, Soraya Chemaly recounts a story of coming home from school to find her mother calmly throwing their kitchen china, piece by piece, over the balcony. It was the first time she realised that her mother carried around a great deal of frustration about her daily life and her place in the world.

This Mothering Sunday we hold up for your contemplation five mothers who have impacted our world in profound ways. These women weren't and aren't perfect – I am certain that, if we met their family and friends, we would become aware of all manner of personal flaws and weaknesses. However, in spite of their imperfections, each of these mothers chose to live lives characterised by the very best of traits – fierceness, courage, persistence, wisdom, creativity and, above all, love. Because of this, each woman made the world a much better place for those around her. These character traits are available to each of us, in spite of our own imperfections. May we consider the stories of these mothers and be inspired to be our very best selves in the weeks to come.

Reading : Colossians 3 : 12-17

St Paul encourages us to reflect the character of Christ in our lives.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

An Affirmation of our Faith

This is the faith that we share with each other and the whole of Christ's Church .

We believe in God the Father
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.

We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen

Prayers

Let us pray

In the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit we pray to you God our Creator.....

We pray for mothers throughout the world. We give thanks for the love and sacrifice they show for their children. We celebrate with gratitude all those who have encouraged and supported us in our life's journey.

O God, be with us in all our relationships.

We remember before you those who find Mothering Sunday a difficult day ----those who have lost a child; those unable to have much wanted children; those whose experience of family life has been an unhappy one.

O God, be with us in all our pain.

This weekend we pray particularly for those children and young people for whom there will be no school or examinations in the coming months; for their parents, carers and teachers as they help them to adjust to a different way of living in an uncertain timescale.

O God, be with us in these anxious and unsettling times.

We give thanks for your world-wide Church and for the community of St Peter's to which we belong. Help us to respond to a new way of being Church - continuing to mirror your love and concern in the world around us.

O God, be with us as we pray for each other.

We pray for Governments throughout the world as they make decisions in the present crisis. We ask your counsel for our own Governments at Holyrood and Westminster. We pray for our nation –for determination and grace to comply with the necessary restrictions.

O God, be with us in your wisdom and strength.

We give thanks for all NHS staff; those in medical research; those in essential occupations.

O God, be with them and refresh them as they work untiringly for our benefit.

We remember those who are ill at home or in hospital; those who are lonely, isolated and afraid; those who have recently died and their families and friends.

O God, be with us in your healing and loving power.

In the silence we name our own particular concerns and feelings before you.....

O God of new life and hope, be with each of us and help us to trust in your promise of new possibilities through the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer.

We gather all our thoughts and prayers in the words that Jesus taught us....

The Blessing

May the Lord bless and keep us, and those whom we love. May the Lord make his face to shine upon us and give us his peace. Amen