

St. Christopher's Church, Hinchley Wood

Sunday 14th March 2021 – Mothering Sunday

Good morning to all of you joining us for our "Virtual Sunday Service".

Today is Mothering Sunday, a day when traditionally all went back to their mother church, to the place where they were nurtured, loved and formed into the ways of God.

Today of course we often also celebrate Mothers' day, a day to thank those who have mothered us in all the ways we can be cared for. It is usually a day of celebration, when we draw together with family and loved ones.

And so this day is a strange one as we are torn between our need to keep life going, to celebrate relationship and kindness, and the fear and imposed isolation that we face. A day when many of us are not able to be with those whom we love, or care for loved ones considered to be vulnerable or at risk. At difficult times, we have a choice: to focus on fear, on ourselves, on what we cannot do. Or we can turn to God and let God lead us into praying for the world, and letting prayer flow into creative action.

Today we are separated in space, but we are still united in worshipping together before the throne of God our Saviour. And so please do join in from home in prayer, in responses, even in singing, and let us worship together. Please join in with the words in **bold** print.

Gathering

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

All **And also with you.**

Praise God who loves us.

All **Praise God who cares for us.**

Hymn: Lord of all hopefulness (sung by St Martin's Voices)

1. **Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
At the break of the day.**

2. **Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord,
At the noon of the day.**

3. **Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, Your arms to embrace.
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord,
At the eve of the day.**

4. **Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord,
At the end of the day.**

Jan Struther (1901-1953)

Confession

We turn to the God who longs to mother us, picking us up when we stumble and enfolding us in love.

For the times we have hurt others and failed to make amends.

Lord have mercy **All Lord, have mercy.**

For the times we have failed to show compassion, kindness, humility or patience.

Christ, have mercy. **All Christ, have mercy.**

For the times we have been wronged and failed to forgive.

Lord have mercy **All Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself
and cleanse you from all your sins, that you may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Opening Prayer (Collect)

God of love,
passionate and strong,
tender and careful:
watch over us and hold us
all the days of our life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Reading: (1 Samuel 1 : 20 - 28)

A reading from the first book of Samuel

So it was that Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, and explained, "I asked the Lord for him."

The time came again for Elkanah and his family to go to Shiloh and offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and the special sacrifice he had promised. But this time Hannah did not go. She told her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will take him to the house of the Lord, where he will stay all his life."

Elkanah answered, "All right, do whatever you think best; stay at home until you have weaned him. And may the Lord make your promise come true." So Hannah stayed at home and nursed her child.

After she had weaned him, she took him to Shiloh, taking along a three-year-old bull, a bushel of flour, and a leather bag full of wine. She took Samuel, young as he was, to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. After they had killed the bull, they took the child to Eli. Hannah said to him, "Excuse me, sir. Do you remember me? I am the woman you saw standing here, praying to the Lord. I asked him for this child, and he gave me what I asked for. So I am dedicating him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he will belong to the Lord."

Then they worshiped the Lord there.

This is the word of the Lord. *All* **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 34

**Come, my young friends, and listen to me,
and I will teach you to honour the Lord.**

Would you like to enjoy life?

Do you want long life and happiness?

**Then keep from speaking evil
and from telling lies.**

**Turn away from evil and do good;
strive for peace with all your heart.**

**The Lord watches over the righteous
and listens to their cries;
but he opposes those who do evil,
so that when they die, they are soon forgotten.**

**The righteous call to the Lord, and he listens;
he rescues them from all their troubles.**

**The Lord is near to those who are discouraged;
he saves those who have lost all hope.**

**Good people suffer many troubles,
but the Lord saves them from them all;
the Lord preserves them completely;
not one of their bones is broken.**

Acclamation

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.
Unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain.

All Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Gospel: (Luke 2 : 25 - 35)

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. He was a good, God-fearing man and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him and had assured him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's promised Messiah. Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the Temple. When the parents brought the child Jesus into the Temple to do for him what the Law required, Simeon took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God:

“Now, Lord, you have kept your promise,
and you may let your servant go in peace.
With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:
A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles
and bring glory to your people Israel.”

The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, “This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, O Christ**

Talk

Affirmation of Faith

Since the very beginning of the church there have been times where Christians cannot meet together for all kinds of reasons and yet they can still share faith and prayers together and one of the ways in which we do that is through the words of the creeds. The Creeds remind us of the faith of the church universal, beyond borders and beyond time. Saying the creed reminds us that even when we are separated and dispersed, we share our faith and our prayers with Christians throughout the world and throughout the centuries.

And so, let us say the Apostles creed. Let us declare our faith in God.

All I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

Between the prayers we say

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

At the end of the prayers we say

Merciful God, accept our prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All Amen

The Lord's Prayer

As God's children, and heirs with Christ we cry in the Spirit, 'Abba', Father.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who
sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Amen.

Taize Chant (In the Lord I'll be ever thankful) *(sung by our Virtual Choir)*

Prayer of Spiritual Communion

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Loving God,
accept the cries of our heart as we offer you our prayers;
through them transform us and all creation
until you are in all and through all.
We ask these and all our prayers in the name of Jesus.

All Amen

Hymn – Now thank we all our God *(sung by St Martin's Voices)*

- 1 Now thank we all our God,
with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.
- 2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.
- 3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore,
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

Nun danket alle Gott Martin Rinkart (1586-1649) translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)

Blessing and Dismissal

Praise God who loves us.

All **Praise God who cares for us.**

May God, who gave birth to all creation, bless you:

may God, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless you:

may God, who broods as a mother over her children, bless you.

May almighty God bless you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

*Please join us for a ZOOM coffee and chat after the service.
You will be invited to share your video and unmute your microphone.
This is a great time to share news and information.*

Bible passages from Good News Translation (GNT) Copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society
Liturgy © copyright The Archbishops' Council 2000

St. Christopher's holds Church Copyright Licences for music that is copied and livestreamed.

For further details see: <https://www.stchristopherschurch.org.uk/about-us/pcc/church-copyright-licensing>