



Sunday 14 March 2021

- All the Bible readings come from the *New Revised Standard Version*.
- The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration have been included at the end rather than in situ because many following the service will be in isolation and unable to celebrate the sacrament.
- The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.
- To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page, <http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 Morning has broken

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Listen to God’s commandment:

‘Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long.’ Today, we remember how we often fail to give enough respect or attention to those we love, and confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

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Sermon and © Lucie Reilly.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

The Gloria is usually omitted during Lent.

The Collect for Mothering Sunday

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.

First reading

A reading from the Second Book of Moses called Exodus

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.' *Exodus 2:1-10*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Second Letter to the Colossians

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. *Colossians 3:12-17*

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This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Jubilate, everybody

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' *Luke 2:33–35*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today is Mothering Sunday. On Mother's Day we give thanks for those who mother us; we celebrate our mothers, grandmothers, foster mothers and celebrate the mother Church which holds us together as the family of God.

But today, lots of us won't be seeing our mothers or children in the flesh: maybe we will see each other via video calls or many other methods our modern world now has to offer. Many of us will have telephone calls to wish them or us a Happy Mothering Sunday.

Not everyone has wonderful memories of their mother's care and sometimes people have been damaged by indifference and even cruelty that makes this day a difficult reminder to them of what they have missed because of fractured family relationships. Hopefully there will have been other figures in their lives that have been able to offer some of the tenderness that their mother was unable to practise. We all have an image of the care, compassion and nurturing that has so long been associated with the best kind of mothering and it pains us to witness examples of this absence in so many young lives.

We pray today for all those who have a difficult or uncertain relationship with the idea of motherhood, and to acknowledge that it in itself, contains the seeds of much suffering and pain.

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This idea is acknowledged in our Gospel Reading where we are reminded of Simeon's prophecy to Mary. It was all going so well: Jesus is going to be the Saviour. He is the saviour and light for the Gentiles and the glory of the people Israel. We read that Mary and Joseph 'marvelled' at what was said about him. You can almost feel them beaming with pride, surprise and delight at such an extraordinary prophecy. But then Simeon says to Mary 'This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.' I'm sure if I had been Mary I would have said 'Wow, Thanks for that bit Simeon, can we just skip that part?' Later in the Chapter, we hear that Mary 'treasured' or, another translation says, she 'pondered' all these things in her heart. Again, had that been me, I would have wanted to have believed that Simeon didn't get the end bit right. He must be mistaken there.

Unfortunately, we know it was pretty spot on. As we look towards Holy Week and the cross, we see what that meant. I'm sure that as Mary stood by her dying son she would be reminded of Simeon's earlier words and she would feel that sword pierce her soul. She would have given anything to swap places with him because that's the fierce love that is created between parent and child. How often would a parent say that they would die in the place of their child? And the fact that Jesus was in his early thirties made no difference whatsoever. It's a primal instinct, one that many of us can relate to. It is part of the mystery of suffering and of the Cross and we cannot tidy it up or reinterpret it. The pain is there to be acknowledged and endured and to testify to the truth and cost of love.

Motherhood brings great joy, but love has a cost too and other mothers have known some of this pain; with sons and daughters who did not return from their tour of duty, others who have suffered terminal illness or a sudden accident. Mothers have known the cost of their mothering love in many ways but also the deep joy and delight in their children.

In these months of national lockdown and isolation, we have been encouraged to show heightened concern for our neighbours and friends. We are well aware that panic and maybe even self-interest has led some people to take far more than they need leaving those who come later to go without, but we may not be so aware of the kind acts and initiatives that are striving to reach out to help others. Maybe on this mothering Sunday we might consider anyone we might know who might welcome a friendly call or any other help we may be able to offer.

It's essential to remember, particularly when we go through dark times of suffering, anxiety or confusion. The world can feel like it's closing in on us. Even those who care for us don't seem to understand or help us in a way we need. We can feel alone and forgotten, but we know that God is with us and will never forsake us. We can bring to Him, our fears, our grief, our disappointments and our sufferings and He will hold them with us. Just as a parent holds an angry and sobbing child and lets them beat on their chest until they start to calm and allow themselves just to be held; that is the solace of God.

So, whether today is a time of enjoyment and celebration with family members, or whether it's a more difficult day full of hesitancy or sadness, cling onto the fact that you are loved with an eternal love, just as you are. You are God's child, and He is mother and father to you in a way that can bring healing and fullness of life. Amen.

The blessing of flowers

All beauty reflects the beauty of God, and points toward God in the beauty of his holiness.

Let us pray:

Loving Heavenly Father, creator of heaven and earth,
thank you for these flowers that you have made.

We ask that they may be channels of your love,
and that they may impart joy to those who receive them.

Bless and hallow these flowers,
that their fragrance and beauty may direct the faithful to you,
in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,

died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

We believe and trust in one God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Today, we thank God for the gift of our mothers and for all good mothering across the world.

The prophet Isaiah wrote that God is our mother, and that God comforts us and carries us in her arms. We thank you for all that was good from our own mothers, and for their care and love.

And we pray for those who no longer have an earthly mother or never knew their mothers; and we pray for those who find being a mother is difficult or unwanted, or whose experiences of having a mother was difficult.

Short pause

Lord in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for Mother Church. In the Gospels, Jesus spoke of himself as a mother, longing to wrap his arms around us like a mother-hen gathering her chicks under her wings. We therefore pray for the Church, asking you to inspire it to embrace us and teach it how to love us.

Short pause

Lord in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for the world. In the Psalms, King David wrote that in God's presence, he felt quiet and at peace, trusting in God like a child safe in its mother's arms. We pray for all those in the world who do not feel safe, or are in danger and need, pain and distress.

Short pause

Lord in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves and those we know who are in need. The prophet Isaiah said that God will never forget us and that he knows each of us just as an earthly mother knows her own children. We therefore pray for ...

Short pause

Lord in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

As he hung dying on a cross, Jesus died he prayed for his mother and sought to look after her. We pray for all those who have died: those who died last night; those who died alone; and those whose funerals occur soon. We pray for the souls of ...

Short pause

Lord in your mercy.

All Hear our prayer.

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The peace

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says, 'As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 He's got the whole world in his hands

[\(click here to hear the hymn\)](#)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

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

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

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

and the blessing of God the Almighty:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 [Seek ye first](#)

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.
And so we gladly thank you,
with saints and angels praising you, and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Loving God,
as a mother feeds her children at the breast
you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life:
help us who have tasted your goodness
to grow in grace within the household of faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen**

All **Almighty God,**
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.