

St Swithun's Church Family

Mothering Sunday

Sunday 22nd March 2020

Sharing together in spirit



'Faith, Hope and Love'

A Service for all ages

Please use this booklet to worship with us – ideally at 10am on Sunday so that we know we are joining our prayers together but any time is good.

We are using a Service of The Word – I will celebrate the Eucharist when I am out of self-isolation and offer it for our whole family.

It doesn't matter if you are one person or a family together – use the booklet and go through the words – stop and reflect as you need to. We are going to try and record this service and add it to the website www.saintswithuns.org.uk please check the website for more resources which we will be adding from now on. If you have things to share please let me know.

*You might like to enhance your worship by singing a hymn or a song at various points – I have a few suggestions below – but you tube is a great resource...
let us know if you find any other good ones*

Why not begin remembering the joy we have in Jesus

Give me joy in my heart

<https://youtu.be/Vg2lk3Hwczc>

On Mothering Sunday you might like to remember God as Mother you could use Mother or Father as feels right for you:

Father / Mother I place into your hands

<https://youtu.be/zBfRNrvvUfc>

I know this is favourite...

O Lord my God

https://youtu.be/PdE_NKyY_o0

Get moving...

This little light of mine

<https://youtu.be/QCN893hzueQ>

Introduction

Today is Mothering Sunday – it is also something called Laetare Sunday – which is known as holy humour Sunday. Today is also the first Sunday when we cannot meet together in worship in person because of the Coronavirus crisis – yet today we join our worship together in our homes and in our hearts.

Laetare Sunday means rejoice Sunday – it is also called Rose Sunday. It's the second time in the year when the liturgical colour is pink (the other one is when we light the pink candle on the advent wreath – which is called Gaudete Sunday).

You might like to find or put on something pink – to remember Laetare Sunday.

The pink Sundays are in the middle of advent and lent and are a reminder that the fun is about to come – they are literally lightening the purple and show us that the seriousness is soon to finish and is a glimpse of the light to come.

Today we need to feel this light to come more than ever as our world seems to be plunging into chaos and darkness, full of fear and concern. The light is to come and as we search for it and remember it we also remember that today is a day of celebration – to remember and give thanks for all those who Mother and care for us.

On Laetare Sunday / Mothering Sunday let us remember the light that we have – however dim it feels to us – and remember the joy of faith and the importance of caring for others.



PERHAPS SPRINKLING WITH HOLY WATER
WAS NOT THE BEST WAY TO
LAUNCH THE CHURCH WEBSITE

The Gathering

The Greeting

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

Amen.

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

And also with you

Saying sorry - prayers of penitence

When we think only of ourselves
and stockpile resources without thinking of others

Lord have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

When we lose hope because we surround ourselves in fear
Christ have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

When we are short sighted and live by the media too readily
instead of considering the bigger picture

Lord have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

We are forgiven

God forgives me/you.
Forgive others.
Forgive yourself.
Be at peace.
Amen.



The 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.
Amen

A special prayer for Mothering Sunday

Catherine reminds us to pray for all mothers and mothers to be all over the world not forgetting those mothers who are not with us anymore...

Thank you God for the love of our mothers and carers:
Thank you God for their care and concern:
Thank you God for the joys they have shared with us:
Thank you God for the pains they have borne for us:
Thank you God for all that they give us:
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Bible Reading

Genesis 18: 1-2; 9-14

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

Yahweh appeared to Abraham while he was sitting by the entrance of the tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them he ran to greet them, and bowed to the ground. 'Where is your wife Sarah?' they asked him. She is in the tent, he replied. Then the guest replied, 'I shall come back next year and then your wife Sarah will have a son.' Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent. Now Sarah and Abraham were old, well on in years. So Sarah laughed to herself, thinking 'Now that I am past the age of childbearing, and my husband is an old man, is pleasure to come my way again? But Yahweh asked Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Am I really going to have a child now that I am old? 'Nothing is impossible for Yahweh. I shall come back to you at the same time next year and Sarah will have a son.'

For the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Reading *Luke 13: 34-35*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

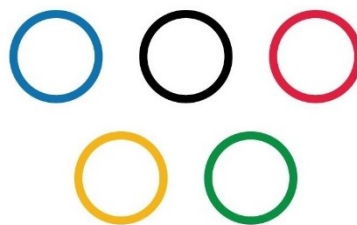
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon *(Mother Juliet and Izzy)*

Jesus taught us through the use of funny stories. Sometimes when we talk about God we get too serious and we miss the funny bits. In our readings today we have some funny stories about being a mummy / parent...

Abraham and Sarah have been wanting a child so desperately but now old they haven't yet had a baby – their lives were full of sadness. But in our reading they are told they are going to have a child. Sarah laughs. They even call the baby Isaac which means laughter. The new life, the light in the darkness makes them laugh.

Sometimes laughing can help us. Have you seen some cartoons making us smile at our new reality of having to be physically distant from each other...?



TOKYO 2020

Practice Safe Social Distancing

We find them funny but they also tell us something really difficult – we don't want to be far apart from each other – it is very painful. Laughing can sometimes help remind us that things will get better. Sarah laughed – there is hope and light and new life to come.

In our Gospel reading Jesus says he is like a mummy chicken – it is quite funny really that Jesus says he is a chicken... He is also telling us he is like a mummy who cares for us which is what we remember on Mothering Sunday.

Funny stories help us feel connected to each other and jokes can make us think about serious things in a different way.

We have been asking you to share some of your jokes and stories and thoughts and reflections... sharing helps us to feel connected despite our isolation from each other physically and we have received some brilliantly diverse contributions.

Izzy shared a photo I'm sure many mums (and dads, aunties, carers and grandparents) can relate to:



And a few stories from Izzy (why do I find these easy to imagine hahaha) *The time we were at a campsite shop and I said to Jon we should get a bottle of wine to go with dinner and then (little) Dorothy pronounced to the whole - very busy - shop: 'Oh YES! Mummy LOVES wine!'*

On Dorothy's 5th birthday, I put an indoor firework on her cake which set off the very loud smoke alarms. I tried to turn the smoke alarm off, but instead pressed the button that starts our sprinkler system - which filled the house with foamy water spraying out of the walls - not my finest moment.

Sitting on the back row of an outdoor theatre having sent the children to sit at the front - I couldn't get there, because it was when I had broken my ankle. I wanted the children to know where I was sitting in relation to them so they could get to me if they needed me, so I shouted out Dorothy's name a couple of times to get her attention. Unfortunately, the show we were seeing was 'The Wizard of Oz' and so everyone assumed I was an actor about to start the show and everyone went quiet and turned to look as I waved at my children and slowly sat back down wondering what the sudden hush was about. (I worked it out later!)

Diane has shared with us too – it is particularly lovely to remember Diane's mum in a story at this poignant time...
Mum had me late, in fact 8 days after her 40th birthday! She told me she was very embarrassed as she was the oldest woman on the ward and felt that the nursing staff had deliberately put her in the centre of the room so everyone could see her. She had to stay in for a week too but that was the usual routine back then. I was asleep most of the time so I couldn't possibly comment....

Richard remembers his mum (he says doing crazy things) bottling some damsons in a Kilner jar outside – she poured the hot damsons and their juice in the jar outside and closed the lid for it to cool and seal – unfortunately it was a sunny day and the jar continued to heat up and exploded covering the back of the house with juice....

Phillip cheered me up with a cartoon this week....

mom why dont we
have any food?



We laugh at the stories and the jokes because they help us cope with embarrassing or difficult things – and we all recognise those feelings. Some of the things Jesus said were supposed to be silly ideas to make people laugh but also to make a point – for example Jesus said why do you see the speck (that is something tiny) in your brother or sister's eye but you don't see the log (the big thing) in your own eye – if you sort the log out in your eye you will see better... in other words Jesus used a funny picture idea to help us to stop looking at what other people are doing and to focus on what we are doing. The cartoon Phillip sent reminds us that people are panic buying – I expect we are all horrified by this – the cartoon shows how silly it is to over buy toilet rolls. But do we need to be careful not to blame others and check what we are doing too? Is it that they are panic buying, they are over reacting but we are just popping out to buy a few bits and bobs just in case...

Humour is very important in families. I think mums really know the importance of laughing – it helps us cope with the challenges and keeps us plodding on when things get difficult.

Having faith, being a Christian is a very important thing – and sometimes we are very serious – but we should also remember that laughter and fun is part of our relationships. Laughter and humour are also important aspects of our relationship with God and helps a loving community such as St Swithun's to bond and learn together. I would like to finish with two of our family who shared very thoughtful things for us to remember today...

One lovely person shared a song she used to sing on Mother's Day as a child:

M – is for the million things she gave me

O – means only that she's growing old

T – is for the tears she shed to save me

H – is for her heart of purest gold

E - is for eyes with love like shining

R – means right and right will always be

Put them all together they spell mother – the word that means the world to me.

Another wanted to share this with us which is a reminder that Mother's Day is not always straight forward for many and also that we can all care for each other – something of utmost importance as life becomes ever more extreme today:

By virtue of giving birth you are a mother - pregnancy being an overwhelming miracle and the baby being the greatest gift from God. Whilst this is known to be an unbreakable bond, we can be, sometimes unknowingly, fortunate to have others take on the role of a mum, which is distinctively different from being a mother. A person who is instinctively open, loving and caring to someone reliant and dependant on others. So thank you God for kinship carers and those that foster and adopt with good intention. Bless those who are surrogates and those who provide support in times of need to mums doing their best. We appreciate you.

So this Mothering Sunday – laugh with us and Sarah from our reading. New life is on its way, we can bring about God's care as God mothers us like a hen looking after her young. We can join together as a family and extend our care to those who do not yet know the love we feel together every Sunday. We can be together with God in spirit, in love, in care and in laughter.

Amen

Profession of Faith

We remember that we are joined together as a family and God is our parent...

**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 *(Written with Taneisha)*

Let us pray to God.

Loving God we pray for all those most severely affected by the coronavirus. Those who are sick and those who are bereaved. Give them comfort in their distress.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for those working in healthcare saving lives and caring for others on the frontline of medicine. For scientists working to find medicines and vaccines. Give them courage and endurance to battle on.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for those considered to be keyworkers. Give them the strength to continue to support others at this difficult time

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for the elderly who have no support, those with mental health needs who are struggling with anxiety, those who will be additionally vulnerable at this time remembering children and adults living in abusive relationships, those with learning difficulties, those who have underlying health needs....

Please spend some time remembering any you know and think how you can contribute to the light they need.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for all those who are anxious about their future, those who have no jobs or income, the year 11-13 students who are worried about the impact on the education. Give them hope and faith despite their fear.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for our leaders to utilise their powers to care for those they have authority over. Give them wisdom as they discern the way forward for our nation.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for our global neighbours who are battling coronavirus alongside us. Especially we pray for those nations without adequate resources to fund efforts to prevent the spread of the virus. May the nations work together as a human family.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for St Swithun's that we can be an effective church to our parish in this complicated time. That we can pull together as our family despite our physical distance and pray for and support one another. We pray that we can use our resources wisely in support of emergency efforts.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we pray for our local community and all those who are gallantly volunteering in an effort to help communities and individuals who are most in need. We remember for foodbanks and those who need to use them. Help us all to serve.

Bring them light in the darkness

Loving God we continue to pray for those we know who are in need of healing - Edith, Vanda, Lorna, Sean, Ena, Stephen McDonald, Avril Sandiford, and Diane and all others we know

Make us whole in your love.

Bring them light in the darkness

For all those who have recently died, for Daisy and Sidnetta Ann James, for all who have perished in the pandemic and for all those who we mourn at this time.

May they rest in peace

and rise in glory.

Merciful Father:

**Accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

The Prayer Jesus taught us

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done;

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory,

for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Peace

God has called us to live in peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Spend some time wishing peace to our family our neighbours and our church family – is there someone who you could make contact with to share God's peace?

Dismissal and Blessing

The Blessing

Mother of infinite wisdom, Christ of infinite compassion, Holy Spirit, guarantee of change, bring us to our knees in prayer, bring us to our feet in action, that with you we may all inherit a new heaven and a new earth.

And the blessing of God, Creator, Word and Spirit, be with us always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

May the light of Christ light up your life!

And up yours!

(apologies for the silly ending – but we need to continue to laugh and bring light into our world - now more than ever)

When Grandma hears
that you've run out
of toilet paper



Notices:

- Today at 7pm Archbishop Justin Welby invites us to place a lit candle in our windows and pray for our nation...
- If you know of anyone in any need – please let Mother Juliet know as we are working with others who can help.
- Stay safe – and keep others safe.

Contacts:

Priest in Charge: Rev Juliet Evans

191 Hither Green Lane, Hither Green, London SE13 6QE
juliettaevans@icloud.com; 07955229351

Churchwarden: Diane Keen

saintswithunchurch@gmail.com ; 07805619142

Safeguarding Officers:

Olivia Daley 07956618629

Patricia Francis 020 8690 6026

Hall bookings: Sean Hopkins

saintswithunshall@gmail.com ; 07895637471

www.saintswithuns.org.uk



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