

Church at Home

Mothering Sunday



Before the Service

Welcome to this service of Church at Home as we join together, from across the Diocese of Oxford, in worship this morning.

We are delighted that The Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker is presiding for us and that Bishop Olivia Graham will be giving our reflection this morning. We are also especially grateful to all those from around the Diocese who have given of their time and talents to contribute to this service.

Today is the fourth Sunday of Lent on which falls 'Mothering Sunday'. This Sunday marks a slight lightening of the solemnity of the Lenten season (you will notice the president wearing rose coloured vestments rather than the usual purple) as we look forward, with growing anticipation, to Easter.

Traditionally on this day people would visit their 'Mother Church' and servants were given the day off to be at home with family; sometimes bringing a bunch of flowers home to give to their mothers too.

In today's Gospel we hear Jesus commend his disciple John and his Mother Mary into one another's care as he hangs on the cross and, elsewhere in the gospels, Jesus even describes himself as being like a 'mother hen' longing to gather Jerusalem under her wing.

Jesus' actions here speak powerfully into the tenderness, care and love we are all called to offer to one another as adopted children in God's family. On a day which holds mixed feelings for many, Jesus speaks to all of us, whatever our gender, age, relationship or family situation, and entrusts us into the care of one another, as he entrusted John and Mary into each other's care from the cross.

As we worship this morning, we give thanks for the 'Mother Church' of this Diocese, Christ Church Cathedral (from which the service comes), and we also remember and give thanks for all the churches and the people who have shown the motherly love of God to us.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother...
when Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple
whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her,
"Woman, here is your son,"
and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."
(John 19.25-27)

If it is safe to do so, you may like to have a tea light or candle ready at home to light when the president lights the large candle at the beginning of the service.

Cover Image

'Meditation on the Cross' by Tom Bower

Video before the service

'Meditation on the Cross'

Images, Video and Music by Tom Bower (St Mary and St Nicholas, Littlemore)

Available online: [www.youtube.com/watch?v= unIREHHgXs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unIREHHgXs)

Greeting

President The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.
be with you

All **and also with you.**

*The President welcomes the congregation gathered online and introduces the service.
If it is safe to do so, you may also like to join the president by lighting your own candle at home.*

President This morning we pray and place before God
the life of our world and we light this candle
to remind us that the love of God
is like a light in our darkness.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

A candle is lit

President On this Mothering Sunday,
when many are far from family, friends or loved ones,
we light this candle for all those we cannot
be physically present with.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

Deacon We light this candle for all who are sick,
all who are in hospital, all who struggle with pain,
fear and sadness, and all who are grieving this day.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

President We light this candle for all who are isolated,
lonely and worried at this time.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

Deacon We light this candle for all who care for others,
whether as family or friends,
as doctors, nurses or carers and for all health professionals
for whom we are so deeply thankful.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

President On this Mothering Sunday,
we light this candle for all mothers
who have loved and laughed and laboured
as they cared for their children.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

Deacon We light this candle for all mothers
who have wept in sorrow and joy for their children.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

President We light this candle for Jesus,
born of a woman and nurtured in her love,
and for Mary, a reminder of your patient, waiting love.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

Song

Blessed Be Your Name
In the land that is plentiful
Where Your streams of abundance flow
Blessed be Your name
Blessed Be Your name
When I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk through the wilderness
Blessed Be Your name

Every blessing You pour out, I'll
Turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say

Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be Your name
When the sun's shining down on me
When the world's 'all as it should be'
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be Your name
On the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering
Blessed be Your name

Every blessing You pour out ...

Blessed be the name of the Lord...

You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say
Lord blessed be Your name

'Blessed be your name'
Music and Lyrics: Matt Redman © 2005
Recorded by Mark Hamilton (St Andrew's Church, Oxford)

Confession

Deacon Let us call to mind our sin,
our failure to value the love of others
and our failure to love as Christ has loved us.

Your love gives us life from the moment of conception.
We fail to live as your children.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Deacon You call us to do good. We seek our own good.
Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ have mercy.**

Deacon You hear us when we cry for help.
We ignore the cries of others.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

President May almighty God have mercy on you,
forgive you your sins,
and bring you to everlasting life.

All **Amen.**

The Collect

President Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President 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.**

We listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.

Reading

I Samuel 1.20-end (NRSV)

Read by Tiwalade Amusan (St Mary and St Nicholas, Littlemore)

In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.' The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the Lord, and remain there for ever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.' Her husband Elkanah said to her, 'Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only—may the Lord establish his word.' So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him. When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh; and the child was young. Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord has granted me the petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is given to the Lord.' She left him there for the Lord.

Psalm 34.11-20

Sung by Peter McMullin & Julia Hollander (The University Church of St Mary the Virgin)

Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
Which of you desires life, and covets many days to enjoy good?
Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.
Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.
The face of the Lord is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the Lord rescues them from them all.
He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken.

Gospel Reading

John 19.25-27 (NRSV)

Read by Jean Johnson (All Saints' High Wycombe)

Reader Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."

From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

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

Reflection

The Rt Revd Olivia Graham, Bishop of Reading

Affirmation of Faith

President Let us affirm our faith in God.

All **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 of Intercession

Led by The Revd Sarah Nesbitt

(United Benefice of Shiplake, Dunsden and Harpsden)

As children of a loving God who always listens to our cries, let us pray in community.

Loving God, you have called us to be your children, opening your arms and surrounding us with care and compassion.

Thank you for your unconditional love, even though we falter and stray from your path. Call us back to you and help us to show your love in our homes that they may be places of security and grace.

God of love, **hear our prayer**

Loving God, Jesus, your Son, was born into the family of Mary and Joseph; we give thanks for all families of every shape and size; bless those who have no family; strengthen those who live under stress and may your love be known where no human love is found.

We ask that you bless those for whom family life means anguish and disappointment; may they know your healing presence.

God of love, **hear our prayer**

Loving God, we thank you for the family of the Church. We pray that all may find in her their true home; that the lonely, the marginalised, the rejected may be welcomed and loved in the name of Jesus.

We give thanks and pray for the Mothers' Union as they work to strengthen communities and help the most disadvantaged across the world.

God of love, **hear our prayer**

Loving God, as we see the brokenness of our world we pray for healing among the nations; for food where there is hunger; for freedom where there is oppression; for joy where there is pain; that your love may bring peace to all your children.

We pray especially today for the Yemen, devastated by conflict and suffering extreme deprivation, and give thanks for all who are working to relieve the suffering there.

God of love, **hear our prayer**

Concluding with the words of the Mothers' Union Prayer we pray together:

**Empowered by your Spirit,
may we be united in prayer and worship,
and in love and service
reach out as your hands across the world.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.**

The Peace

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

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

*Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church.
Although we are separated by distance, we are one Body of Christ; the Spirit moves
among us as we share Christ's peace.*

Offertory Song

Bless the Lord, my soul
And bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul
Who leads me into life

'Bless The Lord My Soul'

Music and Lyrics: Taize Community

Recorded by Christ Church College Choir (Oxford) directed by Alannah Jeune

Preparation of the Table

President God of mercy and compassion,
your Word calls us home to faith and love:
accept all we offer you this day;
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

President Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President Blessed are you, Lord God,
our light and our salvation;
to you be glory and praise for ever.
From the beginning you have created all things
and all your works echo the silent music of your praise.
In the fullness of time you made us in your image,
the crown of all creation.
You give us breath and speech, that with angels and archangels
and all the powers of heaven
we may find a voice to sing your praise:

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.**

President How wonderful the work of your hands, O Lord.
As a mother tenderly gathers her children,
you embraced a people as your own.
When they turned away and rebelled
your love remained steadfast.
From them you raised up Jesus our Saviour, born of Mary,
to be the living bread,
in whom all our hungers are satisfied.
He offered his life for sinners,
and with a love stronger than death
he opened wide his arms on the cross.

On the night before he died,
he came to supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he gave you thanks.
He broke it and gave it to them, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks, 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.

All Jesus Christ is Lord.
**Lord, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.
You are the Saviour of the world.**

President Father, we plead with confidence
his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross;
we remember his dying and rising in glory,
and we rejoice that he intercedes for us at your right hand.
Pour out your Holy Spirit as we bring before you
these gifts of your creation;
may they be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.
As we eat and drink these holy things in your presence,
form us in the likeness of Christ,
and build us into a living temple to your glory.
Bring us at the last with all the saints
to the vision of that eternal splendour
for which you have created us;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
by whom, with whom, and in whom,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

President 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

The President breaks the consecrated bread.

President Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
All **we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.**

Agnus Dei

**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.**

Invitation to Communion

President God's holy gifts for God's holy people.
All **Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

The President receives the Bread & Wine as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith. There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use the following prayer, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need.

Amen.

Music During Communion **'Mothering God'**

(Setting specially composed for this service of Church at Home)

Mothering God, you gave me birth
in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of every breath,
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.

Mothering Christ, you took my form,
offering me your food of light,
grain of life, and grape of love,
your very body for my peace.

Mothering Spirit, nurturing one,
in arms of patience hold me close,
so that in faith I root and grow
until I flower, until I know.

Lyrics: Jean Janzen, after Mother Julian of Norwich

*Music: *Edi beo thu* (14th cent.), arr. Richard Vendome*

Recorded by Oxford Girls' Choir (Oxford Youth Choirs) with Gigi McCauley (harp)

Prayer after Communion

President Let us pray.

God of glory,
you nourish us with your Word
who is the bread of life:
fill us with your Holy Spirit
that through us the light of your glory
may shine in all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All **Amen**

Blessing and Dismissal

President 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.**

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ.**

Amen.

Recessional Hymn

Sing we of the blessed Mother
who received the angel's word,
And obedient to his summons
bore in love the infant Lord;
Sing we of the Joys of Mary
at whose breast that child was fed
Who is Son of God eternal
and the everlasting Bread.

Sing we, too, of Mary's sorrows,
of the sword that pierced her through,
When beneath the cross of Jesus
she his weight of suffering knew,
Looked upon her Son and Saviour
reigning high on Calvary's tree,
Saw the price of man's redemption
paid to set the sinner free.

Sing again the joys of Mary
when she saw the risen Lord,
And in prayer with Christ's apostles,
waited on his promised word:
From on high the blazing glory
of the Spirit's presence came,
Heavenly breath of God's own being,
Manifest through wind and flame.

Sing the chiefest joy of Mary
when on earth her work was done,
And the Lord of all creation
brought her to his heavenly home:
Virgin Mother, Mary blessed,
Raised on high and crowned with grace,
May thy Son, the world's redeemer,
Grant us all to see his face.

'Sing we of the Blessed Mother'

*Words: George Boorne Timms (1910-1997), Music: 'Abbot's Leigh' Cyril Taylor (1907-1982)
Recorded by The Reynold's Family (St Mary's Church, Witney)*

Video after the Service

'There's one thing we can all understand'

Produced by the Disasters Emergency Committee

Available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMCtF-00MAU>

Those who find today difficult, may find some of these charities to be helpful:

Sands

www.sands.org.uk

supporting those who are affected by stillbirth and neonatal death

Saltwater and Honey

www.saltwaterandhoney.org

supporting those who are affected by childlessness, infertility and miscarriage

Cruse

www.cruse.org.uk

supporting those who are grieving

NAPAC

www.napac.org.uk

supporting adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse including neglect

Church at Home is real team effort, drawing together the gifts of many from across the Diocese of Oxford. Some of those gifts are visible during the service, while others are seen only behind the scenes. Whether visible or invisible, the offering of so many gifts serves as a reminder of the beauty and variety of the Body of Christ. With thanks especially to all who have contributed to this service including: Tom Bower (St Mary and St Nicholas, Littlemore); The Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker (Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford); Mark Hamilton (St Andrew's, Oxford); The Revd Philippa White (Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford); Tiwalade Amusan (St Mary and St Nicholas, Littlemore); Peter McMullin & Julia Hollander (The University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford); Jean Johnson (All Saints' High Wycombe); The Rt Revd Olivia Graham (Bishop of Reading); The Revd Sarah Nesbitt (United Benefice of Shiplake, Dunsden and Harpsden); Alannah Jeune & Christ Church College Choir (Oxford); Richard Vendome & The Oxford Girls' Choir with Gigi McCauley; The Reynolds Family (St Mary's Church, Witney);

The Revd Darren McFarland (Liturgist); The Revd James Dwyer (Co-producer) and Revd Hannah Cartwright (Producer)

Church at Home is produced each week by the Revd Charlotte Bannister- Parker, associate chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford; and Steven Buckley, director of communications; with the help of Emma Thompson, digital communications officer, and Mark Robinson of Digital Creative.

Material for this service is taken from Common Worship, New Patterns for Worship, and Times and Seasons, © The Archbishops Council 2002, 2006, 2012. The reproduction and broadcast of the hymns in this service paper falls within the provisions of CCLI 535160 and Limited Online Music License E-0018115 both under the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance. Cover images courtesy of Tom Bower. Images used during the broadcast were licensed from Shutterstock or sourced from Pixabay, no attribution required. Cover design by GMGraphicDesign.co.uk

Locked down, open-hearted

Living life in all its fullness



Lots of people are asking deep questions of faith at this time. Come and See is an invitation to everyone and anyone who feels adrift in this pandemic, whether or not they know anything about the Christian faith.

oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see