



Chet Valley Churches
All Together Worship



Mothering Sunday
22nd March 2020

All Together Worship: Mothering Sunday

It is 9.30am. We are geographically isolated in our own homes. Let us each light a candle to remind us of Jesus, the Light of the World, as we gather in spirit together for worship.

Introduction

Praise God who loves us. **Praise God who cares.**

Today is Mothering Sunday. At one time, this was observed as a day on which people would visit their "mother" church; the one where they had been baptised, their parish church or cathedral. Servants would be given the day off to visit their mother church and families, collecting posies for their Mums from the wild flowers growing on their way. They might also bake a cake to show off their skills and share when they got home. It has become an occasion for honouring mothers and giving them presents.

We Prepare for Worship

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

♪♪ Hymn 450—*Morning Has Broken*

All the hymns, together with the Talk and the Peace, can be found on the new Chet Valley Churches YouTube channel. Here you will find a playlist which contains all the videos. On a PC press the 'Ctrl' key and then click with your mouse on this link. It will take you to the playlist where you can just click on each item as it appears in the service sheet:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-Wo7lu6Ckss-AtlHpkqxOfTv6xCIBpFf>

We will also give links for each item if that works better for you. The link to 'Morning has broken is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-QZRsrO06A>

(Incidentally, you may need to wait until an advertisement has run.)

The Collect for Purity—*A Prayer of Preparation*

**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.**

The Collect—*A Special Prayer for the Day*

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.**

Confession—We Say Sorry to God

A minister introduces a time of penitence.

God loves all of us. He says, “as a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you;” But we often fail to love in return. So 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.

Then all say together

Father and Mother God

We ask you to forgive us

For the things we have thought

And the things we have said

And the things we have done

That do not please you.

We are sorry.

Help us to be more like Jesus:

Ready to pray, ready to help others,

Ready to do your will

In all things, every day. Amen.

Absolution

May God who loved the world so much

that he sent his Son to be our Saviour

forgive *us* our sins

and make *us* holy to serve him in the world,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Bible Readings

Exodus 2.1-10

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.'

After the Bible reading the reader may say

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

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

For the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

♪ **Hymn 159: *Father (Mother) God, I Wonder***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWDLmK05iE4>

[You might like to try singing 'Mother God', instead of 'Father God'.]



The Gospel: *Luke 2.33–35*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

And the child's 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."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.



Talk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBbcTDUpQas>

Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin.

I wonder how many of you remember that? Waiting avidly for the beginning of *Listen with Mother*. For those of you who are too young to remember, this was a programme on the radio with stories and songs just right for little children not yet at school. It was time to snuggle comfortably up to Mum and be quiet for a bit after lunch.

In the Levite household we heard about, I don't suppose that Jochebed's new baby would have had the chance of snuggling comfortably next to Mum too often. They were so scared that he would be discovered by Pharaoh's men and killed.

I wonder how Jochebed felt about that.

I wonder how her daughter, Miriam, felt about it.

I wonder if they were able to comfort one another in their troubles. Consoling one another as they contemplated what might happen to the baby, a son and brother. Sharing each other's fears.

Concealed for three months and then too big to hide any longer, they hid him one last time in a basket in a river. A desperate move, but one which God honoured. The baby, Moses as he was subsequently named, was found and saved. Not only that he was returned to his mother as wet nurse. So perhaps he did get to snuggle up comfortably with Mum after all.

A thousand and more years later, and another new baby.

I wonder just how Mary felt in Jerusalem listening to Simeon. She had gone to the temple, as was the custom, forty days after giving birth to give thanks to God for baby Jesus and to sacrifice two doves to redeem her first born. A moment of joy, excitement even, as they did for their firstborn what had been done for centuries in their tradition. Mary had been amazed, amongst all the other amazing things surrounding Jesus' birth, and no wonder. But I don't suppose that she was particularly comforted when she heard what Simeon had to say:

“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.”

Just what was going to happen in the future to Jesus?

I wonder if Joseph put his arms round Mary, spoke words of reassurance to her about their new baby boy; assuring her that they would face these troubles together. I wonder if she felt God's presence closely with her then as it had been when she discovered that she was to bear His son. Her confidence in God enabling her to say yes at the outset of all this.

I wonder what these two stories have to say to us as we face our own troubles, particularly the unknown outcome of the coronavirus pandemic. Perhaps we are anxious; fearful for ourselves and our families. We don't know what life will look like in a few months' time, or at the end of the year, or further into the future.

As Christians we aren't promised a comfortable life but if we face difficulties we are promised that we will be comforted as we struggle.

The prophet Isaiah tells us: *For thus says our God, "As a mother comforts her children, so I will comfort you; You shall see and your heart shall rejoice"*

St Paul reminds us of much the same thing: *we know that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort. We know that it is he who comforts us in all our troubles.*

God's comfort, though, isn't just so that we can feel snuggled up and comfortable in ourselves. It is in order that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

At this difficult time, let's try to open ourselves to God's presence so that we may be comforted. And having received such a blessing from God, let us pass it on to our family members, our friends, our neighbours and anyone who we can help in any way that we can.

Amen.

Creed: We Say What We Believe

The minister introduces the creed

**We believe in God the Father,
From whom every family
In heaven and 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 above.**

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

♪♪ **Hymn: Be Still for the Presence of the Lord**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOCfPjLOvC4>

During one of the hymns we usually have an opportunity to make a financial contribution to the work of the church. In this time when the churches are shut for worship, this chance is not available. Perhaps you could consider putting a little money aside each week that you can bring to the church once we are open again.

We Pray Together



Loving God, you have given us the right to be called children of God. Help us to show your love in our homes that they may be places of love, security and truth.

God of love,
hear our prayer.

Loving God, Jesus, your Son, was born into the family of Mary and Joseph; bless all parents and all who care for children; strengthen those families living under stress and may your love be known where no human love is found.

God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, as we remember people who are shut up in their homes in this pandemic, we pray that you will keep them safe, bring healing where they have fallen sick and bring help to them when it is needed.

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 marginalized, the rejected may be welcomed and loved in the name of Jesus.

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.

God of love, **hear our prayer.**

We draw all our prayers together in the words that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done,
On Earth as it is 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.**

Giving of Posies

The minister blesses the flowers

O God, bless these flowers, bless us and bless those who mother us. May the flowers remind us of how much they have done for us; may they remind those who care for us and for others how much we love them; and may they remind us all that God cares for us better than any mother ever could. **Amen.**



Watch out for a posy on your doorstep...

Hymn: In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Slj2qCadeGI>

Notices

If you want or need anything, please contact one of the clergy who will do their best to help.

Blessing

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.

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

Amen.

♪ **Hymn:** *I Stand Amazed at the Presence*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3K28WUSTKc>

The Dismissal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSDZWda7nql>

Peace be with you **And also with you**

