

St Nicholas Church, Sighthill

Sunday, 19 March 2023



Mothering Sunday Hearing God's Whisper

Epic Mothers Day Trailer by Motion Worship

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

Call to worship

(based on themes from Psalm 139)

Leader: We gather to worship our loving, nurturing God, who, like a mother, knows us intimately, loves us unconditionally, teaches us the way we should go, and comforts us in times of need. Praise God, the Source and Sustainer of life! From the very whisper of creation, God poured forth love.

All: Praise be to God for the blessings of God's love.

Leader: In the fullness of time, God sent Jesus as a revelation of God's own self.

All: Praise be to Jesus for the many ways in which He revealed God to us.

Leader: Praise be to the Holy Spirit for guidance and inspiration!

All: Blessings, honor, power, and majesty to our God forevermore!

Opening Hymn: Fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers

(Tune: Bunessan - Morning has broken)

1. Fathers and mothers
Sisters and brothers
All those who love us
For whom we care
Help and befriend them
Keep and defend them
Jesus our Saviour, this is our prayer
2. And for those others
Fathers and mothers
Children who hunger
They must be fed
We would be caring
Readily sharing
One with another, our daily bread
3. Sisters and brothers
Fathers and Mothers
We who together
Offer our praise
Hear our thanksgiving
God ever living
May we walk with You, all of our days

CCLI Song # 5166312

A Prayer for Mothering Sunday



Loving God, thank you for mums and children and for all the joy of family life.

Be with those who are grieving because they have no mother; be close to those who are struggling because they have no children; be near to those who are sad because they are far apart from those they love.

Let your love be present in every home, and help your church to have eyes to see and ears to hear the needs of all who come.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Opening Prayer

Leader: Today, we are giving thanks to God for the gift of mothers and the mother-like nurture that many people show to others in their lives. Isaiah wrote that God is a mother to us, comforting and carrying us in her arms: As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you (Isaiah 66:13).

All: Loving Lord, thank you for your tender care.

Leader: Isaiah also wrote that God would never forget us. He knows each of us, like a mother knows her own children: Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! (Isaiah 49:15).

All: Loving Lord, thank you for your tender care.

Leader: David wrote that in God's presence, he was quiet and at peace, trusting his mother God like a child safe in loving arms: But I have stilled and quietened my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me (Psalm 131:2).

All: Loving Lord, thank you for your tender care.

Leader: Jesus spoke of himself as a mother, longing to wrap his arms around us, like a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing (Matthew 23:37).

All: Loving Lord, thank you for your tender care.

Leader: Paul writes about his missionary ministry and likens his work to that of a nurse who looks after those in her care: ...but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

All: Loving Lord, thank you for your tender care.

The Lord's Prayer

Bible Reading 1; Psalm 107:21-22

Give thanks to God for God's steadfast love, for God's wonderful works to humankind. Tell of God's deeds with songs of joy.

'I am a mother'

How many of you have a mother? I hope you all raised your hand! A common experience for us all - having a mother. Some of us may have never known our mother, or been estranged from our

mothers. For others, our lives are closely entwined with loving, and very present, mothers.

Today on Mothering Sunday, we focus not only on mothers not only on those mothers who

brought us into this world, but also on those who have mothered us, who have taken good care of us at home and away from home; those women and men, fathers and aunties, relatives and friends, leader in church and community, neighbours and grandparents.

The Bible introduces us to numerous mothers - good mothers, and not-so-good mothers, loving mothers and harsh mothers, wise mothers and not so wise mothers, happy mothers and suffering mothers. There is no one mold for mothers, as we all can attest to, I'm sure.

In this litany, we hear the voices of several Biblical mothers. Although these women lived long ago, they experienced the same joy and pain that mothers of today experience.

As we listen to their stories, let us remember the important mother-figures in our lives, those who have seen, not just with their eyes, but with their heart.

1. Eve: I am Eve. My son Cain killed his brother Abel because he was jealous. *We remember mothers whose families are torn apart by jealousy, fighting and misunderstandings.*

2. Sarah: I am Sarah. I was an old woman when I gave birth to my son Isaac. *We remember mothers who are older, but who still bear the responsibility of raising children and grandchildren.*

3. Rebekah: I am Rebekah. I helped my favourite son Jacob to trick his brother Esau out of his birthright. *We remember mothers who mean well, but make mistakes.*

4. Moses' mother: I am Moses' mother. I hid my child so that he would not be taken by the government authorities. *We remember mothers whose children are taken or stolen from them because of commercial interests or government policy.*

5. An Egyptian Princess: I am Pharaoh's daughter. I found a baby in a basket and adopted him, raising him as my own child. *We remember mothers who have adopted children and mothers who have had their children adopted.*

6. Hannah: I am Hannah, the mother of Samuel. I was one of many women who had difficulty becoming a mother. *We remember mothers who, after many disappointments, are finally successful in being able to conceive and give birth to a child.*

7. Mother of David: I am the mother of David. I watched as my son grew from being a shepherd boy to become a great king. *We remember mothers who rejoice in the achievements of their children.*

8. Widow of Zarephath: I am the widow of Zarephath. When my bowl of flour and oil is gone, my child and I will die because our land is gripped by famine. *We remember mothers who watch their children suffer and die from malnutrition because of famine, drought, flood or war.*

9. Mother of Bethlehem: I am one of the mothers from Bethlehem. King Herod's soldiers murdered our children for no reason. *We remember mothers whose children are tortured and murdered by soldiers and militia for political reasons.*

10. Mother of Salem: I am a mother of Salem. I wanted to take my children to meet Jesus, but his disciples said not to bother him. *We remember mothers who would like their children to know Jesus but are discouraged by modern day disciples who don't like annoying kids.*

11. Syrophenician woman: I am the Syrophenician woman. Even though Jesus referred to me as a dog, I pestered him to cure my daughter who was very ill. *We remember mothers whose children are sick or disabled and who will try anything to cure or help them.*

12. Widow at Nain: I am the widow at Nain. Jesus raised my son from the dead so I would not be left destitute. *We remember mothers who, as widows, or for other reasons, raise their children alone.*

13. Mother of James and John: I am the mother of James and John. I asked Jesus if they could have a special place next to him in Heaven. *We remember mothers who believe their children can do no wrong and deserve special treatment.*

14. Mary: I am Mary. I watched my child suffer and die on a cross. *We remember mothers who watch their children suffer and die.*

15. I am one of many women, fulfilled in many ways, loved and valued and a mother-figure to many. *We remember women who, because of various circumstances and for many reasons, are not biological mothers.*

16. Lois: I am Lois. Eunice and I taught Timothy, our son and grandson about Jesus. *We remember mothers who teach their children about Jesus.*

Leader: We remember the important mother-figures of long ago and in our own lives, those who have seen, not just with their eyes, but with their heart.

Lord God Almighty, we thank you for nurturing and protecting us like a mother. On this Sunday, especially, we thank you for mothers, and for all people, women and men, who nurture and care for others.

We thank you for those who have mothered us, in the best sense of the word, those who have seen the best in us, seen us with their heart. We pray, too, for those who have been challenged as mothers and by mothers.

Hold them closely in your love. Show us all how to see not only with our eyes, but with our hearts. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Bible Reading 2: 1 Kings 19:11-13

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Short Reflection: 'Come closer'



Song/ offering: The Steadfast love of Lord never ceases

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EnOFh9WFe6k>

Prayers for offerings and mothers

Rev Tony Miles - MCB

God of Great gifts, we give you these gifts today, knowing that You mother us constantly providing for us, caring for us. As we have been abundantly provided for, so we give abundantly to the work that you give us to do, the work of the church, the care for those who are in need. Accept these gifts in Jesus' name.

Caring God, today we praise you for mothers past and present. None would claim to be perfect, but we give thanks for their unconditional love and tender hearts; for their concern for our welfare; for their patience and devotion; for their healing and strength,

for their energy and skills;
for their influence upon our lives;
for their hopes and dreams.
On this Mothering Sunday,
embrace them in your arms.
Renew, refresh and bless them.
For in all good mothers and fathers,
we catch a glimpse of your perfect love for us. Amen.

Hymn: Now thank we all our God.

1. Now thank we all our God
With hearts and hands and voices
Who wondrous things has done
In whom His world rejoices
Who from our mother's arms
Has 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

CCLI Song # 86638

Benediction

May God's love surrounds us like a mother's love. May we rejoice that we are God's own beloved children, nourished and guided to see not only with our eyes, but with our hearts.

Mothering God, empower us to share the light of your justice with all your children. Make us eager to share your love with all we meet!

May the gentle whisper of the God of peace speak to us through our worship, the reading and understanding of scripture, and be the message of our lives as we leave this place.

May the grace....