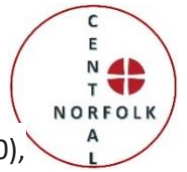


## **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2024:** Fourth Sunday in Lent and Mothering Sunday

*For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or other suitable time.*



**StF 117 H&P 511 'Sing praise to God who reigns above'** by Johann Schutz (1640 – 1690), Frances Cox (1812 – 1897) and Honor Thwaites (1914 – 1993)

### **Opening Prayer**

Think of the past week and say both 'thank you' and 'sorry' to our loving God.

**Old Testament Reading set for Mothering Sunday:** Exodus 2 v 1 – 10

**Gospel reading set for today:** Luke 2 v 33 – 35

### **To think about**

Both these readings are about babies: compare their situations in their Jewish contexts, compare their mothers, and compare the futures that we know both will have.

**StF 594 H&P 617 'Lord Jesus Christ'** by Patrick Appleford (b 1925)

### **Message from a Circuit Friend**

Today is Mothering Sunday not 'Mothers Day'. 'Mothers Day' has a very different meaning.

I could speak about the history of Mothering Sunday, but this is about today, a very different world! On Mothering Sunday we look at the care of not only mothers, but of families and all sorts of people who are caring for children, creating loving and safe environments.

Throughout the Bible there are many accounts of love and bravery and sacrifice around children by various people, in different circumstances. In the account of Moses there are 4 prominent women in his life. The midwife Shiphrah, Moses mother Jochebed, his sister Miriam, and Pharaoh's daughter. All these women paid an important role in his life, and if not for them and their love bravery and care he would not have survived. In Samuel we read of Hannah, childless for so many years, then having a son whom she took to the Temple and gave him for the Lords service, to be brought up by the community of the Temple. In the New Testament we have the unexpected baby for Elizabeth and Zechariah in their old age, and of course, the other unexpected pregnancy of Mary, conceiving the expected Messiah. All recorded from their birth. This was just the start of God's future plans. God had guided these different people to help nurture and care for them making them the great people they were to become, the greatest of all God's only Son.

Relationships concerning 'mothering' can be magnificent, difficult, glorious or troubling, - sometimes heartbreaking. But there is no doubt that mothers, and we mustn't forget fathers, and other carers in this role, take up a powerful life changing calling that profoundly shapes lives.

**Dee Moden (Local Preacher and member of Holt Methodist Church)**

**StF 536 H&P 25 'He's got the whole world'** African-American Traditional Song

*Include a verse: 'He's got the mothers and the fathers, in his hands...'*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

We pray for our world... for the church... for our communities... for our families & friends...

**Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...**

**StF 81 H&P 566 'Now thank we all our God'** by Martin Rinkart (1586 – 1649)

translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827 – 1878)

**May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.**

**Circuit News:** At the Circuit Meeting on Tuesday, we thanked Sam Parfitt for her 5 years working for the Circuit as a 'Rural Re-planter' (7 years altogether including the previous 2 years in the Café at Blakeney). Sam has a new job working for Social Services and would appreciate our prayers as she adjusts to a new phase of working life. Blakeney Methodist Church has now closed and the Circuit 'Re-purposing Group' will take the building under its remit.

## **Dee's Prayer for Mothering Sunday**

Loving God, we thank you for the joy of family life, for extended families caring and loving those in need, giving thanks for those who stretch out loving arms with warm embrace.

Help all those who find this day difficult for various reasons, may they find comfort in you.

Be near to those who are far apart, either in distance or contact, from those they love. Heavenly Father let your love be present in every home. Help your church to have eyes that see and ears that hear the different needs of all who come.

Lord we thank you for the love of our mothers and those who have 'mothered' us in alternative situations, for their care, their concern, and the joys they have shared with us, all they have given and all that we have received, whether it is in the past or in the present time

We ask that you will receive our thanks and prayers through the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.