

The Order of Service for Home Worship The Fourth Sunday in Lent. *Mothering Sunday*



Hymn: For the Beauty of the Earth.

1. For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from their birth
Over and around us lies:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.
2. For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.
3. For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
Pleasures pure and undefiled:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.
4. For each perfect gift of thine,
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers or earth and buds of heaven.
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.
5. For thy Church which evermore
Lifteth holy hands above,
Offering up on every shore
Her pure sacrifice of love:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace in our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you reconcile us to one another and to the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you intercede for us with your Father. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Collect:

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 our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

1. 20-28

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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: 127: 1-4

Response: Children are indeed a heritage from the Lord.

Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it labour in vain.

Unless the Lord guards the city,
the guard keeps watch in vain. (R)

It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for he gives sleep to his beloved. (R)

Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord,
the fruit of the womb a reward.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior
are the sons of one's youth. (R)

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

3. 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

"Woman, here is your son," says the Lord. Then he said to his disciple, "Here is your Mother."

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint John.

19: 25-27

Glory to you, O Lord.

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Meditation: *Today we give thanks for the wonderful vocation to motherhood: the vocation to love, nurture and feed others, especially children. It is a holy vocation given to many, a vocation exemplified in the vocation of Mary to love, nurture and feed Jesus the Son of God. It is the vocation of our Holy Mother the Church to love, nurture and feed the children of God. It is the greatest privilege to be entrusted with, the responsibility for and the care of another human being. In the world today it is primarily, but not exclusively, biological mothers who are called to mother others: Fathers, grandparents, Godparents, foster and adoptive parent and stepparents and siblings are also among those called to be mothers to others. Today as we give thanks for our own mother and for all who have cared for us and nurtured us during our lives, we pray for families throughout the world, especially those who face a daily battle to provide their children with even the most basic of needs. Today we hold before God all families who face daily dangers, lack of food and basic provisions, families who have a daily fight to protect and nurture their children. The vocation to Motherhood makes us vulnerable to hurt and anxiety which is something that Mary, the mother of Jesus, understood only too well as she stood at the foot of the cross and watched the son, she had given birth too, the son she had nurtured, the son she loved, betrayed and killed before her own eyes in the most horrific way. As Jesus hung on the cross, Mary saw her son Jesus give her as mother to the world when he said to John, "Here is your mother." Mary is our mother and she is a perfect example to us of godly living and faithfulness for us and for the Church. As members of the Church we are called to share with Mary the vocation of motherhood to love, nurture and feed others in the faith, but we are also the children of God to be loved, nurtured and feed ourselves. The Church loves all as children of God and is called to nurture the children of God by teaching the Good News of Jesus Christ and by feeding the children of God with the love and grace of God in its celebrations of the Sacraments, most importantly Holy Communion. Through such groups as the Mothers' Union church members do*

invaluable work to support family life in today's world. Another opportunity for us to exercise the vocation of Motherhood, the call to nurture, protect and feed another, is the greatest of all vocations. It is a vocation of love. Today we pray for all who are called to the task of mothering others, for Mary, the mother of Jesus, who gives us the perfect example of devotion and love in her care of her son and her continual prayer for us and for all the children of God. We give thanks for our holy mother the Church, and for the privilege that God give to us all to care for and nurture his children. We pray for the work of the Mothers' Union and other groups that support family life both at home and abroad. We pray for all families in need and we pray for the grace to accept God's invitation to love, nurture and feed others whenever he entrusts it to us. Amen.

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Andrew our Archbishop and Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own ministry area; that as a mother embraces her children in love may the Church reach out and embrace all with your love.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought. We pray especially at this time for the people of Ukraine, Yemen, Israel and Gaza; Draw all nations into your family of love.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; may all families know your love and peace.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; relieve them according to their need, strengthen them with your Holy Spirit and console them with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time; welcome them and all the departed into the eternal joy and peace of your heavenly kingdom.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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:

Jesus said, "Peace, I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in Word and sacrament. Help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross and follow him and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Shall we not love thee, Mother dear.

1. **Shall we not love thee, Mother dear,
Whom Jesus loves so well,
And to his glory year by year
Thy praise and honour tell?**
2. **Thee did he choose from whom to take
True flesh, his flesh to be;
In it to suffer for our sake,
And by it make us free.**
3. **O wondrous depth of love divine,
That he should bend so low;
And, Mary, O what joy was thine
The Saviour's love to know.**
4. **Joy to be Mother of the Lord,
Yet thine the truer bliss,
In every thought and deed and word
To be for ever his.**
5. **Now in the realm of life above
Close to thy Son thou art,
While on thy soul glad streams of love
Flow from his sacred heart.**
6. **Jesu, the Virgin's holy Son,
Praise we thy Mother blest;
Grant when our earthly course is run,
Life with the saints at rest.**