

Worship at Home

15th March 2026 – Mothering Sunday

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StF 610: Best of all is God is with us

**Best of all is God is with us,
God will hold and never fail.**

**Keep that truth when storms are raging,
God remains though faith is frail.**

**Best of all is God is with us,
life goes on and needs are met,
God is strongest in our weakness.
Love renews, will not forget.**

**Best of all is God is with us,
hearts are challenged, strangely warmed,
faith is deepened, courage strengthened,
grace received and hope reformed.**

**Best of all is God is with us,
in our joy and through our pain,
till that final acclamation:
'life is Christ, and death is gain'.**

**Best of all is God is with us
as we scale eternal heights,
love grows stronger, undiminished;
earth grows dim by heaven's lights.**

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Prayers

Loving God,
You are the source of life and light.
You are the One who knows us fully and holds us
gently.
You guide us like a shepherd who does not rush us,
walks with us through every valley,
and leads us toward places of rest and renewal.

Lord God, we thank You that You see beyond
appearances and call out the goodness which You
have planted within us.

We praise You for your patience with us, for Your
steady love, and for the hope You keep placing
before us, even when we lose sight of it ourselves.

And yet, when we pause in Your presence, we
recognise how easily we fall short... *...Pause*

Lord of light and truth, we confess that we often
prefer comfort to honesty, familiar stories to grace
that challenge us.

Forgive us when we fail to see our neighbour,
or turn away from truths that unsettle us.

Awaken us again... *...Pause*

Forgive us when we make quick judgments rather
than listening carefully; when we cling to what feels
safe instead of trusting where You are leading; when
we overlook those on the edges or stay silent when
love calls us to speak.

Open our eyes, gracious God. Help us to see one
another as You see us — with compassion, dignity,
and hope. Renew us by Your mercy, reshape us by
Your love, and lead us forward in the light of Christ.
Amen.

We say the Lord's Prayer...

Reading: Exodus 2:1-10

Message

Worship on Mothering Sunday has its challenges
because there are a wide range of experiences of
motherhood that we can encounter in life. We may
have had wonderfully loving mothers; we may have
had mothers who were unwell or dysfunctional as

mothers and therefore harmful towards us. We may
be mothers, we may not have been able to be
mothers, we may have lost mothers, or we may be
mothers who have lost children. Mothering Sunday
can be a difficult time for some and a day of joy for
others, but I hope that for most of us there was
someone who played a loving motherly or fatherly
role in our lives.

Our story from Exodus is equally complex. Here we
have a baby boy, not yet named, who is cast adrift on
the river Nile by his mother Jochebed in nothing
more than a papyrus basket. At first glance, this
hardly seems like a particularly nurturing thing for a
mother to do with a three-month-old baby. But we
also know that, had she not done so he, like so many
other newborn males in Egypt, would have been
found by Egyptian soldiers and killed for being an
Israelite boy in accordance with Pharaoh's command.

What happens next is equally dangerous and risky.
Pharaoh's own daughter, who is not named, happens
to be close to the riverbank with her servants and
hears the baby cry. She sends one of her servants to
fetch the papyrus basket and when opened she
recognises the baby boy as one of the Hebrew
children that her father has ordered to be killed. She
takes pity on the child, adopts him and calls him
Moses. Moses's sister Miriam, watching as all this
unfolds, speaks with Pharaoh's daughter offering to
find a wet nurse for the baby and brings her own
mother, Jochebed, for the task.

I always think this is a beautiful story to reflect the
complexities of motherhood and family. Perhaps
Miriam would come to the palace with her mother at
times and get to play with her brother. I like to think
so.

It is a story of love and sacrifice and reflects
beautifully the selflessness of nurture. Jochebed
took the risk of hiding Moses for three months before
she could hide him no longer, desperate that his cries
would not be heard. Pharaoh's daughter also took a
huge risk in adopting a Hebrew child under the very
nose of her father who had ordered that all baby
boys of Hebrew families were killed; and all of this
takes place under the loving care and guidance of
God, whose plan is already set in place.

I was born in the early 1960s and although I have never traced my birth mother, my brother did. He was adopted two years later than me and, I would imagine, the stories of our beginnings were most probably very similar. Nowadays, many women have babies without being married, but in the early 1960s it was still very much frowned upon and in many situations seen as something that would bring shame on your family. Often girls would be sent great distances for their confinement so that the pregnancy was kept secret and then once the baby was born, the young mother was not given any choice by her family other than to give the child up for adoption. That was my brother's story and I expect mine was similar. My brother and I were fortunate to be adopted by loving parents, and we have both always been aware that we were adopted. Whatever our experiences of motherhood are and however we view this Mothering Sunday, I pray that we have someone we can think of who nurtured us when we were children. If not, know that the God who knows and loves all He has created was watching over every second of your childhood, just as he does today. Equally, if today brings back memories of those we have lost, know that God is watching over them now as they abide with him in eternity.

StF 594: Lord Jesus Christ

**Lord Jesus Christ, You have come to us,
You are one with us, Mary's Son;
Cleansing our souls from all their sin,
Pouring your love and goodness in;
Jesus, our love for you we sing, Living Lord.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, You have come to us,
Born as one of us, Mary's Son;
Led out to die on Calvary,
Risen from death to set us free,
Living Lord Jesus, help us see - You are Lord.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, I would come to you,
Live my life for you, Son of God.
All your commands I know are true,
Your many gifts will make me new,
Into my life your power breaks through,
Living Lord.**

Patrick Appleford (b. 1925)

Prayers for the World

God of compassion and truth, You gather Your people as a parent gathers their children, holding us with tenderness and strength.

On this Sunday in Lent, when light breaks gently into our journey, we pray for our world, our communities, and all who long for Your healing presence.

We pray for those whose voices are dismissed, whose stories are doubted, whose lives are shaped by exclusion or fear.

Bring light where there is injustice, courage where there is silence, hope where there is weariness.

We remember all who feel unseen; those sidelined by poverty, prejudice, or circumstance; those living with illness, disability, or unrelenting pain; those whose struggles are hidden behind closed doors or carried quietly in the heart. May Your light reveal the truth of their dignity and surround them with care that restores.

We pray for families of every shape and story, for those who rejoice today and those who find Mothering Sunday difficult: those who have lost mothers or children, those who long for relationships that never came to be, those whose homes have not been places of nurture or safety.

Gather each one into Your compassion, and help Your Church to be a community where all can belong, be honoured, and be held.

We pray for places where conflict overshadows hope, where leaders cling to power rather than peace, where people are forced to flee homes, futures, and familiar ground.

Strengthen peacemakers and truth-tellers; protect the vulnerable and stir in us a longing for justice that reflects Your heart.

We pray for Your Church — for all seeking clarity, courage, and renewed sight. Where we have been slow to recognise Your movement, open our eyes; where we have feared the cost of honesty, give us boldness; where our love has grown weary, rekindle Your light within us.

Loving God, as we continue to walk the pathway to Easter, may Your transforming light guide our steps and may Your

steadfast mercy sustain us, that we may reflect Your grace in all we pray, all we say, all we hope, and all we do. **Amen.**

StF 504: May the mind of Christ...

**May the mind of Christ, my Saviour,
live in me from day to day,
by his love and power controlling
all I do or say.**

**May the word of God dwell richly
in my heart from hour to hour,
so that all may see I triumph
only through his power.**

**May the peace of God my Father
rule my life in everything,
that I may be calm to comfort
sick and sorrowing.**

**May the love of Jesus fill me
as the waters fill the sea;
him exalting, self forgetting --
this is victory.**

**May I run the race before me,
strong and brave to face the foe,
looking only unto Jesus
as I onward go.**

Katie Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

Blessing

May the Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, open your eyes to truth, strengthen your heart for the journey, and lead you in love.

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer guide you and affirm you today and always. **Amen.**

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