



Call to Worship

In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, God promised to place a new covenant in our hearts. As members of the living Body of Christ, we see the signs of God's promise among us. God's covenant continues and God's kingdom comes near. As we journey through Lent, we turn back to God, and come seeking forgiveness, healing and wholeness.

A Hymn for Mothering Sunday: StF 120 (Alan Gaunt © 1998, Stainer & Bell)

1. We gladly celebrate and praise,
the gift so great and good,
through which God's kindness is made known:
the gift of motherhood.
2. We sing of Mary's mother-love:
for she, of all on earth,
received the privilege to bear
and bring God's Son to birth.
3. We pray that God's own mother-love
will hold in gentleness,
- all children who have never known
a mother's tenderness.
4. For mothers, who with broken hearts,
are faced with grief and loss,
we pray the Son of God will give
deep comfort from his cross.
5. We trust the mother-love of God,
who bears, in Mary's boy,
our pain and sorrow, to secure
our everlasting joy.

Prayer for Mothering Sunday *(from the Church of England)*

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 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.

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Reflection *(Taken from A Season of Promise written by Mary Scifres and B. J. Beu)*

While the Ten Commandments were a huge advancement toward building good and godly communities, individual human behavior continued to fall short. Realizing that commandments written on tablets of stone would not keep the house of Israel in the ways that leads to life, God promised to make a new covenant with the people: God would put the law within them and write it on their very hearts. If people would look within, they could learn to discern the instructions written there. Such discernment is not easy. It takes patience and practice: in prayer, in meditation, in study, in works of mercy and compassion. But as you learn to discern the law God has written on your heart, you will learn how to live as love in the world, and you will discover how to fully embrace what it means to love God, neighbour, and self with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let this Lenten season be a time of learning to read what God has written within.

Let us pray ... Engraver of the human heart, your law of love strives to burst forth with every beat of my heart. Work within me this day, that the majesty of your love may shine in the words I speak and radiate in the actions I take. Amen.

Consider: *In an earlier chapter of Jeremiah (chapter 18), Jeremiah uses the image of God as a potter making and moulding us. Where you are yearning for God to re-mould, re-shape, or even break down and recreate your life anew? To truly create your heart anew, reflect on people you need to forgive or from whom you need to seek forgiveness. Invite God to be the potter who will enact such change and write God's very presence on your heart and soul.*

Scripture: John 12:20-33

Lenten Liturgy

During Lent, we remember the events that led Jesus to his crucifixion. He had come into the world to bring hope and light, but at every turn there were those who sought to extinguish that light. He came to be a servant and to glorify God but they did not want to be humbled. Jesus said that to bear fruit, we first have to die to our old selves and that those who wish to gain eternal life must lose their earthly ties. But this message was not popular. Jesus invites us all to become something far better than we presently are. A little of the light which had come into the world was snuffed out by those not willing to be transformed.

Let us pray ... O God of glory, on this Lenten journey, guide us towards the darkness of the cross, as we trust in your promises revealing the power of transformation, and the hope of resurrection. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

God of thundering glory and wondrous love, you lifted up Jesus Christ from the earth to draw all people to your holy name. We praise you for opening the way to eternal salvation. We confess that our hearts are hardened and we often fail to help those who you have put in our path. Forgive us we pray. Write your compassion in our hearts that we may love as you love. We lift up to you now the particular concerns that are on our hearts for each other, our community and the world ... for those suffering from violence and injustice ... for those who want to work and have no prospects of work ... for those who are oppressed by racism, sexism, and other types of discrimination ... for those who worried being able to provide for their children and loved ones ... for those who are our political leaders and struggle to address our problems ... for those who have a bounty of resources and yet are not able to share what they have with those in need ... for those who are sick ... In Jesus name, we pray, as we say the prayer that he taught us, *Our Father ...*

Offering Prayer

You are invited at this time to remember your local church and to give generously of your time, talent and treasure.

Let us pray ... God of glory, you have lifted Jesus up and told us that unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and takes on new life, it remains just a single grain. With grateful hearts, we offer you the fruit of our lives to bless and use in heart-felt ways. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

Hymn StF 501 (William Watkins Reid)

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| 1. Help us, O Lord, to learn
the truths your word imparts,
to study that your laws may be
inscribed upon our hearts. | that all our thoughts and words and deeds
may glorify your name. |
| 2. Help us, O Lord, to live
the faith which we proclaim, | 3. Help us, O Lord, to teach
the beauty of your ways,
that all who seek may find the Christ,
and make a life of praise. |

Blessing

We go from here now to glorify God's name with God's love written on our hearts. And may God the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be with us all, now and always. Amen.