

## **Sunday March 22, Mothering Sunday**

*We unite as part of the family of God, separated by distance but united in common accord.*

*Before you pray, you might like to light a candle and use the following words.*

Give thanks to the Father, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and made us partakers in the inheritance of the saints in light.

We light this candle as a reminder that Jesus Christ is the light of the world. A light no darkness can quench

*The candle is lit,*

I weave a silence on to my lips  
I weave a silence into my mind  
I weave a silence within my heart  
I close my ears to distractions  
I close my eyes to attractions  
I close my heart to temptations

*Silence is kept*

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

*Silence is kept.*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

### **Psalm 23**

The Lord is my shepherd;  
therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.

He shall refresh my soul  
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me  
in the presence of those who trouble me;  
you have anointed my head with oil

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and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now  
and ever shall be. Amen.

### **A Bible reading**

Luke 2:22-35

*Silence is kept.*

### **A Reflection**

Today is Mothering Sunday, which in many ways has become corrupted by the commercial 'Mother's Day'. Yes, it is important to acknowledge the hard work of mothers, to give thanks for those who have in the past cared for us. However, for many it is a difficult day, for those who have lost children, or who have never had children, and for those for whom the concept of a loving mother is a distant dream.

Of course, the origin of the day is much more associated with 'mother church'. A church which is worldwide, that unites together and holds us all in unity, and is a spiritual home to us all. The church throughout the ages has a long and venerable tradition of caring for the weak, vulnerable and poor, providing support and care where systems have broken down. At this time of crisis, the church could come to the fore, as a caring and compassionate body of people, who through our prayers and actions demonstrate the love of God for this world.

The words of our reading are very familiar to many who attend, or in the past have attended evening prayer. Simeon, at the end of his life, having seen the Christ child was content to commit himself into the hands of God. May we have that abiding sense that in all we face, we know that we are in God's hands.

### **Prayers**

Our Father, which art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done,  
in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive them that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,

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the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Collect for the day**

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

### **Our Orebeck Benefice Pilgrim's Prayer**

**O**pen our hearts to your love, Father God, as we journey with you;  
**R**enew us each day, as we dwell in your presence.  
**E**ncourage us when we feel downtrodden,  
**B**ring us comfort when we are sad.  
**E**nlive us so that we may always be ready to serve You, and  
**C**are for others in the strength of God's love.  
**K**indle, we pray, all that works towards the coming of your kingdom. Amen

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort, knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, we pray for the leaders of nations at this time of crisis. Guide and direct them to consider the needs of all. May the nations unite to work together to bring about a solution to the Coronavirus. We also pray for those places in the world where there continues to be warfare and bloodshed. Comfort and support the victims who are injured or homeless, and strengthen the many agencies which bring aid. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and for evermore. Amen.

'I weave a silence' is from David Adam Edge of Glory  
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