

Teddington Circuit Service Sheet : March 22 - Mothering Sunday

With thanks to Jill Harker, Mark Gilks and Methodist Church Connexional team for the content.

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use if you are unable to attend church. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you

Opening Prayer

As I come before you Jesus, open my eyes that I might truly see you as my shepherd, comforter, and redeemer. I want to be with others worshipping you but this is not possible, yet I know that I am being prayed for as part of the community of faith. Thank you for this time where I remember you are with me. Amen.

Hymn: Amazing Grace (Singing the Faith 440)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tvt6E9N7AQw>

**1 Amazing grace -- how sweet the sound --
that saved a wretch like me!**

I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

**2 God's grace has taught my heart to fear,
his grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!**

**3 Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
God's grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.**

**4 The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.**

**5 And, when this heart and flesh shall fail
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
a life of joy and peace.**

**6 When we've been there ten thousand years
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun.**

John Newton (1725-1807) (alt.)

Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 440

Let us pray together

On this day, while we are particularly thinking of mothers, we think too of the many people who care for us in so many different ways.

We give thanks to you O God, as you act as a mother and father to us.

We read of the image of you caring for your people like a mother hen cares for her chicks to save them from danger.

We acknowledge that you have brought us into being and that you sustain the life within us.

If we allow you to, you will guide us in the decisions we make and the path we take on life's journey.

No matter how often we may desert you, you never turn your face away from us; your constant concern for us is always for our good.

You weep with us and you laugh with us; you rejoice in our successes and you pick us up when we fail.

Loving, mothering God strong and tender, faithful and true, we worship you today. Amen.

Lord, I worship you today. Help me to see your calling in my life.

Open my eyes to what is possible when I see things through the eyes of your Son.

Forgive what is passed, protect me from all that is to come. Amen

The Lords Prayer:
Our Father.....

Hymn: Listen to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hrh4lMgn-g> or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

Read : Exodus 2:1-10

This is the story of Moses placed in a basket on the river, but why did it happen and who was involved in the story?

First why did it have to happen?

The Israelite people were living in Egypt as slaves; the Egyptians had taken them into Exile. However the Egyptians had become concerned that the Israelite slaves were producing so many babies that they might become a strong enough force to overcome the Egyptians. So Pharaoh had issued a decree to kill all the Israelite baby boys to prevent this from happening. One Hebrew mother decided on her own course of action.

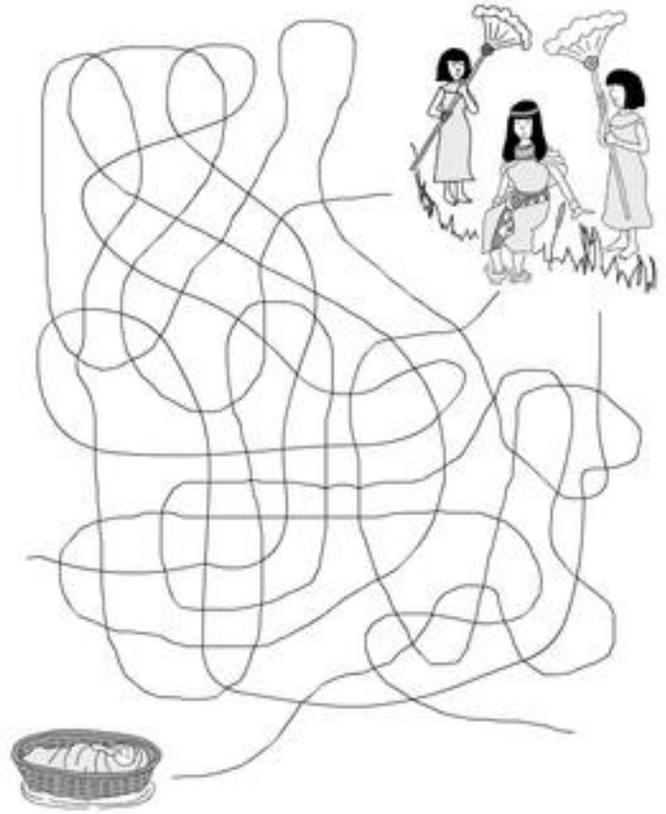
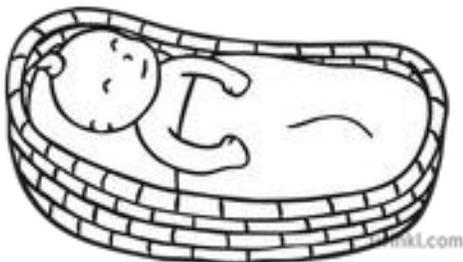
How many people were involved in caring for Moses?

Do you think God was involved?

I think God already had plans for this baby – do you know of any of the things which Moses did for God in his adult life?

Burning bush, leading the Israelites in the Wilderness

One of the things we notice in the story is that trust was shown on both sides. The princess had to trust that Moses Mother would hand him over when he was of a suitable age to enter the court of Pharaoh and the mother had to trust that he would be well looked after.



MOSES
A DELIVERER IS BORN
Discover the hidden words.

Z	W	O	T	L	D	L	G	T	W	M	V	E	C	X
N	K	E	S	L	B	R	P	R	E	T	S	I	S	H
L	S	B	R	K	F	V	R	T	B	L	N	Z	G	I
H	W	N	S	B	G	Z	E	L	V	Q	W	C	X	D
P	W	Z	L	E	E	V	H	N	X	N	U	V	F	F
V	Z	W	A	H	U	H	T	I	I	P	D	O	G	T
M	Q	Z	U	M	K	X	O	H	I	C	M	T	L	A
E	V	O	E	V	F	T	M	S	Z	V	A	O	R	D
V	G	S	R	W	I	B	R	O	T	H	E	R	S	O
P	E	V	V	M	B	U	A	B	R	T	Z	N	E	P
S	V	K	P	A	V	U	M	B	V	B	K	V	U	C
W	C	W	S	T	I	E	N	V	V	K	C	H	W	A
O	N	K	U	P	I	W	O	Z	O	V	T	P	K	L
M	E	V	P	K	H	A	K	B	O	J	C	P	N	F
T	R	W	X	P	A	G	N	L	B	O	V	S	W	P

Word Bank

- | | | |
|----------|--------|----------|
| BROTHERS | EGYPT | EGYPTIAN |
| SLAVERY | BASKET | HEBREW |
| HID | BOYS | BABY |
| GOD | DIET | MOTHER |



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Read John 3:14-21

Sunday 22 nd March is Mothering Sunday, the fourth Sunday in Lent. It is likely to be the strangest Mothering Sunday that most of us have ever experienced. We will be feeling the effects of social distance and even self-isolation. But we are not alone, we are not forgotten.

Mothering Sunday is often called Mother's Day, yet Mother's Day in the USA, Australia, Canada and a number of other places falls on the second Sunday in May. The campaign to have Mother's Day in the UK was led by Constance Adelaide Smith. She did not want it to be so American and campaigned to bring back the old Medieval Mothering Sunday, so called for on that Sunday you went back to your mother church and hence met up with your own Mother. In the Victorian era, servants and labourers (some as young as ten years old) who worked for wealthy landowners were allowed to see their Mothers on Mothering Sunday. In many rural areas the traditional gift to take home to Mum was a Simnel cake, often with eleven cake balls atop representing the eleven disciples (Judas didn't count!). Simnel cakes have made a recent come back in popularity following being chosen as a test in the Great British Bake Off. The two simple messages of Mothering Sunday are, firstly, that as we remember and give thanks for the love of Mothers, we remember and give thanks for the love of God. Secondly, as we share our Simnel cake, we are reminded to share God's love with others.

There is no other passage in the New Testament that springs to mind when we think of God's love more than John 3:16:

"For God so loved the World that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"

When my good Gideon friend Jonathan Shepherd presents New Testaments at Year 7 school Assemblies, he always explains how vital this verse is for Christians. The setting of this famous verse in our lectionary is John 3:14-21, but its broader context is the story of the night-time visit to Jesus by the Pharisee Nicodemus. Some of you will recall Hazel talking about him a couple of Sundays ago. This context throws up the well-used and often ill-

used phrase "born again". It is interesting to note that the word that is translated into "again" can also mean "from above". So, the sentence can be read as Jesus telling Nicodemus "I tell you the truth no one can see the Kingdom of Heaven unless he is born from above" (John 3:3). Jesus goes on to say that he is to be lifted up, and that it will be this event that enables believers to be part of the Kingdom of Heaven. The moment we are "born again" or "born from above" is not just the moment when we began to believe but also the point when Jesus was lifted up on the cross. Jesus links his statement back to the Old Testament story of Moses lifting up a snake on a stick to heal the Israelites (Numbers 21:4-9). When he is lifted up on the cross, our Lord saves us. No Cross, no Crown!

But why does God do all this? What's his motive? It is because: HE SO LOVED THE WORLD! That means all the world. Not just a bit of it. He loved everyone, and he still loves everyone.

We have a choice. It is like this: Jesus is lifted up before us. We can turn him down and ignore him in our lives. Saying "no" to Jesus means that we judge ourselves. We are called to say "yes" we believe; we believe that God is as Jesus declared him to be, not a harsh Judge but a loving Father. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the mind of God, is one with God. We believe what Jesus told us is true and that belief should drive every aspect of our lives. When we say "yes" to Jesus we face judgement bathed in the love of God.

Amazingly, there is more, a great prize, in fact the greatest prize. We receive Eternal life! John's Gospel is clear, Eternal life is not something that is held in abeyance for the believer's future, but it begins in the believer's present. Eternal life is human life as God intended it to be, living our lives in God's presence and love. Christians will not miss out on the world's problems. We will have our share of grief, hurt and suffering. Yet, in the midst of all the pain and challenge believers have an inner joy. Believers have been blessed with Eternal life. This gives them peace with God. It gives them peace with others, when you are forgiven, you become forgivers. It gives them peace with themselves, they know their weaknesses but face

life's difficulties with God. That is what God's love has done for us: Eternal life now and in the future after our mortal death.

So, Brothers and Sisters, on this very challenging and difficult Mothering Sunday, let us remember the love of Mothers, and see the very best of that love as a reflection of God's love for us. Let us share that love, for as we pass on the knowledge of Jesus to others, we share God's love and give them the chance not to perish but to have Eternal life – now!

A time of prayer

All seeing, all knowing God I call on you today. May your Spirit give your world a sense of calm and peace in these difficult times.

On this Mothering Sunday, we pray for all Mums. The good ones and the not so good. We remember all those who would have liked to have children but for whatever reason could not.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty:

For those people who are worried about leaving their home and those who cannot.

For those needing to make decisions in order to care for other.

We pray for carers, doctors and nurses.

We continue to pray for those who will feel more isolated by not being able to attend and act of worship today.

I especially want to pray for

**Holy God,
Present with us now, guide me in all I do and say – that it might reflect your love for the world.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen**

Hymn: God is Love (Singing the Faith 403)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gjju_BKA1PE

1 God is love: his the care,
tending each, ev'rywhere,
God is love, all is there!
Jesus came to show him,
that we all might know him!

Refrain:

Sing aloud, loud, loud!
sing aloud, loud, loud!
God is good! God is truth!
God is beauty! Praise him!

2 None can see God above;
we can share life and love;
thus may we Godward move,
finding him in creation,
holding ev'ry nation. [Refrain]

3 Jesus lived on the earth,
hope and life brought to birth
and affirmed human worth,
for he came to save us
by the truth he gave us. [Refrain]

4 To our Lord praise we sing,
light and life, friend and King,
coming down, love to bring,
pattern for our duty,
showing God in beauty. [Refrain]

A prayer of blessing

Lord, I commit myself to you today. At the end of this day, may I see you more clearly and love you more dearly, and follow you closer. **Amen.**