



**Team Parish of Christ the King
St Aidan's, Brunton Park**

**Sunday 27th March 2022
Mothering Sunday**

This Sunday we mark Mothering Sunday. A day that has grown into a celebration of mothering love in all its diversity. It's not an easy day for everyone. There will be those for whom, for whatever reason, this day is a painful day. So, while we celebrate mothering love in all its forms (whether through the care of a biological child or not), we also hold in our prayers all those for whom 'mother' is a complicated word.

But today, more than just celebrating mothers and mothering love, I'd like to explore our image of God and ask whether we can celebrate the God who loves us as both mother and father. We're familiar with images of a male God, our heavenly Father, the bible offers a surprising amount of motherly images for God as well.

So perhaps today we might allow space in our picture of who God is for motherly love. A God who is tender and passionate with the love of a mother for her nursing child. Who invites us into a relationship as close and intimate as a sated child resting in its mother's arms. Perhaps we might picture God, not as the distant and authoritative father figure we sometimes suspect God is, but instead as offering a mother's gentle embrace to her beloved child, looking down with the besotted love to the infant cradled in her arms. How might that image shape the God we pray to?

But there's also more to mothering love than this image of gentle tenderness, and our gospel reading brings that out. Jesus speaks of his desire to gather the children of Jerusalem under his wings as a mother hen gathers her brood. But this image is one of sacrifice. A hen gathers her brood, under her wings only to protect them from danger. She shields her young with her own body when she sees them threatened. This is also a mother's love. Sacrifice and strength and determination. In Jesus we're offered just such a picture of sacrificial love. The God gives up his life to protect us from the threat of sin and death. Jesus loves as a mother does, sacrificing himself for the children of God.

First Reading : Isaiah 49.13-16

Shout for joy, O heavens;
rejoice, O earth;
burst into song, O mountains!
For the LORD comforts his people
and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.
But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me,
the Lord has forgotten me."
"Can a mother forget the baby at her breast
and have no compassion on the child she has borne?
Though she may forget,
I will not forget you!
See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are ever before me.

Psalm 131

My heart is not proud, LORD,
my eyes are not haughty;
I do not concern myself with great matters
or things too wonderful for me.

But I have calmed and quieted myself,
I am like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child I am content.
Israel, put your hope in the LORD
both now and forevermore.

Gospel reading Luke 13.32-35

He said to them...'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem.'" Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."'

THE WEEK AHEAD

Mon	7.30pm, Zoom: Bible Study Group
Wed	12pm: Lent Lunch, St John's URC - Mary Magdalene
Wed	7.30pm: St Cuthbert's: ' An Adventure with God ' - Rev'd Dr Jennifer Moberly
Thurs	12.45pm: Funeral of Jane Hatton
Fri	5pm: Food for Thought via Zoom (see code below)

Sun 3rd 8:00am: **Said Communion**
9.30am: **Fifth Sunday of Lent**
Leading and Preaching Rev'd Gerard Rundell –
Readings from Isaiah 43.16-21, Philippians 3.4b-14, John 12.1-8
11am: **Annual General Meeting**
4pm: **Taize service**

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wed 6th April 7:30pm: **Lent Course - Rev'd Ben Doolan, Master of St Thomas'**
Thurs 7th April 12pm: **Lent Lunch, St Cuthbert's Brunswick - The Two Thieves**
Sun 10th April 9:30am: **Palm Sunday**

HOLY WEEK

Mon 11th April 7:30pm: **Stations of the Cross 1-5**
Tues 12th April 7:30pm: **Stations of the Cross 6-10 (at St Columba's Church)**
Wed 13th April 7:30pm: **Stations of the Cross 11-14**
Thurs 14th April 7:30pm: **Maundy Thursday**
Fri 15th April 10:00am: **Good Friday Family Worship**
Fri 15th April 2:00pm: **An Hour Before the Cross**

EASTER

Sun 17th April 5:30am: **Sunrise Service**
Sun 17th April 9:30am: **Easter Sunday Eucharist Service**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link is <https://bit.ly/Mothering2022>

ADRIENNE TULIP – left a lovely telephone message thanking everyone for their kind messages during the weeks when she was poorly. She is feeling much better, sounds wonderful, and is now home.

UKRAINE FUNDRAISING – thank you to everyone who has supported our fund raising events over the past few weeks. We have raised £2500. Thank you all so much for your generosity in donating both money and items.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – will take place on Sunday 3rd April at 11am in church. We will be electing Churchwardens, a Deanery Synod rep, and DCC members at the meeting. If you are interested in any of these roles please speak to Gerard.

SUPPORTING REFUGEE FAMILIES – as we pray for peace in Ukraine, many Ukrainian families are seeking refuge, and it is possible that some of us here at St Aidan's will be able to offer shelter within our homes. We know at least one person is considering it! We are asking if, as a church, we can come together as a community to help support the home owners and refugee families as they settle in their new homes. Please let Gerard know if you are able to help in any way.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP LENT SERIES The Bible study group is continuing on Zoom with Rev Miranda Threlfall-Holmes' video series How to Eat Bread, based on her book exploring different ways of reading the Bible, looking particularly at how the Bible itself uses biblical texts. 7.30 Monday evenings. All welcome, whether or not you have been part of the group before. Meeting code: 884 3537 3515 or Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88435373515?wd=ODA3Q1dQbIRqZnNiaUNHK1UvTkZ1dz09>

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDsm1KOURtQT09> Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS: if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

CHURCH CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS – face masks are optional, please sanitise your hands on entering church, and maintain at least a one metre distance.

USED STAMPS – if you have any used stamps, please save them and put them in the box at the back of church to raise fund for St Oswald's Hospice.

CHURCH OPENING – church is now open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

FOOD BANK – a little reminder that we still collect for the foodbank. There is a box at the back of church for donations.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – Particularly for Sacred Heart RC and St John's URC, our Sunday school and our retired clergy: Ben Pullan, Christine Crompton, Ray Devenney and Jean Skinner.

For the community – Christian Aid, the Children's Society, and other charities supported by the church and the Saturday café

For the world – Particularly during the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, for her people, refugees and the Ukrainian community in the UK, and our own national and political life.

For those in particular need - Gladys Johnston, John Macleod

For those who have died and those who grieve – Edward Chaneller, Alfred Minford, George Tomlinson, Katharina Middleton, Max Smith, Margery Archbold, Joan Garner

CONTACTS

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