



Worship@Home

Sunday 19th March

Lent 4 – *Mothering Sunday*

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 3: 1 – 13

Gospel Reading: Luke 2: 33 – 35

Time to Reflect

Call to Worship

Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
**If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.**
If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
**even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.**

STF – 588: I come with joy, a child of God

Sing/read/pray the words or listen to it [here](#)

- ¹ I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved and free,
the life of Jesus to recall,
the love laid down for me.
- ² I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread.
- ³ As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends.
- ⁴ The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here.
- ⁵ Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one.

Brian Wren

Prayer

Let us pray together:

May God, Mother of all,
draw us back into the loving arms
that embrace all of who we are,
forgive our hurts & failings
restore us to our place in His family
and nurture our faith with His maternal love.

Amen

Mothering Sunday is traditionally a day when we give thanks for our mothers and show them our appreciation. It falls on Refreshment Sunday, when the fast of Lent is lifted briefly. But for many it is not a day when “the fast is lifted”. Mothering Sunday can be tricky for a whole host of reasons – childlessness, infertility, miscarriage, infant death, death of a mother, abuse, estrangement and the many other life stories which impact this date.

The Gospel reading with its prophecy of suffering to come for both Jesus and his mother, gives voice to the fact that bearing and bring up children is not all sweetness and light. It involves mental as well as physical pain even for those who are blessed with the gift of children.

In our Old Testament reading, the first question in the Biblical narrative is, “where are you?” like a caring mother calling to her child. God speaks and gives voice to His perpetual search for us. The voice of God is calling to find us.

When first reading the question, it seems simple. Adam and Eve hid, so we are told. So it is logical that God should ask, “where are you?” But thinking about this, we are told throughout scripture that there is nowhere anyone can hide from God. Moses flees to the desert, and God is there in a burning bush. ‘Where can I go from your presence O Lord?’ says the Psalmist. God sees us and loves us wherever we are.

Eve and Adam’s choices to listen to the serpent, to eat from the fruit, to cover themselves, to hide. Each of these choices had an impact on them physically, spiritually, emotionally, relationally. In a very short space of time they have gone from being in open communion with God and each other to being ashamed, hidden and scared. There is a need for them to work out where they are with God and with each other. We too maybe able to relate to that experience in our own lives.

For me, Mothering Sunday is a day which makes me want to hide, to run away, to avoid the reminders of my own losses, losses which I had no choice or control over, as someone who lost her mother in childhood and due to illness has lost the ability to bear my own children. But as I/we/you may want to hide from our own pain, shame and hurt, God is still asking, “where are

you?" And we do have a choice. We can run, cover ourselves, try to find a bush or we can let the question remind us of where we belong, of who's we are. Beloved children of God.

God is still there and still asking, "where are you?" And our answer can be, if we choose, here I am, with God, in God, listening to God, opening our broken hearts to stay close to God.

Where are you?

STF 663 – I, the Lord of sea and sky

¹ I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
my hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

*Here I am, Lord
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night,
I will go, Lord
if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

² I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain;
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

³ I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts are satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Daniel L. Schutte

A time of Prayer

God, our maker,
all-powerful and all-seeing:

***You are the God who sees us,
we worship you.***

Bringing before you hearts which cry silently for
compassion.

We ask for healing for deep wounds,

being mindful that scars are part of uniqueness
and battle-weary beauty.

God, our redeemer,
all-loving and compassionate:

***You are the God who sees us,
we worship you.***

Standing in your sight with heads held high.

We ask that you bless the relationships of those
who are straining to keep it together with patience
and with love.

God, our comforter,
enabling and transforming:
***You are the God who sees us,
we worship you.***

Reaching out to you.
We ask for your peace for all mourning loss.
Before the beginning,
***and after the end,
and for ever,
you are the one, true God.
You are the God who sees us,
and we worship and adore you.***

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father...

Blessing

The blessing of God,
Giver of life,
Bearer of pain,
Maker of love,
Creator and Sustainer,
Liberator and Redeemer,
Healer and Sanctifier,
be with you and all whom you love,
now and forever. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Worship materials taken from Saltwater and Honey – Mother's Day
Runaway Service Resources

Reflection written by Rachel Moss

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