

Cathedral Eucharist for Mothering Sunday



Sunday 30th March, 10:30am

Welcome to Coventry Cathedral

Mothering Sunday began to be marked as such in the 16th century when people would go to what they considered to be their 'mother church'. For those living away from their family home in service, this might mean walking for several hours to get to the church of their upbringing. Going back to their mother church was a way of acknowledging the importance of that church in setting their life path, and strengthening and upholding them in prayer.

The idea of the mother church is important for cathedrals, who are seen as the mother church of the diocese. Today, we recommit ourselves to that vocation of offering nurturing support to all those in the Coventry Diocese.

Mothering Sunday is also an opportunity to thank God for all those who are like mothers to us; our own biological and adoptive mothers, and all those who care for us. To commemorate this, we will give every adult, child and young person who cares for someone else in the Cathedral this morning a small bunch of daffodils as a way of thanking them for the ways in which they care for others.

We are aware that Mothering Sunday can be painful for some, and so this service also contains moments of reflection where the hurts that we feel today can be held before God.

On this Mothering Sunday we will also thank God for *Remember our Child*, a special pastoral provision for bereaved parents. This has been very important, both to bereaved parents and to the Cathedral as we have sought to minister to them. Today, we offer to God the names of all those who have been remembered in this ministry, entrusting them to God's safekeeping.

Cover photo of 'Mary Mother of Jesus at the Foot of the Cross', by John Bridgeman

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Other material is by the Right Reverend Mary Gregory, Bishop of Reading

As you prepare for this service, you might want to reflect on the ways in which God is like a mother to us, using the words of St Anselm, an eleventh century Archbishop of Canterbury:

Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you; you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.

Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness; through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.

Your warmth gives life to the dead, your touch makes sinners righteous.

Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us; in your love and tenderness remake us.

In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness, for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.

If you are visiting or new to us, please introduce yourself to one of the ministers. We hope you will come and worship with us again.Our regular Sunday services are at 10:30 am and 4 pm, and you will receive a warm welcome. You are welcome to take photographs, but not until after the service, please.

If you have brought small children, thank you! Feel free to explore the space with them, and to use the toys and books provided.

During this service, we say the words in **bold** together and stand and sit as indicated. However, you are more than welcome to remain seated if you prefer.

The president today is the Reverend Gillian Roberts. The Reverend Su McClellan, Cathedral Associate Minister is preaching. The deacon is the Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry. The Reverend Nitano Muller, Canon for Worship and Welcome, is sub-deacon.

The Cathedral Choir is directed by Luke Fitzgerald, Acting Director of Music. The organists are David Rice, Acting Assistant Director of Music, and Amelia Parkin, Organ Scholar. The Setting is the Communion Service in C by John Ireland (1879 – 1962).

The Gathering

The Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry, welcomes the congregation. The Peace Bell is rung and we STAND.

Processional Hymn

For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies, for the love which from our birth over and around us lies: Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night, hill and vale and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light:

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child, friends on earth, and friends above, pleasure pure and undefiled:

For each perfect gift of thine, to our race so freely given, graces human and divine, flowers of earth and buds of heaven:

For thy Church which evermore lifteth holy hands above, offering up on every shore her pure sacrifice of love:

> Words by F.S. Pierpoint (1835-1917) Tune CP 253 England's Lane English melody adapted by Geoffrey Shaw (1879-1943)

The Greeting

The Reverend Gillian Roberts, presiding, says,

The Lord be with you: and also with you.

Praise God who loves us. Praise God who cares.

The Liturgy of Penitence

The Very Reverend John Witcombe, deacon, says,

God says – When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them.

Hosea 11:1, 3 – 4

In silence, let us call to mind those times when we have rejected God's tender care.

Silence is kept, and then the deacon says,

As a father has compassion towards his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

Psalm 103:13

I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a child upon its mother's breast is my soul within me.

Psalm 131:2

The choir sings Kyrie Eleison as the president sprinkles the people with water containing hyssop, a herb used for penitence and purification.

| Kyrie eleison. | Lord, have mercy. |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Christe eleison. | Christ, have mercy. |
| Kyrie eleison. | Lord, have mercy. |

The president says,

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon and forgiveness of all your sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and strength of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Collect

The president introduces a time of silent prayer, saying,

Let us ask God to keep and hold us in his love.

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.**

The Liturgy of the Word

The Epistle

We SIT for the Epistle, read by Norman Barnes, representing the Cathedral community.

¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:12-17

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn

We STAND to sing as the Gospel procession moves to the centre of the Nave. Please turn to face the book of the Gospels as it passes.

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy, Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares can destroy, Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray, Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith, Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe, Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray, Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day. Lord of all kindliness, Lord of all grace, Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace, Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray, Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm, Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm, Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray, Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Words by Jan Struther (1901-1953) Tune CP 507 Irish traditional melody harmonised by Erik Routley (1917-1982)

The Gospel Reading

The deacon introduces:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

The choir sings, then we all repeat:

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.



³³ And Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

Luke 2:33 - 35

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** We all sing:

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.



A short organ improvisation may follow as the Gospel procession returns to the Chancel.

The Sermon

The Reverend Su McClellan, Cathedral Associate Minister, preaching, prays and then we SIT. After the sermon, silence is kept for a time of reflection.

The Affirmation of Faith

We STAND. The president says,

Let us declare our faith in God.

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Prayers of Intercession

The president says,

Let us pray to God who watches over us like a father, tends us like a mother, walks with us like a brother.

We SIT or KNEEL.

The deacon continues,

Loving God, we thank you for your faithfulness towards us; that you stay by our side, weeping as we weep, rejoicing as we rejoice, working for our good, raising us when we fall. Help us to open ourselves to your tender loving care. God of love, hear your children's prayer.

We pray for this Cathedral Church,

thanking you for her calling to be the mother church for the Diocese of Coventry.

Teach us how to nurture our daughter churches, to be a gathering place where all are welcome and where all may be fed.

God of love,

hear your children's prayer.

We give thanks for those who established the Remember our Child ministry at the Cathedral, for those who have led it,

and for all those who have drawn strength from it. Comfort all those who mourn their children

with the assurance that you can never forget them, that you hold them still.

God of love,

hear your children's prayer.

We pray for all those who care, women and men, children and the elderly, thanking you especially for those who have cared for us. Give us imagination to see those whom we are called to care, drawing us especially to the lonely and the despairing. God of love,

hear your children's prayer.

We pray for those who care for others in situations that are dangerous or especially difficult: for those who have fled their homes because of violence, for those who struggle without shelter, warmth or food, for those at the end of their own resources. Be close to them, multiply what they have. God of love,

hear your children's prayer.

We pray for your children who suffer at this time in body, mind or spirit, and for those who care for them. We pray especially for *NN*. Be to them a tender parent who watches over them and binds up all their wounds. God of love, **hear your children's prayer.**

We pray for those who have died, entrusting them to your everlasting arms; amongst them we pray for *NN*.

The president says,

'Our true mother, Jesus, bears us to joy and everlasting life.'

Julian of Norwich

Lord Jesus, as we wait for our prayers to be answered that we might be birthed into the fullness of your kingdom, keep us in your love. **Amen.**

Community Notices

The Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry, shares community news with us.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

We STAND and the president says,

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says, 'As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.'

Isaiah 66:13

The peace of the Lord be always with you and also with you.

The deacon says,

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

During this hymn, a collection is taken. The book containing the names and dates of all the children in the Cathedral's Remember our Child ministry is carried in procession to the Sanctuary and placed upon the High Altar.

There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea; there's a kindness in his justice which is more than liberty. There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven; there is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgement given.

For the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind; and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind. But we make his love too narrow by false limits of our own; and we magnify his strictness with a zeal he will not own.

There is plentiful redemption in the blood that has been shed; there is joy for all the members in the sorrows of the Head. There is grace enough for thousands of new worlds as great as this; there is room for fresh creations in that upper home of bliss.

If our love were but more simple, we should take him at his word; and our lives would be all gladness in the joy of Christ our Lord.

> Words by F.W. Faber (1814-1863) Tune CP 598 Corvedale by Maurice Bevan (1921-2006)

Prayer at the Preparation of the Table

The president says,

Gracious God, these gifts of bread and wine remind us that you loved us so much that you sent your Son to lead us home to you. Confident of your love, we entrust to you the children recorded in this book. Thank you that they continue in your presence, beloved of you; that their names are written on the palm of your hands, now and for all eternity. **Amen.**

Isaiah 49:16

The Eucharistic Prayer

The president says,

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, Lord God, our light and our salvation; to you be glory and praise for ever. From the beginning you have created all things and all your works echo the silent music of your praise. In the fullness of time you made us in your image, the crown of all creation. You give us breath and speech, that with angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven we may find a voice to sing your praise:

The choir sings the Sanctus and the Benedictus:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The president says,

How wonderful the work of your hands, O Lord. As a mother tenderly gathers her children, you embraced a people as your own. When they turned away and rebelled your love remained steadfast.

From them you raised up Jesus our Saviour, born of Mary, to be the living bread,

in whom all our hungers are satisfied.

He offered his life for sinners, and with a love stronger than death he opened wide his arms on the cross.

On the night before he died, he came to supper with his friends and, taking bread, he gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you thanks, and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

The deacon says,

Jesus Christ is Lord Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. You are the Saviour of the world.

Father, we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross; we remember his dying and rising in glory, and we rejoice that he intercedes for us at your right hand. Pour out your Holy Spirit as we bring before you these gifts of your creation; may they be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

As we eat and drink these holy things in your presence, form us in the likeness of Christ, and build us into a living temple to your glory. Bring us at the last with Mary, Michael and all the saints to the vision of that eternal splendour for which you have created us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord:

by whom and with whom and in whom, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

Please SIT or KNEEL as silence is kept.

The Lord's Prayer

The president says,

God says, '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 palm of my hands.'

Isaiah 49:15 - 16a

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread, saying,

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ. Though we are many, we are one body because we all share in one bread.

The Invitation to Communion

The president says,

God's holy gifts for God's holy people. Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Agnus Dei

The ministers receive Communion as the choir sings:

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

The Giving of Communion

It is our custom for this part of the service to be a time of quiet reflection. Please wait in your seat to be directed by a churchwarden or steward. If you wish to receive gluten-free bread, please ask and we will be happy to accommodate. Those who do not intend to receive Communion, but who would prefer to receive a blessing, are asked to carry this booklet as an indication of your preference to the ministers. During the distribution of Communion the choir sings the Anthem.

Verbe égal au Très-Haut, notre unique espérance, Jour éternel de la terre et des cieux, De la paisible nuit nous rompons le silence: Divin Sauveur, jette sur nous les yeux.

Répands sur nous le feu de Ta grâce puissante; Que tout l'enfer fuie au son de Ta voix; Dissipe le sommeil d'une âme languissante Qui la conduit à l'oubli de Tes lois!

Ô Christ! sois favorable à ce peuple fidèle, Pour Te bénir maintenant rassemblé; Reçois les chants qu'il offre à Ta gloire immortelle, Et de Tes dons qu'il retourne comblé.

Word of the Highest, our only hope, Eternal day of earth and the heavens, We break the silence of the peaceful night; Saviour Divine, cast your eyes upon us!

Pour on us the fire of your powerful grace, That all hell may flee at the sound of your voice; Banish the slumber of a weary soul, That brings forgetfulness of your laws!

O Christ, look with favour upon your faithful people Now gathered here to praise you; Receive their hymns offered to your immortal glory; May they go forth filled with your gifts.

> Words by Jean Racine (1639 – 1699) Music by Gabriel Fauré (1845 – 1924)

The Communion Hymn

We sing together:

Soul of my Saviour, sanctify my breast; Body of Christ, be thou my saving guest; Blood of my Saviour, bathe me in thy tide, wash me with water flowing from thy side.

Strength and protection may thy passion be; O blessèd Jesus, hear and answer me; deep in thy wounds, Lord, hide and shelter me; so shall I never, never part from thee.

Guard and defend me from the foe malign; in death's dread moments make me only thine; call me, and bid me come to thee on high, where I may praise thee with thy saints for aye.

Words Latin attrib. Pope John XXII (1244-1334), tr. author unknown Tune CP 322 Anima Christi by William Maher (1823-1877)

The Prayers after Communion

The president says,

Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Eternal God,

comforter of the afflicted and healer of the broken, you have fed us at the table of light and hope: teach us the ways of gentleness and peace, that all the world may acknowledge the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. The president says,

Creator God, may these flowers bring joy to all those who receive them. May they be a token that you see and delight in the ways in which we care for others. **Amen.**

The flowers will be handed out as you leave the Cathedral. If you are an adult, child or young person who cares for someone else, don't leave without yours – and thank you for all you are and do!

The Dismissal

The **Blessing**

We STAND and the president says,

May God, who gave birth to all creation, bless you.

May God, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless you.

May God, who broods as a mother over her children, bless you.

May almighty God bless you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

Final Hymn

Praise to the Holiest in the height, and in the depth be praise: in all his words most wonderful, most sure in all his ways.

O loving wisdom of our God! When all was sin and shame, a second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came. O wisest love! that flesh and blood, which did in Adam fail, should strive afresh against the foe, should strive and should prevail;

And that a higher gift than grace should flesh and blood refine, God's presence and his very self, and essence all-divine.

O generous love! that he, who smote in Man for man the foe, the double agony in Man for man should undergo;

And in the garden secretly, and on the cross on high, should teach his brethren, and inspire to suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height, and in the depth be praise: in all his words most wonderful, most sure in all his ways.

> Words by Saint John Henry Newman (1801-1890) Tune CP 557 Gerontius J.B. Dykes (1823-1876)

The Dismissal

The deacon says,

Go in peace to share the reconciling love of God. In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Organ Voluntary

Please do stay and enjoy the organ voluntary, performed today by David Rice.

Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist BWV 671 by J. S. Bach (1685 – 1750)

If you would like to make a one-off donation to the Cathedral via your phone, or set up a recurring donation, please use the QR code below. There are also contactless donation points and collection boxes near the entrance. Thank you for your support.



If you would like to revisit this morning's sermon, please visit this page: <u>https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/worship-music/services/sermons</u> We serve refreshments at the back of the Nave after this service, so please feel free to stay for a chat over a cup of tea or coffee!

Daily Services at the Cathedral:

Regular services at the Cathedral follow this pattern. For special services and up-to-date information about one-off cancellations of the services below, please check the calendar on the Cathedral website: <u>https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/full-calendar</u>

Monday - Friday

8:30 – 9:00am: Morning Prayer & Holy Communion 12 – 12:10pm: The Litany of Reconciliation (followed on Thursdays by BCP Holy Communion) 4 – 4:30pm: Evening Prayer (or Wednesday and Thursday during school terms: Choral Evensong, 5:15 -6pm)

Saturday

12 - 12:10pm: The Litany of Reconciliation

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: The Cathedral Eucharist 4 – 5pm: Choral Evensong

SAFEGUARDING AT COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

We are committed to the safeguarding of all people. For details, please visit <u>www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding</u>

You can report a concern using the same link or by contacting Canon Nitano Muller, Chapter Safeguarding Lead, at

Nitano.Muller@Coventry.Anglican.org or call 07365 200 359 while Jane Williams is away.

Alternatively, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team led by Sarah Price: 024 7652 1345 or <u>safeguarding@coventry.anglican.org</u>

COMING SOON

Lent Course 2025

Every Tuesday in Lent 4th March, 7pm – 8:30pm, St Michael's House This year's Lent Course is titled 'Hope in Hard Places'. As our world faces huge challenges, the course invites us to ask, "Where is God in all of this?" Written by the team at Embrace the Middle East, it is our hope that you will find encouragement and strength in stories that span over 3000 years of history - showing us that, no matter how dark the times we live in, God remains with us.

We will begin each week at 7pm and end at 8:30pm in the lounge at St Michael's House.

Is a lasting and just peace possible in Israel and Palestine? Wednesday 2nd of April, 7pm

Occupation, war, extremism, terrorism and fear are all words we hear used to describe what is happening in Israel and Palestine. In such a context it's hard to imagine a future where Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims and Christians may live in peace, either together or side by side. Is that a pipe dream or is such a future still possible?

Daniel Munayer, director of Musalaha - a reconciliation ministry in Israel and Palestine - and the only Palestinian ever to have addressed the UN Security Council, will explore this question at 7pm on Wednesday 2nd of April here in the Cathedral. His talk will be followed by a conversation with Dean John and Jamie Eyre, CEO of Embrace the Middle East. Entry is free but you will need to register using the following link.

https://embraceme.org/events/lecture-is-peace-possible-in-israel-palestine

J. S. Bach's St Matthew Passion

Friday 4th April 6.30pm

J. S. Bach's St Matthew Passion is a masterful musical setting of the narrative of Christ's capture, trial and death. Beyond that, though, it is an exploration, through some of the most extraordinary music ever written, of themes that remain relevant to us all: injustice, persecution, suffering, redemption, hope, and – ultimately – love. This upcoming performance, blending the voices of 100 young choristers, from Trinity Boys Choir and Kieler Knabenchor, aged 10 to 18, offers a rare opportunity to experience the work as Bach originally intended, written as it was for the young voices of Bach's own choir.

Holy Week and Easter Services

Sunday 13th April – Sunday 20th April Details of our Holy Week and Easter services can be found on our website: <u>https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/easter/easter-services</u>

'Emmaus': The Way of Faith

Tuesday 29th April, 7pm

Are you new to the Cathedral community? Do you have questions about faith, the church or what we believe? You are invited to a post-Easter course for those new or interested in exploring the Christian faith which will begin on Tuesday, 29 April at 7pm, St Michael's House with a bring-and-share meal. Emmaus is a 15 week course that explores topics such as believing in God, the role of prayer and the bible, and the life and ministry of Jesus and other exciting topics. For further information speak to Rob Halligan or Canon Nitano.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Funeral of Mary Viner

Mary Viner died at the George Eliot Hospital, Nuneaton, on 13 February 2025. Mary was house-bound, but remained fully committed to the Cathedral, which she regarded as her spiritual home. Her coffin will be received into the Cathedral on Friday 4th April at 4.00 pm. Her funeral service will take place on **Saturday 5th April 2025 at 12.00 noon**, followed by refreshments and a private committal at Hammerwich Crematorium. All members of the Cathedral community are invited to the funeral or reception of the coffin.