Join us for Mothering Sunday...
Nurture your church family and help make childhood better in your community and beyond
Celebrating Mothering Sunday with The Children’s Society

Mothering Sunday falls on the fourth Sunday of Lent. It is a special day when we celebrate those who care for us and give thanks for the Mother Church.

Developed with our colleagues in the Church of England, The Children’s Society can support your preparations with a range of free resources, which will help you to:

- **Welcome and engage** children, families and the wider community.
- **Explore** key Lenten themes of preparation, reflection and penitence.
- **Enrich and nurture** your church family using our exciting resources.
- **Benefit** the wider community and help children to play a positive role.
- **Support** the thousands of children that The Children’s Society care for.

In this pack you will find lots of information to support your Mothering Sunday activities including worship suggestions (readings, hymns and a talk/sermon outline) and all-age activity ideas for engaging children and young people.

Also visit [www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mothering](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mothering) where you will find:

- Additional worship materials – a Mothering Sunday service outline and liturgy.
- All-age worship activities – arts and crafts, a simnel cake recipe and more!
- Children’s Workbook – includes fun activities, fundraising and discussion ideas.

A circle of nourishment, nurture and growth

Our main suggested activity is for children to decorate their own pots and plant flowers from bulbs instead of using cut flowers. We suggest that after flowering, the bulbs are kept and the children replant them somewhere in their local community. This symbolises a positive circle of action by children, standing as a contrast to the disadvantage experienced by the thousands of children supported by The Children’s Society.

See page 6 for more information on planting flowers for Mothering Sunday.
Jenny was five years old when she went to live in a foster home after her father died and her mother became too depressed and ill to look after her. Jenny missed her mum very much and from the age of six, started to run away from her foster home to walk the 12-mile journey to her mother’s house. One of The Children’s Society’s project workers started to visit Jenny, supporting her and helping her to understand why she couldn’t live with her mum at that time. Jenny has not run away for a while now. She sees her mum regularly and is happy at her foster home.

By joining us this Mothering Sunday and raising money for The Children’s Society, either through a collection in church or one of our other fundraising activities, you will enable us to be the wider family that children like Jenny need and deserve.

Visit our website to find out more about how any money you raise this Mothering Sunday can help support children and young people whose well being is affected by the difficulties they face.

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mothering

Paying in your donations

Once you have collected the donations, please use the paying in slip on the back page to send in any money raised to:

Mothering Sunday Appeal
The Children’s Society
Edward Rudolf House
Margery Street
LONDON
WC1X 0JL
Readings

A specific set of Lectionary readings is provided for Mothering Sunday as an alternative to the regular Lectionary readings. These are as follows:

**Old Testament**
Exodus 2. 1-10 or 1 Samuel 1. 20-28

**Psalm**
Psalm 34. 11-20 or Psalm 127. 1-4

**New testament**
2 Corinthians 1. 3-7 or Colossians 3. 12-17

**Gospel**
Luke 2. 33-35 or John 19. 25-27

Suggested Talk / Sermon Outline

The following talk outline could be used together with the suggested activities on pages 6 and 7 and delivered conversationally as an all-age talk. The activities could also form the basis of a preparation session for the service in a young people’s or children’s group, or during a separate children’s session running in parallel with an adult-orientated service. Alternatively combine with some of the activities from the Children’s Workbook.

The Bible’s stories of mothering are never twee, sentimental or saccharine. How might you describe the mothers in today’s readings?

- Exodus: cunning, determined, desperate, protective, nurturing (i.e. the ‘wet nurse’).
- 1 Samuel: passionate, generous, sacrificial, brave, joyful, trusting and faithful.
- John: still present even in sorrow, faithful, grieving, caring and cared-for, love that is stronger than death.

Mothering is all those things and more. Without someone to do those things for us; without someone to look out for our interests, to defend us, to protect us; without someone to enable us to learn our purpose in life, without someone to model trust, faith and joy; without someone who will love us enough to let us go our own way; without someone to take the risk of loving us, even knowing that that love may bring them pain; without someone to stand with us in our times of greatest suffering – without someone to do those things for us, we are missing something crucial. Also, if we ourselves have nobody for whom we can do these things, we are also missing out.

The Children’s Society is an organisation that seeks to do some of these things for disadvantaged children who would otherwise never experience this kind of mothering: protecting children in danger, being an advocate for children in trouble with the law, enabling children who are struggling to reach their God-given potential, taking a risk and investing in the future of children in the knowledge that they must have their own integrity and yet at the same time walking with them on their journey of self-discovery, and affirming that all children are, in the words of Moses’ mum “beautiful before God”.

Sometimes when The Children’s Society discovers situations of extreme suffering, tragedy and crisis, they find new and life-giving ways of creating family and community, just as Jesus did from the cross when he asked his mother and his best friend, John, to care for each other when he had gone. Just as Moses’ mother did when she risked everything to give her son a chance at life.
Think about your own lives – your experiences of mothering or of being mothered; remembering with thanksgiving the people who have done those things for us. Perhaps also remember the times when we have been failed by those who were supposed to care for us, or those times when we ourselves have failed.

If mothering were only done by mothers, it would be very hard indeed to ensure that everyone received the nurturing, protection, love, sacrifice, guidance that we need to become the people we are meant to be. As a church community, we are called into a role of mothering that sometimes might need to be just as desperate, fierce, loyal, grieving as the mothers in today's readings. If we, as a church, truly love the community in which we are situated, just as God loves it and if we are to be God's holy people for God's needy world, then we will feel the pain of the world's suffering, and we will be willing to sacrifice something of ourselves in order to bring to birth God's purposes for the world.

On the cross, God's love is nailed firmly to the world so as never to let it go. Is our love for the world as firmly fixed as this? Are we this passionate about nurturing the world into becoming the place that God created it to be? A truly parental love is one that would give anything and everything for the child. This is the love of God that we see on the cross, but this is also the love that we are called to have for one another, and which the Church is called to have for the world. When we love like that, we make our Mothering-God visible in the world.

**Hymns and Songs**

The music chosen for Mothering Sunday can enhance the celebration by reflecting the season and the themes. Below are some suggestions along with relevant references.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested hymns</th>
<th>AMNS</th>
<th>BPW</th>
<th>CFE</th>
<th>CH4</th>
<th>CP</th>
<th>HP</th>
<th>HON</th>
<th>HTC</th>
<th>MP</th>
<th>NEH</th>
<th>RS</th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>SOF</th>
<th>TS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All things bright and beautiful</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>294</td>
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<tr>
<td>For the beauty of the earth</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>157</td>
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<td>285</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>112</td>
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<td>Give thanks with a grateful heart</td>
<td>308</td>
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<td>443</td>
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<td>527</td>
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<td>650</td>
<td>699</td>
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<td>God is our strength and refuge</td>
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<td>443</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>369</td>
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<td>He's got the whole world in his hands</td>
<td>176</td>
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<td>249</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>225</td>
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<tr>
<td>I come with joy, a child of God / to meet my Lord</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>408</td>
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<td>Jesus, good above all other</td>
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<td>487</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>528</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lord of all hopefulness</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>313</td>
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<td>239</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>902</td>
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<td>Now thank we all our God</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>354</td>
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<td>486</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>405</td>
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<td>Tell out, my soul</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>467</td>
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<td>186</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>520</td>
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<tr>
<td>Through all the changing scenes of life</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>740</td>
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<td>604</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>516</td>
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**Additional songs and hymns**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional songs and hymns</th>
<th>Books</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring sharing</td>
<td>BBP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clap your hands, stomp your feet</td>
<td>KS</td>
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<tr>
<td>For Mary, Mother of Our / the Lord</td>
<td>AMNS</td>
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<tr>
<td>From hand to hand</td>
<td>BBP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great God, we praise your mighty love</td>
<td>HTC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Happy the home that welcomes you</td>
<td>HP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jesus’ hands were kind hands</td>
<td>CPR</td>
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<td>Jesus put this song into our hearts</td>
<td>CH4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magnificat (Taize)</td>
<td>SOF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mothering God, you gave me birth</td>
<td>CG</td>
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<td>O God in heaven, whose loving plan</td>
<td>AMNS</td>
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<tr>
<td>We thank you God for Mummies</td>
<td>BBP</td>
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<tr>
<td>When trouble strikes (A woman’s care)</td>
<td>WGWG</td>
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**Key to Books**

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BBP: Big Blue Planet</td>
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<td>BPW: Baptist Praise and Worship</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CFE: Celebration Hymnal for Everyone</td>
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<td>CG: Common Ground</td>
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<td>CH4: Church Hymnary (4th edition)</td>
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<td>CP: Common Praise</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CPR: Come and Praise</td>
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<td>HON: Hymns Old &amp; New (Complete Anglican Edition)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>HP: Hymns and Psalms</td>
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<td>HTC: Hymns for Today’s Church</td>
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<td>JP: Junior Praise</td>
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<td>KS: Kidsource 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>LAU: Laudate</td>
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<td>MP: Complete Mission Praise</td>
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<td>NEH: New English Hymnal</td>
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<td>RS: Rejoice and Sing</td>
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<td>SG: Sing Glory</td>
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<td>SOF: Songs of Fellowship 1-4</td>
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<td>TS: The Source</td>
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<td>WGWG: Wild Goose Worship Group</td>
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Mothering Sunday Appeal

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mothering
All-age Activity Ideas

Over the next two pages you will find some key activity ideas for children and young people. All ideas are designed to engage children with the themes of Lent and Mothering Sunday in church and the community and can be used either as part of a group, or at home.

Planting Flowers – Thinking about your environment

Giving flowers on Mothering Sunday comes from the tradition of returning to your Mother Church and gathering flowers on the way to decorate the church. The flowers would be displayed and then blessed and distributed amongst the congregation.

Instead of buying cut flowers, why not plant flowers from bulbs in pots? It’s a great way of teaching children about themes of nourishment, nurture, growth and responsibility, just as our Mother Church and those who care for us do through their love, nurture and guidance.

The Children’s Society can supply free anemone corms for children to plant along with planting instructions. Anemones are pretty, hardy and easy to grow.

Visit www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mothering or call 0845 600 8585 to order.*

Here are some ideas for engaging children with this activity:

- Ask for donations of old pots from your congregation, or suggest the children ask their family, friends, classmates etc.
- Contact your local garden centre to see if they will donate pots and soil or provide a discount as the activity is supporting the work of The Children’s Society. You could also ask for different types of bulbs to plant.*
- Ask the children to decorate and display the pots on Mothering Sunday. Consider what the plant needs to survive and grow and how this connects to themes of Mothering Sunday.
- What would the children like to do with the flowers? Who would they bring enjoyment to? Who has cared for them and brought them comfort? Is there anyone in the wider church family or community who would like to receive the flowers? Could they replant them in the local community once they have flowered to continue the growth cycle?

* Anemone corms as supplied by The Children’s Society are subject to availability.
All-age Activity Ideas

Mothering Activity
Ask someone to lie on a large piece of paper and draw around the silhouette. You could use wall-lining paper. Invite the children to write words on various parts of the body to describe what mothering is like, or the characteristics of someone who is in a mothering role, perhaps taking a lead from the examples of mothering in the readings. Examples of words could be cunning on the head, love on the heart, tears on the eyes, protection on the arms, etc. This could also be done in specific relation to the work of The Children’s Society.

Clipping the Church
Clipping the church is an ancient custom within the Church and involves the congregation forming a circle around the church, holding hands and singing, cheering or dancing. It’s a really lovely way of bringing the group together in an act of celebration and worship.

Alternatively, work with the children to make a circle of paper people to put round one of the pillars in your church.

You will need:
• An old newspaper
• Paper
• Scissors
• Colouring pens, pencils or paints
• Blue tack / sticky tape (to stick the people around a pillar in church)

Visit www.childrenssociety.org.uk/mothering for:
• Additional worship resources including an outline service and a range of the Church of England’s worship materials for Mothering Sunday.
• Additional all-age activity ideas including a recipe for a simnel cake, a cake for the brave and arts and craft ideas.
• The Children’s Workbook – including discussion ideas and lots of fun activities and fundraising suggestions.

What to do:
• Fold the paper to make a fan, so that all the sections you fold are equal.
• On the top section, draw a person whose hands reach the fold of the paper.
• With the paper still folded, carefully cut around your person.
• Open out the paper and you will have a chain of several people holding hands and colour each person in.
Together, we can make childhood better for all children

Paying in your donations for Mothering Sunday
Please complete the correct section of the form below in block capitals and send it to:
Mothering Sunday Appeal, The Children’s Society, Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London WC1X OJL

Supporter number

Forename

Surname

Church / group name

Home address

Postcode

Daytime telephone number (in case of queries) [T]

It really helps The Children’s Society if we can keep you informed about our exciting campaigns, activities and fundraising. Please tick if you would prefer us not to contact you by post [SW] or phone [ST].

Email

[Please provide your email address if you are happy for The Children’s Society to keep you informed by email about our exciting campaigns, activities and fundraising.

[Please send me information about how I can include a gift to The Children’s Society in my Will.]

Credit/Debit card payments

Please debit my card with £

Card type: Visa □ MasterCard □ Maestro □ CAF □

Name on card

Card no.

Start date /

Expiry date /

Issue no. (debit cards only)

Signature

Cheque payments

I enclose a cheque/PO/CAF made payable to The Children’s Society for £