

Hymn:

Offering:

If an offering is to be taken for the work of Mothers' Union this is an appropriate time.

We've given our money to help God's work in looking after mothers and others who need help.

We now want to give our Mums and those who care for us something to thank them for loving us. We also want to remind them how precious they are both to us and God.

The children could share their memory verse here (Isaiah 43:4)

Children to give out "You are precious cards" or other appropriate gifts. *(These can be given to all women not just mums.)*

It's good to give gifts to people to thank them for their love but the best thing we can give is to pray and thank God for them. So let's pray now.

The children could pray their "active prayer" from the children's resources here.

Lord God we pray for mothers everywhere.

Like Samuel's mother, may they have wisdom to know how to protect their children and keep them from harm.

Like Naomi, may they be able to turn hard situations into good.

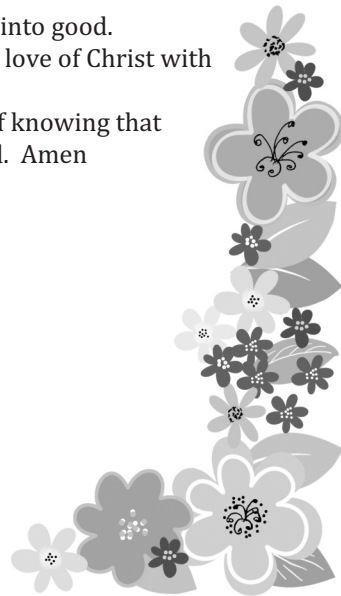
Like Lois and Eunice, may they be ready to share the love of Christ with their children.

In all that they give to others may they have the joy of knowing that they too are children, held in the love and care of God. Amen

Final hymn:

Blessing

Let us go from here rejoicing
that we are precious to God.
May his blessing touch our families
and all who are precious to us.
May we, as the family of God,
Shine as precious stones
reflecting his love to the world.
Amen



A Mothers' Union Family Service for Mothering Sunday

Welcome to our Mothering Sunday Family Service

We come here today to spend time with each other and with God in remembering and celebrating the gift and work of motherhood, wherever it is found.

We're not all mothers ourselves but we all have a mother, whether or not they are still with us, and we are all children of God. He is our loving Father but is also the one who remembers and comforts us as a mother comforts her child, and draws us close as a hen protects her chicks.

Let us pray: *(a child may read this prayer)*

Dear Jesus
we thank you for Mothers everywhere,
for all who care for us day by day.
Let us not forget that you were a child
and your mother was Mary.
We say thank you for Mums across the world
and in our country too.
Although we may not say it,
we think you are the best.
So let us give grateful thanks
and let our voices be heard
for all the Mums and Grans
on this very special day.

Amen

Hannah Middleton 2005 (URC Northern Synod)



Hymn:

Readings *(Two children could read these if appropriate)*

First Reading: Exodus 2:1-10 – The Birth of Moses

About this time, a man and woman from the tribe of Levi got married. The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw that he was a special baby and kept him hidden for three months. But when she could no longer hide him, she got a basket made of papyrus reeds and waterproofed it with tar and pitch. She put the baby in the basket and laid it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River. The baby's sister then stood at a distance, watching to see what would happen to him. Soon Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her attendants walked along the riverbank. When the princess saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it for her. When the princess opened it, she saw the baby.

The little boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This must be one of the Hebrew children," she said. Then the baby's sister approached the princess. "Should I go and find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" she asked. "Yes, do!" the princess replied. So the girl went and called the baby's mother. "Take this baby and nurse him for me," the princess told the baby's mother. "I will pay you for your help." So the woman took her baby home and nursed him. Later, when the boy was older, his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her own son. The princess named him Moses, for she explained, "I lifted him out of the water."

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

Second Reading: John 19: 25-27 – Jesus provides for his mother

Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home.

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

Talk

The children may come up to the front for the talk.

Have a baby's Moses basket, with various objects in it.

Ask if anyone knows what the basket is for and what it is called?

Refer back to the OT reading and stress that because she loved him, Moses' mother, Jochebed, made a plan to keep him safe at a time when baby boys were in danger.

There are other mothers in the Bible who cared for their children in different ways.

Let's find out about a few of them.

Choose children one at a time to pick an item out of the basket.

(It doesn't matter in which order.)

Hannah – handkerchief.

Hannah was very sad because she had no children. She cried to God and he gave her Samuel. She showed her love for Samuel by letting him grow up in God's temple where he could learn to serve God.

Lois & Eunice (Mother & Grandmother) – children's Bible

Lois and Eunice cared for Timothy by teaching him all about God

Salome – crown

Salome wanted her boys James and John to have an important job with Jesus. It might not have been the right thing to ask for but it did show that she loved them and wanted the very best for them.

Naomi (mother in law) – small box of cornflakes or picture of corn

Naomi's son had died but she showed her love for her daughter in law Ruth by helping her to find a new husband to care for her.

Pick up the Children's Bible again:

Now I want to tell you about a mother, not from the Bible but who lives in Uganda today. Her name is Priscilla and she would have loved to have read to her children when they were little but she wasn't able to read or write.

If appropriate a Mothers' Union member or another member of the congregation could tell Priscilla's story.

Priscilla is 52 years old, she lives in South Sudan. She married when she was just 13 years old. Her culture did not think that educating women was important and so for many years Priscilla could not read or write.

"A girl was viewed as a source of family income and so we were not allowed to go to school."

And yet it was Priscilla's dream to go to school. *"Though I was married my dream to go to school was yearning within me."*

When Priscilla learnt about the Mothers' Union Literacy & Financial Education Programme (LFEP) she was the first person to register as she felt that her 'dream had now been fulfilled.' Priscilla has now finished the programme and her life has changed completely. She can not believe the impact it has had on her life.

Priscilla can now make a family budget in order to spend the little money the family have more wisely.

"In the past... when my husband gave me some money, I really didn't know how to spend it. It created some differences between me and my husband because sometimes I could not account for the money I was given."

She has also gained skills in saving and loans and has started a small business. The trainers and facilitators have helped Priscilla discuss with her fellow literacy circle members how to take care of the environment, and learn more about hygiene and nutrition.

Mothers' Union's Literacy & Financial Education Programme trains facilitators to work with literacy circles, like Priscilla's, and they have seen an amazing impact across the whole community. Priscilla had to wait many years for her dream to be fulfilled but now she could not be happier.

Sometimes mothers need people to help them as well as them helping us. Jesus asked his friend John to care for his mother Mary; Mothers' Union help many mothers to care for their family by teaching them to read and write in countries where they couldn't go to school to learn.

The children may place the basket and items on the altar or a table at the front.