



Parishes of St Saviour's Harden and St Matthew's Wilsden

IN THE BENEFICE OF HARDEN AND WILSDEN, CULLINGWORTH AND DENHOLME

Newsletter for 22nd March 2020 Mothering Sunday

While we are not able to meet together at church for worship we hope that you will all join together in this act of worship your own homes on Sunday morning at 10.30am, don't worry if you can't keep to that time, still join us in your own time.

*Take a moment to be still. Perhaps light a candle or hold a cross.
Be aware that others will be saying these same words and prayers.
We are united in prayer and worship.*

The Lord is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes.
God is close to those who trust in him. (Nahum 1.7)

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Pause for reflection as you offer the day to God.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever. Amen.

Almighty God,
Unite us with those we usually see on Sundays.
Unite us with our Family and Friends.
Unite us with those on our hearts this day.
Unite us with your Church across the world.
Unite us in the power of your Holy Spirit.
And lift our hearts to rejoice in your presence,
Amen

First Reading: Colossians 3:12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word

Second Reading: Luke 8.19-21

Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. And he was told, 'Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.' But he said to them, 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.'

Thanks be to God for the gift of his Holy Word

Mothering Sunday

It would be too easy to reflect upon the joys of motherhood.

It would also be inappropriate at a time when the world is in crisis.

Parenting is not all sunshine and flowers.

Life can be deeply painful for all of us.

There is pain in not being able to parent, or in the loss of a child.

There is pain in being caught up in an unhappy relationship with one or both parents, or with children who fail to meet our expectations of them, of how the perfect family 'should be'.

There is pain in the experience of birth and many people find family life challenging.

There is also sorrow and pain in the experience of loss which too many people in our world are facing. For many the usual opportunities for togetherness and comfort, for dignified end of life care and loving goodbyes are just not possible.

What can we do for those who are anxious, suffering or grieving in this complex and unusual situation? How should we mark Mothering Sunday this year?

I was reading Jonathan Viera's book 'Finding my Voice' this week and came across this paragraph.

"You remember the date when your world turns upside down because it is an ordinary day that suddenly twists into something quite different; a day when you have to stop living life as it is – in the sense of getting something for dinner, talking to a friend on the phone, waiting outside the school gate or nursery for your son – all of that stuff becomes suspended, a freeze frame which you leave behind for a world of flashing lights and a stretcher."

It is the opening sequence to a description of Jonathan suffering from viral encephalitis and his wife being told that he was unlikely to remember anything or indeed be a functional adult, certainly not an opera singer, if he recovered at all. The book goes on to describe a series of truly miraculous events. He is surrounded by prayer and he makes a miraculous recovery. There is then a description of God's amazing provision for their family in their time of financial and emotional turmoil. The story of a Faith that challenges us and changed lives.

Many of us can remember the date that something dramatic occurred in our lives.

Sometimes it is a shared recollection like 9/11. It may be a deeply personal recollection. The birth of a loved one, or the death of a loved one. There will be a large swathe of young people who will remember the 18th March 2020 as the day that they were told that they did

not have to take their GCSE's or A level's and would receive 'what they deserve'. Many of them will have spent the subsequent time praying most sincerely that divine intervention will mean that they are blessed with better than they deserve.

Even those with no actual faith in God will probably have said a prayer.

There are a lot of people turning to the Lord in prayer.

We are all living in a year that we will never forget when the normal rhythms of life across the globe are being suspended and the undercurrent is fear. It is incredibly sad that our churches are unable to offer normal services to people at a time when they are most in need of God's comfort and the assurance that they are loved, treasured and precious.

Instead we are reaching out through modern technology and willing volunteers: The Church as a community showing love and care for friends, family and our neighbours. Christians setting an example of selflessness and courage in a world made crazy by greed and fear. The government referred to the war when introducing these physical distancing measures and there is a 'war time' spirit of resilience and community spirit surfacing. There is a need to show the world the best that we can be, demonstrating the good and modelling discipleship in our approach to the crisis.

One of the readings for Mothering Sunday 2020 is Psalm 127, the opening verses are:

Unless the Lord builds the house,
the builders labour in vain.
Unless the Lord watches over the city,
the guards stand watch in vain.

In vain you rise early
and stay up late,
toiling for food to eat—
for he grants sleep to those he loves.

Children are a heritage from the Lord,
offspring a reward from him.
Like arrows in the hands of a warrior
are children born in one's youth.

It is not a reading I have ever considered using for a Mothering Sunday previously but in our present circumstances it has something to offer. We are reminded of our own powerlessness and reliance upon God. Mothering Sunday is not about parents and children. It is about the church and the church is about God.

“Mothering Sunday began as an explicitly religious event of the 16th Century, with no connection to mothers at all. The word "mothering" referred to the "mother church", which is to say the main church or cathedral of the region. It became a tradition that, on the fourth Sunday of Lent, people would return to their mother church for a special service. This pilgrimage was apparently known as "going a-mothering", and became something of a holiday event, with domestic servants traditionally given the day off to visit their own families as well as their mother church.”

(<https://yesterday.uktv.co.uk/blogs/article/mothering-sunday>)

In the Gospel reading Jesus says: ‘My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.’

Let us take the opportunity we are given to listen to God and to act according to His Word. Let’s show our love for all God’s children and care for those we can in whatever way we are able. If you are self-isolating then be a good friend and bring comfort through conversation and humour.

Use your time as a gift to pray for your neighbours and those on the news, especially this weekend for all those young people facing an uncertain future. If you are out and about still – then bring supplies and a smile to those who cannot go out. It will be a long twelve weeks, but we can shorten them with our love and we can deepen our discipleship while we wait on the Lord.

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul writes: “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

I pray blessings upon you this Mothering Sunday.

Liz Moy leads us in our prayers:

*In the quiet, rest in God's love and know
that you can bring all your thoughts and concerns
to your loving heavenly Father.*

Give thanks for the good things in your life.

*Pray for the church throughout the world,
that it may reflect the light of Christ,
especially when times feel gloomy and difficult.*

*Remember areas of the world which are in particular need, the Yemen, Syria, Sudan
and all places struggling with the coronavirus.*

*On this Mothering Sunday, pray for those who are closest to you,
family and friends – those who care for you and those you care for.*

*Remember those who are struggling at this time – those you know personally, those who
have been affected by recent events and those who continue to struggle in the aftermath of
events earlier in the year.*

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

And draw all of your prayers together in the words of the Lord's Prayer.

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 forever. Amen.

And so may you be aware of God's blessing upon you in our Lenten blessing:

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
To deny yourselves, take up your cross and follow him;

Let us share the grace together,
aware that we are gathered together in different locations,
but united in one body:

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Love of God and
the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.



The Archbishops of York and Canterbury have asked people to have a special day of prayer today, Mothering Sunday. As part of this they have asked people to place a candle in one of the windows of their home at 7 pm this evening.

It is such a good idea we have decided to do it every night at 7 pm. Make sure you light it safely! If you have a 'pretend' candle that would be even better.

"It will be a sign of solidarity and hope in the light of Christ that can never be extinguished"



If anyone is in need of assistance, support, food or medicine deliveries or just a chat please ring Rev'd Richard on 01535 273758 or Rev'd Suzy on 01535 270687.

Please follow our Facebook page: If you are on Facebook search for 'Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme Benefice'.

There are lots of uplifting things in our Facebook community and there will be more regular features in this time when we cannot meet as we normally do!

Each weekday the church will be opened in Harden at 9.30am, Wilsden at 10.30am, Cullingworth at 1.30pm, Denholme at 2.30pm and there will be prayers for 45 minutes.

Prayer Chains at St. Matthew's and St. Saviour's.

St. Matthew's: Margaret Harrison 272305. (Reserve is Dorothy 01274 497898)

St. Saviour's: June Thompson 273787. (Reserve is Hazel 274234)

Please pray for:

Linda White

Beatrice Waddington , Bob and Suzanne Evans, Malcolm and Di Halliday

Prayers for the week beginning Sunday 22nd March

Because of print deadlines this prayer diary cannot respond quickly to breaking news. In addition to the suggested topics, please keep in prayer national and international events as you learn of them.

Sun	22-Mar	Mothering Sunday. As we give thanks for the blessings of family life, pray for any separated and unhappy families in our villages.
Mon	23-Mar	Pray for single parent families in our villages.
Tue	24-Mar	Pray for parents and godparents and all who have been baptised in our churches recently.
Wed	25-Mar	Pray for those who would have attended the Men's Group meeting this evening.
Thu	26-Mar	Pray for those in our communities at highest risk from the coronavirus, for whom this is a particularly anxious time.
Fri	27-Mar	Pray for all who work at the medical centres in Cullingworth, Wilsden and Denholme
Sat	28-Mar	Pray for staff and residents at Laurel Bank and other nursing and residential homes in this area.

Please give contributions for the next newsletter to Pauline - Tel: 01535 273814

email: pstern155@gmail.com (and copy to David Haigh: david@haigh.demon.co.uk and to Helen Ludkin) **Copy Deadline:** 12.00h on the **WEDNESDAY** before publication

Please note we can only mention people, by name, in the newsletter with their consent.

Websites:	www.stmatthewswilsden.org.uk	www.stsavioursharden.org.uk
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	<i>St Saviour's – Malcolm Jones</i>	<i>01535 272649</i>
<i>Deputy Warden</i>	<i>St Saviour's – Chris Bendle</i>	<i>07903 713018</i>

Donations or regular giving may be done by sending your gift to:

Account name	Sort Code	Account Number
St Saviour's Church Harden PCC	05-02-42	32488873
Parish of St Matthews, Wilsden	40-23-05	42128918

Please include your name or we will be unable to thank you. We are wholly dependent on your generosity.

Clergy Days off: Liz – Monday & Thursday, Suzy – Tuesday, Richard – Saturday