

Seek Peace and Pursue It - Reflections for Lent 2018
Week 4 – 11th March
Written by Jenny Broadbridge

Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday began in the 16th century as a religious event with the word "mothering" referring to "mother church". On the fourth Sunday in Lent, domestic servants would be given the day off in order to return to their home church and also visit their families. This was known as "going a-mothering". Nowadays commercialisation has taken over, but the day is still celebrated in the UK on the fourth Sunday in Lent, while in most of the world it is on the 2nd Sunday in May. For many of us the day is one when we think with love and gratitude of our own mothers, and of our children and grandchildren. But there are many others who find the day extremely difficult; those who never had a good relationship with their mothers; those whose relationship with their children has broken down; people who have lost mothers or children; those who never had the opportunity to have children. There are many different circumstances which can contribute to a day of sadness and regret. As we think of this year's Easter Offering theme of "Seek peace and pursue it" we remember all those who seek inner peace, and pray that they will find it.



Jenny's mother on her 90th birthday when she had just met her great granddaughter (4 months) for the first time.

To ponder: Is there someone you know who finds this day difficult, to whom you could show love in a practical way? Are there spiritual mothers in your life to whom you could show your appreciation for their Christian guidance and prayer?

Prayer: God, our Father and Mother, we thank you for mothers who loved and nurtured us, showing us the way to live. We rejoice with new mothers at the wonderful gift of new life, but we also remember and pray for those who are grieving because of a miscarriage, a stillbirth or infertility. We pray for mothers who are grieving the loss of a child and for children and adults grieving the loss of a mother. We pray for mothers estranged from their children, and children who have left home and whose whereabouts is unknown. We pray for all who have never known a mother's love and have been abused, neglected and unloved. We ask that they will find the mother-heart of you, our God, and feel your peace. Help us to be sensitive to the needs of others, and to be people who "rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." We pray in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who knows us all intimately and loves each one. Amen.

Bible link: Romans 12 v. 15 (KJV) *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*

Hymn: Singing the Faith 710: Peace, perfect peace is the gift of Christ our Lord

These Lent reflections are written to link with the 2018 Easter Offering Dedication Service, 'Seek Peace and Pursue It' which will be used by most circuits of the Methodist Church in Britain during the weeks following Easter. Orders of service and other resources can be found at www.mwib.org.uk