

## Rector's Letter - Rev'd Jeremy Trew - March 2023

Dear Friends,

This month we celebrate Mothering Sunday. A bit like harvest it's never been an official Church festival, rather one adopted because of local popularity, and they're maybe the best sort. But what will we be celebrating? Mothers of course; ours specifically, and motherhood in general. But what does that mean? Motherhood and the family mean very different things to different people. For some it is the idealised view of a wife and mother managing the home and raising the children. For others it is quite different.



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Mothering Sunday has its origins in something older: 'Laetare Sunday'. Laetare comes from the Latin for the first word of the traditional prayer for the day: 'Rejoice'. It is also known as 'Refreshment Sunday', and was a day when people who had given something up for the Christian fast of Lent (like sweet foods) were allowed to 'break their fast' and have a little of whatever they were missing. And in some places this Sunday is called 'Bright Sunday' or, in others, 'Holy Humour Sunday'.

Humour is found all through the Bible, from beginning to end. For example, in the book of Genesis God tells Abraham and Sarah that they are going to have a child. Sarah is too old to have a child and when she hears what God has said she laughs. This laughter is so important that they call their child Isaac, as the name means 'laughter'. Isaac is one of the great forefathers of the Jewish faith and Sarah, one of the great foremothers of the faith, is the one who laughed.

I suspect that most mothers would go mad if they couldn't sometimes laugh at life's quirks and misunderstandings. The misunderstandings of families and children, if treated with a sense of humour, can make a family joyful and a good deal less stressful. So here goes...

A mother was explaining to her young children how they should behave during a church service. She asked them, 'Why is it important to be quiet in church?' Her bright little daughter said, 'Because people are sleeping.'

A mother had been teaching her three-year-old son the Lord's prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, he would repeat after his mother the lines from the prayer. Finally, he decided to go solo. His mother listened with pride as he carefully recited each word, until he got to: 'Lead us not into temptation,' he prayed, 'but deliver us from e-mail.'. Amen to that one!

Laughter is an essential ingredient in our family lives (even if you didn't find those jokes funny). So don't come to church morose and full of penitence this Mothering Sunday. Instead put on your best smile and bring your laughter with you.

Have a blessed Lent

Jeremy

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