

Faith in action: Service of Thanksgiving

Welcome and gathering

Welcome to our Mothers' Union Service of Thanksgiving. We gather to celebrate the many ways as Mothers' Union we are able to live out our faith through action. We gather to affirm that all we do is founded on love for God and our neighbour; and to praise our supreme example of love, Jesus Christ, who calls us to emulate his life of service.

Call to worship

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.
His love endures forever.
Psalm 136:1

Lord of all, we gather in your name
to bring our love and service as an act of true worship.
Let us praise his name together. Amen

Opening hymn

O Jesus, I have promised
J.E.Bode, (1816-1874)

Prayer of preparation ***See service notes**

God of wonder and of joy:
grace comes from you,
and you alone are the source of life and love.
Without you, we cannot please you;
without your love, our deeds are worth nothing.
Send your Holy Spirit,
and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love,
that we may come before you now
with thankful hearts
and serve you always with willing minds;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**
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Confession

**Merciful Lord,
Forgive us when we shun your love
and choose to follow our own selfish ways.
When we place our own comfort
above the needs of your world.
Help us to model our lives on Christ,
our perfect example of love,**

**that we may wholeheartedly
serve God and our neighbour
for the glory of your name. Amen**

Absolution

May our heavenly Father open wide his arms
in loving forgiveness and grace.
May we know the joy of restored relationship
with God and his people. **Amen**

New Testament Reading: 1 John 3:16-18

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:16-18

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

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:35-40

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Glory to you, O Lord.

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Hymn

Brother, sister, let me serve you
Richard Gillard

Talk/sharing of stories from Mothers' Union work

Thanksgiving and intercessions

We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,
which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

We now bring our prayers to God for the work he has called us to do;
with thanks that he has equipped us to serve him together.

**Lord, we hear your word;
let us be doers of your will.**

We pray that our efforts to help those
whose lives have met with adversity
will be a source of hope and relief
as they battle through times of hardship.

We pray that our support will help many
along the road to transformation
from weakness and dependency
into flourishing resilience.

We give thanks for our members worldwide
whose lives of faithful action
shine as a beacon of hope
in the communities they serve.

And today we give thanks for... ***See service notes**
here in ... diocese.

We pray for all whom we seek to serve
that lives may be bettered
and relationships thrive.

Symbolic Offering

*Symbols of the various Mothers' Union initiatives may be brought to the front
and placed before the altar*

We offer up these symbols
of our love and service.

We pray for God's blessing
on all that we do in his name. **Amen**

**Lord, help us to remain in you
that our work may be fruitful.
May we reflect the love of Christ
through our lives of faithful action. Amen**

Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord

We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union

as we seek to share your love

**through the encouragement, strengthening
and support of marriage and family life.**

Empowered by your Spirit,

**may we be united in prayer and worship,
and in love and service**

reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Final Hymn

Hope of our calling

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Tune: Woodlands

Final blessing

Go now and proclaim the gospel,
not just through words but deeds –
through what you say,
what you do,
and who you are.

May others, as they meet with you,
meet with Christ,
and know his living presence for themselves.

Amen

Nick Fawcett, Prayers for all Seasons; 1998

We say the Grace together