

United in Prayer: Wave of Prayer Service of Thanksgiving

Welcome and gathering

Welcome to our Mothers' Union Service of Celebration. We gather to give thanks for our wave of prayer links across the world that we have valued over many years; to celebrate the relationships we have enjoyed and the privilege of prayerful support. We gather to embrace with gladness the new relationships ahead and to commit ourselves afresh to prayer.

Call to worship

God, your name is known everywhere;
all over the earth people praise you.
Your right hand is full of goodness.
Psalm 48:10

Lord of all the earth,
we come to worship with thankful hearts.
Let us praise his name together. Amen

Opening hymn

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King!
George Herbert; Tune: Luckington

Prayer of preparation

**With thankfulness and love we take our place
in the family of Mothers' Union worldwide.**
Open our eyes to the significance of relationship
with members worldwide; with those known to us or not.

**With support and love we reach out
to our sisters and brothers across the world.**
Strengthen our commitment to those with whom
we share vision and values; wherever we may live.

**In unity and love we link hands
with our worldwide family of God.**
Unite us in worship; build us in service,
as together we seek to share your love.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Confession

Merciful Lord,

**who died that we may be accepted
into the family of God,
forgive us for the times when our love
for each other is strained,
when the bonds between us are loose.
Forgive us when we choose to ignore
the joys of shared relationship
and focus on weakness and strife.
Help us to change our selfish ways
that we may love God and his children
with all our hearts. 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: Ephesians 3:14-22

For this reason I fall on my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name. ¹⁶ I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, ¹⁷ and I pray that Christ will make his home in your hearts through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, ¹⁸ so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love.¹⁹ Yes, may you come to know his love—although it can never be fully known—and so be completely filled with the very nature of God.
²⁰ To him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of: ²¹ to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all time, forever and ever! Amen.

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

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:18-20

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

When Jesus came near, he spoke to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ So wherever you go, make disciples of all nations: Baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach them to do everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am always with you until the end of time.”

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

Hymn

Jesus put this song into our hearts.

Graham Kendrick

Talk/sharing of memories/symbolic offering *See service notes

Thanksgiving and intercessions

My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love.

Colossians 2:2

As we come to give thanks for Mothers' Union Worldwide, and particularly for our link dioceses, may God encourage us in heart and unite us in love.

Symbolic lighting of candles *See service notes

Lord,

We bring to you our praise

for the fellowship and prayer support

that we have known through our links with..... former link dioceses

We thank you for the times when we have built relationship through sharing and visits.

We thank you for the times when lack of news has driven us to pray and intercede.

We look back with gratitude for the blessing

of being united in prayer with..... former link dioceses

We pledge to continue to remember

our sisters and brothers in prayer.

We look forward with anticipation to the joy

of being united in prayer with..... new link dioceses

Bind us together in mutual love and support

as we uphold one another in prayer.

Loving Lord,

help us to fully appreciate the blessings

of being united in the family of God.

Let us be ever ready to intercede for each other

for God's assistance and protection.

May God encourage us in heart and unite us in love.

We pray for all members.

May God be with them

in every part of their lives,

encouraging them and leading them,

sheltering and strengthening them

so they may work to your praise and glory. **Amen**

Sharing of the Peace

God was in Christ, offering peace and forgiveness to the people of this world.
2 Corinthians 5:19

As we share God's peace together
we also reach out in peace to those
with whom we are linked across the world.
The peace of the Lord be with you:
and also with you.

We offer each other a sign of peace

Final Hymn

Jesus is King and I will extol him.
Wendy Churchill

Final blessing

Lord, as we have celebrated
your goodness together,
may our unity deepen and grow.
We are the family of God.
His love draws us in to himself
and out to one another.
**We reach out as your hands
across the world.
Thanks be to God. Amen**

We say the Grace together