

Dear Friend

Yesterday we celebrated Mothering Sunday - many thanks to Linda for taking over the preaching from me at the [10.00am service](#), as I was indisposed with a heavy cold. The theme of love, care and nurture, is at the heart of our faith - that God truly loves, cares for and nurtures us, with the tenderness of a Mother as well as a Father. The origins of Mothering Sunday, as you may already know, have nothing whatever to do with motherhood! As far back as the 16th century, the Fourth Sunday of Lent was known as "Refreshment Sunday" when the rules of Lent were set aside and everyone was expected to return to their home church or cathedral to celebrate with their family. So it was our Mother church that gave its name to Mothering Sunday - an opportunity to receive love care and nurture from our own local Christian community, together with our families, when most children, even as young as ten, had to leave home and enter domestic service away from home.

For a huge number of people, I included, and for so many reasons, our modern celebration of Mother's Day can be extremely difficult. For the Church, we can focus on the love, care and nurture we receive from our particular community of faith, as well as reflecting on the nature of God as both Father and Mother. But for many of those who do not share our faith, I imagine they breathe a sigh of relief when it's all over!

As yesterday's [readings](#) reminded us, when we exercise our faith in our God who promises to provide for our needs, both material and spiritual, we will suffer no lack. Our tender-hearted, loving, caring and nurturing God will look after us, and provide abundantly for us, so that we are able to bring love, care and nurture to others.

With love and prayers

Simon