

All-age service Mother's Day 2019



'Because of you...'

This resource is linked to the Home for Good 2019 Mother's Day film and additional resources. This all-age service gives opportunity for every member of the family to contribute at their appropriate level. Mother's Day is an opportunity to invite people to church who don't often come, but it is also a time when some people stay away because they worry about the theme of the day. This service gives opportunity for everyone to be blessed and to be challenged. If you have anyone in your congregation that would usually stay away or find Mother's Day hard, you could let them know about the context of the service in advance so that they realise how inclusive it aims to be.

These resources enable us to share about the women who have cared for us and helped us - in big and small ways - to be the people we are today. They give an opportunity for us to thank God for those women and also to think about the challenge we have of being and doing that for others.

For some of the sections there is more than one option to follow (some requiring more preparation than others!). This all-age service consists of:

- Introductory activity, to set the scene (two options)
- Sung worship
- Sharing stories/Home for Good film and prayer (three options)
- Bible reading
- Amie's story and call to the church
- Optional short talk
- Prayer response

Introductory activity to set the scene (two options):

OPTION 1: Women who have helped shaped the world...

PowerPoint attached

These are some famously inspirational women who are believed to have helped shape the world...do you know who they are and why they are inspirational?

You could either show this PowerPoint as people arrive and get them to write it down with prizes for those who got them all right/got the most right. Or you could lead this activity from the front and go through each woman with members of the congregation shouting out the answers.

The answers are:

1. **Mother Teresa:** The Nobel Peace Prize winner (1979) aimed at looking after those who had nobody to look after them through her own order "The Missionaries of Charity". She worked tirelessly towards her goal until her ill-health, which included two heart attacks, pneumonia and malaria, forced her to step down in March 1997, following which she took her last breath in September 1997.
2. **Diane Abbott:** Well-known for late-night political punditry on BBC 1's This Week and for wading into controversy, she nevertheless inspired thousands of black girls when she became the first female black MP in 1987. Her opposition, as a backbencher, to the Iraq war contributed to her being overlooked for ministerial office.
3. **Florence Nightingale:** 'The lady with the lamp' nursed wounded soldiers during the Crimean war. Her passion and dedication to the profession changed public perception of it and her insistence on improving sanitary conditions for patients is believed to have saved many lives.
4. **Benazir Bhutto:** The 11th Prime Minister of Pakistan (1993-1996) and the first woman to head a Muslim state. During her leadership she ended military dictatorship in her country and fought for women rights. She was sadly assassinated in 2007.
5. **Billie Jean King:** With 39 Grand Slam titles to her name and six separate spells as world number one, Billie Jean King is undoubtedly one of the greatest tennis players of all time. However, it is her battle for equal rights for sporting women that she will be truly remembered for. In 1973 she took on and defeated self-professed chauvinist Bobby Riggs in 'The Battle of the Sexes'. A former world number one himself, Riggs' defeat proved once and for all that women deserved both respect and equality in the world of sport. Moreover, Billie Jean King described sports as 'a microcosm of society', and believed her actions could help improve women's rights all over the world.
6. **Emmeline Pankhurst:** Emmeline, a passionate feminist, was an influential women's activist who fought along with her husband for the rights of women in late 19th and early 20th century. After she lost her husband, she teamed up with her three daughters and formed 'The Women's Social and Political Union' - best known as the suffragettes (women's right to vote).
7. **Rosa Parks:** Also known as 'the first lady of civil rights', the African-American Rosa Parks was a pioneer of civil rights in a racially segregated Alabama in the 1950s. In 1955, she refused to give away her seat to a white passenger in a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, thereby disobeying the bus driver's orders. This act of hers sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott that crippled the state capital's public transport system.

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8. Helen Bamber: Aged 20, at the end of the Second World War, she entered the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp to help victims. After the war, she worked with child survivors of the Holocaust. Her life has been dedicated to human rights and opposing torture. She was the first chairman of Amnesty International in Britain.

Summary/introduction to theme: Today we're thinking about the women who have cared for us and helped us - in big and small ways - to become the people we are today. The women in our lives might not have changed the world in the way that some of these women have, but in doing what they have for us, they have changed our world for the better. Today is an opportunity for us to thank God for those women and also to think about the challenge we have of being and doing that for others.

OPTION 2: Matching mother-figures game...

Two options to play this game...either as a team game (which could also be done as people arrive) or front-led.

1. Team game/matching game:

- Importantly, as congregation arrive, you need a welcome team that will help people to become/join a team – especially those who came on their own!
- Instructions will be on the screen
- Every team gets a set of Home for Good matching game cards/pieces of paper (printable resource) and splits them up into two piles: one with the children's name and info and the other pile with the mother-figures
- The children on the cards all need some extra support and the cards show women who could offer them that. Who might be able to give what each child needs?
- The aim of the game is to match mother-figures to the child – some will have more than others and they will all have more than one! There's no right or wrong answer – this is more an opportunity to start discussion and introduce the theme.
- Allocate a set time to this activity (5-10 minutes) and then go through the children and find out who the teams matched with them (using the PowerPoint in the resources), or offer a short summary/introduction (below)

2. Front-led:

- Keep the set of children's cards at the front for whoever is leading
- Either hand out the mother figure cards to people as they arrive, place them under the chairs of people in your congregation or hand them round as you start and explain the game (if you think there might be people who would rather not participate)
- You can use the PowerPoint in the resources if that's helpful
- The children on the cards all need some extra support and the cards show women who could offer them that. Who might be able to give what each child needs?
- Read the first child's name and information and invite congregation members to stand and call out their card if they think they should be a mother figure to that child
- There's no right or wrong answer – this is more an opportunity to start discussion and introduce the theme.

Summary/introduction to the theme:

Jimmy

Eight years old. Likes making things, drawing and animals. Jimmy doesn't have close friends and isn't confident - even in things he's good at.

Ben

15 years old. Is on the autistic spectrum, but attends the local secondary school with some additional teaching support. Loves and is very good at technology and gaming, but doesn't enjoy schoolwork. He can be shy. He started a paper round at the beginning of the year so that he can save some money for a new games console, but doesn't do any clubs/activities, including the youth club at church. His dad works shifts and his mum has two jobs so having regularity can sometimes be hard.

Hope

Eleven years old. Likes playing football (she plays for her school and her county) and visiting her sisters and gran (which she does every week). Hope is in foster care with a family with two other children...it's a very busy household and Hope doesn't have a lot of spare time in her week. Hope is in her last year of primary school.

Alfie

Four years old. Really enjoys school and his teachers say he is doing really well. He much more enjoys the company of adults than other children and doesn't have many friends his age, although this doesn't seem to bother him! Alfie enjoys reading and difficult puzzles.

Charlie

Graphic designer. Mum of three children aged 6,9 and 11. Would love to foster but doesn't have the space in the house.

Maggie

Secondary school teacher (form tutor and English). She's single with no children and her family live quite far away. She loves volunteering at various youth and children's camps over the summer.

Rose

Has five grandchildren, three of whom she looks after regularly - one during the day and the other two she picks up from school and brings home for tea. She sometimes has them at the weekends as well.

Chantelle

Uni student in her second year studying for a sports science degree. Enjoys helping out with the children's ministry at church and lots of different types of sports.

Pippa

Single mum of a five-year old boy who struggles at school, both with friends and academically. She encourages her son by doing fun educational activities and would love him to have more friends.

Mehree

Elderly single member of church whose family is in different countries. She recently invested in a tablet with different apps for her to keep in touch with her family, but isn't confident on how to use it. Mehree enjoys getting out of the house and staying as young as possible!

Amber

Children's worker at church who would like to start doing prayer partners with children at church and has been advised to try it out with herself and a child first. She would love to not only support the children but bring them together as well.

Vix

Has known the family for years and has recently cut back her work hours so that she can start some new studies for a career change. This leaves her with quite a bit of regular free time and space to study.

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BECAUSE
OF YOU 

Sung worship

Worship song ideas:

- *Build My Life* (Written by Pat Barrett, Matt Redman, Brett Younker, Kirby Kaple, Karl Martin)
- *City on a Hill* (Written by Nick and Becky Drake)
- *For the Sake of the World* (Bethel)
- *God I Look To You* (Bethel)
- *God You're So Good* (Passion)
- *No Longer Slaves* (Bethel)
- *Reckless Love* (Bethel)
- *This is Amazing Grace* (Phil Wickham)
- *Who You Say I Am* (Hillsong Worship)
- *You Make Me Brave* (Bethel)
- *Your Love Awakens Me* (Phil Wickham)

Sharing stories/Home for Good video and prayer

Sharing stories (optional – will take some preparation!):

This would be a great opportunity to give space for those in your congregation to share stories of women (not just their birth mothers, but could include some) who have made a difference to their lives. It would be great to have lots of different examples and different ages of people sharing their stories. It doesn't just need to be children and women who share – it would be a good opportunity to include some of the men in this service as well.

Home for Good video and prayer (three options):

Show the Home for Good Mother's Day 2019 video and then respond with prayer. We have three options for you to choose from:

1. Mother's Day spoken prayer

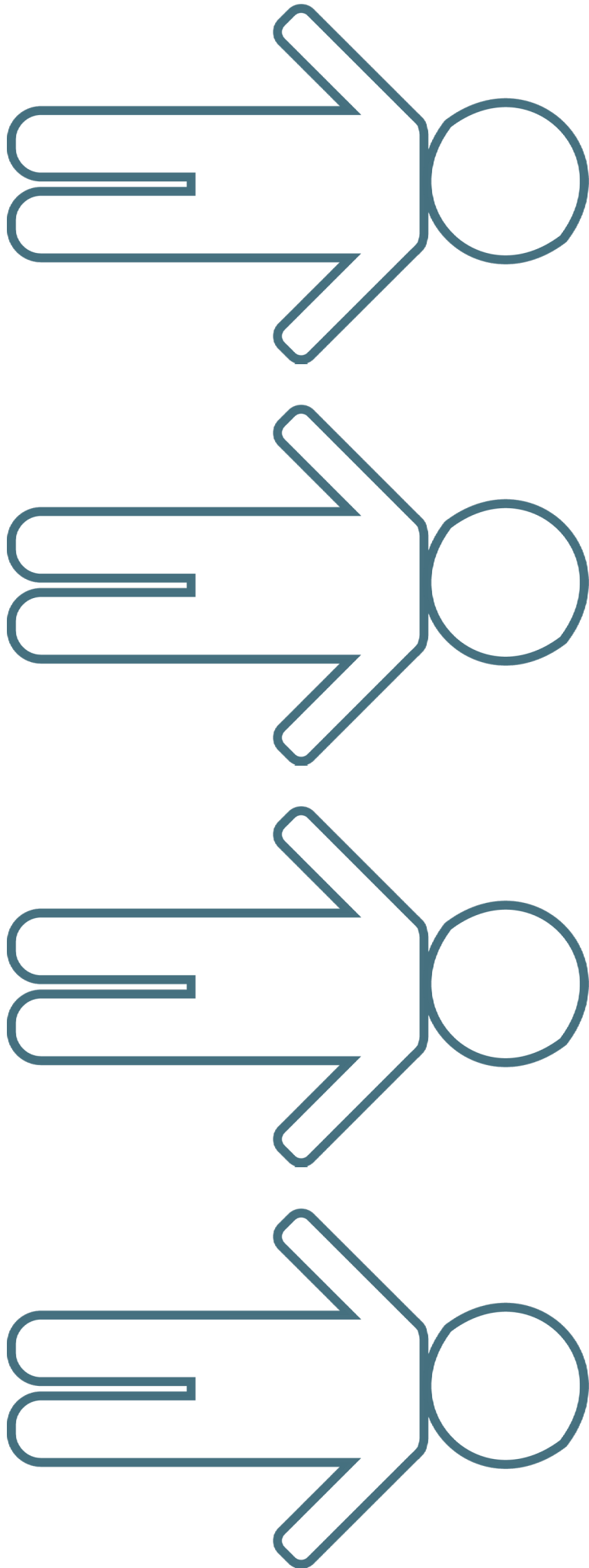
- You could all read this prayer together as a congregation or you could ask one or two people to read it out.
- You'll find a pdf of this in the additional resources that you could print out to share or it's on the PowerPoint

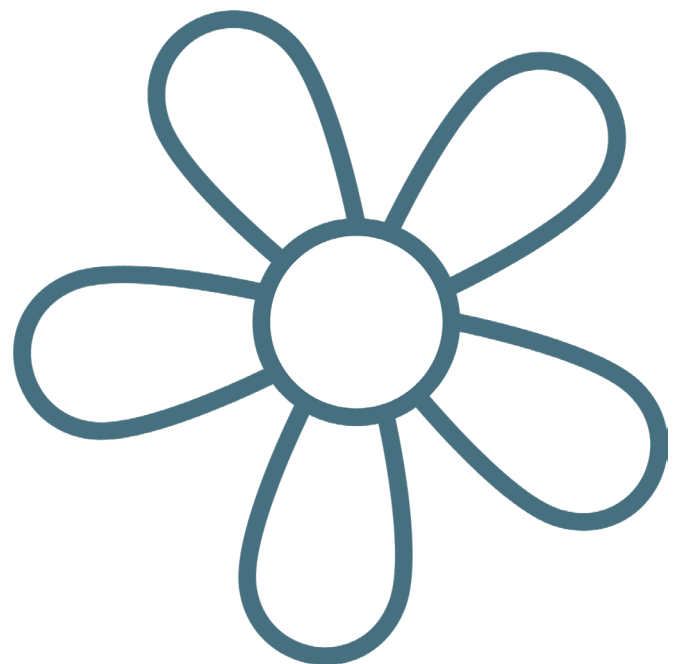
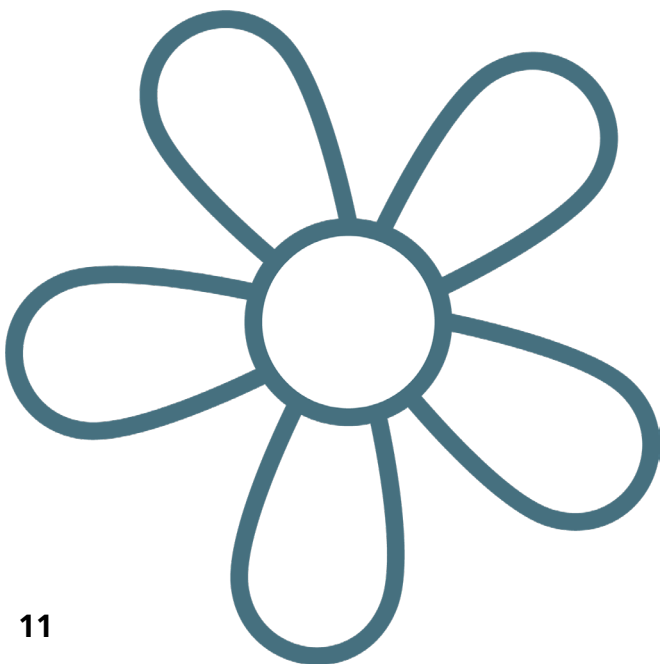
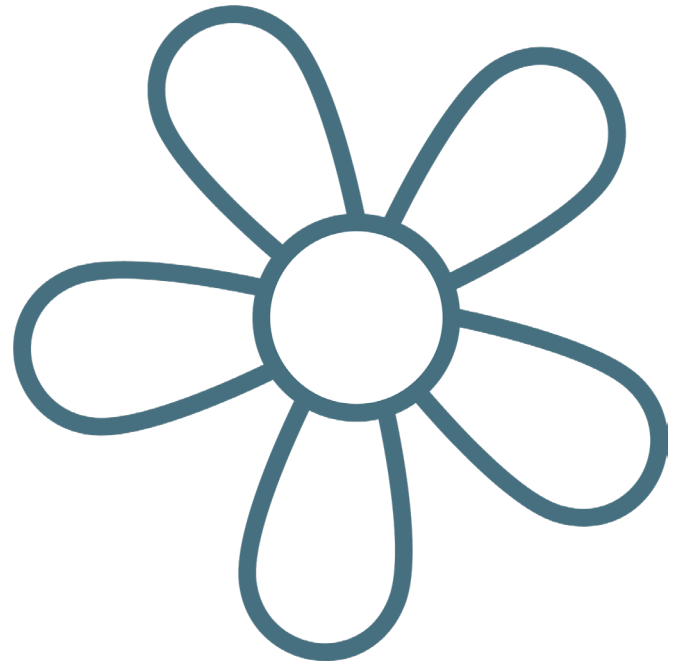
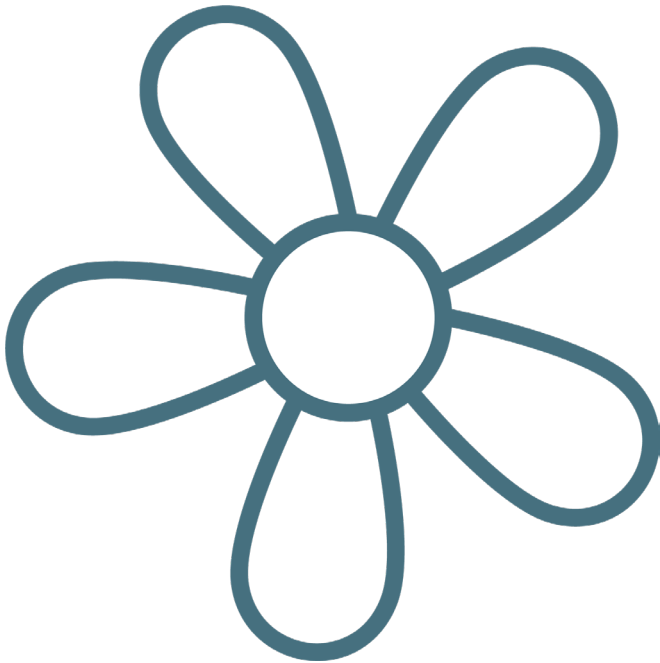
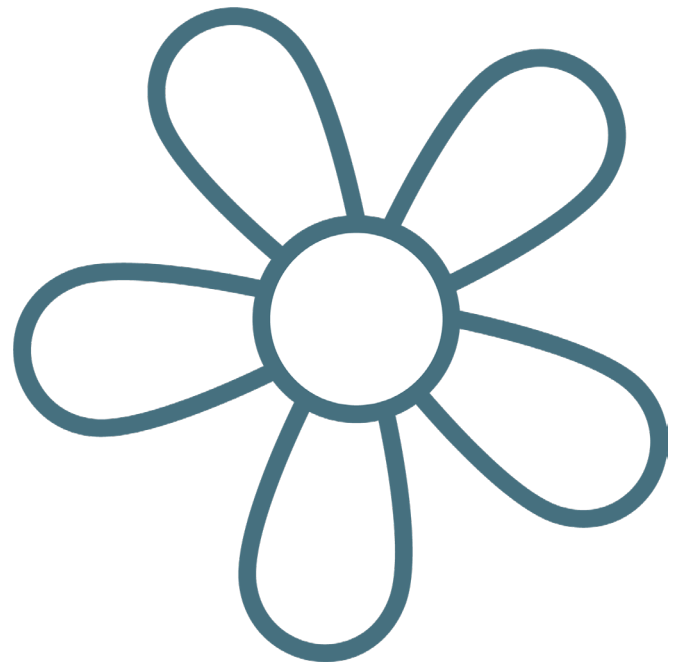
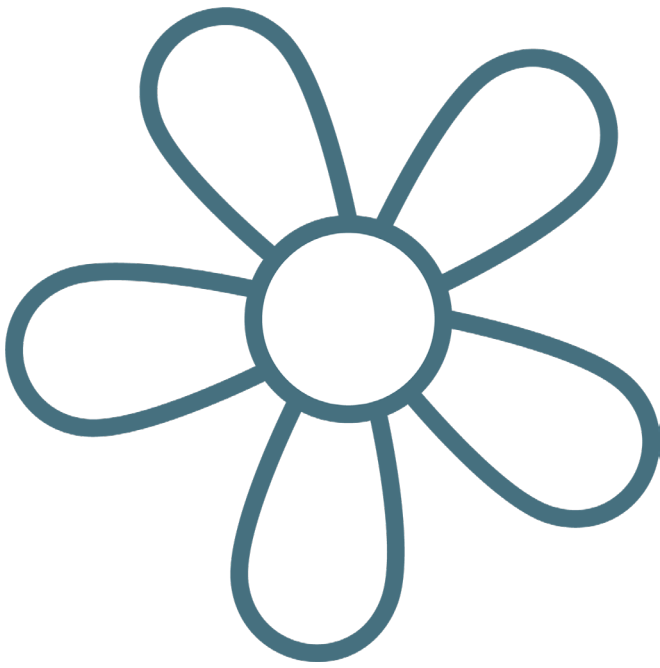
2. Creative prayer response 1: Prayer people

- Print out (and cut out if you want to) the people outline templates (or you can buy packs of these to use!) enough for one each
- Everyone will also need a pen/pencil
- Ask everyone to write inside the person outline the names of women who have cared and helped for them and helped them to be the people they are today
- As they write the names down, encourage them to thank God for those women
- You could make space at the front/in the hall of the church for everyone to come and stick up the people, as a continued act of thanking God, but also as reminder to everyone of the many women we remember and honour on Mother's Day.

3. Creative prayer response 2: Prayer flowers

- Print out (and cut out or have scissors there for people to cut their own) the flower templates
- Everyone will also need a pen/pencil
- Ask everyone to write in each petal the names of women who have cared and helped for them and helped them to be the people they are today
- As they write the names down, encourage them to thank God for those women
- Have a vase at the front of the hall and ask people to come and place their flowers in the vase
 - i. The vase could be a drawn vase that people stick the flowers into
 - ii. If you have a creative congregation/the time and space, you could get people to stick florists wire or green pipe cleaners along the stem of the flower to help them stand.
- You could keep the vase of flowers on display at church as a reminder of the women we are thankful for.





Bible reading

Although it's a short scripture, you could have a number of different people reading it, or just ask one person to read it out.

Scripture: Romans 12:10-13 Love in Action

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Amie's story and call to the church

Watch the short film of Amie Aitkin sharing her story, available in the Mother's Day 2019 extra resources.

Talk

Below is an outline for a short interactive talk, which you can tailor to make it appropriate for your setting.

Set up:

You'll need to print off the Bible verses and put in a gift box and/or wrap to place under seats in the congregation to use throughout the talk. At each point where a Bible verse is shared, encourage people to look under their seat, locate the number, open the gift and either read it out or bring to the front to be read....

Present 1: Ephesians 1:4-5

Just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.

Talk:

- Incredible! Reflect what a privilege, great God, almighty, infinite, all-powerful, creator of whole universe – adopts us into his family
- Most intimate relationship of parent and child, depth of love & commitment
- When Jesus teaches us to pray (Matt 6) – Lord's prayer – encouraged 'Our Father' – just as Jesus does, we can know God as father
- How amazing that I've done nothing to deserve this – I am weak & sinful & selfish – yet He chooses me, chose me before foundation of world, to adopt me & welcome me into His family!
- Let's explore family we're welcomed into - all too often, our understanding of family is shaped

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by culture, experience, worldly values

- Traditional view of family is a specific, defined, closed group of people, generally bonded together through blood or marriage
- Biblically, we find something very different

Present 2: Psalm 68:5-6a

*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
is God in his holy dwelling.*

God sets the lonely in families

- Bible shows God as father and protector of most vulnerable people in society, nobody to protect/care for them, alone and vulnerable
- Yet God sets them in families, in other versions it says that God gives them home, places them into a family
- So with God, don't need to be born into a family to become part of it – families can be joined, family should be open – all are welcome
- Let's be honest though, this way of doing family is complicated, it's messy and challenges us

Present 3: Romans 12:10-13

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

- God knows this is the case, which is why we get passages like this one, offers guidance for how we exist in family together
- It's all there – love, honour, service, hope, patience, generosity – how we're called to live as His family, echoing His heart with one other
- But always, always extends outwards – original Greek for 'hospitality' literally means to be a friend to strangers – we are called to welcome the stranger into our family
- Our love, honour, service etc. is not just for family we already know, those we love (even those we put up with) but always includes the stranger, called to invite people into the family
- Today, as we celebrate Mother's Day, we have an opportunity to thank God for those people – in particular women, today! – who have welcomed us into their family or become part of our family by being these things to us!
- Can you think of a woman who has been devoted to you? Who has shown love to you? Who has honoured you? Who has being persistent in hope for you? Who has served you? Been patient? Faithful? Prayed for you? Been hospitable to you? Been generous? Today, let's thank God for these women who have shown us this example.
- But we also have a challenge to do this for others...who can we extend our family to? Who can we welcome into our family? Who could we accept love and hospitality from? Or maybe we need to think about who we could be these things to? Who could we be a positive role model to? Who could we display these attributes to?
- Because of God's love in us, and the Holy Spirit teaching us what it is to be family to those around us, we will be able to extend this love to others and draw others into family with us.

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Prayer response:

Print the scripture out onto large paper or write it out on a large roll of paper:

Romans 12:10-13 *Love in Action*

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

In response to what we've heard today, we want to be people who do for others what has been done for us and more! What is it that God is calling us to do for those around us? Who is God asking us to care for? What do we need more of to do this?

Have lots of coloured pens/crayons at the front and encourage everyone to come and circle/highlight/underline those things that they want God to grow in them so that they can show this hospitality, love and care to others.

Or you could have post-it-notes/arrow post-it-notes/heart post-it-notes that they place alongside the section of the scripture that they want God to grow in them.

You could take the response one step further and encourage people to write (on the post it notes or pens – whichever option you choose!) what they're going to do in response to this (i.e. invite a family round for food/make a cake for.../be intentional about asking someone how their week has been etc.).