



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on March 20th 2022 at 10:45, meeting once more at Bethesda Chapel.

Whilst some are able to meet in person, others we know are still at home. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

Our All-age service today is led by Tim, a special service for Mothering Sunday. Trevor plays the piano for us as we gather.

Tim welcomes everyone to Bethesda Chapel:

"Welcome to BBC on this lovely spring morning. Well done for remembering to move your clocks forward! Today is Mother's Day. Mother's Day reminds us to take the time to appreciate our mothers and what they've done for us. We are grateful for the women in our lives that have loved us and cared for us. But we also know that Mother's Day can be a tough day for many people. You might be happy for time spent with your mother or you might be sad because you've lost your mother or, as a mother, you've lost a child. You might be celebrating the many things your mother does to care for you or you might be disappointed because your mother was not there to love and care for you in the way that you would have liked. You might have or have had a great relationship with your mother or you might be thinking about your behaviour towards your mother or your own failures as a mother. Perhaps you are sad because you have never had the opportunity to be a mother or overjoyed for the opportunity to enjoy your children. We know that everyone will have different feelings about a day like this.

Whatever we feel, today, though, and whatever our own failings, we can still be thankful to the God who has never failed us and never will, and who has done so much for us. Ephesians 5 verses 18 - 20 remind us about this and encourages us to say and sing our thanks to God. Let's say those verses together: 'Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.' And let's do what it encourages to do, as we sing our first song." Trevor plays this for us on the piano.

Song: Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks, because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son.
Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks, because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son.

And now let the weak say, "I am strong."

Let the poor say, "I am rich, because of what the Lord has done for us."

And now let the weak say, "I am strong."

Let the poor say, "I am rich, because of what the Lord has done for us."

Give thanks!

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Tim leads us in a Brief Opening Prayer

"Father, thank you for the wonderful gift that you have given us in mothers. Thank you for the fun and the laughter that we can have as families. However, we are feeling today, help us to think about you and be grateful to you for the great thing you have done for us in giving us Jesus to be our saviour. Thank you that we are strong and rich beyond belief in him, no matter what our circumstances are. Thank you that you are always there for us and that your love endures forever. Amen"

Tim continues: Brainstorm on Characteristics of Mothers

"Well, we're thinking about mothers today, so I wonder what comes to your mind when you think about good mothers and what they are like? Let's get a few ideas from you which I'll write on this board. Think about some of the things that they do and some of the challenges that they face... (the congregation gave various ideas - !!!!!.)

I wonder if one of the words we could use is 'tough'? We are going to concentrate on that word that could often be used to describe many mothers, because sometimes Mums need to be tough, don't they? They need to be tough when they are setting down the rules. They need to be tough when they are tired and busy. They need to be tough when things go wrong. They need to be tough when they are protecting their children from dangers. They need to be tough to persevere and teach their children about the God who loves them.

I wonder just how tough some of the mums here today are? Well, we're going to find out as we get some to take 'The Tough Mum Challenge'. I need three Mums (of any age) to help me with this - don't worry, I don't think it will be too stressful or embarrassing!" (Becky, Jean and Jane volunteered, deservedly getting a round of applause for being intrepid Mums, who don't know what they're getting themselves into here!)

Tim carries on: The 'Tough Mum' Challenge

"Mums (and in fact Dads!) have to play all kinds of roles, don't they? I think back to all the things we had to do, many of them which maybe didn't seem quite natural at the time, when we were bringing up our two daughters. Sometimes Mums have a 'nursing' challenge, sometimes an 'overcoming obstacles' challenge, sometimes a 'multi-tasking' challenge, sometimes a 'messy' challenge, sometimes a 'speed' challenge and many, many more! But today we've got three challenges for these Mums to take on.

The first is an 'artistic' challenge - how many Mums have had to design costumes, draw pictures for their kids or paint their faces, even when they don't feel remotely artistic? So for our first challenge, I would like each of you to draw a cat, but do it with your wrong hand!" (The Mums, in turn, have a go at drawing a cat and the congregation

vote on which is the best. 5 points for first, 3 for second, 1 for third - Jane got the 5 points, Jean 3 and Becky 1 - they were all better than one I could have drawn with my dominant hand!!)

"The next challenge is a 'memory' challenge - how many Mums have to remember all the things they need to do or get in their busy day? I'm going to give each of you 6 items on a shopping list. We'll give you 30 seconds to remember as many as you can, then we'll see how many you can write down in another 30 seconds." (Tim asked them to remember oranges, sausages, peas, chips, washing up liquid, and cheese, then we all recited 'Baa, baa black sheep, have you any wool?' before the Mums wrote down the items they could remember. Scoring was the same ; 5 points for most items, 3 for second most, 1 for third, and once again Jane got the 5 points, this time Becky getting 3 and Jean 1)

"The final challenge is a 'homework' challenge - how many Mums have had to try to help children with homework, even in subjects they themselves find tricky? So I'm going to give you each five spellings and five sums to do and see how you get on. " (At this point the 3 volunteers looked as though they were regretting having volunteered!

They were given five spellings:

mother, extravagant, distinguished, accomplished, exceptional,
and then 5 sums:

3×7 , $143 + 212$, $318 - 125$, $120 \div 24$, 11×32 .

Correct answers to sums: 21, 355, 193, 5, 352.

It may by this time come as no surprise that Jane scored most highly and was declared the winner!!)

Tim introduced our Dramatised Bible Reading: Exodus 2: 1 - 10

"We're going to read a story from the Bible now involving a mother who had a really big challenge and had to be very tough to deal with it. This takes place in Egypt where the Israelites were living and where they were being treated harshly by the Egyptians - so harshly, in fact, that the ruler of Egypt was taking drastic measures to stop the Israelites getting stronger. He ordered all baby boys born to the Israelites to be drowned in the river Nile.

We'll try to act the story out as we go along, so I'm going to need a few volunteers to help me here - 1 man and 5 ladies or girls. ¹Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, (Tony F played Amram and Jochebed (Shirley L) are 'married' - then Amram sits down again - focus not on men here) and she became pregnant (Jochebed was given a cushion, by Tim, which she convincingly placed inside her jumper!) and gave birth to a son (Tim handed Shirley a doll - Jochebed holds baby Moses). When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months (Jochebed hides Moses in various places - behind the piano!). ³But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him (or rather Tim gave her a little hamper) and coated it with tar and pitch (Jochebed mimes spreading coating on basket). Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. (Tim laid out a paper 'Nile' river on the church carpet - complete with Nile Delta!! Jochebed puts Moses in basket, then walk to the 'river' and place the basket in it). ⁴His sister - Jean - stood at a distance to see what would happen to him (Jochebed withdraws, but

Miriam stays at a distance, watching). ⁵Then Pharaoh's daughter - Brenda - went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank (Pharaoh's daughter and two attendants - Lynette and Becky arrive, complete with towel, bubble bath, etc). She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it (Becky waded into water to fetch basket). ⁶She opened it and saw the baby (Pharaoh's daughter opens basket). He was crying (sound effects by the congregation!), and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said (Miriam - Jean - approaches). ⁷Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" ⁸"Yes, go," she answered (Pharaoh's daughter points). So the girl went and got the baby's mother (Miriam fetches Jochebed back again). ⁹Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." (Hands over the basket and Moses to Jochebed.) So the woman took the baby and nursed him (Jochebed takes Moses away). ¹⁰When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. (Jochebed - Shirley - takes child back to Pharaoh's daughter - Brenda.) She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Ukraine Mum video

What a tough situation for Moses' Mum! It's not just Mums in Bible times, of course, who face very tough challenges. We're seeing on our news a lot at the moment about the tough times that Mums from Ukraine are facing - let's watch a short video with the story from one of them, Tetyana, who has had to leave her country.

(Those of us at the Chapel were able to watch the video on the screen)

If you would like to give a donation to help BMS World Mission help people from Ukraine like Tetyana, you can use the envelopes we have to do that. When you're in terrible trouble like Jochebed or the women of Ukraine, you need the help and grace of God, and, thankfully, God is full of amazing grace, giving us help and kindness that we don't deserve, even in very bad situations. Most of all, Jesus came and helped us when we had no hope, by dying on the cross for us and rising again. Let's join in with a song we're familiar with by Phil Wickham, reflecting on God's amazing grace to us in Jesus - and as we sing that, we're going to take up our offering for this morning."

Song: This is Amazing Grace - was shown on the screen at Bethesda

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness?

Whose love is mighty and so much stronger?

The King of glory, the King above all kings.

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder?

And leaves us breathless in awe and wonder?

The King of glory, the King above all kings.

This is amazing grace, this is unfailing love,

that You would take my place, that You would bear my cross.

You laid down Your life that I would be set free,

Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that You've done for me.

Who brings our chaos back into order?
Who makes the orphans a son and daughter?
The King of glory, the King of glory.
Who rules the nations with truth and justice?
Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance?
The King of glory, the King above all kings.
This is amazing grace.....

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.....

Worthy, worthy, worthy -
This is amazing grace....

Songwriters: Farro Joshua Neil / Wickham Phil / Riddle Jeremy, This Is Amazing Grace lyrics © Wb Music Corp., Fbr Music, Josh's Music, Bethel Music Publishing, Word Music, Llc CCLI SONG # 6333821
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CCL No 5664
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-rbmpzoQ5o>

Tim leads us in an Offering prayer

"We thank you Father for sending Jesus into the world. Thank you for the amazing Grace that you have shown to us through him. Thank you that he was prepared to go to that cross and to die for us. Thank you that he rose again and he lives and is able to strengthen and give us grace today in every time of trouble that we face. Lord we thank you and we give you these gifts as a small token of our gratitude to you and we pray that you will take and use them well for your purposes here and also particularly to support people in Ukraine. Amen"

Tim shares a Short Talk

"The things that are written in the Bible aren't just interesting stories - the Bible itself says that 'everything that was written in the past was written to teach us' - so what can we learn from today's story about young Moses and his mother?"

Well, first of all, we see that **Jochebed was prepared to obey God, even in a tough situation**. If they had a baby boy, they knew that the ruler of Egypt's rules were to give up that boy to be killed. Can you imagine what it was like for Jochebed and her husband, not knowing whether the baby she was expecting was a boy or a girl? Maybe she was hoping for a girl so that they wouldn't have to face that terrible situation, but it says in verse 2 that when her son Moses was born, she saw he was a 'fine child' - I'm sure all mothers think their babies are fine children, but the word here means a bit more - it meant she saw something of the plan that God had for this child's life and how he would bring help to many other people. So she was prepared to disobey the rulers of Egypt and keep Moses hidden as long as she could. God did have a plan

for Moses' life, but the great news is he has a plan for all of our lives, even from before we are born. It says in Psalm 139 verses 15 and 16: 'You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body; you know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something. Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, the days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day.'

Second, we see that **Jochebed was willing to give her child to God**. She couldn't keep him hidden any more, so she placed him in the basket in the river and trusted God to save him. The word for basket in verse 3 is the word 'teba', which is the same word used in the book of Genesis for Noah's ark - which God used to save Noah and his family from the Flood - water was involved in both cases. I think this shows the faith that Jochebed had in God, despite how difficult it must have been for her to leave a three-month old baby that way. It's why she and her husband are listed among the heroes of faith in Hebrews chapter 11. I think it's brilliant that the Nile water which was supposed to be used to kill the baby boys, was actually used by God to save Moses. So Jochebed was prepared to trust her child to God - and all Christian parents ultimately have to give their children to God's care.

Lastly, we see that **Jochebed was right to trust in God's power**. God used circumstances, as he so often does, to bring about his plans. The posh word for this is God's 'providence'. And here, God worked through the actions of several women to bring about his plans. Not only Jochebed herself, but the midwives who spared the baby boys, Moses' sister Miriam and even Pharaoh's own daughter. It's a great illustration of the truth Romans 8 verse 28, which says 'we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him'. And how much he does it - even more than we have any right to expect! We see God's overflowing grace at work as Jochebed gets the chance to care for her own son, and even get paid for doing it! How she must have enjoyed the chance to teach young Moses about the great God that they had - and what a difference that teaching made in influencing Moses's later life.

So let's all remember this story and make sure that we obey God, even when it's hard. Parents, trust God for your children, and let's all remember that God's power is great to work through circumstances and bring about amazing outcomes!"

We're grateful to Brenda, who's going to come now and lead us in our prayers, which we can all join in.

When you were going to say a prayer when you were young, you were probably told to put your hands together and close your eyes. This morning, however, I am asking you to put your hands together but keep your eyes open, as our prayer is on the screen and we will all share it together. I will read the words in black and please will you all read the underlined words. So, let us join together in prayer.

We come to You, our Father God, this morning and thank You that You are here beside us, and that You are our loving Father.

We ask You to listen as we speak to You.

On this special day we think of our mothers. Some of us remember them from a long time ago and others have them still.

Thank you for mothers and all they did or still do for us.

We pray today for mothers everywhere in all kinds of situations.

Lord, be near to all of them.

Many mothers are struggling to pay their bills, heat their houses and feed their children.

Lord, be beside them.

Some mothers are disabled, ill, abused or feeling that they cannot cope and have no one to help.

Lord, be beside them.

Some mothers are torn apart from their husbands and families to escape war and flee to safety. Some are in the midst of curfew, sheltering from the horror around or even fighting themselves.

Lord, be beside them.

There are mothers who are grieving as their sons have been killed on both sides in the present conflict, or have lost their children tragically in other ways.

Lord, be beside them.

Some mothers are denied the right to work, be educated and to worship in the way they want.

Lord, be beside them.

We pray for all here today who are mothers and worry about their children and their families, even if they are grown up. Some live far away and they don't see them often, whilst others may have family problems, are ill or unhappy.

Be near to all our families, Lord.

However, Lord, our children and their families bring us joy and inspire their mothers in many ways and we are glad when we can help them.

Thank You, Father God, for our families.

We bring to You all the mothers and families who come into this building for whatever reason and the ones who live in the houses nearby.

We ask for Your love and Your care for them all.

We pray for men who are fathers and who support their families and worry about them, especially remembering the ones who are fighting in Ukraine who are far away from their loved ones.

Lord, be beside them.

There are mothers and families who are now preparing to take in refugees from far away and others who are raising money or collecting provisions.

We thank You for all of them.

Heavenly Father, we know You care for us and we ask that You will forgive us for our wrong doing and that You will be close beside us as we go home and continue through this week. Please help us to cope with any problems and have happiness too. May we

witness for You wherever we go.

We offer our prayers to You in the name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen.

Tim continues: "It's great that when we're in tough situations whether as a mother, or whoever we are, we can always rely on our great God who is always there to help us, even when we don't know what to do. Our last song reminds us of this."

Song: Father I Place into Your Hands

Father, I place into your hands the things I cannot do,
Father, I place into your hands the things that I've been through.
Father, I place into your hands the way that I should go,
for I know I always can trust you.

Father, I place into your hands my friends and family.
Father, I place into your hands the things that trouble me.
Father, I place into your hands the person I would be,
for I know I always can trust you.

Father, we love to see your face, we love to hear your voice.
Father, we love to sing your praise and in your name rejoice.
Father, we love to walk with you and in your presence rest,
for we know we always can trust you.

Father, I want to be with you and do the things you do.
Father, I want to speak the words that you are speaking too.
Father, I want to love the ones that you will draw to you,
for I know that I am one with you

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At this point of the service, all the ladies were given some flowers, lovely daffodils, (Some of the gentlemen kindly helped to give them out)

Notices for the Week were shown on the screen, which included Extra Ladies Bible study on Tuesday morning instead of the Ladies afternoon meeting this week, no Tiddlywinks this Wednesday.

We will have the joy of a Baptismal Service on Easter Sunday morning, if anyone else would like to be baptised please speak to Alec or the Deacons.

Next Sunday we will be looking at Easter from the perspective of the old Testament, led by Colin.

Tim invited everyone to stay and have a group photograph taken at the end of the service which was brought to a close as we said together:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen