# Prayer and Worship Ideas

## Mother’s Day Artwork

An A6 postcard has been designed for people to respond to the range of emotions on Mother’s Day. The artwork reflects many situations surrounding this day and will mean different things to different people. As a result, there are a few ways you could choose to use these cards, for example:

* To reflect and to allow space to be calm and recognise difficult emotions around Mother’s Day. The card may be kept for individual personal reflections either during a service or beyond Mother’s Day.
* To write a note of gratitude or encouragement – offer the card for people to write on and share with others on this day. This can also be given with a gift.
* As part of worship – a guided Visio Divina style time of reflection has been written below and a PowerPoint template with the image is available on the Mother’s Day website page. Please adapt according to how this may best suit your corps. You may choose to create this time for individuals to self-reflect or encourage people to share with others in a small group.

Use the ideas above as simply suggestions. You may feel inspired to take and use the cards in an alternative way to support your worship and congregation on Mother’s Day.

### Lectio Divina with the Mother’s Day Postcards

#### View the artwork

What do you see?

What stands out for you?

***Leader’s note: If you feel your corps may need some prompting when looking at the artwork, here is a more detailed list of things to point out:***

**Landscape** – spacious and calm. God asks us to come to him for rest and he will provide the space for us to be in his presence.

**Wind in the trees** – You may feel like your life is changing in direction, or it feels like a storm is surrounding you. God wants us to be rooted in him and be reminded of his love and ability to journey through challenges alongside us.

**Character** – Do you think she is serving, in prayer, pouring love out of her, experiencing grief, desperation or loneliness, at peace, releasing pressures of everyday life to God, nurturing something or someone, pouring her hopes out to God?

**Birds** – For some people the birds may represent the gifts of the female figures in our lives, release of difficult emotions and giving them to God, people who have experienced loss – either their own mother or children.

#### What connections do you make?

Read the accompanying text and look over the artwork again.

What feelings are rising in you?

What comes to mind?

#### What do you hear?

Read the Scripture again and explore the artwork a third time.

What do you hear?

What is God saying to you?

What blessing or prayer is rising in you?

**Suggested Scripture Verses:** It’s best to focus on one, but you may choose two or three that are appropriate for your corps.

**Isaiah 41:10:** ‘So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.’

**Philippians 4:6-7** (*The Voice*): ‘Don’t be anxious about things; instead, pray. Pray about everything. *He longs to hear your requests,* so talk to God about your needs and be thankful *for what has come.* And know that the peace of God (*a peace* that is beyond any and all of our *human* understanding) will stand watch over your hearts and minds in Jesus, the Anointed One.’

**Matthew 5:3-11** (*MSG*): ‘ You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

‘You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

‘You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are – no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

‘You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.

‘You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.

‘You’re blessed when you get your inside world – your mind and heart – put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

‘You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

‘You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.

‘Not only that – count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens – give a cheer, even! – for though they don’t like it, *I* do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.’

## Prayer for Mums

As a Salvation Army we support many mums who parent children amongst adversity. Think about the mothers who pass through your building – Mother’s Day is as much about encouraging and celebrating their courage to reach out for Salvation Army support. Pray for the individuals you know, and the groups represented in the list below. You may choose to read out the list or adapt to the groups of women you specifically provide support for in your area.

Lord, we pray for the …

* Mums in prison
* Mums using food banks
* Mums parenting children through mental and physical health battles
* Mums who are experiencing homelessness
* Mums who try to protect their children against abusive partners
* Mums working multiple jobs
* Mums caring for older family members
* Mums who are victims of modern slavery
* Mums reunited through the Family Tracing Service

Today, as we celebrate the mother figures in our lives, we take time to recognise the mums who are going through difficult seasons in life. Be near each of these women; may they be reminded of your love and strength.

We pray for the women and their families who are supported by The Salvation Army. May they know your unending love and support as they navigate through challenges and uncertainty. Give mums the perseverance to find your light in the darkest times.

We pray for the mums who are yet unknown to us. Give them the courage to step out of difficult situations and seek the help they need. Help us to show your love through the programmes we offer to support mums in this area.

We pray for the women who are part of our church family. Thank you for their faith and passion to serve and worship you, Lord. May they radiate your love as they continue to share the good news to others.

Amen.

## Nurture a Plant

**Equipment: seeds, compost and small individual plant pots.**

Encourage the young people or the whole congregation to plant a seed. This could be given to the women in the congregation as a gift.

Throughout the Bible we learn more about who God is and what he is like. We see on various occasions God being caring and loving towards people as well as helping people to grow to be better people. Just like a plant, people need care and nurturing in order to grow. God places people in our lives to care and nurture us.

Like these fragile seeds, we must lovingly care for each other as God cares for each of us through each stage of our growth.

## God’s Character

With the people around you, list all the good characteristics that you see in the mother figures you know. For example, patience, kindness or courage. In the Bible, God teaches us how to live out many of these characteristics. Galatians 5:22-23: ‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.’ We are all encouraged to live out these characteristics and share with those around us. On Mother’s Day we take time to celebrate the positive attributes of our mother figures. However, may this be a challenge to us all to grow into the people God wants us to be.

## Corporate Prayer:

Lord, today we come to you and thank you for the mothers and mother figures in our lives. We thank you for the care and love that they have shown to us throughout the years. We thank you that they give us an example of your love, and encourage us to love those around us.

**Lord, help us to love others as you have loved us.**

Today we come to you and thank you for those who have showed us maternal love throughout our lives. For the aunties, the teachers, the stepmothers, the foster-mothers, the friends, and the church community. We thank you for the way they have taught us more about you and how they have helped form us. Help us to show these attributes in our own lives.

**Lord, help us to love others as you have loved us.**

Today we thank you for the many mums in our church. We know that being a mum is hard work and can be messy, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Lord, we pray that you will bless them today, and send people to surround them with your great love.

**Lord, help us to love others as you have loved us**.

Today we acknowledge that Mother’s Day isn’t easy for everyone; that this special day can come with a mix of pain, grief and longing. We pray for those who miss their mothers, those who miss their children and those who are longing to be a mother. We pray that today they will feel your love in the love and care of the people around them.

**Lord, help us to love others as you have loved us.**

Lord, we thank you for your love, and that one way you choose to show us love is through the love around us. Help us to love others generously in all that we do.

**Lord, help us to love others as you have loved us.**

**AMEN.**

## Prayers for Mothers – Mega blocks

Equipment: building blocks

Have some blocks displayed at the front. Invite people to think of mother figures who have been a strong influence in their lives – the women of faith who have nurtured, discipled and challenged us to go deeper in our relationship with God. While some music is being played, offer space for people to come and build a wall using their block. As the blocks are connected, we must recognise and remember that connecting with others makes us stronger through the support we give each other. Give thanks to God for the people who positively influence us, and for the important connections and support that has given us in life.

## Poem by Major Joanne Thompson, Divisional Intergenerational Officer

### Mothering Sunday

It’s Mothering Sunday,

Yes, it’s Mother’s Day,

It’s time to give gifts.

It’s time just to say

All the wonderful things

We all think of our mums.

Let’s celebrate now,

With the beating of drums.

It’s Mothering Sunday,

Yes, it’s Mother’s day.

‘But what about us?’

I hear voices say –

‘The ones without mums,

The ones without child,

The ones daily longing,

The ones faking smiles?

‘Where do we fit

On this special occasion,

The ones feeling lost,

Who don’t fit in the equation?

We see in the shops

The displays full of love,

And we whisper our prayers

To our Father above.’

It’s Mothering Sunday,

Yes, it’s Mother’s Day.

But let’s not forget

It’s a good time to pray

For those reaching out,

For aunties and friends,

For those on a journey,

Those seeking amends.

It’s Mothering Sunday,

Yes, it’s Mother’s Day.

It’s time to give thanks

For those who’ve helped on the way –

The motherly figures,

The teachers who cared,

The loving and humble,

for times that they shared.

It’s Mothering Sunday,

Yes, it’s Mother’s Day.

So thanks be to God

For our village today!

Our team of support,

Our family of God,

The mums, and the children,

Our church, our squad!