

## **MOTHERS' UNION THURSDAY PRAYER: 19 MARCH 2026**

### **"The Resurrection and the Life"**

#### **ZOOM INFO**

**Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8IuyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>  
**(MEETING ID: 852 0929 8628 & PASSCODE: 080127)**

**Good Morning everyone.** And welcome to the March Thursday Prayer which is on the theme of **"The Resurrection and the Life"**.

We will begin with a few **prayers**, followed by singing the **hymn**.

#### **MARCH THURSDAY PRAYER. WE SAY TOGETHER:**

**Dear God, our Heavenly Father, enable us to worship you in faith and hope, motivated by love. May your promise to Abraham that all peoples on earth would be blessed through him and his family, be also your promise to us as we seek to heal the wounds of those who are suffering in our broken world. We ask this in the resurrection hope of our blessed Lord. Amen.**

#### **From the MU Annual Prayer Diary for March: "Global Invitation to Prayer and Action"**

Called by God to be a global family of prayer, action, and service, may God bless us with:

- hands to comfort;
- a holy anger at oppression seeking justice;
- a restless discomfort with easy answers, so that we can seek the truth boldly;
- enough foolishness to believe that we really can make a difference in this world.

So, we are called, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done. **Amen.**

#### **Today's Prayer:**

We pray for our work across generations, whether at a toddler group or a grandparent event: wherever young and old meet. May we all learn from each other, having fun and building faith. **Amen.**

#### **A Lenten Prayer:**

Loving Lord, in faith help us in Mothers' Union always keep a Holy Lent with you. Fill our hearts with sorrow for our past failings and may we have loving confidence in all your plans for us in the future. Inspire us with creative ways to shape the plans we are making as we mark 150 years of this incredible movement. **Amen.**

We now sing the hymn: **Breathe on me, Breath of God.**

#### **HYMN:**

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that as you love, so may I love,  
and do what you would do.

2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure,  
until my will is one with yours,  
to do and to endure.

3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fulfil my heart's desire,  
until this earthly part of me  
glows with your heav'nly fire.

4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with you the perfect life  
of your eternity.

*Edwin Hatch (Tune: Carlisle - Charles Lockhart)*



## READING: John 11:14-27

<sup>14</sup> So then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, <sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

<sup>16</sup> Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

<sup>17</sup> On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

<sup>21</sup> “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

<sup>24</sup> Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup> and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

<sup>27</sup> “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

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## TALK: “The Resurrection and the Life”

I find this story about Lazarus being raised from the dead probably one of the most amazing of all Jesus’ miracles, and it takes up the whole of Chapter 11 of John’s Gospel.

It is not like the other miracles of healing or other miraculous signs or even Jairus’ daughter being brought back to life. Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Martha and Mary feature prominently in this story as well, and both say: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died” (in verses 21 & also v.32). But Martha also believes that her brother “will rise again in the resurrection at the last day”. Jesus responds by saying: “I am the resurrection and the life”. And Martha believes that He is “the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world”. There is a sense here of the spiritual aspect to resurrection and eternal life, as well as coming alive physically.

But as with many stories about Jesus and His miracles and parables, there is always something deeper and more profound going on, than what at first appears to be happening.

This is the fifth of seven “I Am” statements by Jesus in John’s Gospel, which affirms his divine nature, and that the resurrection is not something happening in the future, but a present reality with Him. This means that death is not the end for those who believe in Him – spiritual and physical resurrection will be experienced through faith in Him.

The placing of this story in John’s Gospel comes at an interesting point in Jesus’ ministry. Later in the chapter it says: <sup>45</sup> Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. <sup>46</sup> But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. <sup>47</sup> Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.....

<sup>53</sup> So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

<sup>54</sup> Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

In the following chapter (12) Jesus goes and has a meal with Lazarus and his family, then comes Palm Sunday when He is hailed as the king of Israel, and following that is the week leading up to the Passover Festival and His Passion, and Jesus predicts His death. Is the raising of Lazarus pointing towards Jesus being raised from the dead?

The story of Lazarus is about much more than one man being brought to life again. It points towards Jesus being in authority over life, death, and new life – in Him now, in earth and heaven, and in the future. Salvation has come to all those who believe, and through his death Jesus has redeemed us and our sins are forgiven.

We say in the Eucharist: Great is the mystery of faith: Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again. We have a certain hope of forgiveness and eternal life with our Lord – it is a mystery but it is also an amazing promise. We are a Resurrection People and we follow a living Saviour.

In 1 Corinthians 15, there is much debate about what Resurrection means. Jesus' Resurrection is described and confirmed. There is also much deliberation about what resurrection bodies will be like: basically there is a natural body and a spiritual body – we don't know the details – just that it will be different. Just as Jesus' Resurrection body was different after He rose from the dead.

<sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. <sup>15</sup> More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. <sup>19</sup> If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

<sup>20</sup> But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

And in 2 Corinthians 4:

<sup>13</sup> It is written: 'I believed; therefore I have spoken.' Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, <sup>14</sup> because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself.

<sup>18</sup> So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

There are so many other promises in the rest of John's Gospel, it is not easy to pick out just a few. But for me, these ones stand out in John 15: <sup>9</sup> 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

One of Jesus' greatest commands to his disciples and to us.

So, as we continue our journey through Lent, we know that the Resurrection Morning is coming, and that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive and reigns. We are walking in the light of Christ, not asleep, not in darkness, but living a new transformed life in the power of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised He would send. And this helps us as we go about our lives, and as Mothers' Union members, to make a difference to every life we touch, in all we say and do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

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**The Theme of the MU MARCH MIDDAY PRAYERS is "Global Invitation to Prayer and Action".**  
The Focus for Thursdays is **"Call to Ministry of Prayer and Refreshment"**.  
Please join in the words in **BOLD**.

*Come apart and rest awhile (Mark 6:31).*

Lord, we pray that we may find clarity in this world and drown the sounds that distract us from listening to you. We give thanks for retreat centres; spiritual directors, soul friends, prayer group leaders. Their guidance and reflections come directly from God, inspired by their faith in Him, studious and comfortable in the silence.

**ALL: We are all sisters and brothers in the eyes of God, and we pray that we can provide refreshment and prayer to those in need. May all who are burdened with the pressures of life find rest and peace in the Lord. Amen.**

**WE PRAY TOGETHER: THE THURSDAY PRAYER.**

**ALL: Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Our Intercessions. We pray for:**

- The worldwide work of the Mothers' Union;
- Kathleen Snow, our Worldwide President;
- Our Chief Executive, Bev Jullien; All who work in Mary Sumner House;
- Our new Board of Trustees; and our Vice-Presidents: Jean, Hazel and Debbie; those leading and serving on the Task Groups of: Faith in Action, Praying our Faith, Finance & Administration, and Communications;
- Our province of Canterbury and Comfort Fearon, our Provincial President;
- Our Worldwide Links: Lusaka in Zambia; Shyogwe in Rwanda; Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria; Karimnagar in India; Plus Diocesan Links with Kigali & Vellore.

**WAVE OF PRAYER: 19-21 March:**

- Antisiranana in Madagascar; Busoga in Uganda; Yola & Oke-Ogun in Nigeria; Algoma in Canada and Jabalpur in India.

And in the **Anglican Communion Cycle of Prayer** we remember:

The Diocese of Ukwa - The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

**We also pray for:**

- Bishop Dagmar, as she leaves to become Bishop of Edinburgh; our new Bishop of Ely, the Rt Revd Sarah Clark; and for the new Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Dame Sarah Mullally, at her enthronement on 25th March.
- For our local parishes, our families, and our friends; and we give thanks for our many blessings.
- Anyone known to us who is in need or unwell.
- The many countries around the world where there are troubles, unrest, and people are suffering.

~~~ *PAUSE FOR REFLECTION* ~~~

**WE SAY TOGETHER: THE MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER.**

**ALL: Loving Lord, We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.**

**We pray for families around the world. Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life. Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name. Amen**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER.**

**ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name;**

**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

We conclude with this prayer of commitment as we go forward on our Christian journey:

**ALL: As Jesus taught us, we commit ourselves to welcome strangers into our midst, to care for the poor, to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to support justice in our community. In the name of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit we pledge ourselves to work and pray for peace: Peace in our homes, Peace in our communities, Peace in our world. Amen.**

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**We say THE GRACE ALL TOGETHER.**

**May The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.**