



## On your marks

Finding something new for the annual special services is always a challenge. Mothering Sunday is increasingly one of those services where many fringe supporters of church make an appearance. It is important we make them welcome and sow good seeds for the gospel. The following is an idea for a fun contribution to a Mothering Sunday service involving mothers and their children. It is followed by four Bible readings on the theme of motherhood, any one of which could be picked up as part of a short talk.

## Get set

You need to prepare this with your Sunday group children before the service. Go through the questions with them but make sure they will not give away what they have answered to their mothers! For the readings you will need four people – not necessarily children – who can rehearse the verses briefly beforehand.

## Go!

The format for this contribution to the service is taken from many popular game and quiz shows. Before the service up to seven children choose the answers that they would give to multiple-choice questions concerning their mothers. During the service at some point their mothers come up to choose what they think their children said. Clearly you will need to rewrite and adjust the questions to suit your own circumstances. The more particular and appropriate the mother-child questions can be, the greater the impact of this activity, though beware causing unnecessary embarrassment. What follows are some sample questions with possible answers.

1. a) We asked Jonathan what things annoyed his mum? Did he say i) too many meetings in a week? ii) a phone call during an important TV programme? iii) someone eating all the chocolate biscuits in the cupboard?
2. b) We asked Jade what made her mum really happy? Did she say i) discovering that her Friday afternoon class had been cancelled? ii) when twins didn't have a fight over tea? iii) when the school holidays were over?
3. c) We asked Alice what her mum would spend £100 on, if she had a free choice? Did she think she would say i) a new hat? ii) a family dog? iii) someone to do the garden?
4. d) We asked Sam what is the most embarrassing about his mum? Did he say i) the way she sings in church? ii) the way she stands at the school gates and calls 'I'm over here'? iii) or something else?
5. e) We asked Holly what luxury her mum would most like, if she had a choice? Did she say i) a built-in sauna? ii) a holiday in Canada? iii) a lifetime's supply of icing for cakes?
6. f) We asked Rebecca what she thought would be her mum's favourite Bible story? Did she say i) David and Goliath? ii) Mary and Martha? iii) Noah's ark?
7. g) We asked Tim what he does that really annoys his mum? Did he say i) falling asleep in



church? ii) leaving his room in a mess? iii) playing on the computer too much?

You might think it a good idea to put up some of these questions with their possible answers on a screen to create a typical TV format.

Of course the whole idea could be reversed whereby you could ask a series of similar questions with three possible answers to the mothers first before the service and then have their respective children come up to see whether the mums knew how their children would answer!

This section to the service could then be rounded off by four people reading the following verses from the Bible, each of them related to how God values motherhood.

- Exodus 20:12 – God's commands for family life
- Proverbs 31:27-28 – God's picture of a good mum, who earns her family's praise
- Isaiah 49:15 – God's love for us is compared to a mother's love for her child
- Luke 2:51 – God's chosen mum for Jesus and the example she gives us