



# **Mothering as a Metaphor for Ministry. by Emma Percy (Ashgate Contemporary Ecclesiology)**

*Emma Percy*

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Drawing together original research which weaves together ideas from theology, philosophy, feminism and writing on mothering and child development, Emma Percy affirms and encourages aspects of good practice in ministry that are in danger of being over looked because they are neither well-articulated nor valued. Offering a fresh look at parish ministry, this book uses a maternal metaphor to provide an integrated image of being and doing. The metaphor of mothering is used to explore the relational aspect of parish ministry which needs to value particularity and concrete contingent responsiveness. Percy suggests virtues that need to be cultivated to guard against the temptations to intrusive or domineering styles of care on the one hand or passive abnegation of responsibility on the other. Parish ministry cannot be understood in terms of tangible productivity; different ways of understanding success and evaluating priorities need to be developed. The book suggests ways of being 'good enough' clergy who can find the right balance between caring for people and communities whilst encouraging and acknowledging the maturity of others.

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