



## The Third Sunday Before Advent: 8<sup>th</sup> November Remembrance Sunday

Take some time to be still, perhaps light a candle and offer your own prayer to God. You may find the following words helpful.

Father God, help us to come to you this morning with open and thankful hearts. Fill us with the joy and peace that comes with knowing you. Be with us as we walk in your light, rejoice in your love and reflect your glory.

**Amen**

### The Gathering

The Lord be with you,  
**and also with you**

### Hymn 494: O God, Our Help in Ages Past

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of thy throne  
Thy saints have dwelt secure  
Sufficient is thine arm alone,  
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight  
Are like an evening gone;  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,

Bears all its sons away;  
They fly, forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.

Our God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,  
And our eternal home.

## Act of Penitence

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy, forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you.  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

## Collect

God, our refuge and strength, bring near the day when wars shall cease and poverty and pain shall end, that earth may know the peace of heaven through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

## Old Testament Reading: *Wisdom of Solomon 6. 12-16*

Wisdom is radiant and unfading,  
and she is easily discerned by those who love her,  
and is found by those who seek her.  
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.  
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,  
for she will be found sitting at the gate.  
To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding,  
and one who is vigilant on her account  
will soon be free from care,  
because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,  
and she graciously appears to them in their paths,  
and meets them in every thought.

## Gospel Reading: *John 15. 12-17*

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command

you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

### **Sermon: Rev'd Petra Shakeshaft**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> day of November 1918 at eleven o'clock in the morning, a schoolgirl called Catherine Edmunds rang the school bell in Williamstown, Rhondda as the Armistice came into effect and the First World War ended. It was her thirteenth birthday.

In Grimsby a young mother, Ethel, faced the future alone with five young children. The youngest, a boy, was born shortly after her husband was gassed in France. That same child would be shot dead some twenty-five years later as he prepared to go home on leave to be married during the Second World War.

The thirteen year old schoolgirl was my grandmother, and the widow, my great-grandmother. For the time there is nothing unusual about these stories. Europe was littered with widows and orphans. But they are women I remember and their stories link me to a bit of history that I was not present for. *Their* stories became part of *my* memory. They shaped, or re-shaped, our family. They are also part of the collective memory which shaped a nation.

On that same day in 1918, in Orchard Road in Sawston, John and Rebecca Barker would have been remembering their son, Alfred, killed aged 29 in 1917 in France.

Also in Sawston, Florence Brand was, like my great-grandmother, facing the future alone with two children after the death of her husband Walter. Emily Brand, Walter's mother was mourning the loss of not just one son, but two. Another son, George was killed in France. Stephen and Susan Mackay also lost twin sons Alfred and Arthur. Their cousin, Frank, of Common Lane, was also killed.

Most families have their stories. At some level the two world wars touched every family in the country.

This has been a very strange year for all of us; a year we will look back on and wonder about. Since 1919, people have gathered to observe two minutes silence at 11.00 to commemorate the Armistice and to recall the dead; the cost of war. We may not be able to gather together as we usually do, but we still remember together and I think it's important that we remember the people whose names we recall year on year and their stories. Every single one beloved and mourned by their family and community. Every single one part of the cost of the brokenness of the world.

We are the ones charged year by year to remember and read out those names of the men from this community who died, to perhaps re-imagine the pain and grief of hearing of the death of father, brother, son; the re-shaping of a family and the re-shaping of a community.

Just as our own stories shape our identity, these stories and our recalling of them become part of the identity of this community. In the same way our Christian identity is shaped by the story we tell and retell every time we come together,

every time we read and reread stories from the Bible we are reconnecting with the story of who we are; bringing those stories and memories into the present moment – the now..

In the gospel passage we heard earlier, Jesus talks about what love -real love - looks like when lived out in a hostile world. *Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.* It's a line of scripture quoted year on year up and down the country at war memorials and in churches on Remembrance Sunday. But we must be careful not to take it out of context lest we end up using it as a justification for the wholesale slaughter of a generation of young men in the First World War, or any other conflict before or since.

Jesus is speaking to his disciples about the intimate relationship between himself and God that he longs for, for his disciples, and for us by extension. I am the true vine, ... you are the branches. Abide in me. The branch cannot bear fruit without the vine. We cannot bear fruit unless we are rooted, grafted on Jesus the true vine. What does that fruit look like? If we look to Jesus as the model, we see Love and Service. *This is my commandment, he says, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

Jesus was preparing for his own battle, not on the Somme or in the skies; not a battle between nations or ideologies, but a battle between good and evil. A battle that looked all but lost, nailed and bloodied on the cross, but won forever on Easter morning. For most of us, thankfully, we will never be asked to give up our lives to death for another, but we *are* all called to love one another and to serve one another; to put another's needs before our own.

As we begin a second lockdown we shall doubtless see some of that same selfless service we saw back in March and April; All those people who carried on working to make our lives more bearable; the doctors and nurses and all those who kept hospitals, care homes, and shops going. These are the good things that come out of pandemics and wars, disasters and tragedy; that human beings come together and care for one another.

These are some of the fruits, if you like, of love and service. One human being putting aside their own comfort and sometimes safety in the interests of another. *Jesus said, you did not choose me, I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.*

Each one of us is chosen; chosen to fulfil a call to love and service. Chosen to bear fruit – the fruits of love fruits that feed and nurture and serve, support and heal. This kind of love and service is costly and in times of war costs lives; which is why we are called to *love* one another and even to love our enemies; to work towards peace. Peace that is more than an absence of conflict. Peace that is healing of all division, jealousy, fear and hatred.

It's why we stand silent during the Service of Remembrance, recalling in sorrow those grandmothers and grandfathers, fathers, brothers, mothers, sisters, sons and daughters and the stories of those they loved and lost. We recall the *past* gift of their lives which secured peace for us in this *present* moment.

And we recall in gratitude a *future* hope secured for us in the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ who chose you, each of us to bear the fruits of love, service and peace; fruit that will last.  
We *will* remember them.

## Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God the Father, from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## Intercessions

Lord God of peace, glorious and powerful,  
in whose breath the winds blow and the seas rise,  
and by whose hand the storms of life are stilled,  
we call to you now in this time of unrest and uncertainty,  
knowing you are the constant presence,  
behind, before, beneath and beside us;  
with hands that hold us in your love.

May God give peace

**God give peace**

Lord God of welcome and justice,  
no one is a stranger to you  
and no one is ever far from your loving care.  
In your kindness, watch over refugees and victims of war,  
those separated from their loved ones,  
those who are lost.

Bring them safely to places of peace  
and help us always to show your kindness to strangers  
Through your many names we pray.

May God give peace

**God give peace**

Lord God of healing, gentle and strong;  
We pray for all places divided by fear and hatred.  
Give strength and hope  
to those whose lives have been torn apart  
through loss of life, of home, of livelihood  
or lack of opportunity.

We remember all those who gave their lives  
for the peace of this land  
and pray for the grace and courage  
to do all we can to secure that peace,  
to heal divisions, to embrace difference,  
to calm fear and to love even our enemies.

May God give peace

**God give peace**

God of peace,  
whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingdom  
and restored the broken to wholeness of life:  
look with compassion on the anguish of the world,  
and by your healing power  
make whole both people and nations;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen**

## ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

### Poem: Remembrance Day

*by Lance Bombardier Les Parsons, R A*

Let us remember before God,  
and commend to his sure keeping:  
those who have died for their country in war;  
those whom we knew, and whose memory we treasure; and all who have lived and died in the  
service of mankind.

*The names of those who lost their lives in two world wars (and who are commemorated in this  
church) will be read out.*

*The following will be read:*

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.  
**We will remember them.**

When you go home, tell them of us and say  
"For their tomorrow, we gave our today".

*John Maxwell Edmonds*

**THE LAST POST:**

**SILENCE:**

**THE REVEILLE**

### The Peace

Blessed are the peacemakers:  
they shall be called children of God.  
We meet in the name of Christ and share his peace.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**And also with you**

## Hymn: Hope for the World's Despair (Hymn of Peace)

1. Hope for the world's despair  
we feel the nations' pain;  
can anything repair  
this broken earth again?  
For this we pray:  
in every place  
a spark of grace  
to light the way.

2. Wisdom for all who bear  
the future in their hand,  
entrusted with the care  
of this and every land.  
When comes the hour,  
O Lord, we pray,  
inspire the way  
we spend our power.

3. Honour for all who've paid  
war's painful, bitter price,  
when duty called they made  
the greatest sacrifice.  
Their memory  
will never cease  
to cry for peace  
and harmony.

4. Ease for the troubled mind  
in endless conflict caught,  
each soul that cannot find  
the peace beyond all thought.  
May they be blessed  
with healing balm  
for inner calm  
and perfect rest.

5. Love for the human heart:  
when hate grows from our fears  
and inwardly we start  
to turn our ploughs to spears.  
Help us to sow  
love's precious seed  
in word and deed,  
that peace may grow.

***Ally Barrett*** Winner of the *Jubilate Hymns of Peace* competition 2018, to mark the centenary of Armistice Day and the end of the First World War.

### **Remembering the Lord's Supper:**

Take a moment to remember the final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. As we think about this meal - with the washing of feet and bread and wine shared with friends - we remember Jesus' offering of himself on the cross. We rejoice in his resurrection from the dead and look forward to the coming of God's Kingdom. While we cannot receive Christ in the sacraments in the usual way, we can be the presence of Christ in our homes and communities and we can be a praying presence wherever we are.

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours.  
Now and for ever.  
Amen.**

### **Prayer After Communion**

God of peace,  
whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingdom  
and restored the broken to wholeness of life:  
look with compassion on the anguish of the world,  
and by your healing power  
make whole both people and nations;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

### **Act of Commitment**

Let us pledge ourselves anew  
to the service of God and our fellows:  
that we may help, encourage and comfort others  
and support those working for the relief of the needy  
and for the peace and welfare of the nations.

**Lord God our Father,  
we pledge ourselves to serve you  
and all mankind in the cause of peace,**

for the relief of want and suffering,  
and for the praise of your name.  
Guide us by your Spirit;  
Give us wisdom;  
Give us courage;  
Give us hope;  
and keep us faithful,  
now and always. Amen

## The National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen,  
long live our noble Queen,  
God save the Queen.  
Send her victorious,  
happy and glorious,  
long to reign over us:  
God save the Queen.

Thy choicest gifts in store  
on her be pleased to pour,  
long may she reign.  
May she defend our laws,  
and ever give us cause  
to sing with heart and voice,  
God save the Queen.

## Blessing

Go in peace to love and to serve the  
Lord  
**In the name of Christ, Amen**

**If you have any prayer or pastoral needs, please don't hesitate to contact**  
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