



Church at Home

Sunday 8th November

Remembrance Sunday

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

***Do not let your hearts be troubled,
and do not let them be afraid'.***

John 14:27

Suggested Bible readings for today:

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 – At the end of his life and ministry of leading the people of God into the Promised Land, Joshua calls everyone together and asks them to remember how God has looked after them and been with them from the days of Abraham until now. He challenges them to commit themselves to the Lord completely just as he and his household have promised to do.

Psalms 78:1-7 – The Psalmist calls God's people to pass on the laws of the Lord and the story of God's love to the next generation using parables, so that they too will put their hope in God.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 – Paul writes about the Christian hope of resurrection for those who have died. He shares this truth and the promise of the second coming to comfort those who mourn.



Matthew 25:1-13 – Jesus tells the story about the 10 bridesmaids, five of whom were not ready when the bridegroom arrived. Jesus has promised that he will return one day but the challenge is, will we be prepared for that moment.

Question from church-at-home in Linkup: I wonder how we can be better prepared to be of service to God and our neighbour when the opportunity comes?

[Here is a reflective story version of this parable](#) with wooden figures and wondering questions

Additional Bible verses for today:

From Psalm 46: 9-10

(It is God, who)... makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth.

He breaks the bow and shatters the spear.

He burns the chariots with fire.

Be still and know that I am God.

I am exalted among the nations. I am exalted in the earth.

From Matthew 5: 9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

From Micah 4:1-4

In days to come the mountain where the temple stands will be the highest one of all, towering above all the hills. Many nations will come streaming to it and their people will say, 'Let us go up the Hill to the Lord, to



the temple of Israel's God. For he will teach us what he wants us to do; we will walk in the paths he has chosen. For the Lord's teaching comes from Jerusalem; from Zion he speaks to his people.' He will settle disputes among the nations, among the great powers near and far. They will hammer their swords into ploughs and their spears into pruning knives. Nations will never again go to war, never prepare for battle again. Everyone will live in peace among his own vineyards and fig trees, and no one will make him afraid. The Lord Almighty has promised this.

Songs and Hymns:

[O God, our help in ages past](#)

[Lord for the years](#)

[Make me a channel of your peace](#)

[Jesus remember me when me come into your Kingdom – Taizé](#)

[The last post for Remembrance Day](#)

Hymn to listen to, suggested in Linkup: [O Lord, the clouds are gathering](#)

Sermon for Remembrance Sunday, 8th November 2020

from Rev. Dr Keith J. White. This message was originally intended to be delivered at St Mary's Lambourne.



This was how St Mary's looked on Remembrance Sunday in 2019. And had things gone according to plan, the 2020 service would have formed part of the 900th anniversary celebrations of the parish. Appropriately the photo, taken before the service last year, shows the Norman door, a reminder that the church building has its origins in life after the invasion of William the Conqueror in 1066.

On that morning the church and its surroundings were the local embodiment of stillness and peace. The two minute's silence at Lambourne, feels about as far away from the sounds of war as you could possibly get.

Inside the church the East window was brightly lit by the rays of the November sun, and the nativity scene it portrays is exactly what we expect, with the charming exception of the (local) dog who has joined the other animals around the manger.

During the service, the Communion Table beneath this window was bedecked with the British Legion standard.

Meanwhile outside the cenotaph was set among autumnal colours, etched on grass, trees, and gravestones.

So much for last year. This year is different: we need to imagine all this, and much more, drawing on our memories of times past. If we are to enter into the spirit of Remembrance Sunday this year, we really have to do what the annual event is all about: remembrance of times past.

With the names of those local men who died in the Two World Wars in the 20th century ringing in our ears (See *The Lambourne Roll of Honour on page 5*), and with our celebration today shaped by the Covid lock down, what is it that we find ourselves remembering especially today, I wonder?

As a starter to get your thoughts going, here are three.

Conflict: Remembrance Sunday is focussed on recalling (literally) the names of those who died in two of the major conflicts in history. As we hear the familiar names of the fallen from our own parish, we know that around the country, others will be doing just the same, the only difference being the names. In this way the local and the national are connected. Wars are never simply about battles that happen somewhere else. When the guns have stopped, and the casualties identified, then the awful cost is counted in the grief of the families and communities who have lost loved ones. It is not possible for humans to comprehend, let alone remember, the sum total of the cost of human conflicts, and so we pause where we are to allow something of the truth of conflict and war to sink in. Blood has been shed, and tears have fallen across the world. If ever we forget the truth about the ugliness and human cost of war, and fail to pass on this truth to the next generation, then we risk allowing the seeds of new conflict to grow and flourish in years to come.

In years gone by there used to be bus (and trolley bus) connections between the village of Abridge, and the Baker's Arms in Leyton. Several used this route to get to Leyton County High School. At Whipps Cross, just past the hospital and where the buses turned left into Lea Bridge Road, there is a cenotaph bearing some words from the famous poem, *In Flanders Fields*, by John Macrae: "We are the dead...To you with failing hands we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high." All through my life whenever possible I have celebrated Remembrance Sunday at St Mary's, Lambourne. And for me, this was part of what I took these words to mean. By remembering the fallen on Flanders Fields and many other places, I was receiving the torch and prepared to hold it high.

Covid: We are doing things differently this year, because of the arrival of a global virus. And somehow this resonates with the nature of War and conflict that we have just explored. There are growing statistics, but the true cost is counted in families and communities. There is the challenge of how to honour the dead with dignity. Those who suffer most are those who have lost loved ones, or who live alone. This is social distancing at its most cruel. And it reminds all of us of the priceless value of neighbours and community. We could celebrate Remembrance Sunday in our homes simply by watching the television coverage of the British Legion Festival of Remembrance on Saturday evening, and the Cenotaph Service on Sunday morning. But our instinct is to go to a special place where we know others will gather, and to experience afresh the joy of solidarity and belonging. So, the Covid restrictions prevent the very thing that gives essential meaning to Remembrance Sunday.

And that, of course, is just what conflict and war is about: being forced to do that which goes against the very grain of human decency, goodness, and respect. So, during Covid, as in times of War, we need to find new ways of showing by the quality of our shared lives that we care for others. It is possible to withdraw into a shell at such times, whether self-centredly in our households, or parochially in our neighbourhoods. We have an opportunity to show that we carry high the torch that has been handed to us, by the way we

improvise new ways of living and caring for one another, conscious more than ever, of the frailty and contingency of human existence.

Church: There is always a creative tension in many of our minds between remembering and respecting those who have died in conflict and war, and the nature and purpose of Christian life and worship. It is possible to glorify human sacrifice, while playing down the realities of human sin; to focus on human community at the expense of the good news which is at the heart of the Christian message. In an increasingly secular age does Remembrance Sunday need Church and churches, hymns, Bibles readings and prayers?

This is where we come back to St Mary's. We find in the building that which spans centuries of history, war, and peace. We walk to the church through the graveyard, a reminder that death is not the unique preserve of Conflict and Covid, but a defining characteristic of human life. We find before us the window reminding us in November that Christmas is just around the corner. And we hear good news. What is the good news? That the Creator of our world has not left us to the ravages of war and disease, Conflict and Covid, but has come among us in Jesus Christ, in order to put relationships right: with ourselves, others and God. That the central Christian service or ritual is about broken bread and poured wine, symbols of unconditional covenant love. That death is not the end. That the new way of living, foretold by Micah (4: 1-4), where love, joy, peace, patience, self-control, gentleness, are at the heart of families and communities, has begun in and through God's gift of His dearly loved Son.

Do you sometimes wonder what people are thinking about during the two minute's silence? In St Mary's church, I try to remember the names of the fallen, to pray for those bereaved and grieving, and to do this in the name of Jesus. If ever everyone in our parish needed to remember the old, old story of Jesus and His love, it is surely on Remembrance Sunday 2020 during Covid. This is surely where, and something constrains us to kneel before the One alone through whom true love, joy and peace are found.



LAMBOURNE ROLL OF HONOUR

1914 – 1918

Lieut. RICHARD LOCKWOOD, Coldstream Guards.

Commander FRANK H. H. GOODHART, R.N. DSO

Flt. Sub-Lt. MAURICE EPPSTEIN, R.N.

Flt. Sub-Lt. GEORGE PHILLIPS, R.N.A.S.

Capt. W. R. EPPSTEIN, Durham Light Infantry

FREDERICK WEST

JAMES RUMBLE

FRANK C. SMITH

EDWARD FLACK

CECIL BULL

ALBERT GREENAWAY

ALBERT H. BULL

ALBERT TURNER

JOHN REEVES

WILLIAM AMNER

GEORGE BREWSTER

ALBERT ANDREWS

WALTER GURTON

CHARLES THREADER

JOHN GROVES

BERTIE J. CRABB

WILLIAM BOYD

WILLIAM BIGNELL

LAWRENCE GREYGOOSE

LEO GREYGOOSE

ERNEST W. TURNER

WALTER NEWELL

RICHARD BLACKBURN

GEORGE GREENAWAY

BERTIE WILSON

WALTER GRAY

ERNEST F. GURTON

ALFRED SURRIDGE

HAROLD LISTER HARLOW

1939 – 1945

J. O. CARPENTER

W. D. TREACY

W. C. L. LAVENDER

ERIC COOK

H. J. LANG

J. C. L. D. BAILEY

P. S. GUNNING

J. D. CROSSMAN

W. B. PATTULO

R. P. PLUMMER

E. WILLIAMS

J. P. MORRISON

S. ANDREWS

W. A. PEACOCK

R. de C. D'HAMALE

G. EDWORTHY

G. W. JEFFREYS

R. W.G. GATES

D. HALL TODD

T. J. L. McENERY

C. H. LAWRENCE

ALFRED DANDRIDGE

CLAUDE FIELD

FRANK R. GODFREY

DANIEL SOUTH

VICTOR PAGE

GEORGE A. MOSS

LOUIS R. RAWLINS

Visual for your focus table:



A Poppy: People see the poppy in a variety of ways: it is of course the symbol of the British Legion that still cares for those who have been bereaved or injured in wars; it is also a way of remembering the sacrifice made by many who fought against those who would take away democratic freedoms from our world; it is a sign of hope, inspired as it is by the poppy fields in Belgium, where the flowers grew on the very land that had during the First World War been battlegrounds; it can also be seen as a 'vote for peace'.

Here is a Poppy prayer:

Look at your poppy. Poppies are bright and cheerful flowers: give thanks to God for the lives of those who have died in war, remembering all the joy they brought to families and friends, and all the good things they did for their home and their country.

Now look at the red petals: red reminds us of danger and harm. Ask God to be close to those who are still facing danger each day, to give courage to the armed forces, and compassion to all who help others. Place your whole hand over the poppy: poppies are also fragile and need to be handled gently. God cares for those who are hurting and those who are sad. Ask God to comfort all who are grieving the loss of someone they love.

Finally place a finger on the centre of the poppy: ask God to help you play your part in working for peace in the world.

All age activities

1. Questions to get young and old talking together

- Why do people still get involved with wars when we know from history that innocent people are bound to be killed and also what a terrible legacy war can leave?
- Look at James 4: 1, 6-7: are my feelings of anger towards someone really the beginnings of 'war'?
- How can it ever be right to go to war?
- What would happen if more people refused to fight in wars? Wouldn't we just be overrun by evil forces?
- In what ways do you think people in the armed forces are heroes?
- What are we remembering on Remembrance Day? What difference should this day make to each of us personally?
- What does being a peacemaker involve? What did it mean for Jesus?

2. Make a peace sculpture

In many towns and cities around the world, there are often monuments built to commemorate wars, including statues of soldiers and famous battles. What, however, would a statue to peace look like?

Prepare some [homemade play dough](#) and use this to shape a mini-sculpture on the theme of peace. Once it is finished, put it in a microwave for five minutes to harden and then invite families to come back and paint this as part two of this activity.

Here are some sculpture ideas: a dove, an olive branch, a candle, broken weapons. Or look at the following website with the Adinkra symbol from West Africa for peace, which literally means 'no one should bite another' – www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra/bink.htm

Talk about: What comes to your mind when you think of 'peace'?

