

Remembrance Day



A Service for **Remembrance Sunday** – 8 November 2020, Haddington West / Garvald and Morham

Grace be with you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ

“Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory for your love, for your faithfulness.” –

Ps.115,1

“God is our refuge and our stronghold, a timely help in trouble; so we are not afraid though the earth shakes.” – Ps.46,1-2

Collect: ‘Almighty God, keep us mindful of all your benefits and heedful of our high calling, that we may yield ourselves in new obedience to your holy will, and live henceforth as those who are not their own, but are bought with a price; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.’

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6.8

In the presence of God, We commit ourselves to work in penitence and faith for reconciliation between the nations, that all people may, together, live in freedom, justice and peace. We pray for all who in bereavement, disability and pain continue to suffer the consequences of fighting and terror. We remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts past and present, have been given and taken away.

Take time, after the words of the Tryst, to remember those who fought in the recent wars to protect and safeguard our freedoms.

‘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.

Ever-living God we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence; may that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home.
- 2 Under the shadow of Your throne
Your saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is Your arm alone,
and our defence is sure.
- 3 Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received her frame,
from everlasting You are God,
to endless years the same.
- 4 A thousand ages in Your sight
are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night
before the rising sun.
- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all its sons away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies with the dawning day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be our defence while life shall last,
and our eternal home.

[Words by Isaac Watts]

We consider words from the New Testament: [Mt.5,1-12:](#)

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.'

Dear friends

What might be the reason for choosing to read this passage from the Gospel on the occasion of Remembrance Sunday, when we remember those who have laid down their lives on the battlefields of Europe and beyond for a future in freedom for our nation? Can a war such as the one they fought, and for which we remember them, be won in the way laid out in the Beatitudes? The answer, surely, is no, it cannot.

And yet the deeper truth is that war is a thing from which man will emerge victorious *only* in this way!

War is a state of enmity prevailing in the heart of man who has turned from God and has abandoned knowledge of him. It is overcome only when that state is altered.

In the so-called Beatitudes Jesus describes this altered state through the attitudes and actions which proceed from it and express it. They are Jesus's call to arms and to duty for the battle that is to be fought in order to overcome the state of enmity and restore peace to a war-minded world.

This war-mindedness of the world is overcome by those in whom a principle rules that is different from that of a war-minded world. It is overcome by those who *are poor in spirit*, who hang on every word of God in self-abandon and childlike trust; it is overcome by those who rather than focussing on happiness at any cost *mourn* the fact and consequence of sin; it is overcome by those who choose the way of *meekness* over the way of power; it is overcome by those who *hunger and thirst for righteousness* such as to put that before self-fulfilment and having one's own way; it is overcome by those who *are merciful*, who do not count up wrongs in order to get their own back but show grace, forgive and seek restoration; it is overcome by those who *are pure in heart*, who do not resort to deception nor yield to lies and to lying; it is overcome by those who *are peacemakers*, who are willing for the sake of peace to pay the price for the guilt of others; it is overcome by those who *are persecuted because of righteousness*, who stay the righteous course when all around declare it to be wrong and even take action against it.

Jesus calls those who do so 'blessed' because the outcome of what they do is rewarded with a state of things where enmity shall cease to prevail and man shall be filled with God-mindedness.

Dear friends, this call is to Jesus' disciples, to those who hear and follow him. Not because it lies within their capabilities or possibilities – it does not! But because he will lead them into this attitude and practice, will teach them and enable them, will give them the strength and wherewithal to do it. He will give to them and apply to them through the Holy Spirit the victory of his cross and resurrection whereby in his own body, accused of the sins of the world, he bore away the state of enmity (putting it to death in his own death), reconciling man to God through the forgiveness of sins.

Dear friends, when Jesus calls us to is a battle, and it is a battle which, if we remain true, will cost us our lives. When he says 'Come!' he bids us lay down our lives. The world stands against faith and godliness from which these principles arise and wars against it. We shall remain true only if we do it *because of Jesus Christ* and not because of an expectation that we will win out personally as friends of and with the world. "*Don't you know*", says James, "*that friendship with the world means enmity against God?*" (4,4)

But if we stand because of Jesus Christ, seeking his guidance and strength and relying upon grace to help us in our weakness and to overcome our sinfulness (our inclination to comply with the world's voice!), we will find our reward in him. "*Very truly, I tell you*", Jesus says, "*unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.*"

Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will know the one who serves me.” AMEN

- 1 Who can sound the depths of sorrow
in the father heart of God,
for the children we've rejected,
for the lives so deeply scarred?
And each light that we've extinguished
has brought darkness to our land:
upon the nation, upon the nation
have mercy, Lord!
- 2 We have scorned the truth You gave us,
we have bowed to other lords,
we have sacrificed the children
on the altars of our gods.
O let truth again shine on us,
let Your holy fear descend:
upon the nation, upon the nation
have mercy, Lord!

[Words and music by Graham Kendrick]

Prayer:

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict, and ask that God may give us peace: for the service men and women who have died in the violence of war, each one remembered by and known to God; may God give peace.

We pray for those who love them in death as in life, offering the distress of our grief and the sadness of our loss; may God give peace.

We pray for all members of the armed forces who are in danger this day, remembering family, friends and all who pray for their safe return; may God give peace.

We pray for civilian women, children and men whose lives are disfigured by war or terror, calling to mind in penitence the anger and hatreds of humanity; may God give peace.

We pray for peace-makers and peace-keepers, who seek to keep this world secure and free; may God give peace.

We pray for all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership, political, military and religious; asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve in the search for reconciliation and peace. May God give peace.

O God of truth and justice, we hold before you those whose memory we cherish, and those whose names we will never know. Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of this broken world, and

grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm. As we honour the past, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life and hope, now and for ever. Amen.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today your daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen

Blessing:

God grant to the living grace, to the departed rest, to the Church, the State and all people, unity, peace and concord, and to us and all God's servants, life everlasting. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you all and remain with you always. Amen

