



Remembrance Sunday, 8th November 2020, Stanground BC, 10.30 am

Prompt 10.30 start to keep faith with the 2 minutes silence at 11.00 am

NOTICES

Some of us may want to go to our doorsteps for the 2 minutes silence at 11.00 am. Please feel free to do this but so as not to disrupt the service for everyone else, and to show respect, please silently leave the meeting and rejoin afterwards if you want to. Please do not take your “camera” to your doorstep and distract from our act of worship and remembrance. Thank you.

READING Luke 22: 7 – 23 “Do this in remembrance of me”

REFLECTION Please don't panic if we listened to that Bible reading and thought “Oh I didn't know it was communion, I haven't got anything”!! It isn't communion this morning it is Remembrance and this passage in Luke is where we read that Jesus told his disciples to “do this in remembrance of me”. Matthew and Mark don't use those words, not sure if I'd noticed that before!

What is Remembrance? It is NOT remembering, like tying a knot in our hanky or sticking a post it note to the fridge. Remembrance is more than that. Remembrance is more of a “re-enactment”, a remembering of the meaning behind the event rather than just not forgetting the anniversary of the event.

So, in the Bible passage, Jesus speaks of his broken body and poured out blood BEFORE his body had been broken, BEFORE his blood had been shed, and said “Do this in remembrance of me!”.

Jesus spoke of God's judgement on the one who would betray Jesus.

Jesus could have called down hellfire and brimstone from the cross but instead he chose to go to the cross, and surrender his body to be broken, and offer his blood to be shed as a sacrifice so that we could be forgiven and cleansed and made new.

A violence was done to Jesus so that we could be forgiven and healed.

And we were to commemorate and remember the sacrifice behind this violence with simple bread and common wine, everyday symbols of the most extraordinary grace.

God has history of doing such a thing, commemorating a violent act in kind, simple ways. When the Egyptians held the Israelites in slavery and persecuted them, God sent Moses to rescue them, to save them. When God sent death upon the firstborn of Egypt but “passed over” the homes of the Israelites, this led to Pharaoh setting God's people free. It is called Passover to this day and as both Jewish and Christian people engage in this remembrance they do so with the food connected to the event, bitter herbs, lamb, bread without yeast. At the Passover Feast the youngest present asks the gathering “What is the meaning of this feast”, not because they do not know, but because the act of remembrance involves recounting the story.

In Passover and in The Lord's Supper we use innocent but symbolic food to remember how God engaged in saving acts for the benefit of all people.

And the annual Remembrance Sunday, what is the meaning of this? At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1919, the guns fell silent on the First World War. Armistice Day. It had been called the war to end all wars and how sad is it that this was not the case. It was not until 3 years later, in November 1921 that an American veterans gathering adopted the poppy as their symbol of peace. Then as it was adopted internationally it became the means of raising funds to help those who had been injured in wartime.

Why the Poppy? Because red poppies bloomed wild in the farmland and battlefields of France. Because of a poem called "Flanders Field" that spoke of the dead lying beneath the poppies of Flanders Field.

We wear them in Remembrance of those who died in war.

God's symbol of his sacrifice and saving grace has been simple food.

Our Remembrance of those who lost their lives in war is a simple flower.

The poppy isn't especially hardy, a gust of wind blows the petals off ours year after year. They are not expensive flowers, they grow wild. They come in a variety of colours but it is the red, symbolic of shed blood, that is our symbol of Remembrance.

Why do we remember? So that we do not repeat the sin and error of past generations in glorifying war and killing. So that we honour and acknowledge those who were killed and injured, both military and civilian. Some gave their lives, most had their lives taken from them and this applied to all "sides" in conflicts.

We remember so that we don't repeat. And as we remember we do not glorify violence any more than God did at the Red Sea or on the Cross. We remember and we pray for peace.

Prayers

- pray for those who mourn the death of loved ones still, in wars from many years ago and in armed conflicts of recent years
- pray for those who suffer from seen and unseen injuries and harm as a result of all armed conflicts. Pray for all the charities and organisations who try to support them
- Pray for our armed forces in these days and ask God's protection over them. Pray for good governance and leadership in the Armed Forces. Pray that Governments will resource them for safety.
- Reflect on the women who never married because a generation of young men were killed, reflect on the children who were never born and what those children might have achieved. Pray for widows, especially those raising children now as a result of more recent deaths in action
- Pray for peacemakers and peacekeepers, asking that God would prosper their efforts as they work for peace. Pray that God will stay the hand of aggressors and haters and all who make a profit or gain power from war, violence and killing

The Last Post will sound shortly before 11.00 then without announcement we will keep **2 minutes silence** with the nations

Reveille will mark the end of the 2 minutes silence

Closing words and prayer

Share Grace together