

## Remembrance Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – At Home

Hello Church! I know we have different start times when we would usually worship in an actual church building, and thus the Act of Remembrance and the Two minute's silence might be in the middle of the service, or at the end. Since we are "at home" the choice is ours. It is not the where, today, but the doing, that is important. So, the Act of Remembrance is set out at the end, and you may choose whether to move it to the middle or to the end or even the beginning. Just aim to be remembering at 11am! The main thing is to give glory to God for His love, care, and sacrifice for us, and to give grateful thanks for all those in our armed forces, both of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, and of the commonwealth of nations past and present who have paid such a high price and sacrificed so much in defence of this country and other countries and peoples in an effort to do what is right, to act with justice, and in striving for peace and freedom.



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Grace and peace to you all, and welcome to our service of Remembrance.

Let's open with a prayer of praise and worship to commit this time to the glory of God.

O Lord, we praise you, and give you thanks that even though we are apart today, that you are here, with us. At this time when we have had to give up many of our freedoms in the hope of saving lives, we gather in our homes to remember those who gave up so much more in order that we might have the years of freedom and peace that we have had. Such things come at a price and are dearly bought. As we remember their sacrifices, we also remember with gratitude and awe the sacrifice made for us by your Son Jesus, in order that we may be made right with you, our Father God, and be given the honour to become children of God with the help and guidance of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

We now read Psalm 46:

- <sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.
- <sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
- <sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam  
and the mountains quake with their surging.<sup>[c]</sup>
- <sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
- <sup>5</sup> God is within her, she will not fall;  
God will help her at break of day.

<sup>6</sup> Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;  
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.  
<sup>8</sup> Come and see what the LORD has done,  
the desolations he has brought on the earth.  
<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease  
to the ends of the earth.  
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields<sup>[d]</sup> with fire.  
<sup>10</sup> He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth."  
<sup>11</sup> The LORD Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

This is followed by our first song:

Song: **Dear Lord and Father of Mankind**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAxIN0egN-I>

*John G. Whittier. A Songs of Fellowship Worship Resource*

*CCL Licence number: 289404*

**DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND,  
Forgive our foolish ways;  
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;  
In purer lives Thy service find,  
In deeper reverence, praise,  
In deeper reverence, praise.**

**In simple trust like theirs who heard,  
Beside the Syrian sea,  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us, like them, without a word  
Rise up and follow Thee,  
Rise up and follow Thee.**

**O sabbath rest by Galilee!  
O calm of hills above,  
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee  
The silence of eternity,  
Interpreted by love,  
Interpreted by love.**

**With that deep hush subduing all  
Our words and works that drown  
The tender whisper of Thy call,**

**As noiseless let Thy blessing fall  
As fell Thy manna down,  
As fell Thy manna down.**

**Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace,  
The beauty of Thy peace.**

**Breathe through the heats of our desire  
Thy coolness and Thy balm;  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,  
O still small voice of calm,  
O still small voice of calm!**

Prayer (some taken from Words for when there are no words)

Lord God, we bring our praise and worship to you this morning. We thank you for all that you have given to us. We ask now for your forgiveness for all that we have done wrong this week, in what we have said and done, or when we have not acted or spoken up when we should have. We thank you that you are faithful and just, and when we ask your forgiveness, you will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Heavenly Father, whose heart is selfless love, take pity on our divided world; and grant that we may follow in the steps of your Son in giving ourselves to the service of others and reaching out to the marginalised and the despised, that peace and justice may triumph, and your kingdom come on earth. In Christ's name we pray, amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer (All)**

**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.**

We then have our reading: John 14 vs 15-27 (NIV translation)

<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be<sup>[c]</sup> in you. <sup>18</sup> I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. <sup>19</sup> Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup> Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

<sup>22</sup> Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. <sup>24</sup> Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

<sup>25</sup> “All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

We will now sing or listen to “O God our help in ages past”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssr-Ga3Mz6Q>

Isaac Watts. A Songs of Fellowship Worship Resource

CCL Licence number: 289404

**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.

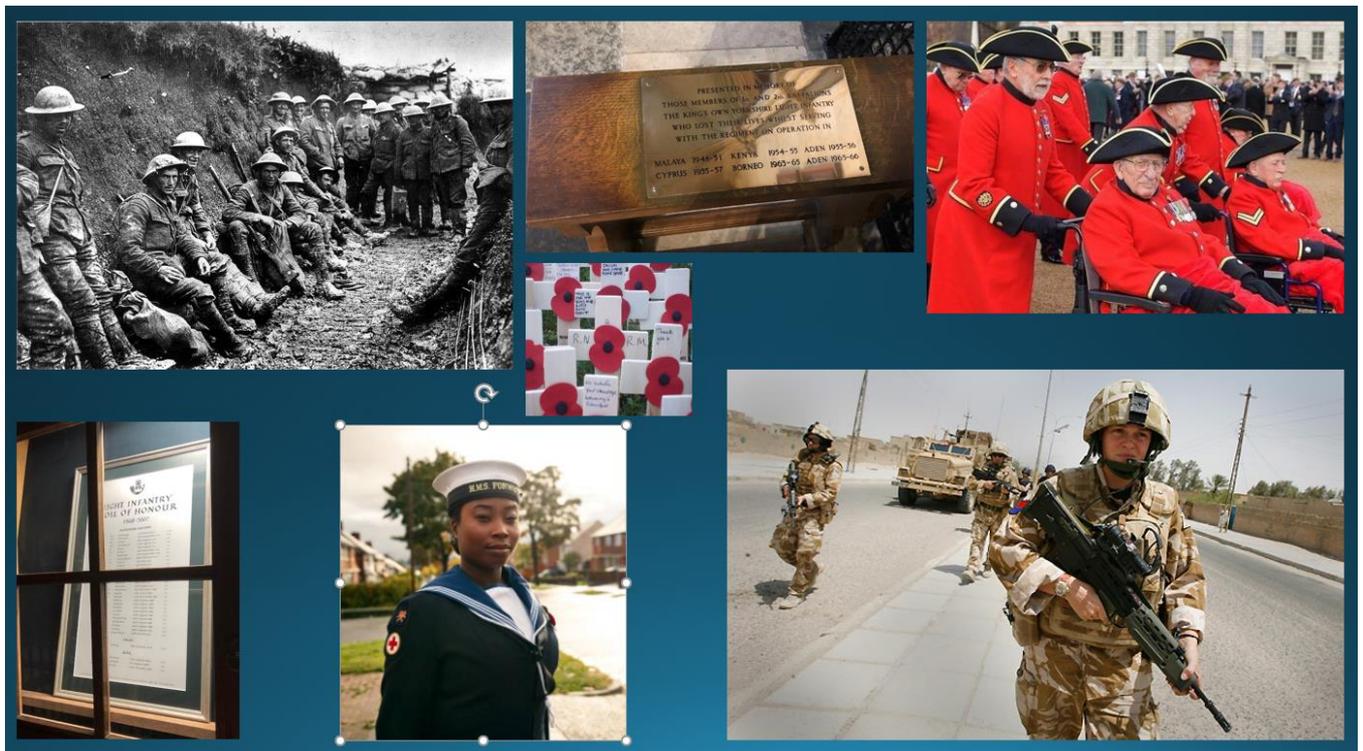
Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

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.

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

### A Locked Down Remembrance



This is going to be a different Remembrance Sunday to the many that have gone before it. There will be no crowds of people at the Cenotaph in London to watch representatives of the serving Armed Forces or the veterans march past. There will be a march past and a ceremony, but everything will be much smaller and much more controlled as the government and the people of the United Kingdom try and prevent the spread of the coronavirus that has so impacted us all. Remembrance services and events will still be held, but in much reduced form with strict social distancing guidelines in place. Said the Prime Minister's official spokesperson, "It's important that the country can continue to come together to remember the sacrifice of those who have died in the service of their

country and we will ensure that Remembrance Sunday is appropriately commemorated while protecting public health." And so we should. During the half term week, Sarah and I took some time out and went to Yorkshire, and on our last day booked to visit York Minster. It's been some years since we last visited, and this time entry was strictly controlled, and masks had to be worn around the whole building. For people like me who wear glasses, it takes at least 10 to 15 minutes for the glasses to de-mist whilst they adjust to the temperature of the surroundings because of the effect of breathing through a mask. I spent the first few minutes grumbling to myself that yet again my ability to see and take in what was around me was being hampered by the mask, as it had been wherever the mask had to be worn. However, the grumbling stopped altogether once we had come out of the main nave of the church and entered an area where there were many memorials to those in the armed and auxiliary forces who had died in conflicts from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through two world wars and more modern conflicts right up to Afghanistan. There was a memorial for members of the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who had died whilst on service in Malaya, Kenya, Aden, Cyprus and Borneo; there was a book of memorial displayed for the Light Infantry who had died in Northern Ireland, Oman and Iraq; and one for the Rifles for Yorkshire Riflemen who had died in Afghanistan. And behind some carefully inscribed wooden panels were the names of women in the nursing services who had died in service in World War One, and a panel commemorating the women of the Royal Airforce who had died in World War Two. In that peaceful part of this place where God had been worshipped for hundreds of years, seeing those names and thinking not just of those who died, but of those who survived but were still physically or mentally scarred by their service, and thinking of their families and friends who also suffered loss, I decided that my own brief loss of freedom from the much hated mask was a small price to pay for trying to keep others safe; a brief loss of freedom that one day will be over; a brief loss of freedom that pales in significance to the sacrifices that had been made in the name of freedom and peace by the people and families behind the names I was reading.

Our gospel reading reminds us that in just a few hours before Jesus' crucifixion, he was thinking first and foremost about the peace and joy of his followers. It is an amazing thing to realise that in the face of his upcoming trial, torture and death, he was burdened for them, not for himself. His words are designed to build up their faith, to tell them that no matter what was to come in the hours, days, weeks, years ahead, that he had their joy, peace and faith in mind, and that he would never abandon them, even after what was to follow. He will not leave them as orphans. If they keep his commands, and show their love for him by doing so, then they will be loved by God the Father as well as Jesus; and that the Helper, the advocate, the spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, will be there to see them through good times and bad. He will be there to "remind you of everything I have said to you". The Spirit will also teach them to correctly interpret the words of Jesus, and in some cases inspire them to write down what they have seen and heard, and so allow us two thousand years later to read these words of John, who was an eyewitness and friend of Jesus. The Spirit will also give them a peace that the world cannot give. We live in troubled times. The world sees peace in terms of removing our troubles – better health,

more “stuff” to make our lives easier, ease of life, and peace of mind based on good circumstances. Jesus’ peace is not as the world gives, or the world understands. Jesus’ peace is there for us in times of trouble and in bad circumstances. John records Jesus saying in John 16 vs 33, “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world, you will have tribulation. But take heart in that tribulation; I have overcome the world”. This is the peace of God that passes all understanding. It is not a peace the world understands. It is God’s peace, not the world’s peace. And whilst we should do all we can to stand up against injustice, and to protect the vulnerable, and to act with justice and mercy, we need to understand that the peace that we as humans buy ourselves is only temporary. As one war stops, another starts. As one trouble goes, another one comes along. As we remember the sacrifice of the many men and women of our armed forces, and honour their memory, and look to the care of those injured in their service, we need to look to the sacrificial love of Jesus, who

“...was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed”. (Isaiah 53: 5).

**I pray that the peace of God in these troubled times will be with you and remain with you; and that his peace will be with the service men and women who serve and have served our country with bravery and dedication. Amen.**

#### **Prayers of Intercession:**

Living Lord, in a dark hour you spoke of the gift of peace, we seek that gift for ourselves. Grant us, we pray, the inner serenity which you alone can give that we may become messengers of peace to a strife-torn world. Give peace in our time, O Lord:

**Give peace in our hearts, O Lord.**

We pray for all who suffer as a result of the wickedness and folly of others. We especially pray for those who suffer from the breakdown of law and order, or from the absence of just and humane laws and are thus denied the freedom to realise their birthright as your children on this earth. Give peace in our time, O Lord.

**Give peace in our hearts, O Lord.**

We pray for those who are fighting; injury, disfigurement, death, their constant companions; nerves and bodies strained beyond endurance, the streams of compassion drying up within them, their only goal the destruction of the ‘enemy’. Whatever the colour of their skin - we pray for them. Whatever the sound of their tongue - we pray for them. Whatever the insignia they wear - we pray for them. Give peace in our time, O Lord.

**Give peace in our hearts, O Lord.**

We pray for all those who stir up strife; for all who make a profit out of the misery of others; for all who are led into vice as they seek a momentary Forgetfulness; and for all who believe that war is inevitable. We remember those who have died. Lord, we pray that you may hold us fast amidst all the evils of this world that at the last we may enter into the peace and joy of your kingdom. Give peace in our time, O Lord.

**All: Give peace in our hearts, O Lord Amen.**

## **The Act of Remembrance:**



### **Prayer:**

**God of all time, we say that time is a healer**

**And yet healing does not happen without our permission.**

**If we come today with bitterness,**

**Persuade us with your sweetness.**

**If we come today still with anger,**

**Pacify us with your patience.**

**If we come with pain, soothe us with your tenderness.**

**If we come numb with shock,**

**Calm us with your hand placed upon our shoulders.**

**If we come in despair,**

**Give us hope.**

Light a light for those we want to remember.

Light a light for hope.

Light a light as a prayer beyond words.

Light a candle for those who gave more than we had a right to ask.

**God of all life,**

**Life here and now,**

**Life beyond death;**

**God of many names,**

**reaching through beliefs and traditions,**

**And sometimes despite these things;**

**God reaching out with a hand to hold,**

**And an ear to listen.**

**Let your spirit move amongst us,**

**Let burdens be lifted,**

**Let hearts be lightened.**

**May your suffering people find peace**

**And may those who mourn**

**Know they are blessed in you.**

"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."**

**Two Minute's Silence to be kept.**

**Afterwards, we pray:**

**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,**

**and by your grace enable us this day**

**to dedicate ourselves anew to the cause of justice, freedom and peace,**

**and give us the wisdom and strength to build a better world, for the**

**honour and glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

**Our closing song:**

**Guide me o thou Great Jehovah:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oq9vcQqI93U>

William Williams.  
Tr. Peter Williams. *A Songs of Fellowship Worship Resource* CCL Licence number: 289404

**GUIDE ME, O THOU GREAT JEHOVAH,**

Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,  
Hold me with Thy powerful hand:  
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,  
Feed me now and ever more,  
Feed me now and ever more.

Open Thou the crystal fountain  
Whence the healing stream doth flow;  
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar  
Lead me all my journey through:  
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,  
Be Thou still my strength and shield,  
Be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan  
Bid my anxious fears subside;  
Death of death, and hell's destruction,  
Land me safe on Canaan's side:  
Songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to Thee,  
I will ever give to Thee.

**Closing Blessing:**

Go out into the world in peace; Be encouraged; Hold firmly to everything good.

Do not give back evil for evil; Strengthen those who are faint-hearted; Support the weak,

Help those who are afflicted and hurt by others.

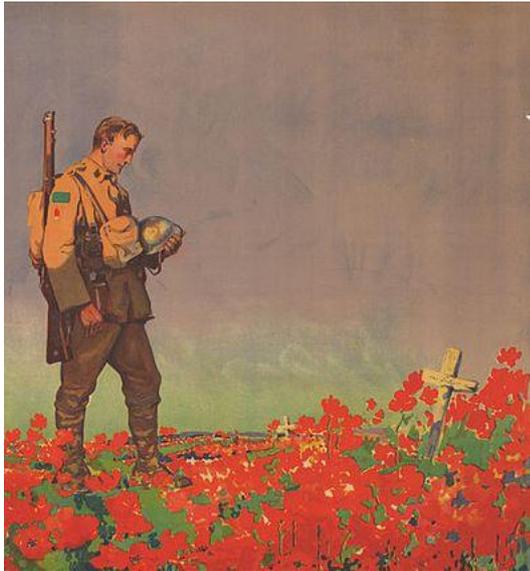
Honour everyone; Love and serve the Lord,

Rejoicing in the power of God's Holy Spirit,

And the blessing God our Father, Jesus His Son, and the helper, the Holy Spirit,

Be among us and be with us always.

**Amen.**



“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.”