

**Call to Worship**

As we begin our worship, these words are for our thinking this morning: “What does the Lord require of you? On this day of all days, as we remember people, who gave their everything for us, we gather here to honour their memory and give thanks.

What does the Lord require of you? On this day of all days, we come seeking peace for all, in a world that cries out for it. We come seeking to love the unloved and to live humbly with our Lord.

What does the Lord require of you? On this day of all days, we come to Him in worship and praise. Let us worship the God of love and peace.”

**Act of Remembrance**

Hymn – Lord of all being, throned afar, (CH4 125)

**Scripture Reading: Isaiah 2 vs 1 – 5:**

This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: ‘In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

Many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.’

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Let us also hear these words of Jesus from the Gospel of John:

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 let them be afraid. (John 14:27)

This is a time of quiet remembering, of silent gratitude for past sacrifices, and of offering deep thoughts to God.

This is a time of expressing pain and regret, of recalling those who did not return from war, of acknowledging the pain of those who have returned, but are forever wounded in body or in mind, and of praying for those who are still engaged in conflict.

This is a time of recommitment to the purposes of God, whose Son said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” “Love one another, as I have loved you.”

**If you are able, would you, please stand.**

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.

We read these words in the Old Testament book of the prophet Micah: “With 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)

Let us pray.

Not just for yesterday, Lord God, not even for just for today, but also for tomorrow, we stand in silence.

We stand this morning, like measured ranks in a foreign field, stone upon stone, name upon name, date upon date.

Stones. Stones not worn by the passing of the seasons, names not yet forgotten by the passing generations, dates too full of memories as year encircles year.

We stand, with pictures in our minds. Pictures of repatriation, of tears from families and friends for their hero, who now is also ours.

Almighty and Eternal God, your prophet promised your people of old a name and a place where they might always be remembered.

So, we now hold those names before you. Names etched in granite. Names carved on our hearts. We stand in this place which we know is Holy ground because You are here.

We stand mindful of the sacrifice, aware no words of ours can ever be sufficient. We stand once more recommitting ourselves to follow the ways of the Prince of Peace.

We stand in silence before an empty cross, the eternal sign of the God who loves His world and who wants for all His children the peace this world can neither give nor take away.

Lord God, we stand in silence.

***The Last Post***  
***2 Minutes Silence***  
***The Reveille***

***“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.”***

Where wars are still waged, and lives are still lost, where terrorism is feared, and where worst fears are confirmed, come, God, bring safety and strength.

To the leaders of the nations, to all at whose deciding there is war or peace, to members of our Armed Forces, still serving during danger, come God, bring wisdom and guidance.

To Elizabeth, our Queen, and all the Royal Household, come, God our Sovereign Lord, bring strength, bring health, and bring peace.

On this Remembrance Sunday, we also pray for the families and friends of those who are currently deployed, waiting and watching so anxiously at home.

And we pray that your Holy Spirit, might strengthen all who strive to ease tension, maintain peace, and resolve conflict around Your world today.

***When you go home tell them of us and say - For your tomorrow we gave our today.***

In all our prayers, spoken or silent, we offer them in the name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

**Hymn CH4 710 – ‘I have a dream’, a man once said,**

## **Intimations**

### **Prayer of Adoration & Praise**

We clear our heads, we still our hearts and we come before God in prayer, let us pray.

Gracious God, our Loving Heavenly father, you are our refuge and in You we find shelter and safety. You are our redeemer and in you we find forgiveness and freedom.

As we come before you this morning, we give you thanks and praise for all the different ways in which we may approach you and for the variety of ways in which You reach out to us.

Whatever our age and stage in the journey of life and faith. Whatever our role in congregation or in wider community, we give thanks that we can come before You as part of the family of Your people in this place and worship you O Lord, our Refuge and Redeemer.

Today we pray as the Psalmist prayed that our words and thoughts may be acceptable to You and not just what we think and what we say but what we also do.

For we confess Father, that all too often our thoughts, words and actions are far from being acceptable to You, or to each other, or even to ourselves. As we recall some of the ways in which we fall short of the standard you have set for us in the example of Jesus, we pray that you will have mercy on us and forgive us...

Help us today, Lord God, to remember the standard set for us by Jesus and the promises we have made to follow Him. Help us to remember that those same standards and promises apply not just whilst we are sat in Church but should spill out into our daily lives and the life of our community.

At home, at work, at University, College or School, wherever we are and whatever we do, may our words and thoughts be acceptable to you our God and Redeemer. May all that we do show us to be members of the family of Your people in this place.

On this day, as we commemorate and commend those who lived and died in the service of others, helps us to remember that your purposes for us are good. That you gave your Son, Jesus, for the life of this world, and that you lead us by the Holy Spirit into paths of righteousness and peace.

For all this we ask in Jesus' name, who taught us when we pray together to say; 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 our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive others that sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

## **All Age Talk**

### **Hymn CH4 198 – Let us build a house**

#### **Readings: Joshua 4: 1 – 9**

#### **Memorial Stones are Set Up**

<sup>1</sup>When the whole nation had crossed the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, <sup>2</sup>“Choose twelve men, one from each tribe, <sup>3</sup>and command them to take twelve stones out of the middle of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests were standing. Tell them to carry these stones with them and to put them down where you camp tonight.”

<sup>4</sup>Then Joshua called the twelve men he had chosen, <sup>5</sup>and said, “Go into the Jordan ahead of the Covenant Box of the LORD your God. Each one of you take a stone on your shoulder, one for each of the tribes of Israel. <sup>6</sup>These stones will remind the people of what the LORD has done. In the future, when your children ask what these stones mean to you, <sup>7</sup>you will tell them that the water of the Jordan stopped flowing when the LORD's Covenant Box crossed the river. These stones will always remind the people of Israel of what happened here.”

<sup>8</sup>The men followed Joshua's orders. As the LORD had commanded Joshua, they took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, one for each of the tribes of Israel, carried them to the camping place, and put them down there. <sup>9</sup>Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, where the priests carrying the Covenant Box had stood. (Those stones are still there.)

### **Ephesians 2: 12 – 22**

<sup>12</sup>At that time you were apart from Christ. You were foreigners and did not belong to God's chosen people. You had no part in the covenants, which were based on God's promises to his people, and you lived in this world without hope and without God. <sup>13</sup>But now, in union with Christ Jesus, you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup>For Christ himself has brought us peace by making Jews and Gentiles one people. With his own body he broke down the wall that separated them and kept them enemies. <sup>15</sup>He abolished the Jewish Law with its commandments and rules, in order to create out of the two races one new people in union with himself, in this way making peace. <sup>16</sup>By his death on the cross Christ destroyed their enmity; by means of the cross he united both races into one body and brought them back to God. <sup>17</sup>So Christ came and preached the Good News of peace to all — to you Gentiles, who were far away from God, and to the Jews, who were near to him. <sup>18</sup>It is through Christ that all of us, Jews, and Gentiles, are able to come in the one Spirit into the presence of the Father.

<sup>19</sup>So then, you Gentiles are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now fellow-citizens with God's people and members of the family of God. <sup>20</sup>You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. <sup>21</sup>He is the one who holds the whole building together

and makes it grow into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord. <sup>22</sup>In union with him you too are being built together with all the others into a place where God lives through his Spirit.

### **Sermon – ‘Remembering’**

Remembrance Sunday is always a poignant day as it is important that we take time, in the context of worship, to remember the sacrifice of those who have given their lives in the service of their country. Important to do so in the context of worship as it gives us an opportunity to bring to God our thoughts and our feelings.

In our Old Testament reading from Joshua, we heard a tale of the building of a memorial – a memorial to the power of God. In the previous chapter, God had just made the River Jordan stop flowing, so that His people, the Israelites, could cross over safely with the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was the special chest that people understood was God with them.

The memorial the Israelites built had twelve stones it – each one representing one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The memorial that would provide a powerful, visual, reminder to anyone who saw it of God’s power. A Cairn of sorts.

Maybe you have at one time put a stone on a cairn at the top of a hill or at a beauty spot. A stone that represents the person that put it there. In the same way the stones on the Israelite’s cairn represented the twelve tribes – each stone placed on a cairn at the top of a hill, or a mountain represents a hill walker. A reminder or memorial to the effort made.

In this Church we have many different memorials of many different kinds – some commemorating sad events and some happier ones – yet all a visual reminder of someone or something. And it is good and right to remember, for what has gone before, shapes our future. To think otherwise is to misunderstand life.

Maybe, for those inside our building today, you stopped as you came in and looked at the names on the War Memorial in the vestibule. To most of us these

are the names of strangers, to a few perhaps the names of family members. However, each of them is a person and each name has a story behind it.

A young man who had his whole life ahead of him, before the advent of war dashed that. A life is cut short, and others' lives are changed. It is essential that for our future that we never forget what these young men did for us and how their sacrifice shaped our lives and our futures.

Whether or not you agree with war – and I respect anyone's right to disagree with the need for war in its most bloody of meanings – what we must never do is forget the names and the stories behind each of the names on our War Memorials.

God's people in the Book of Joshua, build a memorial to the twelve tribes – which marked a union – a shared history and a shared future. How sad that today the nation of Israel and the Holy Land is still a place of conflict and turmoil. I do not begin to understand it all – the politics of it, the history, but it is a mark of the world, that the land where our story as a Church began, is a place of disagreement. Where people are willing to fight and commit human atrocities against one another, and yet profess faith in a God who must surely weep at what He sees.

Our New Testament reading from Ephesians is a powerful one. These words were written by the Apostle Paul to the Church in Ephesus, a Greek Church in a foreign land, not one that was part of God's chosen land – Israel. Paul, a former Jew and now Christ's Apostle, is making clear for his readers that God's love is for everyone. Not just the Jews but for everyone, where they were born is an irrelevance. He is stressing in this passage how Jesus Himself breaks down the "barriers" between people and through doing this brought peace to everyone.

How sad it is that when we look at our fractured world, that so many "walls" still exist in 2021.



Starting with pride. Thinking we are important. More than we really are. Always thinking we are better than others. How often do we see that lived out in politics and between nations? I would suggest, too often.

Jealousy. Wanting something someone else has. Whether that is clothes, money, or land. Disliking them because they have it and we do not.

Selfishness. Always putting ourselves first. Making sure we are okay. Even if that means hurting others.

Prejudice. Treating people unkindly or unfairly. Just because they are different to us in some way.

Insincerity. We feel a bit small or insignificant. So, we hurt others as a distraction from what we think of ourselves.

Greed. Not satisfied with what we have. We want more.

Being unable to forgive. Hanging on to angry feelings. Holding a grudge.

Hatred. Seriously disliking someone.

Fear. When we are scared, we do one of two things. It is fight or flight.

Wealth. We might have it or we might not. Either way it can cause problems for us.

Equally poverty. When in poverty desperate people can do desperate things.

Finally, power. Some people are just power hungry and will do anything to gain even more. Often causing even more suffering for some of the world's most fragile people.

These words can all be used when we think of, not just war, but our own relationships. Where there is balance in favour of one – another one suffers and

where an equal balance does not exist then a proper relationship cannot flourish.

All these words which we have very quickly explored, cause a misbalance. They cause walls to go up, whether that be metaphorical or real walls.

Paul in his letter to the Ephesians reminds them that Jesus takes those walls down. Jesus breaks the power games and makes everyone equal. For Jesus brings peace. The imagery Paul gives of Jesus breaking the wall with His own body is a powerful one. Jesus gave His life so that the world could know the real love of God, the real will of God, Peace & Love, Hope & Joy, a world of equals. A world where no one was worth more than another. A world where no life was worth more than another.

So, each November we take time to remember the price paid by each life lost in peace, each one a heavy price, each one a legacy, and yet what have we learned. Surely, we should have worked out that life is costly, and the loss of life is painful. Why is that we preach forgiveness, and I do not just mean in Churches, and yet find it hard to do the other bit – the forgetting.

Whilst it is right to forgive and forget – that forgetting does not mean we do not remember the sacrifice of others on our behalf. This is something that God understands – it is something He experienced and experiences still today.

For peace to exist we must forgive the past and forget our hurts, but we must never stop remembering those who paid the ultimate price.

Let me finish with words written during the First World War by John McCrae:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders' fields.

Take up your quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flander's fields.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Hymn CH4 706 – For the healing of the nations**

#### **Prayer for Ourselves and Others**

We unite our hearts again in prayer, let us pray.

We give because we have received. We have received because the Lord is generous. We give because You are worthy. You give because You are Lord. We give out of what we hold. You overwhelm us by Your abundance. Lord God receive all we are and use it for the glory of your name.

When we remember ... lives etched as shadows on broken walls following nuclear fission and the fractured bones of a common humanity: tell us of Your new heavens and new earth.

When we see ... oil fields burning in the desert, clouding any hope of ordinary living, turning days of opportunity to nights of fear: tell us of Your new heavens and new earth.

When we hear of ... young lives lost by the thousand and forests turned to wasteland to capture a dozen yards of land: tell us of Your new heavens and new earth.

When our instinct tells us ... to reject, rather than welcome diversity because we have too well learned the lessons of terror: tell us of Your new heavens and new earth.

When we watch ... athletes compete with strength and skill in ways which conquer war-caused injury: tell us of Your new heavens and new earth.

When we despair ... and think that nothing changes and no hope is real, or that peace is too elusive and too fragile to survive: tell us of Your new heavens and new earth and of Your Son: victim of violence, sentenced to die, risen from death the first fruits of Your new heaven and new earth.

And now Gracious God, this is the time for new songs, fresh praise on instruments played with joy. For our God has shown His faithfulness, our God has once more made love known.

Not for us timid days of fearful quiet. Unsure of what is to come. Clinging to a "rose-tinted" age long past. The sea is shouting, the hills are crying out. The whole earth praises God – and so do we. For God is here, present across the earth: and God has shown His faithfulness. Our God has once more made love known.

You call us Gracious God, to sing Your song, to demonstrate justice, to embody your peace to praise your Name with all our strength, all our lives; and to rejoice in what we have come to know: that God has shown His faithfulness. Our God has once more made love known. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Hymn CH4 736 – Give thanks for life, the measure of our days,**

### **Benediction**

We go to remember peace secured, freedom won and all those who have been lost in war. We go to be beacons of peace. We go to never forget the great

sacrifice of many but to always remember. So may the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you and all whom you love, this day and for evermore.

**The National Anthem – 1<sup>st</sup> Verse Only**

**Recessional Song – ‘May God’s blessing surround you each day’**