

Sunday 12 November 2023

Remembrance Sunday

A service of remembering and comfort



Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

Liturgy and prayers of intercession © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

All the hymns are hosted on YouTube. Please click on the links to hear them.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [God is our strength and refuge](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Jesus says, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand’.

So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for Remembrance Sunday

Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Prophet Amos

Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!

Why do you want the day of the Lord?

It is darkness, not light;

as if someone fled from a lion,

and was met by a bear;

or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,

and was bitten by a snake.

Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,

and gloom with no brightness in it?

I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amos 5:18-24

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the arch-angel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-end

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Make me a channel of your peace

[\(click here to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All **Glory to you O Lord.**

[Jesus said], ‘The kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

‘When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.’

Matthew 25:1-13

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

Today is Remembrance Sunday, the day when (as the name suggests) we *remember*: we remember the sacrifices of the fallen, and we remember the bravery and the cost of those left behind. We remember wars fought both recently and long ago. That’s why today’s time-honoured refrain is ‘We remember’.

And therein lies the problem: how *can* I remember a war fought so long ago it was fought before I was born? How can *I* remember anything that occurred before my parents entered the world? Clearly, no-one here was alive at the start of the Great War and therefore no one here can (in that sense) ‘remember’ it. But if we don’t have the necessary memories to hand, how can we create any meaningful service / event / mechanism of any kind that will enable us to stop committing the same errors, the same sins, and hence prevent yet more wars?

This service is an act of Christian worship. During this service, the related words ‘remember’ and ‘remembrance’ occurs surprisingly often. For example, we

will recall the Last Supper when Jesus said, 'Do this in *remembrance* of me.' In fact, that's the clue that helps us to know how to remember in such a way that it does make a difference: the word used in the Bible that we translate as 'remember' was never meant to mean bringing something of the past to mind in any cerebral sense. It's not a word or fleeting mental picture saying in effect 'O yes, I recall ...' Such a short mental picture can't change us—it usually flits then transmutes into a different thought, which is the very opposite of remembering.

To Jesus and his tribe, the word 'remember' meant immersion of self into a situation, re-enacting it with all our senses involved. It therefore involved *participation* and was a way of bringing something back to life again. That's why remembering was always time-consuming and was always costly.

Let's try an example. In the context of the Great War, remembering in this sense could involve mentally placing ourselves in a trench in French no-man's land with mortars overhead and with the ground shaking each time a shell lands nearby. Next, we place ourselves in a cold and stinking underground dug-out and imagine the clinging sense of dread that accompanies each klaxon calling us out of that so-called comfort to fight other soldiers to the death—our death or theirs, whichever occurs first. To *remember* the war in this sense is to place ourselves in the mind, in the heart of the families of those fighting at the front, and feel the way each heart misses a beat when the morning post comes through the letter box—is it a letter saying a loved one has been killed in action? It's a calling to mind the horror of houses, streets, and whole towns being destroyed, imagining the smell of cordite, of dust, or blood, and despair.

If every member of every nation was willing to 'remember' war in *that* sense, in effect was willing to acknowledge the true cost of war, it's a fair bet that wars would cease because we'd be so filled with horror at its cost that we'd never allow it to happen ever again.

There's also a flip side. Many of us, when we 'remember' in this sense, can bring to mind the few good and positive things brought about by war, and they are real: they could include bravery and camaraderie, self-sacrifice, and striving to eradicate evil. All of that is, of course, good. And it's all part of the remembering.

Which brings us to the reason why we're here today. We are here to do something about evil: that's a major part of what following Jesus is about. It's about dealing with the evil inside ourselves as well as outside. And *that* requires knowing Jesus and seeking to do what he would have us do. To that end, Jesus tells us to remember what he himself did: we'll do so later in this service. We'll remember how Jesus celebrated a meal with his closest friends; we'll remember his execution after the kind of show trial that's common in countries that glorify war; we will

remember that he came back to life again. We'll remember his taking our sins which enable us to come before God and actually encounter him, face-to-face.

In each case, when I say we *remember*, I again mean that we immerse ourselves in the ideas and Gospel events of the past. It will involve our imagination and our time. It will involve effort. So when we remember that Jesus came back to life, I mean that we could sit down and (in our mind's eye) *experience* the wonder of resurrection. As our mind's eye becomes accustomed to the dim light of a Palestinian dawn two-thousand years ago, we picture Jesus moving for the first time in days as God re-introduces the life-force of his Spirit into his up-till-now dead body. We should strive with our *everything* to see him struggle to sit up and shrug off the grave-clothes. We are to participate in the event as we see it relayed before our thought senses. We are to believe in, join in, and thereby celebrate in the event. In proportion to our seeing with the eye of faith, so that faith grows and God is enabled to live in us and grow in us, and become a part of us.

And here's the crucial point: if this 'remembering' of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is a mere fleeting thought, 'O yes, I think I remember ...' before we move to something else, then in fact we've not participated in Jesus' life at all. We have not 'remembered' in the sense he intends. Maybe if we have no desire for God, He will say to us, as he said through the prophet Amos in our first reading, 'I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.' If we aren't living in Jesus, how can we identify with him to the extent that we can know what He expects of us so that, when tempted, we know how to act? We cannot.

Today is Remembrance Sunday, and is dedicated to remembering. We remember the lives and the sacrifices of many wars. Genuine remembering will always change us and thereafter will change future history. Christianity has always taught that we must fight against evil in order to overcome it, and the best way to overcome future evil is to first deal with the evil currently inside ourselves, because it releases the energy and holiness of God. And to do that, we must remember—let our hearts and minds dwell so deeply and richly on everything to do with the Lord Jesus that we become like him.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Act of Remembrance

We stand and remember words of Holy Scripture and draw comfort from their inspired wisdom:

God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble. **Psalm 46:1**

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **Psalm 121:1–2**

This I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.

Lamentations 3.21–23

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31

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

Today, we remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives have been taken away in world wars and other conflicts past and present.

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,

Laurence Binyon

We will remember them.

All We will remember them.

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Remembrance Sunday

The bugler sounds 'The last Post'.

(please click on this [link](#))

A two-minute silence

The bugler sounds 'Reveille'.

(please click on this [link](#))

When you go home tell them of us and say,
for your tomorrow we gave our today.

National Anthem

**God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,
God save the King!
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King!**

(please click on this [link](#))

**Thy choicest gifts in store
On him be pleased to pour
Long may he reign
May he defend our laws
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice
God save the King!**

Prayers of intercession

We pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict and ask that God may give us peace.

We pray for the service men and women who have died in the violence of war, each one remembered by and loved by God:

May God give peace

All God give peace.

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 us His peace

All God give peace.

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 us His peace

All God give peace.

For civilians—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 us His peace

All God give peace

For peace-makers and peace-keepers, who seek to keep this world secure and free:

May God give us His peace

All God give peace

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 us His peace

All God give peace.

God of truth and justice, we hold before you those others who have died: those whose names we will never know and those whose memory we cherish, including those who have died very recently.

May God give us His peace

All God give peace.

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.

May God give us His peace

All God give peace.

For the people of Gaza and Israel, we ask for peace; for the people of Ukraine and Russia, we ask for peace; for the people of Yemen and Libya, we ask for peace; for people anywhere who are tyrannised and displaced through war, we ask for peace; we yearn for harmony between every nation on earth.

May God give us His peace

All God give peace.

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The peace

To crown all things there must be love,
to bind all together and complete the whole.
Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,
All And also with you.

Hymn 3 **Love one another**

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below.

The Dismissal

God, grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the church, the King, the Commonwealth,
and all people peace, unity and concord,
and to us and all his servants, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God the Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with us always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 **Lord Jesus Christ**

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy
that we should always sing of your glory,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

For you are the hope of the nations,
the builder of the city that is to come.

Your love made visible in Jesus Christ brings home the lost,
restores the sinner and gives dignity to the despised.

In his face your light shines out,
flooding lives with goodness and truth,
gathering into one in your kingdom
a divided and broken humanity.

Therefore, with all who can give voice in your creation
we glorify your name,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

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.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ

which he gave for you,

and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,

and feed on him in your hearts

by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

God, the source of all holiness and giver of all good things:
may we who have shared at this table
as strangers and pilgrims here on earth
be welcomed with all your saints
to the heavenly feast on the day of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.