

Circuit Written Service – Remembrance Sunday 9th November 2025

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Call to Worship – Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

'Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.'
The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Hymn StF 132

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 thy arm alone,
and our defence is sure.

Before the hills of order stood
or earth received her frame,
from everlasting though 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.

The busy tribes of flesh and blood,
with all their cares and fears,
are carried downward by the flood,
and lost in following years.

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 life shall last,
and our eternal home.

Isaac Watts

Prayers

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? We meet 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 have been given and taken away in world wars and conflicts past and present. Father, our own human history condemns us, making plain our sinfulness. We are unable to live together in harmony; our self-assertion, greed, ignorance, and prejudice ensure that peace is always short-lived. We let pride and patriotism blind and deafen us while justice and mercy go unheeded. We abuse your gift of knowledge: we do not use technology for good, so often choosing destructive and inhuman courses instead. Even within your Church, we have failed to live out the Gospel of peace, failed to show people their true worth, failed by our unfaithfulness in praying for the world, failed by accepting injustice and so increasing tension.

Father, we need your forgiveness. Despite the immensity of our sin, set us free from it; and may the knowledge of your constant forgiving grace result in our striving for peace and actively seeking the good of all; for Christ's sake. Amen

Lord's Prayer – please use whichever version in whatever language you prefer

Hymn StF 517

Eternal Father, strong to save,
whose arm doth bind the restless wave,
who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
its own appointed limits keep:

*O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.*

O Saviour, whose almighty word
the winds and waves submissive heard,
who walked upon the foaming deep,
and calm, amid its rage, didst sleep:

*O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.*

O sacred Spirit, who didst brood
upon the chaos dark and rude,
who made its angry tumult cease,
and gavest light and life and peace:

*O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.*

O Trinity of love and power,
shield all who sail in danger's hour;
from rock and tempest, fire and foe,
protect them whereso'er they go,
*and ever let there rise to thee
glad hymns of praise from land and
sea.*

William Whiting

Remembering

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.

Silence



Matthew 5: 43 – 48

'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Reflection

In this last year I have reconnected with a couple of women who, when they were girls in my school, lost their Dads during the Falklands Conflict in 1982. I told them that I remember them, and their Dads, on Remembrance Sunday and they were touched.

I tell you this because we were one of those extremely fortunate families who lost no-one in either world wars on either my Mum or my Dad's side of the family. So I had nobody to directly remember growing up.

Since my two grandads died, having both played an active part in WWII, I think of them. My paternal grandfather was in the army and in India, and that is about all I know, he wasn't one to talk about it. My maternal grandfather, however, was in the Navy and he shared various stories of his time during the war, on and off ship.

Each of you will have your own stories, your own remembrances, of the hard times, the sad times, and the joyful times. But there is still war in the world as I write this, even though some appears to be coming to an end, and unfortunately we can often find ourselves, or with others, who still express the opinion of 'them and us'. People who are loved and people who are hated, sometimes for their ideology and actions, but more often than not because of what they represent, very possibly unwillingly.

Jesus is very clear on this attitude. You might not like your perceived or real enemies, but you must pray for them, try and stand in their shoes, see things from their perspective, and not hate, because they too are children of God.

If we always keep with our own kind (whether that is our family, our religion, our skin tone, etc) then we are not being as God wants us to be. We are forgetting to love our neighbour as ourselves, loving their humanity, even if we don't particularly know them or like them.

To me, love is not an extension of like, but it is a basis through which we all encounter each other in our lives, the knowing and liking (or not) comes later. It can be a difficult concept to get our head around, especially during a time of war, or other conflict, at home or abroad, directly affecting us or at arm's length.

So what better time to reflect and remember, on Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day, all those that we have loved and lost, especially those involved in war but also those that we did not know, who also suffered and continue to do so, all around the world, brought to us in our news, but only when deemed newsworthy. But let us remember them as our sisters and brother, the ordinary people caught up in decisions and actions not of their making, however difficult that feels, so that we may find peace in ourselves, and peace with God.

Hymn StF 131

By a monument of marble,
or by simple wooden cross,
here we gather to remember
sacrifice and tragic loss.
Blood-red poppy petals flutter,
shadows of a war long past:
all the conflict, all the carnage
sanitized by time at last.

Solemn silence now surrounds us
as we stand in memory.
Why should evil lead to conflict?
This eternal mystery
troubles hearts and stirs the conscience,
urges us to think again;
face the curse of confrontation,
yet reduce this searing pain.

For the sound of war still thunders
through our planet, on this day.
Every hour new victims suffer,
even as we meet to pray.
God, beyond our understanding,
peace seems far beyond our reach;
move us on to new solutions
through the active love you teach.

Marjorie Dobson

Prayers

Let us pray for the needs of the world:
Where there is war and conflict,
we pray for peace and security;
where there is injustice and oppression,
we pray for peace and freedom;
where there is hatred and distrust,
we pray for harmony and understanding.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who suffer as a result of war:

For the injured and the disabled,
for the mentally distressed,
and for those whose faith in God and humanity
has been weakened and destroyed.
For the homeless and refugees,
for those who are hungry,
and for all who have lost their livelihood
and security.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died in war;
for those who have taken up arms;
those caught up in conflicts in any way;
and all innocent victims of war and violence.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hymn StF 636

O love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee:
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its
flow may richer, fuller be.

O light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.

Blessing

God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the world, peace;
and to us and all the faithful, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with us now and for ever. **Amen.**

We also pray for those who mourn their dead,
those who have lost husband or wife,
children or parents, and especially for those
who have no hope in Christ
to sustain them in their grief.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As Jesus taught us
we commit ourselves
to welcome strangers into our midst,
to care for the poor,
to love our neighbours as ourselves and
to establish justice in our community.
In the name of God
and in the power of the Holy Spirit
we pledge ourselves to work for peace:
peace in our homes,
peace in our communities,
peace in the world. **Amen**

O joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee:
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.

O cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee:
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.

George Matheson

