

Order of Service - Remembrance Sunday 2020

On this day of memory we gather to sing and to pray,
we remember the past and look to the future.
Remembering the day when the guns once fell silent,
we come before you God, seeking Your peace.
God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.
Open our eyes and the eyes of the nations
to find a different path through the disagreements of life in this world.
In this time of story, song, and prayer,
may we be re-committed to being people of Peace, true peace.
May we catch a vision of how the world could live together.
And so we echo the old prayers,
Make us channels of your peace.
Let there be Peace on Earth and let it begin with us!
Amen.
(written by Gordon Waldie and posted on *Worship Offerings*.)

Hymn MP 498: O God, our help in ages past (v1 - 3 & 5)

Our 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 Your throne
Your saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is Your arm alone,
and our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received her frame,
from everlasting You are God,
to endless years the same.

Our God, our help in ages past
our hope for years to come:
O be our guard while troubles last,
and our eternal home.

Prayer including Lords Prayer

Most Gracious God,
Father of all mercies
We offer our thanks,
For all that you have given us,
We offer our thanks,

For your grace.
We rejoice in our inheritance of all holy things
And in the freedom and peace in which we live.

Especially this day we give thanks
For the remembrance
We are privileged to make
Of those lives which were given in times of war.

And in our thankfulness
And in our remembering

We offer you the prayer taught to us by Jesus:

Our father,
which art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our debts
As we forgive our debtors
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For yours is the kingdom,
The power and the glory
For ever
Amen

Act of Remembrance

Remember Ypres, Gallipoli, the Somme,
Mons and Verdun.
Remember the Western Desert, El Alamein, the Normandy beaches.
Remember Coventry, Dresden, Hiroshima and the Burma Road.
Remember Aden, Suez, Korea and all the many wars that have continued until today.

Remember the courage, the comradeship, the ingenuity, the friendships,
Remember the planning together for a better world that would come with peace.

Remember the call to arms, the patriotic songs, the partings which were such sweet
sorrow.
The sound of the drum, the skirl of the pipe, the prayer that God would be on our side.
Remember the carnage; the colossal horror of war.
Remember the bereaved,
the old men and women who never knew a parent.
Remember the love that was lost,

the wisdom wasted,
the minds that are still pained by memories.
Remember the families bereft by recent wars and conflict.

Remember this day the children who will die while nation fights nation.
Remember the One who asked us to remember them.
Father, remember us; and forgive us our sins against you and our fellow man.

Please stand, as you are able:

They shall not grow 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
All: We will remember them

The laying of the wreath...
(Jim Sinclair lays the wreath)

Let us now in the silence remember before God those who have died and suffered in war;
those whom we knew,
and whose memory we treasure.

The Silence

(please be seated)

Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted, either by death or life: hear our prayers and thanksgivings for all whom we remember this day. Fulfil in us, as in them, the purpose of your love; and bring us all to your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord God of the nations, whose sovereign rule brings justice and peace, have mercy on our broken and divided world. Pour out your peace into the hearts of all, that all peoples may learn to live as members of one family. through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Words of Welcome

Hymn MP 50: Be still for the presence of the Lord

Be still, for the presence of the Lord
The Holy One is here;
Come bow before Him now

With reverence and fear:
In Him no sin is found -
we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord
the Holy One is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord
Is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire,
with splendour He is crowned:
how awesome is the sight -
our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around

Be still, for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place:
He comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister His grace -
no work too hard for Him.
In faith receive from Him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

Bible Readings

Revelation 22: 1-5

Eden Restored

22 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb **2** down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. **3** No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. **4** They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. **5** There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Matthew 5: 38-48

Eye for Eye

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'^[h] **39** But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. **40** And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. **41** If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. **42** Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love for Enemies

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor[i] and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Hymn MP 428 - Lord for the years (v1, 2 & 5)

Lord, for the years Your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive Your people's praise.

Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us -
self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

Sermon

In the Old Testament, a law was giving to restrict violence;
An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, it says in Leviticus.
However, when Jesus came, restricting was not good enough.
What Jesus wants is perfection.
What Jesus wants us to find mercy and reconciliation in every situation.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'
But I tell you, Jesus says, do not resist an evil person.

"If anyone slaps you on the right cheek,
turn to them the other cheek also.
And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt,
hand over your coat as well.
If anyone forces you to go one mile,
go with them two miles.
Give to the one who asks you,
and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you."

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.'
But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

that you may be children of your Father in heaven.'

"God causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good,
and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?
Are not even the tax collectors doing that?
And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others?
Do not even pagans do that?
Be perfect, therefore,
as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

You see, God sees more in us than we do.
God has plans and a purpose for us.
God intends to use us to achieve something spectacular.
And that something spectacular is precisely to be who we were created to be and, in so doing, to help create a different kind of world.
This different kind of world is where "violence doesn't always breed more violence and hate doesn't always kindle more hate.'
Martin Luther King, Jr. understood the logic behind the thinking of Jesus when he said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

So, can we do this?
Can we turn the other cheek, love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us?
Be perfect as God is perfect?

Well, no we cannot. Well, not perfectly. On some days, we maybe manage but on others not at all.
But here is the thing. What Jesus is expecting here is not perfection achieved, but persistence.
Jesus is not asking us to be perfect,
but to persist in the goal Jesus has for us,
To create this different world.

All through the life of Jesus we see the ways where persistence works.
The woman who wanted justice from a judge. The judge kept on refusing but she persisted.
The lady who asks Jesus to heal her daughter - she persists
The woman who lost one of her ten coins and persisted until she found it.

Jesus suggests that an essential characteristic of what it means to be a disciple is to persist in working toward the goal that these words have in mind:
"Because God persists, we persist"

This is a day to say thank you for the sacrifices of those that have come before us; but the best way we can honour the sacrifice of the past is by persisting in achieving what God means us to be.

All of us, even those we consider enemies are children of God.

All of us, even those we see do wrong, all of us benefit from God's love equally.

The sun rises on all of us and the rains fall.

And if God "takes such a generous approach', then we can do no less.

This is what it means to love your neighbour as yourself.

The other reading today was from the closing chapters of Revelation, and indeed therefore from the closing chapters of the whole Bible.

It tells of the great hope that God will never abandon us

That God, our good God, will find a way for us to return to the source of all that is good.

"Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb **2**

down the middle of the great street of the city.

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.'

We can live with this great reassurance of our ultimate home will be with God, that God is in charge,

However, that does not alter our responsibility to act to stop war and to prevent conflict.

We have work to do now,

to bring people safely to the end of their days and to receive the fulfillment of this hope.

On this day when we remember those who have given in time of conflict,

We are to persist in bringing about a better world.

Amen

Organ: Largo from Xerxes by Handel

1738, a now obscure opera opened in London. It was a commercial failure and soon closed. However, in the 19th century the opening aria from that opera was rediscovered and became one of its composer's most famous pieces of music.

In 1906, it was the first ever piece of music broadcast over the radio,

And at the start of World War Two, it found a new role.

In 1939, the British Isles went into lockdown. The BBC closed its nascent television service and sent many of its non-essential radio staff home.

The radio in those days was mainly news stories and forecasts about what was going to happen.

But as we know in lockdowns, unlikely stars arise.

Sandy McPherson, a Canadian, had been kept on by the BBC to entertain between the gloomy news by playing requests on his theatre organ.

There were complaints. Some critics wanted more high-brow entertainment. Others felt that Sandy played the same music over and over again.

However, he became hugely popular and he was brought out to play day after day as listener's requests flooded in.

One of Sandy's regular requests was indeed that re-discovered piece of music that made history in 1906.

And as we continue our time of remembrance, Linda is going to play that piece of music now.

It is "Largo from Xerxes" by George Frederic Handel.

Prayers for Others (from Church of Scotland: Weekly Worship)

Heavenly Father, On this day, we hold with gratitude the service of those who are peacemakers in their service.

We are grateful for a vision that will hold the darker forces of our humanity in check with an ethos of cooperation, harmony and mutual flourishing.

We pray for the dedicated service of our armed forces in all the generations, remembering especially those who still remain with us from the Second World War. We thank You for their testimony and bravery which reminds us of the tragedy of conflict.

On this day when we are drawn together from many backgrounds, and with faith flickering, strong, or with no faith, we thank You that there are times and causes around which we can all rally for the common good. Help us to find that common ground more, and to work through our differences.

May the example of Jesus, His boundary-crossing life, His open-hearted embrace of all peoples, be the inspiration for our weary and wounded world.

We hold before You all of our leaders, praying for tenacity, energy, and an open-eyed, open-hearted vision for our communities and the world.

On this day of remembrance, we pray for those who have lost loved-ones in conflict, and through the collateral damage of war.

We think of those close to home in the army, navy and air force. We remember those on the other side to us in conflict, and we think of the deep scars of conflict that mark our world whenever there is war.

May our remembering be for new beginnings, so that lives lost are the foundations of new worlds. May the vision of the prophets be our vision too. May Your forgiveness be our forgiveness.

God of the cross and the empty tomb,

God of the road to Emmaus
and the breakfast on the shore.

You have shown us in Jesus the way that is beyond death, so hold us in the faith of Your future. Help us to rest in the confidence of new light and life,
to trust that those we have loved and lost have returned to You, and that our own walk is the way home

where You wait for us in the mystery of eternal life.

May our prayers be heard by you, God our maker, our saviour and sustainer. Amen

Hymn MP 673 - There is a Redeemer (see below)

There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son
precious Lamb of God, Messiah
holy One.

Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.

Jesus my redeemer
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah
O for sinners slain:

Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.

When I stand in glory
I will see His face,
and there I'll serve my King for ever
In that holy place.

Thank you, O my Father,
for giving us Your Son,
and leaving Your Spirit
till the work on earth is done.

Benediction

God grant to the living, grace;
To the departed, rest;
To all people,
Peace;

And life everlasting.

And the blessing of God almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Be with you all.

National Anthem (MP 194)

God save our gracious Queen,
long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
happy and glorious,
long to reign over us;
God save the Queen!