

Worship@Home 10th November 2024 With Revd David Speirs Remembrance Sunday

Opening Prayer:

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, bring justice to all peoples and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer of Remembrance prepared by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Accessed at: <https://ctbi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Remembrance-Sunday-Order-of-Service.pdf>

STF 83 – Praise my soul the king of heaven

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06x2nYDQOfg>

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like thee his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King!

Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress;
praise him, still the same for ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise him! Praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! Praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows.

Angels in the height, adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace!

Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

Please read:

Matthew 5:1-12

<https://bible.oremus.org/?q1=215490651>

Time to Reflect

As we commemorate Remembrance Sunday this year and remember those service men and women who died not only in the First and Second World Wars but in more recent conflicts, we also hold in prayer those places in the world that continue to be marred by the horror of war in the twenty first century.

In September the US newspaper The Wall Street Journal estimated that a million people have been killed or wounded in the Russia-Ukraine conflict whilst thousands of people have been killed in the ongoing conflict occurring in Israel, Gaza, & Lebanon. In Sudan an ongoing civil war has resulted in thousands of deaths and the displacement of eight million people.

On 16th April 1953 the 34th President of the United States, Dwight D Eisenhower, delivered a speech that warned against the extremes of the modern military-industrial complex that not only facilitates the horror of war but deprives humanity in other ways. In the speech the president declared that:

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”

These observations were perhaps even more poignant coming from a former five-star general who had served as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe during the Second World War and had overseen the invasion of Normandy in 1944. President Eisenhower knew the human cost of war first hand both in terms of lives lost and the loss of human potential.

A few months before making this speech, on 1st February 1953, President Eisenhower was baptised and confirmed into the National Presbyterian Church. He remains the only US President to be baptised while in office. President Eisenhower’s Christian faith was surely a significant factor in his desire and hope for a world that was free from both the horror and the threat of war.

Although a military man, leading the US during a time of severe tension with Soviet Union, President Eisenhower longed for the day when humanity would be reconciled and the nations of the world would live together peaceably.

In the reading that we have today Jesus says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9). At the heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus is a commitment to peace. A commitment to loving not only our neighbours but our enemies as well (Matthew 5:43-48).

In a world where conflict, violence, oppression, and injustice continues to strangle and choke humanity Jesus call to love one another and to work for peace is as relevant today as it was two thousand years ago. Jesus not only showed us the way of peace and love in his teaching but in his dying and raising as well. Jesus demonstrated a new way of being in a violent world; a way in which the love of God and the love of our fellow human beings overcomes the sin that leads us into violent conflict and deprives humanity of its dignity and full potential.

As we remember those who gave up their lives in the service of the nation and give thanks for the peace and security that we enjoy in our lives today we also recognise the horror and error of war. We therefore also make a commitment to work for peace in this violent world. Let us pray that the love of God might transform human hearts and minds and let us pray for opportunities to participate in God's work of reconciliation, justice, and peace-making in the world today.

Prayer of Intercession

You are invited to pray silently for:
The needs of the world...
The Church and its calling...
Loved ones going through difficult times...
For peace, justice, and reconciliation...
In Jesus name. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

StF 132 – O God, our help in ages past

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

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.

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 (1674-1748)

Final Prayer

O God of the nations, as we look to that day when you will gather people from north and south, east and west, into the unity of your peaceable Kingdom, guide with your just and gentle wisdom all who take counsel for the nations of the world, that all your people may spend their days in security, freedom, and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

'A prayer for world peace' from *Prayers for Remembrance* on the Church of England website. Accessed at:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/after-funeral/prayers-remembrance>