

**The Anglican Church in the Pas-de-Calais**

**REMEMBRANCE SERVICE November 8th**

**Leader:** We meet in the presence of God and give thanks this day, O Lord of hosts,

For all that makes our common life secure;

for the peace and freedom we enjoy; and for the opportunity that is ours of building a better order of society for the generations to come

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**All:- Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

**First HYMN: Eternal Father Strong to Save**

**E**ternal Father, Strong to Save,

Whose arm hath bound the restless wave

Who bidst 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 Lord of hosts, to you we turn

to give us grace we cannot earn.

Our soldiers guard our way of life,

be with them all in times of strife.

Let courage flow from your command,

we pray for those who fight on land.

Lord, guard and guide all those who fly

Through the great spaces in the sky.

Be with them always in the air,

in darkening storms or sunlight fair.

O hear us when we lift our prayer

for those in peril in the air!

O Trinity of love and pow'r

Our brethren shield 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, air and sea.

**Leader:** Let us confess to God the sins and shortcomings of the world; its pride, its selfishness, its greed, its evil divisions and hatreds.

Let us confess our share in what is wrong, and our failure to seek and establish that peace which God wills for his children.

**ALL:** Confession:

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**All: Amen.**

**Leader:** As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever.

**All: Amen.**

**READING** : “Bringing home the Unknown Warrior” Pauline Cecchin

Armistice Day, 1920

On the anniversary of Armistice Day, 11th November 1920, the bodies of two unknown warriors killed on French soil were laid to rest simultaneously in Paris and London.

The French Warrior was buried under The Arc de Triomphe where an eternal flame was lit and still burns, and the British Warrior was re-interred at Westminster Abbey to lie amongst Kings.

The idea of a Tomb of ‘The Unknown Warrior’ was conceived in 1916 by Rev David Railton, an Army Chaplain serving on the Western Front. He had seen a grave marked by a rough cross which bore a pencil-written inscription ‘An Unknown British Soldier’.

He wrote to the Dean of Westminster in 1920 proposing that an unidentified British solider from the French battlefields be buried in Westminster Abbey to represent the many hundreds of thousands of Empire dead.

Lord Curzon was charged with sending working parties to the battlefields of Ypres, Arras, The Somme and L’Aisne. Their mission to exhume the body of an unidentified British soldier. Transport the body the night 7th November, to an Army Hut at St Pol-sur-Ternoise. A body be selected, the three other bodies to be removed for reburial - the area identified being the Albert -Baupaume Road still being searched by burial working parties.

The body in a simple coffin was transported to Boulogne Castle, which in turn was placed into an oak coffin to be guarded overnight by the French 8th Infantry Regiment.

10th November the coffin draped in a Union Flag was escorted to Quai Chanzy, embarked onto H.M.S. Verdun, escorted to Dover and sent by rail to Victoria Station.

11th November 1920 the coffin was placed on a gun carriage. The Cortege set off from Victoria Station to Whitehall where The Cenotaph, a ‘symbolic empty tomb’ was unveiled by King George V. The procession continued, followed by the King, the Royal family and Ministers of State to Westminster Abbey. Here the coffin was interred in the far western end of the nave near the door, in soil brought from each of the main battlefields.

The guests of honour were a group of about one hundred women who had lost their husbands and all their sons in the war - ‘Every woman so bereft who applied for a place got it’.

Service men from the armed forces stood vigil as tens of thousands of mourners filed silently past. The ceremony appears to have served as a form of catharsis for collective mourning on a scale not previously known.

On a personal note. For those who fought on land, sea and air

Carol Beaumont, a friend and cox of our senior four at Weybridge Ladies ARC, she and her sister Roma never knew their grandfather. They stayed with us a number of times on their way to see friends in Luxembourg. Their route passed by Ypres to pay their respects to their grandfather at the Menin Gate. He did not come home nor is there a grave.

Mr Gasgoine from Walton RC managed to get his friend and crew member onto one of the small ship off the beach of Dunkerque. His friend saw the cliffs in the distance but didn’t make it ashore, buried at sea.

My father’s cousin was a RAF bomber navigator didn’t come back from a mission, no known grave. My Mother’s cousin Pauline was a nurse on a hospital ship torpedoed in the Atlantic.

I personally think that Remembrance is important. If we do not remember our history, take time out to remember so many young lives lost or damaged and the families touched by the horrors of war, peace between nations can so easily slip away.

Second Reading

A poem by U.S. Sergeant Brian Turner, who spent a year in Iraq

ASHBAH

The ghosts of American soldiers
wander the streets of Balad by night,

unsure of their way home, exhausted,
the desert wind blowing trash
down the narrow alleys as a voice

sounds from the minaret, a soulfull call
reminding them how alone they are,

how lost. And the Iraqi dead,
they watch in silence from rooftops
as date palms line the shore in silhouette,

leaning toward Mecca when the dawn wind

 blows.

*by Brian Turner*

**2nd Hymn**: O God Our Help in Ages Past

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.

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.

**Reflections on Remembrance Sunday (Mary Wood)**

Nowadays people seem more concerned with racial, sexual and religious discrimination and commercial domination than with thinking of past wars and anyway our great enemy at the moment is not a nation but a virus. So we pray for its rapid eradication ; giving thanks for all doctors, nurses, researchers... all those who help to combat it and praying for their safe-keeping, while also remembering those who have succombed to it.

As the 11th November draws near, we are ‘gathered’ not only for worship, prayer and mutual comfort, but traditionally, essentially to remember the men and women who laid down their lives in the service of their country, for the sake of what their governments believed to be just. Throughout the ages, it was usually greed and a lust for power and land that prompted men and nations to wage war, while their adversaries were forced to defend themselves. We may add to such bellicous causes, the fanatical desire to impose one’s beliefs on others, even to eradicate those of a different faith, which was not only at the root of the Holocaust, but of present-day conflict in the Middle East, Afhanistan and nearer home, with the civilian attacks we know and deplore today. This said, we often forget our Crusading Christian ancestors were also guilty of much bloodshed.

My next paragraphs could be entitled ‘lest we forget’! The Brits and French pay tribute not only to those servicemen who served in the two World wars, but those in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Faulklands, Algeria, Indochina... commemorating them with hymns and prayers. Sometimes forgetting those who survived, some whose lives were damaged by physical or mental injury. Just as we do not specifically mention the civilians executed for conspiring against the enemy or the innocent civilian victims on all sides. Or again, those in the enemy forces, whether they served willingly or not.

Although **I** am certainly not saying so, some people feel we should do away with Remembrance Day, because the feel that, with these ceremonies, war is being glorified, especially if ‘we were on the winning side’. Surely, on the contrary, it is only right to remember with gratitude and esteem those who died fighting for their country, many, as David Sargent reminded me, ‘accepting to move out of their comfort zone to break the rule «*thou shalt not kill »* in order to protect lives’. Some of us here might well say ‘to protect **our** lives.’ And let us not forget those I have mentioned, along with the police and others who in peace or war, have risked or lost their lives attempting to defend citizens and keep the peace. There are so many negative aspects of war and terrorism that we must **always** pray hard for peace, not only among nations but indeed among people in general.

Yes, ‘We shall remember them’, not as we remember old friends or last year’s holiday, but solemnly ‘commemorate them’. However, typing out the traditional phrase ‘We shall remember them’ set me wondering how many of us knew, personally, any of those we ‘remember’ today and even those who survived. Excuse me if you find my reminicing too personal, but it is meant to make **you** think about ‘remembering’.

The only military personnel I really knew during World War 2, were 3 brothers. Uncle George had come over with the Royal Canadian Engineers, who trained so hard that when on leave, he would arrive at our house, commandeer my bed and sleep for days on end. He later took part in the Normandy landings, and survived. Young Colin was in the Navy, based in Dover, living through horrific air raids and, what was even more nerve-wracking, as you had no fore-warning, the regular heavy shelling from the big guns in the Noires-Mottes beside the Blanc-Nez.

But first and foremost I just remember my father, whose departure at the end of August 39 is one of my very earliest memories, although I didn’t understand why he was going away at all, let alone why he was dressed in khaki, carried a rucksack and that funny, long, pointed thing I later learnt was a rifle. As a reservist, he was immediately sent to the Champagne area of France but came home once, during the ‘*drôle de guerre*’, on a short leave, when I was so proud to hang on to his arm as he walked me to school. Back in France, he and his pals emerged one morning from their cellar shelter to find the village had been wiped out and their officers had done a bunk. Shattered, they avoided the horrors of Dunkirk by trecking right across what had become **enemy** France, to La Rochelle, where they hitched a lift on a fleeing coal-boat. They arrived safely in England, but my father died. Not from severe external wounds, but from stress, hunger, exhaustion and, possibly, coal fumes.

At home, whenever the ‘all-clear’ sounded, I would take some of Mummy’s home-made cakes to the Anti-Aircraft gunners a hundred yards or so down the road, but didn’t really get to know them as they were either too busy or had their mouths too full to answer my childish questions. A couple of years later, we kids would simply skip along behind American soldiers on their way to the pub, vainly chanting ‘Got any gum chum ?’

On the French side, most members of the family, too old or too young to fight, joined the *exode* and fled to Nîmes. When the South was eventually occupied, my father-in-law was sent to an internment camp, where he acted as interpreter, helping some important prisoners to escape to British submarines lying in wait off the coast. Fortunately, the Germans could never prove his role in these evasions. My husband did his military service in Algeria, before things got really nasty, and was not later re-mobilised as he by then had *charge de famille*. So, apart from my father, I have no particular, individual person to remember today as having laid down his life for his country.

Lack of personal involvement does not, however, prevent us gratefully ‘remembering’, paying tribute to all those who, military or civilian, did not survive war or terrorist attacks. And it should not prevent us joining wholeheartedy in prayer and thanksgiving, whether ‘together’ today or in a few days, watching, on television, the probably somewhat reduced ceremonies in Paris or the always very moving service at the Cenataph. Long may these continue, but let us most fervently pray that there will never be further, **new** sacrifices to be remembered. Amen

THE ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

**Leader**: We meet in the presence of God.
We commit ourselves 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 armed conflict and terrorism.
We remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts past and present, have been given and taken away

A Minute’s silence

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
*A*t the going down of the sun, and in the morning, We will remember them.
**ALL: We will remember them.**

*The Last Post*

**Leader**

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.**

**3rd Hymn ; Make Me a Channel of Thy Peace**

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord;
And where there's doubt true faith in you.

Refrain:

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console;

To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness, only light;
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Refrain

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
In giving to all men that we receive;
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

THE CREED

 **All : I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**Amen.**

INTERCESSIONS

On this Remembrance Sunday, let us bring before the God of peace our prayers for the world, the church and all His people.
Merciful God, we pray for peace in our hearts and homes,
In our nations and our world,
The peace which is your will,
The peace which we so badly need.
We remember today O Lord all those who have died in any kind of war throughout your world, soldiers who perished in the horror of battle, innocent people buried beneath the rubble from bomb attacks, men women and children brutally attacked and murdered in their villages. Each one known to you and remembered by name
Today we remember especially those victims of the two world wars including those close to us, or to our parents and grandparents. We remember those who came home with terrible injuries, both physical and psychological and those whose loved ones never returned. And we remember too all the victims of recent barbarous acts of violence here in France and throughout the world

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our Prayer**

Remembering the conflicts of the past and the sacrifices which were made, we pray for a world where war is still a grim reality. Lord as we remember those who have lost their lives, help us to renew our fight against cruelty and injustice, against prejudice, tyranny and oppression. We pray for all those 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 risk life and limb to bring their families to safety, for those on our doorstep who have lost their lives in attempting perilous crossings, for those are hungry and all those who have lost their livelihood and security

*Lord in your mercy …*

Lord God, we pray for the leaders of the nations at this time, asking you to pour out your spirit of reconciliation on them. Give them a longing to bring freedom from fear and freedom from want for all peoples. Give strength and courage to those who bear heavy responsibilities for the peace of the world. We pray also for the Christian Church, called to witness to your love in this generation. May we as Christians work with all men of goodwill to break down the barriers which divide people. May those who profess one faith respect those who sincerely hold another faith and build a community where there is harmony and understanding.

*Lord in your mercy …*

Merciful God, we pray for all who face difficulties in their personal lives - problems in their families, in their friendships, in their neighbourhoods or in their workplace. Help them to be calm in times of uncertainty and patient with those around them. Show us when we can help and give support to others around us .
On this day of remembrance our hearts and prayers go out to all who mourn the loss of those we have loved. When we lose someone close we feel that part of us dies as well but part of them lives on in us, Give us strength and understanding to honour and cherish that gift. Help all those who are bereaved to find the same consolation that in knowledge of your love they may honour the past by looking to the future.

Lord Finally, a prayer for ourselves

O God our Father, help us to realise that all striving after justice must begin with ourselves, and not with others. Make us to be those who work for peace and seek always to express your love in the world. Help us to encourage the spirit of reconciliation, by being those who forgive, rather than those who try to establish their rights. We ask this in the name of the One who forgave those who persecuted him, even Jesus Chris

**Merciful Father: Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

READING

The following reading is a re-written version of the poem which appeared in *Kosovo War Poetry* in 2000. (See *Books* page.) It was written with the relations between Serbs and Kosovo Albanians in Kosovo in the years around 1999, in mind,  but he also had in mind the relations between the Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland

There will be peace:
when attitudes change;
when self-interest is seen as part of common interest;
when old wrongs, old scores, old mistakes
are deleted from the account;
when the aim becomes co-operation and mutual benefit
rather than revenge or seizing maximum personal or group gain;
when justice and equality before the law
become the basis of government;
when basic freedoms exist;
when leaders - political, religious, educational - and the police and media
wholeheartedly embrace the concepts of justice, equality, freedom, tolerance, and reconciliation as a basis for renewal;
when parents teach their children new ways to think about people.
There will be peace:
when enemies become fellow human beings.

David Roberts
1999.

ACT OF COMMITMENT

**Leader**: Let us pledge ourselves anew to the service of God and our fellow men and women:

That we may help, encourage and comfort other, and support those working for the relief of the needy and for the peace and welfare of the nations.

**Lord God our Father,**

**We pledge ourselves to serve you and all humankind, in the cause of peace,**

**for the relief of want and suffering, and for the praise of your name.**

**Guide us by your Spirit; give us wisdom; give us courage; give us hope; and keep us faithful now and always. Amen**

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.**

Merciful God,
We offer to you the fears in us
That have not yet been cast out by love:
May we accept the hope you have placed
In the hearts of all people,
And live lives of justice, courage and mercy;
Through Jesus Christ, our risen redeemer. **Amen**.

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever.**

**Leader:** The Blessing

God grant to the living grace, to the departed rest,

To the Church, World Leaders, and all people,

Unity, peace and concord,

And to us and all God’s servants, life everlasting;

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

Be among us and remain with us always. Amen

**Final Hymn: I Vow to Thee My Country**

I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love:
the love that asks no question, the love that stands the test,
that lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
the love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
the love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.

2 And there's another country I've heard of long ago,
most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;
we may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;
and soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,
and her ways are ways of gentleness and all her paths are peace.