



## Birstall and Rothley Methodist Churches



### Remembrance Sunday 8 November 2020

This short act of worship has been prepared for use at home,  
as we are unable to use Methodist Church premises.

It includes a Lovefeast, which traditionally includes a glass of water and a piece of fruit cake.  
You may prefer to have a cup of tea and a biscuit!

#### Call to Worship

This day has been set aside for us to remember.  
We remember those who have fought in the many wars that have torn our world apart.  
We remember those who have been injured, in body, mind or soul.  
We remember those who have been bereaved.  
We remember, too, the many acts of bravery and heroism,  
of self-sacrifice and courage  
that have given hope to so many.

We pray for peace,

***and, for the sake of peace, look to the risen Christ  
who gives the grace we need to serve the cause of peace  
and make our own self-sacrifice.***

God give us peace.

***If you withdraw your love there is no peace for us,  
nor any hope of it.***

With you to lead us on,

***through death or tumult, peace will come.  
Amen***

Hymn: StF 696

For the healing of the nations,  
Lord, we pray with one accord;  
for a just and equal sharing  
of the things that earth affords.  
To a life of love in action  
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom;  
from despair your world release,  
that, redeemed from war and hatred,  
all may come and go in peace.  
Show us how through care and goodness  
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,  
let it from the earth be banned;  
pride of status, race, or schooling,  
dogmas that obscure your plan.  
In our common quest for justice  
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator-God, have written  
your great name on humankind;  
for our growing in your likeness  
bring the life of Christ to mind;  
that by our response and service  
earth its destiny may find.

*Words: Fred Kaan (1929-2009)*

### **Prayer**

Eternal God, whose image lies in the hearts of all people,  
we live among people whose ways are different to ours,  
whose faiths are foreign to us,  
and whose tongues are unintelligible to our ears.  
Help us to remember that you love all people with your great love,  
that all religion is an attempt to respond to you,  
that the yearnings of other hearts are much like our own,  
and are known to you.  
Help us to recognise you in words of truth,  
things of beauty, and actions of love.  
We pray through Christ, who is a stranger to no-one and no land.

***Amen***

*Adapted from a prayer of The World Council of Churches, Vancouver Assembly 1983*

### **Bible Readings: Micah 4: 1-4**

In days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be raised up above the hills.  
Peoples shall stream to it,  
and many nations shall come and say:  
'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the house of the God of Jacob;  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.'  
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
He shall judge between many peoples,  
and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away;  
they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,  
and their spears into pruning-hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more;  
but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees,  
and no one shall make them afraid;  
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

### **Matthew 5:1-12**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:  
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

### **Time to Reflect**

The poppy is the centre of attention today – and the colours of the poppy are the true colours of today. Not the blue or khaki of service uniforms, though obviously, members of the armed services observe this day very seriously; and not the red, white and blue of the Union Jack, either. To me, the *black, red and green* of a poppy say the most about the meaning of today.

The blackness at the centre speaks of the darkness in our hearts which causes war: the fear and hatred of people different from ourselves, the desire for power, and the greed which makes governments and peoples turn to violence; the cruelty which devises ever more devastating ways of killing, hurting and maiming people and destroying the world around us.

And, then, of course, the red of the petals speaks of the blood and pain which war creates. We still hear on our news the pain and grief of war and terrorism, and are rightly appalled. Sometimes a nation believes it has to enter into war to defend a just cause or conquer an evil enemy. Despite all our noble intentions, we know very well that war isn’t a romantic adventure, but something truly horrible. So, red stands for blood and pain.

But finally, there’s the green in the poppy – green, the colour of life and hope. And when we solemnly remember wars and all their tragic consequences, we pledge ourselves, on an occasion like this, to the service of life: to reconciliation, freedom, peace, justice, and the healing of wounds in people’s lives, and in our ravaged earth.

Black, red and green. The colours of the poppy. For Christians these colours have a particularly deep meaning. Christianity is very realistic about human sin and destructiveness; we know its effects in our own lives, and have to confess them often. But the colour red also speaks to us of the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son - blood shed in pain on the cross to overcome the effects of evil and to bring forgiveness, peace and hope.

And finally, the green of life speaks to us a deeper power than our own, which can fulfil the good intentions we express with our lips – the power of God working within us to bring transformation and hope, where before there was despair and hopelessness.

*Take a time to sit quietly and look at the colours of your poppy*

### **An Act of Remembrance**

Let us remember before God  
the men and women of all nations who have died as a result of war –  
those who we have known and whose memory we treasure;  
those we never knew,  
and those who died unknown.

We remember the tortured, the innocent,  
the starving and the exiled,  
the imprisoned, the oppressed and the disappeared.

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.

***We will remember them***

Let us keep silence with all who witness for peace.  
The Prince of Peace is among us and is preparing to take up his cross

*Two Minutes' silence*

Living God,  
by whose love we are united with one another  
across the boundaries of time and space,  
bring us to a new remembrance of your love and life,  
reflected in earth and sky, and every person who ever lived.  
Teach us to be reconciled to one another and to you,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***Amen***

### **The LoveFeast**

We are all invited to eat and drink together as brothers and sisters,  
children of the living God.  
Taste and see that God is good.

**The LoveFeast Grace:**                      Tune: *Old Hundredth*

Be present at our table, Lord;  
be here and everywhere adored;  
thy creatures bless, and grant that we  
may feast in paradise with thee.

*We take and eat our portion of cake and drink the water*

### **Prayer**

We thank you, God, for our daily bread;  
for the food which delights and nourishes us  
and for the companionship that sustains us.  
We thank you, too, that we can quench our thirst,  
and that you give the Living Water  
with which you surprise and enrich and transform our lives.  
We give thanks that we can share together, in this foretaste of the Holy Realm.

***Amen***

***Our Father, who art in heaven ...***

**Hymn**    Tune: *St Gertrude* (Onward, Christian Soldiers)

Poppies to remember  
lives laid down in war -  
hopes and bodies broken,  
wounds forever raw.  
Red and white and purple

tell of what's been lost,  
summon us to silence  
as we count the cost.

*Help us to remember  
now and every day  
sacrifice and service,  
Lord of life, we pray.*

“Do this to remember,”  
Jesus tells his friends;  
by his death securing  
life that never ends.  
Broken like his body,  
bread on which we dine;  
blood that's shed for us  
recalled again in wine.

*Help us to remember...*

Jesus, we remember  
this the debt we owe;  
and we pledge our service,  
that the world may know  
all that leads to freedom,  
all that makes for peace.  
Let your Kingdom come, Lord!  
Let all bloodshed cease!

*Help us to remember ...*

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### **A prayer of blessing**

Creator God, we commit to you the needs of the whole world.  
Where there is hatred, give love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is distrust, faith;  
where there is sorrow, hope,  
where there is darkness, light.

And may the blessing and peace of God remain with us,  
with those for whom we have prayed,  
and all we remember today who are  
and who have been  
caught up in the conflicts of this world.

***Amen.***