

**Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit**  
**Sunday Worship Sheet, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (Remembrance)**

Our worship for this week was written by Simon Charters.

You may wish to have your Bible to hand. Please note the hymns are now at the back of the sheet for ease of printing. CCLI licence 556292

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**Introduction:**

Today we join with millions of others as we remember those that have fallen so that others may live.

**Hymn:                    StF 499            Great God, your love has called us here**

**Opening prayers:**

Lord, I come before you today at a time when war, and the very real effects of war, are at the front of the news once again. Help me to feel your presence as I take this time to reflect on the breadth of your love for this world and for humankind, in comparison with the hatred that we spill on each other. Help me to understand that, above all, is your supreme power, manifest in wonderful creation, and a purpose for your people, however unfathomable it may feel at times like this. Help me to spend this time in true contemplation, allowing your love to embrace me and encourage me, so that I can be sure that hope still flowers and peace can still bloom in the most unlikely places.

And, Lord, I bring before you the times when I have contributed to conflict. When I have listened without hearing, looked without understanding, spoken without thinking and acted without love. I may not have started a war, but I have, through my own fault, contributed to the discomfort or hurt felt by another. I know, Lord, that that is not what you want me to do, and I say sorry for this. Give me the strength to be more thoughtful and kinder to those around me, so that I may reflect the love and grace that you have shown to me.

Lord, it is through this grace, your grace, that I am forgiven. Thank you, Lord. Amen

**Hymn:                    StF 495            Dear Lord and Father of mankind**

**Readings:            John 15. 9-17.**

**Reflection:**

*Remembrance Day Reflection to the Unknown Soldier - written by Nick Fawcett during a visit to the war graves of Flanders. It asks how it must have felt to be one of the countless young men sent out to the battlefields of "The Great War".*

How did you feel that morning when the call up papers came through? Did your blood run cold, or excitement take hold at the thought that your country needs you?

How did you feel that morning when the time came to set off from home? Did you conquer your fear, or break down in tears with the loved ones you'd soon leave alone?

How did you feel that morning when you first set foot in the trench? Did you brush it aside, or wish you could hide from the horror, the carnage, the stench?

How did you feel that morning when your friend was blown up by a shell? Did you rush to his aid, or just stand there, afraid that you'd somehow been whisked off to hell?

How did you feel that morning when they sent you over the top? Did you shout with relief, or in sheer disbelief, vainly pray that this nightmare would stop?

How did you feel that morning when the bullets started to fly? Did you think, even then, you might cheat death again, Or did you know you were going to die?

How did you feel that morning as the lifeblood slipped slowly away? Did you try to make sense of these crazy events, or with one final breath try to pray?

How do I feel this morning in the face of such slaughter and sorrow? Do I just stand aghast as I think of the past, or give all for a better tomorrow? © 1998 Nick Fawcett

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*Take a moment of silence, two minutes if you can, to remember the fallen.*

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.

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Autumn is often thought of as a melancholy season – the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness (John Keats), windier and sometimes wetter days, the odd frost, early darkness and the foretelling of another winter. We see the fallen leaves swirling around the garden or pavements, sometimes bunching into larger clumps for children to wade into and kick about.

But if you are able to look at or go into a garden, or walk along a tree-lined street, take a closer look at these fallen leaves, while they still have their colour. They are no longer alive, they've been blown from the branch that sustained them. But that branch will produce more next year, because the leaf did its job this year. It has helped the plant produce food by converting the energy in sunlight into chemical energy that the plant can eat. The structures within the leaf convert the energy and make it possible for the plant to get food. And now it lays, dead, but in glorious colour, a tribute to what it did for that tree.

The line that stands out in the passage is verse 13 - "no one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends". Like the leaves fallen from a tree, the men and women to whom the reflection is addressed, come from all sorts of backgrounds, reflected in the different shapes and colours of autumn leaves. Did they mean to be where they were when they fell? Probably not – they were under orders, following the command they were given. Look at the leaves on the ground, and what happens when the wind blows – they land not where they choose, but where the wind sends them.

At face value Jesus words seem very clear – lay down your life of your friends, in love. But today we commemorate a wider meaning – the laying down of life for those unknown. Today we commemorate in a spirit of freedom – freedom to vote, freedom to worship – freedom to speak out for equality and against injustice.

The love that Jesus was talking about was not the love of one person towards a select group of known people, but for all people. So, today, we are prepared to remember people we don't know, and who didn't know us, when they sacrificed their life for what we have today.

We didn't know Jesus personally when he laid down his life for us – simply because we weren't born then. But God knows us – he knew us before we were born and will know us throughout our lives. And God gave his son for all of us living today, and Jesus followed that through on our behalf.

In the short time he was with us, he converted rules into life in all its fullness, providing spiritual food and life-giving energy from his own light.

Today we remember that we are forever in the debt of those who died for us. And we must remember too that we are forever in the debt of Jesus, for his sacrifice, through love, and by which we have been forgiven all our faults.

So let us remember.

### **Prayers of intercession**

Lord of all, hear us now as we pray for the victims of war, and for peace in our world.

We pray for those across the world who bear the scars of conflict – the injured, the maimed and mentally distressed, those who have lost limbs, their reason or their loved ones through the horrors of war. We pray for those left homeless or as refugees, those who have lost their livelihoods and security, and those who still live in daily fear for their lives. We pray for children who have been orphaned, parents who mourn their children, husbands and wives who have lost their partners – countless families whose lives will never be the same again

We pray for those in the armed forces, charged with keeping the peace in countries across the world – their work involving months away from family and friends, and often danger to themselves. We pray for world leaders and rulers, politicians and diplomats – those whose decisions and negotiations affect the lives of so many, and in whose hands worldly peace ultimately lies

Lord of all, give wisdom to all who work for peace, so that a more secure future may be ensured for all. Give courage to those who strive for justice, so that the causes of conflict may be overcome. Give strength to those who seek to break down barriers, that divisions over race, colour creed and culture may be ended. Grant that wherever war, or the threat of war, continues to haunt lives, a way of reconciliation may be found, and harmony established between people and nations. In the name of Christ, Amen.

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn:**                    **StF 712            Put peace into each other's hands**

**Blessing:**    May the peace of God, which exceeds all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Go in peace, to bring his peace to our world. Amen

### Hymn 499

- 1 Great God, your love has called us here  
as we, by love for love were made.  
Your living likeness still we bear,  
though marred, dishonoured, disobeyed ;  
we come, with all our heart and mind,  
your call to hear, your love to find.
- 2 We come with self-inflicted pains  
of broken trust and chosen wrong,  
half-free, half-bound by inner chains,  
by social forces swept along,  
by powers and systems close confined,  
yet seeking hope for humankind.
- 3 Great God, in Christ you call our name,  
and then receive us as your own,  
not through some merit, right or claim,  
but by your gracious love alone ;  
we strain to glimpse your mercy-seat  
and find you kneeling at our feet.
- 4 Then take the towel, and break the bread,  
and humble us, and call us friends ;  
suffer and serve till all are fed,  
and show how grandly love intends  
to work till all creation sings,  
to fill all worlds, to crown all things.
- 5 Great God, in Christ you set us free  
your life to live, your joy to share ;  
give us your Spirit's liberty  
to turn from guilt and dull despair  
and offer all that faith can do,  
while love is making all things new.

~(Lord God, your love has called us here)

Brian Wren (*b.* 1936)

### Hymn 495

- 1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind  
forgive our foolish ways ;  
re clothe us in our rightful mind ;  
in purer lives thy service find,  
in deeper reverence, praise.
- 2 In simple trust like theirs who heard  
beside the Syrian sea  
the gracious calling of the Lord,  
let us, like them, without a word  
rise up and follow thee.
- 3 O sabbath rest by Galilee !  
O calm of hills above,  
where Jesus knelt to share with thee  
the silence of eternity,  
interpreted by love !
- 4 With that deep hush subduing all  
our words and works that drown  
the tender whisper of thy call,

as noiseless let thy blessing fall  
as fell thy manna down.

- 5 Drop thy still dews of quietness,  
till all our strivings cease ;  
take from our souls the strain and stress,  
and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of thy peace.
- 6 Breathe through the heats of our desire  
thy coolness and thy balm ;  
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire ;  
speak through the earthquake, wind, and  
fire,

O still small voice of calm !

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892)

### Hymn 712

- 1 Put peace into each other's hands  
and like a treasure hold it,  
protect it like a candle-flame,  
with tenderness enfold it.
- 2 Put peace into each other's hands  
with loving expectation ;  
be gentle in your words and ways,  
in touch with God's creation.
- 3 Put peace into each other's hands  
like bread we break for sharing ;  
look people warmly in the eye :  
our life is meant for caring.
- 4 As at Communion, shape your hands  
into a waiting cradle ;  
the gift of Christ receive, revere,  
united round the table.
- 5 Put Christ into each other's hands,  
he is love's deepest measure ;  
in love make peace, give peace a chance,  
and share it like a treasure.

Fred Kaan (1929–2009)