

8 November 2020, 10.45am
Christ Church New Southgate
& *Friern Barnet*

Please join with us to read this service together either in printed form, whatapp or via the youtube link on our website www.christchurchnsfb.org

Each person in the church is assigned a deacon who will call you to see if you are alright in these times and to pray for you. Please feel free to call Ruth too if you wish – only happy to help! 020 8368 8157

Hello and welcome to our Remembrance day service here at Christ Church New Southgate and Friern Barnet on Sunday 8 November 2020.

I am sad to share with you that following a short stay in hospital with Covid 19, Brian Gibbins has died. Let us remember Jane and Sue in our prayers.

We begin our worship remembering our God who is Almighty and loving by sharing in reading this creed together:

Apostles creed

**We believe in God
the Father Almighty
who sent Jesus into the world.
He came as a baby,
born of the Holy Spirit,
was crucified, died,
and was buried.
On the third day,
he rose from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
where he prays for us continually.
Praise the Lord. Halleluia!**

A special thank you to the Reflectionary blog for these prayers.

Poppy Prayer activity

If you would like to print a copy of a poppy and colour it in while we pray that would be great. Please see the link on our website or draw your own poppy freestyle!

First we colour the centre the darkest colour you have. See the dark centre of the poppy and remember how dark the skies are now at night time.

With our eyes shut to God's light we recognise that we have wandered from his path, stumbling in the darkness, following human knowledge instead of the wisdom of God, walking by the light of our own eyes, which is no light at all.

Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows." (Isaiah 59:9)

**God of light,
we call upon you in our blindness.
Open our eyes to see your light.**

**God of light,
we call upon you in our walking.
Set our feet upon the right path.**

**God of light,
we call upon you in our places
of darkness.
Walk with us through
our valleys of shadow.**

**Restore us we pray,
for your mercy is great
and your love endures for ever.**

May the Lord, who is all light, heal our blindness, make straight our wandering, and fill our dark places with his incomparable glory. **Amen.**

Now for the petals – colour them red. See the red poppy petal, red reminds us of danger.

When we stay in darkness and refuse God's light, when we feed our selfish instincts, when we place power and prestige above people, then sin buds and blooms.

Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." (Isaiah 1:18)

**God of mercy,
we confess to you as humanity.
We have spoilt your perfect world
with wars and injustice.**

**God of mercy,
we confess to you as community.
We have failed
to declare your peace.**

**God of mercy,
we confess to you as individuals.
We have not loved you
with our whole hearts,
nor our neighbours as ourselves.**

**Forgive us we pray,
for your mercy is great
and your love endures for ever.**

May the Lord, who is slow to anger and full of grace, wash away our sins of scarlet and create in us a clean heart. **Amen.**

And last the green leaf. Green reminds us of new life and spring time.

Revelation 22.1-2 says this "Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life ... On each side of the river stood the tree of life ... And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

**God of resurrection,
we thank you for life renewed.
We choose to forgive
those who have hurt us
or our loved ones.**

**God of resurrection,
we thank you for fresh starts.
We choose to learn from our mistakes.**

**God of resurrection,
we thank you for living water.
We choose to be channels of your
healing.**

**Guide us we pray, for your mercy is great
and your love endures for ever.**

May the Lord, who is the living water, fill us with his resurrection life. **Amen.**

As we consider today what we remember and why we make memorial stones, let us hear from the Bible from the Old Testament book of Joshua. We pick up the story of the Israelites, the people of God having escaped slavery in Egypt, wandered in the desert for 40 years and have just one last river to cross before they can settle in the Promised Land. Crossing the river Jordan was a big moment in the life of God's people, here God asks Joshua to help the people remember just how important their journey had been.

Reading: Joshua 4.4-7

⁴Then Joshua called the twelve men he had chosen, ⁵and he told them, "Go into the Jordan ahead of the Covenant Box of the Lord your God. Each one of you take a stone on your shoulder, one for each of the tribes of Israel. ⁶These stones will remind

the people of what the Lord has done. In the future, when your children ask what these stones mean to you, ⁷ you will tell them that the water of the Jordan stopped flowing when the Lord's Covenant Box crossed the river. These stones will always remind the people of Israel of what happened here.”

Hymn: Abide with me

1 Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me
abide;
when other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, O abide with me.

3 I need Thy presence every passing hour;
what but Thy grace can foil the tempter's
power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can
be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide
with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing
eyes,
shine through the gloom, and point me to
the skies;
heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain
shadows flee:
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

While in lockdown, our brownies, guides
and rangers have been meeting online. I'm
happy to share that they have created some
beautiful poppies, wreaths and memorial
stones. I invite you to watch this
presentation during the time of silence.
Names that appear are those who the girls
know who are in active service.

Act of remembrance

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,

All We will remember them.

Two minutes silence

Sermon: Joshua 4.4-7

Lest we forget – God is faithful

I wonder how many cranes have you seen in
the last week? How many building sites are
near your home? We live – despite
coronavirus and Brexit – in a city that is ever
expanding, ever building. In every building
site that we might go near there is churned
earth, mud, dirt and debris.

And yet if we look closely, despite all odds, in
and among the rubble and dirt there is always
a few shoots of grass, maybe a few self-
seeded flowers. Even in a seemingly
inhospitable place like a building site – it is
possible to see something beautiful is
growing.

It is the disturbed earth of battlefields of
France that saw poppies bursting into new
life after WW1. This was the symbol chosen
to remember the sacrifice of many.

From the very place of pain and suffering of
so so so many lives, a flower grows. A delicate
gentle and oh so gracious a flower grows. The
poppies that we wear are temporary symbols
to remind us of sacrifice.

At the Cenotaph and up and down the
country – even near Aldi in North Finchley,
we find permanent stone monuments to the
sacrifice of the armed services. In normal
times, we gathered around such places to
remember, and to keep remembering so that

never again should such devastation be known.

In our reading today, we hear of the Israelites - The people of God who had been promised new life and a new land a long time before they got it. They were oppressed, homeless and wandering for decades till they got to the Jordan river.

The Jordan was a river to cross and a watershed moment. It was a defining moment for individuals and for the entire people. The Lord brought his people out of Egypt and with Moses leading the way the Israelites crossed the red sea, God brought them through the desert, through the pain, through suffering and finally, finally crossed over the Jordan.

Each of us have moments in our lives like this don't we? Each of us have significant moments in our lives, a moment of transition when we are never the same again. It could be a baby born, a marriage, a death, a new vocation found. For the Christian the significant moment in life is baptism – we acknowledge our love for God and our desire to follow him and we go through the waters, we are made new – hallelujah!

And the lord tells the leader of the people Joshua: don't let this moment pass, remember what I have done for you, remember how I have led you, remember how I have loved you, remember that I am faithful to you, that I am providing for you and I will always provide for you. Remember that I am faithful. So take a big stone from that river and put it up.

And when your children ask – what do those stones mean? Tell them I am faithful, tell them that I will lead you in testing times and in easy times, that I am always with you, that I love you, that I am gracious to my people. Let the stones remind you of me and my

promise to you to be faithful.

Today we will look at stones erected to remember love too. The love of men, young and old, the love of women, young and old who served this country and gave everything they had to grant us our peace.

While we weep that war and violence ever happens we are so grateful that in the threat to our peaceful lives, our grandparents and great-grandparents stood firm and fought.

We recognize the enormous sacrifice and bravery of our armed forces today and we thank them for their current service.

The memorial boards in our church and memorial stones all over the UK remind us of the love and sacrifice of others for us. The stones of the Jordan reminded God's people of the love and faithfulness of God.

As we consider today what we remember, may we remember that God is faithful. Faithful to love, faithful to grace and faithful to compassion and mercy. Faithful to sending his son Jesus to us, faithful to the sacrifice of Christ's death on the cross. Faithful to his resurrection ! He is faithful to his promise to make our world new again, to call us all to live in heaven with him where there is no pain or suffering.

It may be that each of us feel rather churned up today, longing to find a stone on which to lean upon.

We may find the thought of another 4 week lockdown heavy indeed.

We may find ourselves at a turning point and we are unsure what to do.

We may be despairing at the state of our national or international politics.

We may be missing a loved one.

We may be seeking to see a green shoot in a difficult place.

We may feel a call to love and serve God in a new way.

However we feel – hear today that God is faithful, no matter what, no matter what global leaders may say or do, God is faithful and will lead us because he loves us.

May I encourage you later on today, to take a walk. Have a think now, where is the nearest pond or lake or stream near to you. Ours is at Arnos Park, or there's a lake at Broomfield, Grovelands park or Alexander Palace. Pick up a small stone and pray that you will know today and throughout this lockdown now that God is faithful. Drop the stone gently into the river and allow God's Spirit to restore you.

Intercession

Jesus welcomed the outcasts, forgave for the unforgivable and died for the unworthy. We, his body on earth, do not always follow his example. Many see the Church as rejecting those who do not fit.

Hear the words of our Lord: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt 11:28-30)

"He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' ... 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.'" (Rev 21:5-6)

God of peace, we bring to you our hurting people. May we be your hands to heal and comfort. We especially remember Jane and Sue mourning Brian and Peter waiting for surgery.

God of peace, we bring to you our suffering victims. May we be your voice to cry out against injustice.

God of peace, we bring to you our wounded heroes. May we be your arms to defend the defenceless and work for reconciliation.

Strengthen us we pray, for your mercy is great and your love endures for ever.

Our final hymn is called 'Hope for the world's despair' and it is linked on our playlist or on our website.

As we are now in lockdown, church will be online until it is safe for public worship to resume. You are all welcome to join a Zoom prayer meeting from 12 noon. Please see Clare's email for the joining code, or text me or a deacon.

Blessing

May the Lord, who is the Prince of peace, empower us, equip us and send us. Amen.

<https://youtu.be/xIQAykpkbhw>

1 Hope for the world's despair:
we feel the nations' pain;
can anything repair
this broken earth again?
For this we pray:
in every place
a spark of grace
to light the way.

2 Wisdom for all who bear
the future in their hand,
entrusted with the care
of this and every land.
When comes the hour,
O Lord, we pray,
inspire the way
we spend our power.

3 Honour for all who've paid
war's painful, bitter price,
when duty called they made
the greatest sacrifice.
Their memory
will never cease
to cry for peace
and harmony.

4 Ease for the troubled mind
in endless conflict caught,
each soul that cannot find
the peace beyond all thought.
May they be blessed
with healing balm
for inner calm
and perfect rest.

5 Love for the human heart:
when hate grows from our fears
and inwardly we start
to turn our ploughs to spears.
Help us to sow
love's precious seed
in word and deed,
that peace may grow.

Ally Barrett (To tune of love unknown)