

**ORPHIR and STENNESS CHURCH,
Sunday 08.11.20; Remembrance Day
Service Handout – edited for distribution**

In the present circumstances of the Coronavirus pandemic, when we are unable to hold our Church services, we think of other Christian people here, and all over the world, and especially family and friends who are separated from us. I invite you to use this service in whatever way is best for you. You may like to look up the hymns and read – or sing - them. If you know of anyone who would like to receive these services and is not on the list, please pass email address to Nicol or Kathryn, and please feel free to pass on hard copies to people who don't have internet access. God bless you all.

“We may not be gathered in the same building, but at this time, when we need each other so much, we are invited to worship together, from where we are – knowing that God can hear us all and can blend even distant voices into one song of worship.”

- Church of Scotland; National Worship Team

This Service is Based on Church of Scotland Book of Common Order (BCO).

Welcome:

1 Call to Worship: “The Bidding”:

We have come together to worship almighty God;
to offer him praise and thanksgiving for our nation's deliverance in time of war;
to recall to our minds those who, through death, injury or bereavement,
suffered to bring peace and freedom to our world;
to seek his forgiveness for our failure to achieve reconciliation between the nations,
and to ask for strength to overcome evil and injustice wherever it is found.

2 Scripture Sentences:

Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples.
For great is his love towards us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever (*Ps. 117*).

Let us worship God:

3 HYMN (1) 161 O God, our help in ages past

4 PRAYERS

Eternal God,
shepherd of our souls, giver of life everlasting,
on this day when we commemorate and commend to you
all those who lived and died in the service of others.

We are glad to remember that your purposes for us are good,
that you gave Jesus Christ for the life of the world,
and that you lead us by his Holy Spirit into the paths of righteousness and peace.

Merciful and faithful God,
your purpose is to fold both earth and heaven in a single peace.
With sorrow we confess that, in our hearts, we keep alive
the passions and pride that lead to hatred and to war.
We are not worthy of your love, nor of the sacrifice made by others on our behalf.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Almighty God

pardon and deliver us from all our sins,
strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God of all grace,
you declared your reconciling love and power
in the death and resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

As we live only in your forgiveness, teach us to forgive one another.
Heal our divisions, cast out our fears,
renew our faith in your unchanging purpose of goodwill and peace on earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen. (*From BCO, edited*)

5 CALL TO REMEMBRANCE

Reading of Names from War Memorials; Introduction:

We may claim that war is sometimes necessary, sometimes justified, but by its very nature it brings havoc and horror and untold suffering. It costs lives, and shortens lives. War is always brutal.

I wonder what it might have been like to be a minister in Orkney during the war years. I wonder whether words such as those we will read from St. John's Gospel really brought comfort to the families who lost sons, grandsons, fiancés, husbands, brothers, nephews and cousins.

Such is the horror of war, and so great was the sacrifice paid by the servicemen who lost their lives, a sacrifice also borne by their loved ones, that it is right that we remember them by name.

Irrespective of ranks or titles, I suggest that it is also appropriate that we give all those who paid the ultimate price one last rank or title. Because there is equality in death, the title conferred should be common to all: ***Friend***.

To lay down willingly one's own life for the benefit of others, especially when there is no certainty of a beneficial outcome, is the ultimate act of friendship. Today let us not just recall the names of those who lost their lives in war, but let us remember them with thanksgiving, as true friends.

May they now rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

A member of the Congregation will read the names from Orphir War Memorial:

Orphir War Memorial: List: (Edited for Reading):

1914 – 1919:

THOMAS ANDERSON Gyre, age 28.

JOHN MUIR Kirbister, age 34.

JAMES H. BRASS Outer Dale, age 19.

SAMUEL R. DONALDSON Donaldsons, age 28.

JAMES S. FARQUHAR Nearhouse, age 31.
CHARLES JOHNSTON Scows, age 27.
GEORGE ROBSON Gray's Inn, age 18.
VICTOR SCLATER Kebro, age 21.
CHARLES SCOTT Swanbister, age 20.
ALEXANDER SHURIE Greenigoe, age 31.
JAMES SINCLAIR New Place, age 33
JOHN STEVENSON Glenrae, age 22.
WILLIAM WISHART Barebrecks, age 31

1939 – 1945:

JACK BEWS Outerdale, age 20.
J. OLIVER FLETT Roadside, age 22.
JOHN SUTHERLAND Roadside.

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A member of the Congregation will read the names from Stenness War Memorial:

Stenness War Memorial: Edited for reading 2018:

Great War:

JAMES A. BURNETT Grievehouse, age 21
ROBERT COGHILL Stoursdale, , age 27.
WILLIAM M. FINLAY Burnside, , age 25.
WILLIAM M. IRVINE Seattersquoy,
HAROLD T. LEASK Coldomo, age 23.
JOHN LINKLATER Nisthouse, , age 24.
THOMAS F. MUIR Cumminess, age 39.
ALEX. L.W. POTTINGER Nether Bigswell, age 25.
JAMES POTTINGER Nether Bigswell, age 25.
JAMES W. SINCLAIR Redbraes, age 23.
JAMES SINCLAIR Breck, age 40.
WILLIAM SINCLAIR Breck, age 30.
JOHN F. SPENCE Lochend, , age 33.
JAMES W.S. TAIT Bridge of Waithe, age 27
JOHN THOMSON Burnside, , age 19.
CALEB WALTER Quoyer, age 24.

1939 – 1945

WILLIAM R. COGHILL Savedale, , age 26.
JOHN R. CURSITER Post Office, age 20.
SAMUEL MCKENZIE Neggheads, , age 25.

also:

JAMES W. ISBISTER Bridge of Waithe; First civilian air raid casualty in the British Empire,
16th March 1940, age 27.

Thank you.

[If you are able, will the congregation please stand.]

Let us remember the kindness of God, and his favour to us in our time of need.
Let us remember the courage, devotion to duty, and the self-sacrifice
of the men and women in our armed forces;
and of all those who supported them, and suffered with them.

Let us remember those
who were wounded or killed in battle, or in air-raids at home;

those who were buried at sea, or far from home,
and those whom we have known and loved,
in person, or by name.

Let us remember those who were our enemies,
whose homes and hearts are as bereft as ours.

Let us remember those whose lives still bear the scars of war;
those who lost sight, or limbs, or reason;
those who lost faith in God and hope for humanity.

Let us remember the continuing grace of God,
whose love holds all souls in life, and to whom none is dead
but all are alive for ever. (BCO)

6 THE TRYST

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.***

We will remember them.

Please be seated

11 PRAYER:

In memory of those who died, may we be better men and women;
and in gratitude to God, may we live as those who are not their own
but who are bought with a price. Amen.

12 **HYMN (2) 712** What shall we pray for those who died

READINGS:

13 OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Micah 4:1-5

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.
For all the peoples walk,
each in the name of its god,
but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God
for ever and ever.

Reflection Part 1

From time to time people question whether or not we should continue these ceremonies of remembrance. After all, there are now no veterans left from the First World War, the “war to end all wars”, and very few of those who fought in the Second World War. The usual response is to remind people of wars since then, and conflicts that are still going on in many places, and the loss lives in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq and Syria.

I read recently about someone asking how long we had to keep up this “Remembrance Day stuff”. The short answer given was: as long as those guys in the war graves stay dead and we free because of them.

And so we remember.

Maybe there is nothing to say about Remembrance Day that has not been said already, but lots of things need to be said again, and again. *Lest we forget.*

15 Gospel Reading: St John 15: 9 – 17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Reading: *Flanders Fields* by Lt. Col. John McCrae;

read by a member of the Congregation:

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard among the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields*

Reflection Part 2: The Poppy

The poem *In Flanders Fields* was written in Belgium in 1915. John McCrae himself was dissatisfied with the poem, and discarded it, but one of his fellow officers found it, and sent it to England, where it was published in the magazine *Punch*. As a result, the scarlet poppy quickly became the symbol for soldiers who died in battle.

If we are ever to live in peace, we must repeatedly remind ourselves of the dreadful cost of war. Throughout the world the poppy has come to represent the sacrifice made by all those men, women and children who gave their lives in conflict.

On 11th Nov 1918, Private Arthur Wrench of the Seaforth Highlanders wrote in his diary: *"I think it is quite hopeless to describe what today means to us. We who will return to tell people what war really is surely hope that 11 am this day will be of great significance to generations to come. Surely this is the last war that will ever be between civilised nations."*

From our perspective, what a tragic irony.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, many of our church buildings are not open to us. Nevertheless, we come together in spirit today, as we come together every year, to remember all those who have fallen in wars present and past. It is 102 years since the Armistice was signed at the end of the First World War, 75 years since the end of WW2. Each year fewer people have personal memories of losing a relative or a friend, but many people still carry inherited memories, passed on from one generation to the next, part of history.

Yet for millions of people since then, war has not been history, but a part of their lives.

Casualties in a depressing list of conflicts since then have left still more families and friends grieving: Vietnam, the Falkland Islands, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and others. And still it goes on.

The poppy wreaths that we laid at the memorial today commemorate not only those from this community who have given their lives. We also remember the injured and their families for whom we have no recorded names.

The Bible, especially the Old Testament, records many wars, much violence, and countless deaths, and it is a tragic reflection that there has probably never been a time when conflict has not existed somewhere in the world.

The prophet Micah wrote about 700 BC, in a time of war and oppression and instability, but he prophesied a future of hope, an ideal world, a world when nations would come together in peace instead of war, a time when the arms of war would be turned into farming tools, and people would live in peaceful community.

Jesus was born, lived, and died in an occupied land. The Jews were waiting for their king, the Messiah, and they expected him to overthrow the Roman invaders by the traditional, violent, means. Peace was not on their agenda.

Jesus came with his message of peace: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God."

This message did not suit the Pharisees and religious leaders. Jesus did not fit their concept of a mighty and all-conquering Messiah, and he threatened the status quo. The Roman authorities were worried that any unrest would reflect badly on them. They all wanted a quiet life; peace on their own terms.

So Jesus, the light of the world, died for us in an act of bigotry and darkest violence. Three days later, as the Son of God, he rose again in light for us.

Peace comes from trust, patience, tolerance and faith. It comes through mutual agreement and understanding. It can never be "Peace only on my terms".

It is not easy to achieve, but no matter how hard, peace is what Micah foresaw, what Jesus taught us, and what we all must strive for.

Peace will not come if we forget those who died, those who were injured, the people left behind.

It will not come if we do nothing. Through our vigilance, our prayers, our voice, by the help of God, peace and light will come.

The Poppy reminds us of pain and loss.

It reminds us also that there is always the light of hope, love and faith through Jesus Christ. Amen.

HYMN (3) 706 For the healing of the nations

Reflection Part 3:

Two Minutes' Silence: It's boring!

Did you observe the 2 minutes silence this morning, or will you observe it on Wednesday morning, 11th November?

How did you fill in the time? Did you think about all those who suffer because of war? About the need to work for a world where we can truly say that those who died in conflict did not die in vain, and that we really are learning to turn swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks? About discovering how to work towards a world without war? Did you manage a prayer? Did you use that silence well?

Or did you wonder if you set the timer on the cooker, and what you're having for lunch?

Somebody said that the Remembrance Service, and especially the two minutes silence, are boring.

Does the most important part of the Remembrance Sunday service consist of two minutes of complete boredom? For two minutes, as we stand still and remember, nothing happens, and there is absolutely nothing to entertain us.

The fact that we stand in silence, and the fact that you are remembering now, proves that, for you, Remembrance Sunday is important and significant enough to take you away from whatever else you might have been doing this Sunday morning.

Some things in life really are too important to be dismissed as boring; things that you do, no matter how tedious they may seem. People who know about these things say that, for most people, war is 95% boredom, and the remaining 5% the most terrifying thing you will ever experience in your whole life.

Every military commander knows that his troops must be ready to fight at a moment's notice, and they must be kept from getting bored. A sentry has to be absolutely vigilant, even if there doesn't seem to be anything to look at. The lookout on a ship must look, even if there is nothing to see. The equipment must be ready, and checked every day, the plans in place, the preparations made.

There are years of training, practising. Like an Olympic athlete - the race might take less than a minute, but it is preceded by years of training and boring stuff, a really strict and boring regime, all focussed on one brief moment.

We keep the two minutes' silence to remember all those who died in war; to recognise the terrible evil and the appalling cost of war. Yet war still goes on. We haven't learned to avoid it yet. When we remember, we have to say sorry to God for conflicts that have brought about so many deaths.

Somebody suggested that, if it is difficult to concentrate during the silence, we might like to have just one thought to help, one line from the Lord's Prayer: *'Deliver us from evil.'*

When we speak those words, 'Deliver us from evil', we remember that Jesus came to forgive. Not to take away painful memories or pretend that they didn't happen; not to distract us, or even to teach us.

To forgive is to heal, to restore, and to bring us back to a loving relationship with our God. To do this, we remember that Jesus gave his life on the cross to prove that we are loved and forgiven by our Father; that there is nothing that the love of God is not prepared to do and suffer for humanity. There is no limit to the love of God.

As Paul says, *Nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

As we remember, we might pray, *'Deliver us from evil.'*

20 Prayers of Intercession

(From Christine Odell's Companion to the Revised Common Lectionary, Epworth Press, 1998)

Gracious God,
On this Remembrance Sunday, we remember past wars:
those who fought in them; those who lived through them;
those who died in them.

Silence

We pray for the victims of wars past, remembering before you, loving God,
those who died in battle, or from the consequences of injury or disease,
and those who mourned, or still mourn them.

We remember those permanently maimed or disabled,
and those psychologically scarred or disturbed.

We pray for an end to the suffering of war.

Silence

Lord God,
We pray for the victims of current conflicts, remembering before you
children trained to hate and to fight;
families turned into homeless refugees,
and lands laid waste and made barren.
We remember those blinded or crippled,
and those driven insane by nightmare experiences.
We pray for an end to the destructive hatred of war.

Silence

We pray for the peace of the world, remembering before you, loving God,
the many places where there is armed conflict, and all those who are working for peace.
We remember that you have called us to strive together
for the coming of your kingdom of love and peace.
We pray that you will equip us for the task with the faith that knows that
nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.
In the name of Jesus, Prince of Peace, who taught us to pray saying:
*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

HYMN (4) 710 'I have a dream', a man once said

19 DEDICATION of OFFERING

Gracious God,
Mindful of the sacrifices that have been made,
and continue to be made, on our behalf,
we bring our offerings, tokens of our commitment.
We offer you our talents; our time, our lives, and all that we possess,
asking that through your grace they may be transformed
into means of your life-giving freedom for all.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

A Final thought: *There Will Be Peace* by David Roberts:

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.

After our final hymn and the Blessing we remain standing to sing the first^t verse of the National Anthem (Hy 706)

21 **Hy 529** Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go (T. 470)

23 **BLESSING**

And now,
God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the Church, the Queen, the Commonwealth,
and all people, peace and concord;
and to us and all his servants, life everlasting.

And the blessing of God almighty,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you all. Amen.

22 **NATIONAL ANTHEM (Hy 706 v.1)**
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Additional Items for use according to timing: left in handout for interest.

Remembrance or Not?

Shall we remember what war is?
What is war?
In the human psyche it is the fatal flaw,
a perversion of the human mind,
using our greatest brains to create a threat to all mankind.

War is the profoundest disrespect for the sanctity of human life,
the ultimate in racism,
the collapse of morality.

War is the ultimate in criminality,
the ultimate obscenity,
the ultimate crime against humanity.

So shall we honour war?
And shall we now praise broken men?
Or shall we remember what war is
and give true meaning to "Never Again"?

(seen on a wall in the Airborne Museum Hartenstein, Oosterbeek, near Arnhem, The Netherlands.)
.....

I do not know your name

I do not know your name, but I know you died
I do not know from where you came, but I know you died

Your uniform, branch of service, it matters not to me
Whether Volunteer or Conscript, or how it came to be
That politicians' failures, or some power-mad ambition
Brought you too soon to your death, in the name of any nation

You saw, you felt, you knew full well, as friend and foe were taken
By bloody death, that your life too, was forfeit and forsaken
Yet on you went and fought and died, in your close and private hell
For Mate or Pal or Regiment and memories never to tell

It was for each other, through shot and shell, the madness you endured
Side by side, through wound and pain, and comradeship assured
No family ties, or bloodline link, could match that bond of friend
Who shared the horror and kept on going, at last until the end

We cannot know, we were not there, it's beyond our comprehension
To know the toll that battle brings, of resolute intention
To carry on, day by day, for all you loved and hoped for
To live in peace a happy life, away from bloody war

For far too many, no long life ahead, free of struggle and pain and the gun
And we must remember the price that was paid, by each and every one
Regardless of views, opinions aside, no matter how each of us sees it
They were there and I cannot forget, even though I did not live it

I do not know your name, but I know you died
I do not know from where you came, but I know you died.

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