

**The Rectory
Rectory Close
Radyr CF15 8EW
vicki.burrows@me.com
Tel 029 20842417 or 07515 965781**

Dear Friends,

For the past twenty years or so since my boys were teenagers I've felt a deep sadness in the week before Remembrance Sunday seeing local youngsters walk to school. This week those same feelings have welled up inside me as I've watched fresh faced boys and girls sometime arm in arm steal a kiss on route to school, their raging hormones oblivious to Covid regulations!



Tomorrow our nation will remember those whose lives have been given and taken away in war and conflicts around the world. As Vicar of Royal Wootton Bassett I recall leading out the service personnel to lay up wreaths in remembrance for lost friends and families under the unrelenting and watchful eye of BBC cameras. I was always struck by just how young they were; some looked like school boys and girls in military uniform. All spoke of their sense of duty and pride in the job they were doing. Each and every service person I have ever spoken to sees no glory in war but only a longing to bring peace out of conflict and stability out of disorder amongst the nations. I am thankful and even proud that others are and have been brave enough to bear arms on my behalf.

Week by week for the past two thousand years or so, Christians have gathered to remember a life both given and taken away. We break bread and drink wine not just to recall the moment of His death, nor the way in which he challenged a broken society, but because we believe that in facing the truth that God was in Christ taking away the sins of the world, we will be inspired to reshape our own lives after His and make the world a better place. In his final moments Jesus uttered words of forgiveness that break the mythical cycle of redemptive violence. Days after his battle with the powers of darkness ended and his broken body was laid in a tomb those who somehow met him heard him speak words of forgiveness and felt a peace that passes human understanding.

In recent weeks I have thought long and hard about how to facilitate Remembrance Sunday in a world of digital worship, distanced relationships and Covid regulations. This year will be especially poignant because many have lost loved ones this year and have not had the opportunity to mourn properly, to attend a funeral service, or to stand at the grave and weep. We feel their pain keenly and know that some of this grief will be borne into our 2020 acts of remembrance.

Tomorrow we will miss the privilege of gathering together as a community for we all want to remember the cost of conflict and express our gratitude for those who won for us the peace that we each enjoy, but we will mark the occasion prayerfully and we will not forget.

At 9.30am tomorrow please join me for a short Zoom Service of Remembrance.

At 10.45am I will conduct a "private" Remembrance Service at Radyr War Memorial. This service will be live-streamed and recorded and it will be shared on both The Radyr Parish and The Radyr and Morganstown website (<https://www.radyr.org.uk>)

At 10.45am Gareth will conduct a "private" Remembrance Service in St Fagans.

Unless you have been invited to lay a wreath please stay at home.

The 9.30am Zoom service will finish in good time to enable you to watch the national services on television; all local services will be attended by a very small number of people.

Later in the day do visit your local War Memorial to lay up a wreath, a poppy, a cross or some other meaningful symbol of remembrance.



Perhaps you will find the familiar Collect Prayer and Laurence Binyon's well known poem written soon after the outbreak of the First World War helpful tomorrow. In different ways they articulate our thoughts and longings when we struggle to find our own words to say:

Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

For the fallen

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

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.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Robert Laurence Binyon (1869-1943)



Yours in Christ

Vicki

Rev'd Vicki Burrows

