



NOVEMBER 2021 Newsletter

November is the month in which Britain marks Remembrance Sunday and Remembrance Day. Whilst those of us who are older still tend to regard these days as primarily for remembering the sacrifice and horror of two World Wars, as time passes (they respectively ended 103 and 76 years ago) and the number of living veterans of even the Second war decrease, the need for remembering does not. Since WWII, Britain has fought in 28 wars or conflicts including in Malaya, Korea, Egypt, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden/Yemen, Northern Ireland, The Falklands, the former Yugoslavia and several Middle Eastern countries. Each brought their own horrors, casualties and deaths.

After His spiritual struggles in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus told Peter to put his sword away, warning that those who use swords will be killed by swords. It is a sad thing that often war is fought in the name of securing or keeping peace, and sometimes even in the name of God. Both Tony Blair and George W. Bush claimed they were guided by their faith to lead their countries to war. War should be the last resort, but too often, it is the first. We follow a Prince of Peace and should reflect on what it means to be a peace maker.



Perhaps we can be inspired by St. Francis, who set out on crusade, but less than a day's ride out, had a dream from God and returned home to live a very different kind of warfare – the spiritual warfare of prayer and giving.

War does not only affect humans. There is a special focus this year on remembering the animals who had no choice about their part in our war efforts. These included horses, donkeys, dogs, cats (to keep rats out of trenches) and pigeons used to send messages. If you have read or seen 'War Horse', you will understand some of what we put animals through.

War is also destructive to land and the environment. Some parts of Northern France and Southern Belgium are too dangerous to access – full of unexploded ordnance, including poisonous gas, or contaminated with toxic heavy metals from the sheer volume of shells and bullets which ended up in the ground. Some human remains are likely to never be safely recovered from those areas. In other parts of the world, minefields which were never mapped are painstakingly being cleared one mine at a time. Some areas are still affected by radiation, or Agent Orange, and will be for centuries to come.

War also impacts civilian populations. We all know the horror stories of what was done to Yazidis or to Bosnian Muslims. We shy away from the stories of rape as a weapon of terror often used by both sides in a conflict – and even, sometimes, by the Peacekeepers and aid workers sent in to 'improve' situations for those who survived. Whilst it is right to remember those who, by selfless motivation or unwilling conscription, poured out their lives in war, whilst it is right to remember those who come back from conflict with minds, bodies and spirits torn and damaged, whilst it is right to remember families living with an absent member, surely our higher call is to remember the one who laid down his life once for all, and follow Him?

Special Note:

Blue Christmas service: REWIND, REVIEW, REFRESH December 4th 11:30am-1pm. A chance to look back over the last 20 months of living with Covid, to mourn and offer lament, but also to identify where God has been at work. A chance to gain inspiration for walking faithfully into 2022.



NOVEMBER 2021 Newsletter

SPECIAL CHURCH MEMBERS' MEETING

(31st. October)

Richard Timmis brought those members present up to date with the church financial state of affairs currently and projected into early next year.

This was followed by looking at some of the practicalities of Sarah finishing her ministry at GLBC on 31st. January, 2022.

Sarah's final service with us will be on the morning of Sunday, 16th January, followed by a buffet lunch.

Help will be required from members of the fellowship to organise the buffet lunch. We need volunteers to arrange a menu and provide a list of appropriate food requirements for willing members of the fellowship to donate.

We would also be grateful for any monetary donations to purchase necessary items of food.

In order to prepare the church for an interregnum after Sarah has left us, it has been agreed that we need to hold a "Vision Day" from 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. on Saturday, 20th. November, when we will be looking at:

What the church is for?

What is our vision for the future?

What is the minister's role i.e. how can we use

our individual?

talents and hobbies help fulfil the vision?

It was agreed that, as Boxing Day is on a

Sunday this year, we would not

hold a service on this day as we have one on Christmas Day morning.

However, it was agreed that we are going to have a Craft Christmas

Service on Christmas Eve from 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

With the more inclement weather approaching during autumn and winter discussion took place as to whether at the Sunday morning service we should have the emergency exit door open (for ventilation) and singing with masks or the door shut and no singing.

It is hoped that all members of the fellowship support as many of the planned events as possible.

J Jenkinson

Christmas Coffee Morning

We are planning to hold a Christmas Coffee Morning this year instead of a Christmas Fayre, owing to the Covid19 situation, on **Saturday, 27th. November, from 11-00 a.m. to 1-00 p.m.** and again we shall be looking for a good financial result to give the church funds a good boost.

We shall be having some of the usual stalls comprising: a Christmas stall, gifts, household goods, toys and refreshments, etc. For this venture to be successful **we need your support** by donating items for the stalls and bringing your friends and relatives to attend the event on the day. If you would like to assist on one of the stalls please let me know Please advertise the Coffee Morning by telling your friends and acquaintances and if you are able to display a poster at home or in a shop window, etc. we would be very grateful.

J Jenkinson

BRASS BAND CONCERT

On Friday, 22nd. October, Sarah arranged for a concert to be performed by Great Barr Brass at GLBC. It proved to be a very pleasant evening listening to popular music from the cinema and stage. As a result of your support £45 each was raised for the brass band and GLBC. Our thanks to all who assisted in any way to make this a successful and enjoyable social event.

J Jenkinson