

The Vine at Home

33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year B & Remembrance Sunday

Call to worship

Gracious God, we are coming into your presence,
May we know a glimpse of the divine in our hearts, and minds, and whole lives.

Come amongst us, move amongst us now, by your Spirit. Amen.¹

Hymn: 81 STF – Now thank we all our God

Opening Prayers

*If you have a candle, find it and something to light it with.
Put it somewhere you can see it. If you do not have a candle, use a lamp.*

*As you light the candle, or light the lamp, say these words:
“the light shines in the darkness and the darkness can never put it out”*

Sit in silence and notice the light and the shadows in the room.

When you are ready, offer this time of worship to God

“Jesus, you are the light of the world, the light of my life, I offer this time to you in worship and prayer and praise.”

Amen.²

You may now like to say the Lord’s Prayer.

Reading: Mark 13:1-8

Reflections on the reading

Remembrance Sunday always calls to mind the need for us to be champions of peace – we remember in order to seek a world in which war is no longer necessary, in which violence will not destroy relationships and claim lives. To seek peace and pursue it.

So today, what you are being invited into, is a journey towards peace. Find out more about organisations pursuing a peace agenda, pray, sign petitions, find out about the history of non-violence and non-violent protest – as currently embodied by organisations like Shane Claiborne’s The Simple Way in the US. <https://www.thesimpleway.org>

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Prayers by Alison Ransome

Of course, there is a great deal still to be done as we hope for world peace – at times it certainly feels as if we are going backwards. But the act of Remembrance Sunday is an important tool for us if we want to build a better world. Perhaps it can help us ‘begin with me’ – help us to remember the stories we know about Christ, remember our experiences of God, and remember the best versions of ourselves that we want to be.

There is much work to be done, but as one of the characters in JRR Tolkien’s ‘The Lord of the Rings’ says: ‘it’s the job that never gets started, as takes longest to finish’.

What do you think about the future? What are the signs you are looking for about how the future will be shaped? What are your next steps into that future? How can you and your church or community adapt in these changing times? What do you need to leave behind? What needs to change, in order to build people of peace?

Let’s start the work of peace and transformation again today, in Jesus’ name.³

Prayers of intercession

As we pray today I invite you to use your poppy, either by detaching it or holding it where it is. If you don’t have a poppy with you, please picture one in your mind.

First, we hold one of the petals of the poppy. Father, the red of this petal is like the red of the blood shed by so many in the wars of the last century. We remember members of our family who were directly involved in those wars, some in the armed forces, some left behind. We remember injury, trauma, death, courage, fear – lives changed forever.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Now we take hold of another petal on our poppy. In doing so, we hold before God the violence and warfare of our own times – the simmering violence in our world today, the open hostilities and threat of terrorism. We pray, Father, that you will give us politicians and military leaders equal to the huge tasks they face – wise in judgement, calm in spirit, makers of peace.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Now we touch the centre of the poppy, the place where the seeds are kept, ready for new life. Lord, take the seeds of peace which lie in the hearts of your people everywhere, and cast them generously over every continent and

³ Reflection and questions by Tim Baker

nation. Let those seeds germinate, grow and flourish. Beat our swords into ploughshares, our spears into pruning hooks and our weapons of mass destruction into technologies for peace.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Now we hold the green leaf (or the green stem) and remember the green and growing hope which comes from faith alone, faith in a God for whom everything is possible, even in the darkest hour. May hope guide our politics, our nation, our thinking and our lives. May hope draw us ever nearer to that day when the world shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

In your mercy, forgive our foolish ways,
In your mercy, help us to listen before we fight,
In your mercy, hold back the men of war,
In your mercy, save the innocent,
In your mercy, hear us,
In your mercy,
In your mercy.

Amen.⁴

Blessing

May the God who mourns with his people, the Son who sacrificed his own life that we might experience the depths of God's love and the Holy Spirit whose presence of peace never leaves us, bless us all today, tomorrow and forever.

Amen.⁵

⁴ Prayers of intercession taken from Glimpses of Glory by David Adam

⁵ Additional prayers by Tim Baker