

Worship at Home – 9th November 2025 (32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time)

A short act of worship for use in people's homes prepared by Helen Watson.

Introduction

Hello, my name is Helen Watson and I'm a Methodist Local Preacher in the Berkshire and Hampshire Borders Circuit. It's my pleasure to be with you today!

This will be a service to remember those who served in the armed forces either in the past or in the present and to pray for God's peace for the future.

Remembrance is about remembering. It is important to remember not only to learn the lessons of the past and to honour those who lost their lives in war, but also to help us shape the future of our world. We look back to the past so that we can live the future more bravely, and we commit ourselves to work for peace and justice for all

Call to worship

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all and with those who work for peace and justice

Hymn – STF 83 – Praise my soul the King of Heaven Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

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| 1 | Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven
who like thee his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King! | 2 | Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress;
praise him, still the same for ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise him! Praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness! |
| 3 | Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! Praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows. | 4 | Angels in the height, adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace! |

Opening prayers

Creator God,
Because you make all that draws forth our praise, and the forms in which to express it,
We praise you.
Because you make artists of us all, awakening our courage to look again at what is there,
grace to share these insights with others, vision to reveal the future already in being,
We praise you.
Because you form your word among us, and in your great works embrace all human experience,
even death itself.
We praise you.
Yours is the glory.

Creator God,
By your design we are whole people
Yet we have sought to prise word from flesh, to drain truth from life.
We have lived in our limits, touching the bounds for reassurance.

We have distrusted the vision and sought to destroy the visionary.

Forgive us when we have been willing to be entertained but not changed,
When we have allowed our insights to harden into clichés,
When we have spoken only to consolidate our own position, when we have called on you only to hear the sound of our own voices, when our celebrations have left others with nothing to enjoy.
Forgive us and help us to amend our lives.
God, who knows us through and through always forgives us when we ask him and helps us to live in his name. **Amen**

And now a poem which may bring back memories for some.

We Shall Keep the Faith²

Oh! you who sleep in Flanders' fields, sleep sweet - to rise anew!
We caught the torch you threw:
and holding high, we keep the faith with all who died.

We cherish, too, the poppy red that grows on fields where valour led;
It seems to signal to the skies that blood of heroes never dies,
But lends a lustre to the red of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders' fields.

And now the torch and poppy red we wear in honour of our dead.
Fear not that ye have died for naught; we'll teach the lesson that ye wrought
In Flanders' fields.

Bible reading – John 12: 23 – 28

²³ Jesus replied, "The time has come for the Son of Man to receive glory. ²⁴ What I'm about to tell you is true. Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only one seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ Anyone who loves their life will lose it. But anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it and have eternal life. ²⁶ Anyone who serves me must follow me. And where I am, my servant will also be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.
²⁷ "My soul is troubled. What should I say? 'Father, keep me from having to go through with this'? No. This is the very reason I have come to this point in my life. ²⁸ Father, bring glory to your name!" Then a voice came from heaven. It said, "I have brought glory to my name. I will bring glory to it again."

Reflection on the reading

Red is a colour for remembering and the poppy is a symbol of remembrance for us today. Remembrance Sunday began after the First World War ended, over a hundred years ago. Then it was not a Sunday, just 11 November every year, the day the war ended. After the Second World War it was decided to remember on the Sunday nearest to 11 November each year. This year, 2025, it is 9th November. In this service we remember not just the dead of two world wars but also those in the armed forces who have died or been injured in conflicts that are still happening. With new conflicts come new needs. Today's injured service personnel conquer horrific injuries both mental and physical and need support to develop new lifestyles.

As well as remembering those who died, we need to do our best to help those still living. For many of us, there may be sadness as we think of family or friends who have suffered because of service in the armed forces.

Jesus said to his disciples Anyone who serves me must follow me, and where I am, my servant also be. My father will honour the one who serves me.'

We have a commitment to follow Jesus and a commitment to remember, to remember for the future. We pray that Jesus will be with us as we do our part to honour him and to support the injured and the bereaved as they look to the future.

Our next hymn may be new to you, but I hope you will recognise the tune – Scarlet Ribbons!

Hymn – STF 131 – By a monument of marble Marjorie Dobson (born 1940)

- 1 By a monument of marble,
or by a simple wooden cross,
here we gather to remember
sacrifice and tragic loss.
Blood-red poppy petals flutter,
each a symbol for a life,
drifting in a crimson curtain,
shadow of our constant strife.
- 2 Solemn silence now surrounds us
as we stand in memory.
Why should evil lead to conflict?
This eternal mystery
troubles hearts and stirs the conscience,
urges us to think again;
face the curse of confrontation,
yet reduce this searing pain.
- 3 For the sound of war still thunders
through our planet, on this day.
Every hour new victims suffer,
ever as we meet to pray.
God, beyond our understanding,
peace seems far beyond our reach;
move us on to new solutions
through that active love you teach.

Prayers for the world, others and ourselves

Dear Lord,
As we remember those who have died in past wars,
so we pray too for those still dying today in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and other areas of conflict,
and for those who grieve for them.

God of the past be our future peace.

We remember those living in countries
where civil war is destroying communities
and making enemies of neighbours,
where fear and violence dominate every aspect of daily living.

God of today be our future peace.

We remember those who have been injured and traumatised
by the brutality of war,
especially those robbed of their childhood
by what they have seen or been forced to do.
God of tomorrow be our future peace.

We remember those who are peacemakers,
those who negotiate,
those who speak out at great cost to themselves and their families...
God of the future, be our eternal peace.

Today, we remember those known to us who are bereaved, injured, traumatised or who have lost home and country due to war or for other reasons.

We pray for ourselves and ask for healing for our hurts, however caused.

All our prayers are said in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

You may now wish to say The Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Hymn – STF 707 – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us Sebastian Temple (1928-1997)

- 1 Make me a channel of Your peace.
 Where there is hatred, let me bring Your love.
 Where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord,
 And where there's doubt, true faith in You.
 *O Master, grant that I may never seek
 So much to be consoled as to console,
 To be understood as to understand,
 To be loved as to love with all my soul.*
- 2 Make me a channel of Your peace.
 Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope.
 Where there is darkness, only light,
 And where there's sadness, ever joy.
 Refrain
- 3 Make me a channel of Your peace.
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 In giving of ourselves that we receive,
 And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Blessing

May God the Father be your strength,
Jesus the Son be your inspiration
and the Holy Spirit be your guide
this Remembrance Sunday and always. **Amen**

Bible readings from [New International Reader's Version \(NIRV\)](#)

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