



St Paul's Church



WE WILL REMEMBER

As we walked the dogs through the orchard my friend asked, 'Do you remember when I brought you here before?' I racked my brains, trying to recall my previous visit, but I had totally forgotten the occasion as though it had never been.

We remember many things but we forget many others, as probably we can all testify from bitter experience. Important points that we ought to remember have that infuriating habit of disappearing from our minds just when we need to recall them, and some of us even resort to tying a knot in a hankie hoping that it may jog our memory, or putting countless yellow stickers on our fridge by way of reminders.

Remembrance Day reminds us traditionally of those who gave their lives for their country during the First and Second World Wars. Every year, the number of those who lived through those times diminishes and, for that very reason, the occasion becomes more rather than less important. Sadly we continue to witness through the media yet more horrors and continuing violence in the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan and elsewhere in the world, and realise that things have not changed as much as we might think. I believe we cannot afford to forget the past or the present conflicts, and that Remembrance Day does not glorify war but rather recalls the price of peace and the sacrifice so many people have made, and continue to make, out of a desire to make the world a better place. We thank God for all who have given their lives for others and especially thank him for the example of Jesus. *'Greater love has no man, than he lay down his life for his friends.'*

Remembrance and our memories are precious: being able to recall happy times spent with loved ones; remembering wise words spoken by our parents or grandparents; reminiscing with an old friend; and, although sometimes painful, remembering our mistakes that may help us learn in the future.

Let us remember too what God has done for us: his faithfulness in times past and the way he brought deliverance from Egypt and guidance during the long years in the wilderness. That message was imprinted on the people of Israel from their earliest days, passed on from generation to generation, recalled day after day, year after year, with glad thanksgiving. And it runs like a golden thread through the book of Deuteronomy and through the Psalms. Also, the words *'Do this in remembrance of me'* from the Lord's Supper stand at the heart both of worship and of the Christian faith. But it's not just at Holy Communion that we are called to remember, nor is it simply the dying and rising of Christ we are urged to recall. For all Christians, remembering what God has done for us is part of the fabric of our lives. The example of former generations and the wisdom they have handed down, and the faithfulness of God that we have experienced, gives us reassurance in the present and hope for the future.

So this Remembrance Day, let us make time to reflect on and recall, God's faithfulness across the ages – to his people of old, his Church, and to each of us. Let us give thanks for the part that memories play in our lives, and, as we remember what God has done, let us celebrate what he is doing now and look forward to all he is yet to do.

Loving God, you bring us light and you bring us the shadows. You give us our memories and yet you also allow us sometimes to forget. Help us to know your presence in all things, so that what the light illumines we shall see, and what the shadows hide we shall not fear nor flee.

Amen.

Jenny Clifton
ALM Pastoral Assistant

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY 3rd NOVEMBER – All Saints' Day

10.30 am - Café Church – Café Church Team

SUNDAY 10th NOVEMBER – Remembrance

10.30 am - All-Age HC – Father Paul Mathias

SUNDAY 17th NOVEMBER – 2nd Sunday before Advent

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30am Morning Worship – Gwyn

SUNDAY 24th NOVEMBER – Christ the King

10.30 am - Holy Communion – Rev Robin Williamson

SUNDAY 1st DECEMBER – First Sunday of Advent

10.30 am - Café Church – Café Church Team

SUNDAY 8th DECEMBER – Second Sunday of Advent

10.30 am - All-Age HC – Father Paul Mathias

EVENTS

THURSDAY 14th NOVEMBER

2.30 pm - Mothers' Union: Beetle Drive

THURSDAY 21st NOVEMBER

2.30 pm - Fellowship: Craft afternoon led by Sue Pamphlet

SATURDAY 30th NOVEMBER

2.30 – 4.30pm - Advent craft afternoon with tea and coffee

FOOD BANK

The next delivery will be on Friday 29th November.

PRAYER RESOURCE

for 2 weeks beginning Sunday, 3rd November 2024

'Remembrance is acknowledging that a life was lived....' (Leo Tolstoy)

This week we give thanks for:

- The life of Maureen and all that she meant to us at St Paul's, and pray for her family and friends at this sad time.
- People and places grown ever more precious through continued recollection; where memories are tinged with pain or regret, may we know God's peace and grace.

Please pray for:

- Our Armed Forces serving abroad: pray for their protection and for courage for each task they face.
- God's blessing on all who attend Remembrance Services this weekend and for them to know His love in their sadness.
- Peace in our world: for the oppressed, exploited, hungry, homeless, sick, suffering; may we hear their cries and respond in Jesus' name.
- Relationships: with God, with family and friends and Church family, and with strangers and all within our communities.
- Those involved in the organisation of Maidstone Winter Shelter; for sufficient volunteers and a safe environment for all; and that the guests will experience true hospitality and God's love and care.
- Our Church family, especially all who are struggling: Trevor, Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Sandra, Brenda, Elizabeth, Carol, Di and Ray; and for Meaghan, Linda, Alan and Alison.
- Look back and reflect, allowing God's presence to enhance your memories and bring comfort when remembering difficult times.

You may like to use this prayer during the week:

Father God, remind me, lest I forget, of the debt I owe – the life made possible through the death of others. Help me to cherish and nurture the things they died for - liberty, justice and peace - so that their sacrifice will not have been in vain. Amen.