Dear friend

Church services in the Benefice are suspended during the period of lockdown, but the churches are open for private prayer as before. We hope to reinstate services in church on 6th December.

Meanwhile, I have attached to this week's service sheet the names of those from our villages who lost their lives in both world wars. you may choose to read the names at 11am on Sunday or on the 11th (Remembrance Day).

Two hymns to start with (words provided). Traditionally 'O God our help in ages past' (tune St Anne) is sung on Remembrance Sunday; here it is from Westminster Abbey, with a bright descant at the end:
https://youtu.be/rsHIwXTjAOU

From a Songs of praise recording, Charles Wesley's 'Rejoice, the Lord is King' (to Handel's strong tune Gopsal) from St Albans; the last verse in particular echoes today's passage from 1 Thessalonians:
https://youtu.be/aDFAv0eh-s8

From Martin, a meditative version of 'How Deep the Fathers Love for Us' by Stuart Townend. Stuart leads the singing in this lyrics-only version of his hymn. What it cost the Father to give his Son to save our sins:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzQj7XvKFmA

As a student, I had the huge privilege of singing in a choir giving one of the first amateur performances of Britten's War Requiem, in the Colston Hall (as was, now Bristol Beacon), Bristol. Britten was a passionate pacifist, and in this extraordinarily powerful work he juxtaposes Latin words from the requiem mass with war poetry by Wilfred Owen. For him, the message of peace was more important than the music. The work was commissioned for the consecration of the rebuilt Coventry Cathedral in 1962. Here are the last two movements but the whole thing is well worth a listen…

A setting of the Agnus Dei, with 'One ever hangs where shelled roads part' sung in a recording studio by Ian Bostridge with St Cecilia choir and orchestra, Rome, conducted by Antonio Pappano. If you let it run after this I hope you will hear soloist and conductor talking a bit about the work:
https://youtu.be/OKuzpvpS_fU

The final chorus starts with 'Libera me' (deliver me, O Lord), where the desperate cries of the chorus and soprano soloist, Elisabeth Soderstrom, reach a climax amongst the sounds of battle from the orchestra. These subside and are followed by 'It seemed that out of battle I escaped', sung by Robert Tear and Thomas Allen, representing two soldiers recently killed in battle. The work comes to a peaceful conclusion with 'Let us sleep now'/in Paradisum, in which the soloists, CBSO and chorus are joined by Christ Church Oxford boys' choir singing 'Requiem aeternam', conducted by Simon Rattle:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ItClGdIRpc

Let us pray for a more peaceful world
Chris

VIRTUAL SERVICE. 8th November. Remembrance Sunday.

Our globe is nothing but a little star in the great universe. It is our duty to turn this globe into a planet whose creatures are not tormented by wars, nor tortured by hunger and fear, nor torn apart in senseless divisions according to race, colour or creed. Give us the courage and foresight to begin this work even today, so that our children and grandchildren may one day take pride in being called human. *(Stephen Benet, the United Nations prayer)*

CONFESSION. Forgive us, Lord, for our self-centredness and greed, when we wage war and when we profit from the sale of weapons used against the defenceless. Forgive us when we fail to remember, and learn from, the lessons of history. *May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself, and cleanse us from all our sins, that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. (Common Worship absolution)*

COLLECT. 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 forever.

READINGS. Amos 5.18-24, Psalm 70, 1Thessalonians 4.13-18, Matthew 25.1-13.

REFLECTION. The brand new church in Thessalonica was thriving, despite persecution and isolation. They believed that Jesus, who had been crucified only a few years before, would return imminently. They were, however, concerned about their friends and relatives who had died before his return; what would become of them, would they miss out on his second coming? Paul wrote to them explaining that Jesus will indeed return as king, at an unspecified time. Those who have died are already with him and those who are alive will be "caught up with them", to be "with the Lord forever". Christians are not exempt from grieving for loved ones, and we should not feel guilty for doing so, but we have the comfort, the living hope, that we are with them in Christ's kingdom.

PRAYERS. On this Remembrance Sunday, let us commemorate in silence those who have died in service of their country in the two World wars (see below)…….**.....**
O God of truth and justice, we hold before you those men and women who have died in active service: in Iraq, in Afghanistan and elsewhere. As we honour their courage and cherish their memory, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life and hope, now and for ever. *Church of England*

We pray for all who strive to restore peace to the troubled regions of the world, especially in the Middle East.

We pray for the people of the United States, for a peaceful, democratic, election process.

We bring to your loving care those who are physically or mentally ill, for those affected by coronavirus, those facing poverty, neglect or domestic abuse through lockdown, the victims of war or natural disaster, those affected by floods and landslides in Central America, for those known to us…….

We pray for those who grieve for loved ones without hope; comfort them in their distress.

We pray for ourselves; help us to support and encourage one another in words and deeds.

We say the **LORD'S PRAYER**.
We share the **GRACE**.

FINAL PRAYER. God of all grace, call to the nations of the earth to cease from strife, that all may join to fight not one another but their common foes of want and ignorance, disease and sin. Lead back mankind out of the way of death into the way of life, from destruction to the building up of a new world of righteousness and peace, of liberty and joy. End the dark night of lies and cruelty, bring in the dawn of mercy and truth. *(SPCK)*

When you go home,

tell them of us and say,

for your tomorrow we gave our today.



1914-1918

FARMBOROUGH

J Bridges

A Coltman

T Cuff

C Humphries

A Janes

F Maisey

S Sands

STANTON PRIOR

William Smith

MARKSBURY

Henry Barnes

Reginald King

R Taylor

Oliver Smith



1939-1945

MARKSBURY

Raymond Garrett

Reginald Hitchins

Charles Litten

James Litten

FARMBOROUGH

Lawrence Bridges

George Flower

Victor Golledge

Harold Lewis

Kenneth Martin

Douglas Parfitt



They shall not grow 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 mornings, we will remember them.