

In association with Bedford Council of Faiths

A Service of Remembrance

Sunday 12 November 2023



All gather in silence

GATHERING

God is our refuge and strength: a very present help in trouble. (*Psalm 46*)

I lift up mine eyes to the hills. From whence will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 121*)

This I call to mind and therefore I have hope: the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning. (*Lamentations 3.21-23*)

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. (*Isaiah 40.31*)

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (*Micah 6.8*)

The Branch Chaplain continues;

We meet in the presence of God. We commit ourselves to work in penitence and faith for reconciliation between the nations that all people, may, together live in freedom, justice, and peace,

We pray for all who, in bereavement, disability and pain, continue to suffer the consequences of fighting and terror.

We remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts past and present, have been given and taken away.

REMEMBERING

Representatives of faith communities in Bedford say:

They shall grow not 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 morning, we will remember them.

All Affirm: We will remember them

The Last Post

The Two Minutes Silence

Reveille

A Veteran says:

We remember our comrades, who gave their lives in defence of freedom, under the charter of the United Nations, during and since the Korean War, 1950-1953.

Not one of them will be forgotten before God.

RESPONDING IN HOPE AND CONFIDENCE

The laying of wreaths and other symbols of remembrance

The Branch Chaplain: A Reading;

In days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say; "Let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. (*Isaiah Chapter 2*)

HYMN: sung by all

I vow to thee my country.
All earthly things above
Entire and whole and perfect
The service of my love.
The love that asks no questions
The love that stands the test
That lays upon the altar
The dearest and the best.

The love that never falters
The love that pays the price
The love that makes undaunted
The final sacrifice.
And there's another country
I've heard of long ago
Most dear to them that love her
Most great to them that know.

We may not count her armies
We may not see her king
Her fortress is a faithful heart
Her pride is suffering.
And soul by soul and silently
Her shining bounds increase
And her ways are ways of gentleness
And all her paths are peace.

(*Gustav Holst/Cecil Spring Rice*)

WORDS OF PEACE: Bedford Faith Communities

PRAYERS: Led by the RBL Branch Chaplain

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict, and ask that God may give us peace:

We pray for the Service men and women who have died in the violence of war, each one remembered and known to God. May God give peace.

ALL: May God give peace

Let us pray for those who love them in death as in life

Offering the distress of our grief and the sadness of our loss;

May God give peace.

ALL: May God give peace

Let us pray for all members of the Armed Forces who are in danger this day, remembering family, friends and all who pray for their safe return.

May God give peace

ALL: May God give peace

Let us pray for civilian men and women whose lives are disfigured by war or terror, calling to mind in penitence, the anger and hatred of humanity.

May God give peace

ALL: May God give peace

Let us pray for peace-makers and peace-keepers, who seek to keep this world secure and free;

May God give peace

ALL: May God give peace

Let us pray for all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership, political, military and religious; asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve in the search for reconciliation and peace.

May God give peace

ALL: May God give peace

O God of truth and justice, we hold before you those whose memory we cherish, those who suffered and died in war and conflict, those whose names we will never know. Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of our broken world, and grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm. As we honour the past, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life and hope, now and forever.

ALL: AMEN

Hymn sung by all

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour,
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.
Henry F Lyte

COMMITMENT TO PEACE MAKING

Branch Chaplain: Let us commit ourselves to responsible living and faithful service.
Will you strive for all that makes for peace?

ALL: WE WILL

Branch Chaplain: Will you seek to heal the wounds of war?

ALL: WE WILL

Branch Chaplain: Will you work for a just future for all humanity?

ALL: WE WILL

THE KOHIMA EPITAPH spoken by a veteran

"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today"

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

God save our gracious King,

Long live our noble King,

God save the King.

Send him victorious,

Happy and glorious,

Long to reign over us,

God save the King.

BLESSING

The Branch Chaplain:

God grant to the living, grace, to the departed, rest, to all people, unity, peace, and concord.

May each of us be blessed.

All: Amen