

+WEEKLY SERMON

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Remembrance Sunday 2025

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15

Over the next few days across the country people will take the opportunity to pause for just a short time to be silent in remembrance of those who gave their lives in wars to secure the freedoms we enjoy.

Irrespective of our personal views on the country in which we live, it cannot be denied that we live in an extremely privileged society. We have freedom of religion, freedom of speech, we don't live in fear of the authorities and each of us gets a democratic vote. Our children have access to education up to the age of 18 and we have free at point of need healthcare.

In this country we have got many, many things to be incredibly grateful for, but it is important to remember that this freedom did not come easy. It was hard won. And because it was hard won it is important to pause and say thank you.

But our remembrance and thank you should not be confined to just one day. The question we must ask is how are we honouring their sacrifice every day? If those men and women died to bring us peace, do we live our lives in a peaceful way? What was the point of their sacrifice if we continue to live at war with our neighbours, or within our families, or indeed, within our church community.

Jesus came to bring peace, He is the prince of peace, so as a Christian community we should strive to be at peace with one another, to work towards an amicable relationship with those around us.

We should seek to speak peacefully to one another, not with harsh words. We should seek to build each other up in love rather than tear one another down. This is especially true in a church congregation. If Jesus is at the centre of our church then there is no room for petty arguments or harsh words, or nasty put downs.

It's the same in our own lives, if we have Jesus in our hearts and our focus is on Him then we are much less likely to fall out with other people. Not that Jesus didn't get cross and angry – because He did. But when He did it was over the big things and it was always done in love and after prayer. I am not saying that we should not disagree with one another, but when we do it should be done in love. We need to learn to disagree well.

Our soldiers didn't die to give us freedom so that we could abuse that freedom by arguing with our next-door neighbour, or with our family, or within our churches. Let us not abuse the freedom that they fought to give us but instead seek to honour the freedom we have by seeking peace above all. Amen.

Rev Canon Anne Beverley, Director of Ministry

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