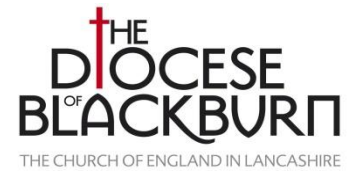


WEEKLY SERMON

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Remembrance Sunday: In Jesus there is still hope

Remembrance Sunday offers us an opportunity to remember those who died in two World Wars, and also the death of warriors and many innocent people in the many conflicts since, including ongoing conflicts in our world today.

The horror of wars in our times is realised particularly now in the death of thousands of innocent civilians, the young and the old, in Ukraine, Israel and Palestine. It is deeply painful and unbearable.

The church has a role to promote peace and speak boldly 'God's Yes' and 'God's No' to the warring nations and their leaderships.

The Bible readings for Remembrance Sunday highlight the importance of Jesus' teachings about justice and compassion to the poor and victims of injustice.

Amos, around 760 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, prophesied against selfishness, greed, divisions and hatreds amongst people. He exhorted the rich and powerful to let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Meanwhile Jesus, while on Earth, spoke about common human challenges. Today, the rich and the powerful nations have an important role to play in establishing justice.

In his teaching of the Beatitudes, Jesus offers a comprehensive ethical template for strengthening common humanity. In our world, irrespective of religion, creed or race people are blessed if they hunger and thirst for justice.

Blessed are those living with humble, meek, pure and merciful hearts and blessed are those who mourn for the suffering and dying and those who offer their lives to establish peace and justice on this earth.

We live in a gloomy and troubled world – particularly at the moment. But in Jesus there is still hope for a glorious future for this Earth.

The church is called to remain awake as peacemakers; we ought to gather God's Spirit in this difficult world and offer hope to those who have lost every hope of peace and justice on this earth. Amen

Rev Sarah Gill, Vicar of Blackburn St Stephen and St James

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES