

9th November, 2025

The paper-version Service



St Andrew's
Church



The Good
Shepherd
Four Marks
Responding to God's Love



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me save that thou
art.

Thou my best thought by day and by
night;

Waking or sleeping, thy presence my
light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true
Word;

I ever with thee and thou with me,
Lord.

Thou my great Father, I thy dear child;
Thou in me dwelling, with thee
reconciled.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for
the fight;

Be thou my dignity, thou my delight.

Thou my soul's shelter, thou my high
tower;

Raise thou me Heavenward, O Power
of my power

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty
praise;

Thou mine inheritance, now and
always.

Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my treasure thou
art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright
Heaven's Sun!

Heart of my heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all..

The Sermon by Sarah Giles

Read Revelation 21.1–7 and Luke 24:1-9 – Remembrance

The cost of conflict

Jesus said 'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends' (John 15:13). On Remembrance Sunday, we remember the servicepeople who never made it home, but we also remember the families who waited, the communities that grieved, and the lives changed forever by loss and by trauma. We remember the civilian lives that have been lost in conflict: ordinary people caught up in other people's wars.

The Bible contains acts of remembrance for things that God has done, such as the Passover festival (Exodus 12), or the placing of stones as a memorial where God parted the River Jordan for the Israelites (Joshua 4). And of course we have communion, with Jesus's instruction to 'do this in remembrance' of him (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24–25).

The Bible shows us that the concept of remembrance is important. But it's not the full picture. We honour the sacrifice of those who have served in the military by working towards a world where that sacrifice is no longer necessary. There is a reason why many war memorials are engraved with the words 'never again'. The Bible also challenges us to be peacemakers. To work for a society where disagreements are resolved without conflict. We need to hold these two halves of the picture together to make sure that remembrance doesn't become bitterness, and that we learn from the conflict rather than just repeating it.

God's model of peace

Often, the world defines peace as simply the absence of fighting – a ceasefire, the quiet after the storm. But the peace Jesus offers, the biblical idea of 'shalom', is much deeper: it's about wholeness, justice, healing, and the restoration of relationships. It's the mending of what is broken and the flourishing of all people and all creation. Shalom is a sense of wholeness, completeness, safety, health and prosperity. Shalom calls us to look beyond our own comfort and to become agents of restoration in the world around us. It invites us to notice where relationships are strained, where injustice continues, and where wounds remain unhealed, and to step into those spaces with compassion and courage. Shalom isn't passive; it's an active pursuit of reconciliation, a

commitment to seeing others flourish, and a willingness to be part of God's work of healing. When we embrace this calling, we become living reminders of the peace Jesus offers.

Jesus is the ultimate example of someone who embodies the sacrifice of their life in the name of peace. His sacrifice on the cross has given us a relationship with God, free from the enormous obstacle of our sin. Jesus doesn't only talk about peace as an abstract idea, he shows us what peacemaking looks like.

Peacemaking today

As we look at our world, we see that there's as much need for peacemakers as ever. War and violence are not only things of the past; they're very much present, both in the wars we see on the news and in the tensions close to home. Peace-making is not easy work; it requires honesty about the wounds of the past, a commitment to justice as well as forgiveness, and a willingness to take ourselves to uncomfortable places for the sake of healing and unity. But it is this work that Jesus called us to do when he said 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God' (Matthew 5:9), and what Paul says in Romans 12:18: 'If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone'.

Peacemaking is not only what happens in countries thousands of miles away. It's not only the job of world leaders and people in positions of power. It's found in the small choices we make each day: choosing to listen instead of speaking over someone; trying to understand, even when it would be easier to judge; forgiving someone who's hurt us; standing up for those who are vulnerable or left out. Practising hospitality. Being creative so that we can find ways to be inclusive.

In this week of Remembrance, let's connect our remembering with action. To truly honour those who have sacrificed so much, we must also be willing to put in the work to build a more peaceful future. Jesus calls us not just to remember, but to respond: to take up the work of peacemaking where we are, and in whatever way we can.

We don't do this alone. The same Spirit who empowered Jesus to make peace, even at great cost, loves to work in us and through us. So go in peace, to love and serve the Lord. In remembrance. In gratitude. In the work of peacemaking. In the name of Christ. Amen.

21st Sunday after Trinity: *Grant, we beseech you, merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, St Andrews and The Good Shepherd, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

At the Church of the Good Shepherd:

- Tea and Chat and Bowls: November 19th, December 17th and January 21st at 2pm in Church Hall & Church.
- Coffee and Questions: November 26th and January 28th at 10.30am in Church Hall.
- The Community Cupboard, 2:45pm every Thursday in Church.

For Further information:

This paper and all parish details are on the website at
<https://www.parishofmedsteadandfourmarks.co.uk>