

**Dear Friends,**

On Sunday 12th November, as a village we will gather around the war memorial to remember and give thanks for those who have lost their lives in conflicts going back over a century, and at 11am we will fall silent for two minutes. Some folks may look at the names carved on the memorial; indeed, some may have a personal connection. Others may pray in silence during this time, but all of us assembled there will remember. *“We will remember them”*.



At St Stephen's we continue to hear the Ukrainian national anthem before our service on the first Sunday of each month as we remember the people of Ukraine, at home and displaced. Sadly, we are now witnessing fresh conflict in Israel and Gaza; thousands of people fleeing their homes with reception areas unable to cope. We must continue to pray for peace.

It's important to remember the sacrifices of so many who died striving for peace in our world.

In the Holy Gospel of +John, Jesus said to his disciples, *“Peace I leave with; my peace I give you”*, before he left them and he sent the Holy Spirit, a promised gift to them. The Prince of Peace will forever be with them because of what he manifests in his community of discipleship.... Love, Joy and Peace.

Henri Nouwen, a great and gifted writer walked the road to peace and over time developed a wonderful, beautiful spirituality of non-violence. Henri wants us to spend time in prayer, praying for peace, the end of conflicts.

He wrote, *“For Jesus, there are no countries to be conquered, no ideologies to be imposed, no people to be dominated. There are only children, women and men to be loved”*.

*“As peacemakers we must resist all the powers of war and destruction and proclaim that peace is the divine gift offered to all who affirm life”*.

Wherever you are on Sunday 12th at 11am, do pause, do fall silent, do remember with gratitude those who have given their lives, and if you can, offer a prayer for peace in our world. Prayers are always heard.

If you can be with us at the memorial, you will be most welcome to join us in church afterwards for our Remembrance Day Service.

***Peace be with you.***

***God Bless,***

***Keith***