



Keeping in Touch

Oct-Nov 2018



Autumn has arrived and with it the autumn special days in the Church's calendar. Before my retirement, I served for fifteen years in the Bishop's Hatfield Team, so that has meant celebrating Michaelmas (29th September) and St. Luke's Day (18th October), while I was at those respective churches. The joyful nature of these occasions is complemented in November by All Saints Day (1st November), but we then move on to the more sober acts of remembering that take place on All Souls Day (2nd November) and on Remembrance Day (11th November). It is a busy time of the year, when we meet together in our churches to learn from the courage and faithfulness of those who have gone before us.



This year is the centenary of the ending of the First World War, which we shall be honouring with civic and religious ceremonies and I should like to offer a few thoughts on the subject. My first thought concerns the emblem which widely marks our remembering – the poppy. Many of us wear the fabric poppy produced by the Royal British Legion, but we shall also see metal pins in coat lapels, knitted poppies sewn together to remind us of the drops of blood shed in that terrible conflict, and perhaps the ceramic poppies which a few years ago flooded the Tower of London grounds in a blood-red wave. The poppy is such a poignant symbol. What strikes me is its simple and enduring beauty. What a glimmer of hope it must have given to those in the trenches who caught sight of the brightness of that flower amongst all the grimness of the mud and destruction! As the soldier poet John McCrae wrote, "*In Flanders fields the poppies blow Between the crosses, row on row.*" Even in a place of death there is life and hope for the future. For the Christian, this is God's sign that he is there too, suffering with the suffering, grieving at the actions of his people, but pointing to a brighter future. Though this war has been followed by other wars and the world is still full of violence and hatred, yet evil has not overcome the good, and with God's help, we can share in God's plan to bring peace.

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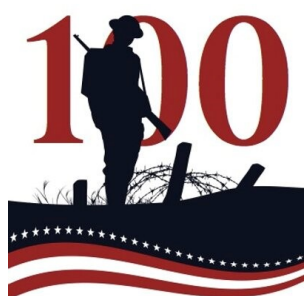
I quoted the first world war poet, John McCrae. So many people of that time expressed their deepest feelings through the beauty of poetry. We will all have our favourites and I have always been deeply moved by the words of Wilfred Owen, Edward Thomas and Siegfried Sassoon. How simple and yet expressive are the four simple lines by Edward Thomas: I

*“The cherry trees bend over and are shedding,
On the old road where all that passed are dead,
Their petals, strewing the grass as for a wedding
This early May morn when there is none to wed.”*

There is nothing overtly Christian in these words, but it seems to me a God-given grace that in the worst of situations there is still beauty. And where there is beauty, there is hope.

Perhaps as we approach Remembrance Day this year, we can prepare ourselves to honour those who have died in the conflicts that burden our human world, and at the same time find hope that people do not have to live this way. There is another way, the way of peace, which is God’s way. With all the resources of beauty and creativity that God has given us, we can together work towards a new and better world.

Rev Susan Marsh



St Mary’s is planning a number of events as its contribution to the National Tribute to mark the end of the First World War.

Please come and join us as we commemorate this important occasion in our history.



The popular **Community Singing** will return on **Sunday 21st October** at **3.00pm** and will have a war theme - songs that we all know and love and kept spirits up in tough times.

Following what is sure to be some excellent and rousing singing everyone will be treated to tea and cake.

Annual Remembrance Service will be held on **Sunday 11th November** at 10.50 am with a short service beforehand at the War Memorial. In preparation for the service Mike Allen has been making sure the war graves in the churchyard have been cleaned of which there are two from the 1st World War and seven from the 2nd World War. There will also be a visual tribute to the 'Might Men of Mymms' in the church.



On **11th November the St Mary's Bellringers** will be participating in a nationwide **Act of Remembrance at 7.05pm** in a unique tribute of bellringing in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War I and to recognise that many of the fallen in the Great War were indeed bellringers. You are warmly welcomed to come and listen to the bells and so pay your own tribute. St Michael's Room at the Church will be open from 6.30pm for tea/coffee and sausage rolls.



Art Workshop

The next workshops will be held on Mondays October 15th, 22nd and 29th and November 5th – 2.00-4.00pm or 7.00-9.30pm. in St Michael's Room. Christmas Cards made at the workshop will be for sale later in November. If you are interested please contact Robin Elgar 01707 261810



Annual Memorial Service offers the opportunity to remember loved ones particularly those who have died recently. This year the service will be held at St Mary's on **Sunday 4th November** starting at **4.00pm**. It is a quiet service of hymns, readings and prayers during which the names will be read out and candles lit in memory of those who have died. A book will be opened in the church in October for anyone to enter the names of people they wish to be remembered. Tea and cakes are served in St Michael's Room before and after the service.



If you would like future copies of this Newsletter posted to you then please send your name and address to the St Mary's Parish Office, North Mymms Park, Hatfield, AL9 7TN

Sunday Services at St Mary's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Parish Eucharist
1st Sunday of the Month 10.30am Family Service followed by a short communion service
6.30pm Choral Evensong
3rd Sunday of the Month 11.30am Baptisms

Parish Registers for August and September 2018

Baptisms

16 September Ayca Trim and Francesca Popescu-Harrington

Weddings

4 August Michelle Parris and Giovanni La Ragioni

Funerals

7th September Memorial Service for Freda LeFort

18th September Funeral Service for Joan Campbell

Contact us

During the interregnum please contact either the Churchwardens or the Office Administrator for service bookings or queries.

Churchwardens

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Parish Office open Tuesday & Wednesday

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