



A Solemn Commemoration on the Centenary of the outbreak of the First World War

Hymn

Introduction/ Bidding We gather in the light of Christ to recall the effects of human violence, our need for redemption, to voice sorrow for our own share in the world's violence, and to find the healing of the world in the light which shines most intensely at the heart of the darkness.

Confession Prayer Most merciful God, gathered in the light of your Christ we confess our share in the world's pride, its greed and its despair, its violence and its darkness. Free us from the tyranny of sin, fill us with your peace, and lead us from death to life, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Choir or all *Kyrie eleison* – said responsorially or sung to a setting

Absolution prayer May almighty God deliver us from the powers of darkness, restore in us the image of his glory, and lead us in the light and obedience of Christ. Amen.

Lord's Prayer Longing for the renewal of creation, and seeking the peace of the Kingdom, we are bold to pray, Our Father...

Historical Reflection This could easily be a project for a local historian, or a reading from a short extract of one of the histories of the war (see below for recommendations) which will bring people to the moment of 4 August 1914.

Poem Wilfred Owen *1914*

Scripture Reading Joel 2: 1-3; 12-13

Music or Silence

Possible contemporary reflection

Prayer
Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

and candles out / lights down

Poem Isaac Rosenberg *On receiving news of the war*

Scripture reading Isaiah 2: 2b-4

Music or silence

Possible contemporary reflection

Prayer
Eternal God,
from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:
kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth
that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward,
till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

and candles out / lights down

Poem Rose Macaulay *Many sisters to many brothers*

Scripture Lamentations 2: 1-3; 6-7

Music or silence

Reading Letter from home

Prayer
Lord God, you hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design
of your great love shine on the waste of our anger and sorrow, and give
peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace
in our hearts; in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(The Very Reverend Eric Milner-White, CBE, DSO)

and candles out / lights down

Poem W W Gibson *The Messages*

Scripture 2 Corinthians 4: 6-11

Music or Silence

Contemporary reading

Prayer
Lord Jesus, you have taught us that we can only be forgiven as we ourselves
learn how to forgive: help us to bear continually in mind our own
shortcomings and our many failings. If we remember the injuries we suffer
and never deserved, help us to remember the kindnesses we received and
never earned, and the punishments we did deserve and never suffered. Help

us to be thankful for your unfailing mercies and those of other people; for the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

(The Very Reverend Eric Milner-White, CBE, DSO)

and candles out / lights down

Hymn or other music whilst lights fade, leaving one symbolic candle alight in the midst of the Church, or by a War Memorial

Scripture John 12: 27-35a

Prayer Eternal Father, the darkness is no darkness to you, and the night is as clear as the day. Accompany and protect us as we enter the night; give us eyes which watch for the dawn and hearts to learn again the lessons of love, that reconciled to one another and to you we may walk through this world's perils and sorrows as children of light. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Extinguish final light

At this point, some may like to read John 15: 9-10; 12-13, either in the darkness or from a part of the Church, such as near the Font, where a new light may be kindled.

Depart in Silence.