

**LAIRG CHURCH OF SCOTLAND & ROGART (ST CALLANS) CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**  
**SCO20871 and SCO10035**

**Call to worship**

Gracious God, on this day closest to Remembrance Day, we pause to remember those who have died because of wars and violence.

Let us be still for a moment now as we observe the two minute silence.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

We will remember them. Amen.

**For the Fallen** by Robert Laurence Binyon  
With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,  
England mourns for her dead across the sea.  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal  
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.  
There is music in the midst of desolation  
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.  
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,  
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

**Hymn: For the healing of the nations**

For the healing of the nations,  
Lord, we pray with one accord  
for a just and equal sharing  
of the things that earth affords  
To a life of love in action  
Help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us now Lord into freedom,  
from despair your world release,  
that, redeemed from war and hatred,  
all may come and go in peace.  
Show us how through care and goodness

**Opening Prayers**

Loving God, we come this morning to remember.  
We come together with our individual and collective memories.  
We remember that you are with us, indeed that you have called us here.  
We come with memories that are painful and difficult, we come with debates and politics that are complex, we come with our limited understanding of wars past and present.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;  
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;  
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;  
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known  
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,  
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,  
To the end, to the end, they remain.

fear will die and hope increase.

You, Creator-God, have written  
your great name on humankind;  
for our growing in your likeness  
bring the life of Christ to mind;  
that by our response and service  
earth its destiny may find.

Fred Khan  
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Loving God, we come to remember those who have died in wars, and we come to give thanks for the gift of life.

Gather us as we remember.

Forgive us as we remember.

Accept us as we remember.

Amen.

**We now say the Lord's Prayer**

***Revelation 6:1-8***

I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!"<sup>2</sup> I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

<sup>3</sup>When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"<sup>4</sup> Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other. To him was given a large sword.

<sup>5</sup>When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand.<sup>6</sup> Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, "Two pounds of wheat for a day's wages, and six pounds of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!"

<sup>7</sup>When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"<sup>8</sup> I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

**Revelation 19:11-13**

**The Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast**

<sup>11</sup>I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war.<sup>12</sup> His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.<sup>13</sup> He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

**Reflection/Prayer**

Lord, we have seen the White-horsed Rider in our world, going out to conquer and subdue. We have seen conquering and subduing done in the name of freedom and democracy, and in the name of the fight against terrorism, and we are ashamed. We seem only to be able to solve our differences in history and our varying perspectives on life by means of violence and bloodshed. Help us to change and to find new ways to live together.

**Bidding:** May the darkness and evil of this world be transformed into goodness and light.

**Response:** By the power of the crucified and risen Christ.

Lord we have seen the Red-horsed Rider in our world carrying a sword in his hand with which to kill. We have seen horrible examples of slaughter and killing with sword, machetes, handguns, automatic weapons and suicide bombs. It seems as if no one is safe, on the streets, in churches or mosques, in restaurants or hotels. Countless other acts of savagery, not so well publicized, fill our world. Help us to change this and support those who fall victims of such senseless rage.

**Bidding:** May the darkness and evil of this world be transformed into goodness and light.

**Response:** By the power of the crucified and risen Christ.

Lord, we have seen the Black-horsed Rider in our world, weighing out credits and debits, surplus and shortage in such a way that the hungry are forgotten and the satiated left with more than enough. We are aware of countless millions in our world whose condition is made worse by our positions of privilege. Help us to have the courage to change this, and reflect in our daily living the scales of justice and truth.

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**Bidding:** May the darkness and evil of this world be transformed into goodness and light.

**Response:** By the power of the crucified and risen Christ.

Lord, we have seen the Pale-horsed Rider named Death in our world, followed by his companion Hades. We know of the cunning ways in which they operate, bringing misery throughout the world through plague and sickness, famine and disease. We are all too aware of the spectre that is AIDs and the devastation it wrought above all in Africa, where whole villages were wiped out and hope dwindled away. Thankfully now, treatments are available to combat this deadly enemy. But now today we are so aware of another hidden enemy in the form of coronavirus, stalking our world. This enemy is all around us yet unseen. It attacks the old, the young, the rich the poor, the innocent and the guilty. Help us to fight this enemy, and to stand up to death and his minions, declaring them to be powerless in the face of divine Truth.

**Bidding:** May the darkness and evil of this world be transformed into goodness and light.

**Response:** By the power of the crucified and risen Christ.

Lord we have also seen another white-horsed Rider in our world, whose name is Faithful and True. He bears a robe dipped in blood and answers to the Word of God. Help us to follow him bravely and courageously. You have come to us in the person of your Son, Jesus Christ, the sacrificed Lamb who is worthy. In his name we dare to pray these things. **AMEN.**

**Prayers of intercession**

As we pray today I invite you to use your poppy, either by detaching it or holding it where it is. If you don't have a poppy with you, please picture one in your mind or focus on the one projected on the screen.

Let us pray.

First, we hold one of the petals of the poppy. Father, the red of this petal is like the red of the blood shed by so many in the wars of the last century. We remember members of our family who were directly involved in those wars, some in the armed forces, some left behind. We remember injury, trauma, death, courage, fear – lives changed forever. We give thanks for so many who were prepared to pay the highest price of all . . . .

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Now we take hold of another petal on our poppy. In doing so, we hold before God the violence and warfare of our own times. We pray, Father, that you will give us politicians and military leaders equal to the huge tasks they face – wise in judgement, calm in spirit, makers of peace.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Now we touch the centre of the poppy, the place where the seeds are kept, ready for new life. Lord, take the seeds of peace which lie in the hearts of your people everywhere, and cast them generously over every continent and nation. Let those seeds germinate, grow and flourish.

Beat our swords into ploughshares, our spears into pruning hooks and our weapons of mass destruction into technologies for peace.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Now we hold the green leaf (or the green stem) and remember the green and growing hope which comes from faith alone, faith in a God for whom everything is possible, even in the darkest hour. May hope guide our politics, our nation, our thinking and our lives. May hope draw us ever nearer to that day when the world shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

In your mercy, forgive our foolish ways,

In your mercy, help us to listen before we fight,

In your mercy, hold back the men of war,

In your mercy, save the innocent,

In your mercy, hear us,

In your mercy, In your mercy.

Amen.

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**Hymn: O valiant hearts**

O valiant hearts, who to your glory came  
through dust of conflict and through battle-flame;  
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved,  
Your memory hallowed in the land you loved

Proudly you gathered, rank on rank to war  
As who had heard God's message from afar;  
All you had hoped for, all you had, you gave  
To save mankind – yourselves you scorned to save.

Splendid you passed, the great surrender made,  
Into the light that nevermore shall fade;  
Deep your contentment in that blest abode,  
Who wait the last clear trumpet-call of God.

Long years ago, as earth lay dark and still  
Rose a loud cry upon a lonely hill,  
While in the frailty of our human clay  
Christ, our Redeemer, passed the self-same way.

O risen Lord, O shepherd of our dead,  
Whose cross has bought them and whose staff  
has led –

In glorious hope their proud and sorrowing land  
Commits her children to thy gracious hand.

John S Arkwright, 1872-1954

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**Blessing**

May the God who mourns with his people, the Son who sacrificed his own life that we might  
experience the depths of God's love and the Holy Spirit whose presence of peace never leaves us,  
bless us all today, tomorrow and forever. Amen.