



FATHER FORGIVE

THE SIGNS OF RECONCILIATION ... ✝

All that stand out below stand at the mercy of God.

The bread which divides across time eating Father begins

over time done, still from time Father begins

The greatest choice of people is whether Father begins

to accept what is set their own Father begins

The good which exists the work of heaven Father begins

which a sign waste the earth Father begins

The story of the mother is Father begins

the witness of water Father begins

The gift which discloses the image of man Father begins

is the witness of water Father begins

The price which leads us to God is Father begins

carriage is not in God Father begins

Be kind to one another, tender hearted,

forgiving one another as God in Christ

Forgive us ...

Resources for REMEMBRANCE

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*Prepared by the Hereford-Nuremberg Partnership
Committee of Hereford Diocese*

Edited by Michael Bourke

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Foreword

IHUGELY WELCOME this contribution to furthering our Companion links with the Churches in Nuremberg. These links have been established over the last 20 years and have led to many exchange visits and friendships. We have learned from one another and worked with one another, especially in congregations and schools.

One of the marks of strong friendships is the ability and permission to ask hard questions of each other. The resources which follow came out of work for, and conversations at, the Ecumenical Kirchentag in Munich in May 2010. Those discussions led to further work being done, and to the production of this document.

Remembrance is at the heart of our Christian faith. 'Do this in remembrance of me,' said Jesus, and we do so faithfully, Sunday by Sunday. We can also understand the word to mean 're-membering', putting together again in the present what has happened in the past, and doing so in a manner that both honours what did happen, and addresses present issues.

For me, Remembrance Sunday carries an overwhelming sense of thanksgiving that so many laid down their lives for the sake of others, so that we can enjoy, and live with, freedom from tyranny. With this comes the call to renew our commitment and responsibility to live out that hard-won and costly freedom to the utmost effect, building the world and our local communities more and more in the way God wants them to be, with his lasting peace, care and justice.

Thank you for this resource. Let it help us in our remembering, and further assist our German-English working together, especially in our Nuremberg-Hereford Companion link.

+ Anthony Hereford

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Introduction

THE DIOCESE OF HEREFORD has enjoyed a partnership with the Lutheran Church of Nuremberg in Bavaria for 20 years, within the framework of the Meissen Agreement between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church of Germany. One of the fruits of our many exchanges is a growing desire for reconciliation between our churches and nations, and a deeper shared understanding of our history.

The Arab-Israeli conflict and the Irish peace process, among many other current examples, illustrate the difficulty which people on opposing sides can have in understanding each other. Each party has its own deeply rooted sense of identity and its own version of history that feeds on past wrongs, and projects a caricatured image of the other. The Holy Land Group of Hereford Diocese's Council for World Partnership and Development recently learned of a research project into encounters between Arab-Israeli and Jewish-Israeli nursing students, where language barriers (the teaching is in Hebrew) and history create an antagonism for which each blames the other (see D Arieli and M J Hirschfeld, 'Teaching nursing in a situation of conflict: encounters between Palestinian-Israeli and Jewish-Israeli nursing students', *International Nursing Review*, 2010). Unless these barriers can be crossed, the mutual suspicion will pass down to the next generation, and history will repeat itself.

Anglo-German relations present a similar challenge. The Hereford-Nuremberg Partnership creates an opportunity for British and German Christians to re-assess our history and discover friends behind the stereotypes. The European Union provides an outward framework of reconciliation, but unless this is pursued at a personal and community level it will not grow deep and lasting roots.

One way in which this historical legacy affects every parish is in the annual observance of Remembrance Sunday. To address this perspective, clergy and teachers from Hereford and Nuremberg led a seminar at the Ecumenical Kirchentag in Munich in 2010 on 'Remembrance – how our churches and schools commemorate war'. The texts of the contributions and the discussion can be found on the Diocese of Hereford website at www.hereford.anglican.org, by following the links to 'Churchgoers', 'Council for World Partnership and Development' and 'Nuremberg and Europe'.

A follow-up consultation was held for clergy and others in Hereford Diocese who carry the responsibility for Remembrance services, which may include not only Remembrance Sunday itself, but also other occasions such as British Legion events or military funerals.

The consultation included two contributions from the Hereford-Nuremberg Partnership. In the first, Stefanie Reuther reflected on her experience of Remembrance Sunday as a German Lutheran Pastor working in Leominster. The German equivalent, Volkstrauertag (People's Day of Mourning), takes

place on the Sunday following our Remembrance Sunday, and people tend to stay away from it. There are no uniforms, flags or National Anthem in church, and the emphasis is on remembrance and prayers for peace and reconciliation. The German people's determination that 'we do not want to be involved in anything like that again' is reflected in the fact that ordinands are exempted from military service. By contrast, Stefanie was surprised to find the British Remembrance Sunday service attracting a full church, and she continues to find the presence of military and uniformed organisations, poppies and flags very difficult.

In the second, Carol Rushton and two students from the Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School described their recent visit to the war cemeteries in France and Belgium, where one of the students had identified her own great-grandfather's grave. The most remarkable aspect was that this was the first time that young people from the school and their German partners at the Wilhelm-Löhe-Schule in Nuremberg had visited the war graves together – a truly united remembrance which included both German and Allied cemeteries.

A number of points were made in the discussion which followed these contributions.

- The focus of remembrance is not on 'victory' or on the political rights and wrongs of conflict, but on coming to terms with loss. It is right to look at the political dimension, but not on this occasion.
- The two World Wars can be thought of in part as a European civil war.
- For Germans, remembrance goes with warning ('Zur Erinnerung und Mahnung') and a deep sense of repentance and heart-searching.
- The British naturally want to remember (hence all the war films on television etc.), and the Germans equally naturally want to forget. The challenge is to find the right balance between the two: non-triumphalist remembrance, and the willingness to forget and let go of grudges, enmities and stereotypes.
- 'In war everybody loses': for those who 'win', pride is accompanied by dismay, not only at their own losses, but also at the violence and destructiveness of victory, the damage to the sense of common humanity and the danger of self-righteousness about their own role in world affairs.
- Young people are directly affected by present-day conflicts, which is why many of them attend Remembrance Day services. Their ideas and expectations may be different from those of the older generation, and this needs to be taken into account when thinking about opposition to change.

- The erection of memorials, the reading out of names and research into the backgrounds of war victims arose as a spontaneous expression of anger at the dehumanisation of the First World War in which millions were sacrificed in new, industrialised forms of combat. Remembrance Sunday can be seen as a community protest: ‘These were our children, and we will remember them!’
- Stories of individuals and communities, especially stories of reconciliation, are invaluable for reflection, preaching and prayer. The stories of conscientious objectors and deserters also need to be reclaimed.

This collection of resources is offered to parishes to use freely in their Remembrance commemorations. We assume that, wherever possible, these events will be ecumenical, and that the leaders of other denominations (and in some circumstances other faith communities) will be involved, not only in taking part, but also in planning beforehand. The preparatory questionnaire which was used at the consultation is included as an Appendix to help in the planning process.

The material is drawn mainly but not exclusively from our Anglo-German experience, but the underlying issues apply of course to any context. We are particularly aware that not only the World Wars but also modern conflicts are at the forefront of many people’s minds in Remembrance services, and account for the increasing attendances at these events, especially by young people.

There are of course many other prayers, stories, poems and resources which could have been included. In particular there is the excellent publication *Beyond our Tears – resources for times of remembrance*, prepared by the Joint Liturgical Group, edited by Jean Mayland, and published by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland in 2004 (ISBN 0 85169 286 9). This booklet follows the general layout of *Beyond our Tears*, excludes material found there (with one or two exceptions), and is intended as a supplement to it. We strongly recommend that churches obtain a copy of *Beyond our Tears* for themselves.

Michael Bourke
Hereford-Nuremberg Partnership
September 2011

Opening Prayers

Kyrie and Collect

BERLIN

This prayer was used at a special service at the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin on 8 May 2005 to commemorate the end of the Second World War. Much of the wording is specific to World War II, but the use of 'lamentation' (Klage) to express penitence is borrowed from the Psalms, and may be helpful in a variety of settings.

Leader Lord, we bring to you our lamentation for those who died in war, or were murdered in the Holocaust. Their loss is irrecoverable; their suffering appals us; the number of victims is beyond our imagination.

In grief and bewilderment we cry to you:
All Lord, have mercy.

Leader Lord, we bring to you our lamentation for the survivors of concentration or extermination camps, forced labour and repeated humiliation. Their sufferings seem endless, and we cannot comprehend how multitudes were robbed of their future, their plans and their dreams.

In grief and bewilderment we cry to you:
All Lord, have mercy.

Leader Lord, we bring to you our lamentation for the hatred that continues to be sown and the reconciliation that is denied. We acknowledge before you the suffering we still inflict on our fellow human beings, and the weakness and indifference which tolerate such wrong.

In grief and bewilderment we cry to you:
All Lord, have mercy.

COLLECT

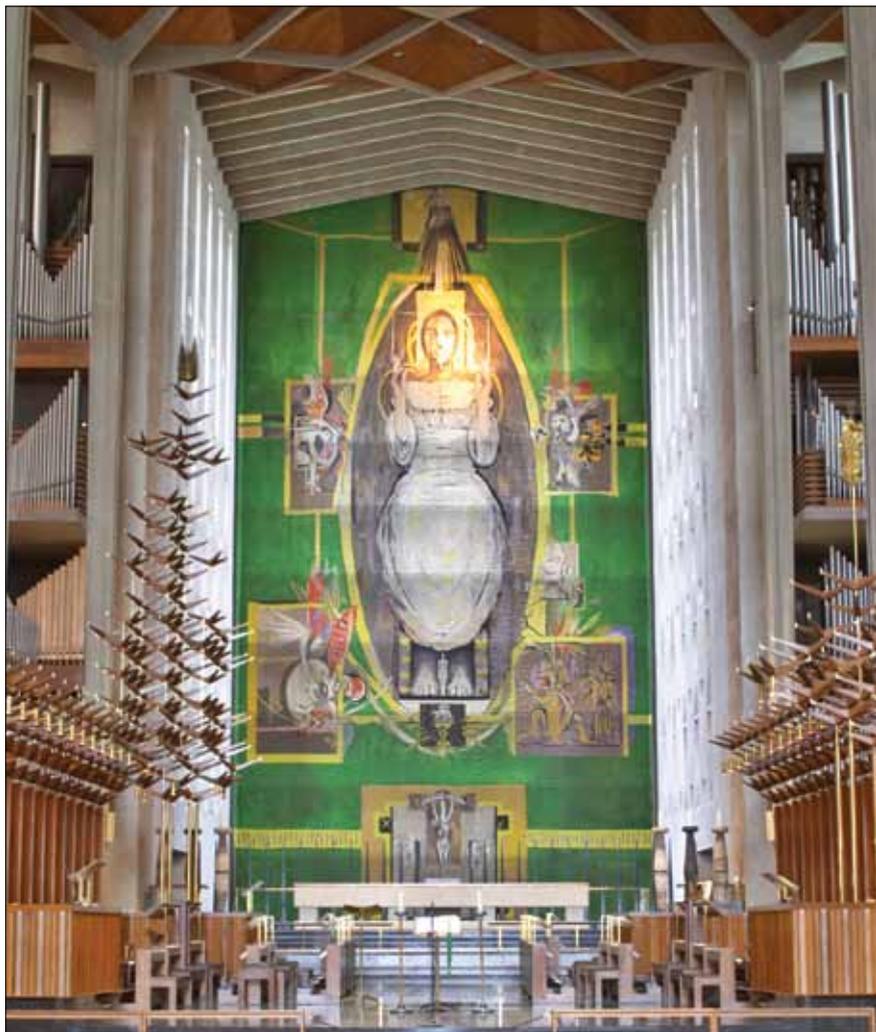
Leader O God, the friend of good order and protector of life, in your hands you hold our human hearts and the justice of nations, and you make us your partners, responsible for your world: let us not grow weary, but give us courage and renew our strength, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COVENTRY AND DRESDEN

These two cities share a common history of devastation through wartime bombing. In the post-war years they have worked together in partnership, and their great churches have become symbols of reconciliation.



The memorial 'Father, forgive' in the old cathedral at Coventry



Graham Sutherland's tapestry 'Christ the King' in the new cathedral at Coventry

COVENTRY

Litany of Reconciliation

Leader All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class:

All Father, forgive.

Leader The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own:

All Father, forgive.

Leader The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth:

All Father, forgive.

Leader Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others:

All Father, forgive.

Leader Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee:

All Father, forgive.

Leader The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children:

All Father, forgive.

Leader The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God:

All Father, forgive.

Leader Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

COLLECT

Leader Almighty God, Father of all, you call us to make peace and to love and serve our neighbour: help us to build a kinder, more just world where those of many races may live together in peace, old wounds will be healed, and all the human family may be one, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

DRESDEN



In the Roman Catholic cathedral in Dresden this monolithic Pietà, portraying the grief-stricken Mary receiving her son's body from the cross, stands in sharp contrast to the Baroque splendours of the Lady Chapel. The design on the altar in the foreground represents the firestorm over the burning city.



This picture shows the Lutheran Frauenkirche in Dresden following its recent reconstruction. The orb and cross which crown the dome were the gift of the British Dresden Trust, and the craftsman who made them is the son of a bomber pilot who flew on the Dresden raid on Ash Wednesday 1945.

Stories of War and Reconciliation

The following stories are based on a number of personal testimonies from within and beyond the Hereford-Nuremberg Companion link. We hope they may encourage you to discover and share similar stories as you plan your Remembrance commemorations.

Two stories from a Deanery visit to Hesselberg *Julia Francis*

When I visited Germany with a Deanery group in the summer of 1992, our group of 20 English people was accommodated, together with a group of 20 Germans, in a hostel owned and run by the Lutheran Church in Bavaria.

This hostel in Hesselberg had been taken under the auspices of the Church in the years following the end of hostilities in 1945. It had been built in the first instance as a training camp for the Hitler Youth. Later after its transfer to the Church it had been modernised to a very high standard, with ensuite

double, twin and single rooms. Thus all ages and types of groups could be accommodated and the hostel included not only a large refectory and meeting rooms but also a light chapel room. The outside spaces at our disposal included a play area for young visitors and a large field on the side of a hill. On this hill were an area for open-air fellowship and a brick area for camp cooking.

More importantly the hill had a large wooden cross. The cross stood in the field which had once been the congregating and marching ground for the youth of the 1940s. The land had not been bulldozed or built upon, rather it had been consecrated for the use of the congregation of the Kingdom of God. Thus it would heal the bitterness of the earth which had been used for indoctrination, segregation and the abuse of power. Now it would be used to celebrate peace and fellowship, to sing and laugh and celebrate life together.

As someone who benefited from the companionship of the week we spent in this beautiful place learning about the Lutheran Church, and indeed more about my own Anglican colleagues and friends, I must say it is a wonderful testimony to the way in which the German people had acknowledged the scars on their past, and allowed the wounds to heal in the open. They had not been covered by sticking plaster, but opened up to be tended and cleansed.

Our German companions had been selected to match, age for age and to a large extent gender for gender, those of us who had travelled from England for this experience of study, worship, tourism, and fellowship.

Thus it came about that two priests, one English and one German, both in their fifties, had joined the party. Each recalled for us how they had been brought up with female relatives for a number of the years of their childhood. As time went on they discovered how their lives had been very much in parallel, and on an evening set aside for the sharing of personal testimonies they told us of their discoveries during the previous few days in discussion.

The English priest had been a reluctant traveller to Germany. He associated it with his father's years in a prison camp and separation from his family. He had not known his father until he was about seven years of age owing to this war service, and consequently blamed the Germans for his father's failing health and the distance that always seemed to exist between him and the son he hardly knew. He had come to Germany almost with a determination to resist friendship and conversation. He had come with prejudices he held long and hard and now almost with a stubborn determination.

The German priest had resisted his English lessons for the same reasons, though his wife, who was all smiles and kindness, could interpret for him. He was a great bear of a man, yet he cried in recalling his own similar tale of a father lost to him for his childhood. I cannot now recall if indeed his father had died during the war; the point was that both sons had prejudices and old, very deep wounds.

At the end of our week together, Christ had brought them to a place of healing. They saw each other in a mirror from the other side of the tale of war. They could see how on both sides people had been hurting, and knew it now in a way they had not wanted to see it before. This time together had changed their attitude to the past. It was no longer a place they dared not revisit because it hurt too much, but a place to travel back to. It was an ordeal for them to find the past unchanged, but words of regret and forgiveness made it easier to bear.

‘A Touching End to Hostilities’ *Chris Bowlby*

The greetings from locals are so effusive, the embraces so intense, the humour so infectious, that it is easy to forget that this is the place where Tom Tate once fled for his life. But as he turns from the main street in the south-west German village of Huchenfeld into the approach towards the steepled church, he is suddenly oblivious to the hubbub around him. His eyes are fixed on a massive set of barn doors, and his mind is back in a dark March evening in 1945, where through those very same doors ‘an electric light was burning. And then I saw ropes hanging down from a massive beam. My imagination told me we were going to be hanged. And that fired me into action and I burst away’. He charged, ‘rugby style’, through the crowd and found his way into nearby woods where he hid under piles of leaves, heard shooting, and sensed the danger still all around.

Tom was one of seven members of an RAF Flying Fortress crew who had baled out from their damaged plane near the Franco-German border a few days before, and had then been brought as prisoners of war through the town of Pforzheim on their way to a Luftwaffe base in Huchenfeld nearby. Pforzheim was in a state of ruin following a devastating RAF ‘firestorm’ raid a couple of weeks earlier, a 20-minute torrent of high explosives and incendiaries estimated to have killed at least 17,000 people. Seeing the ‘skeletons of buildings’, was, Tom says, ‘one of the greatest shocks of my life’. Although his crew had not taken part in the raid, confrontation with such carnage was deeply disturbing for bomber crews. And as bewildered German survivors spotted the British prisoners they began stoning them with the rubble that lay in mounds all around.

As the prisoners were escorted on to Huchenfeld and billeted in a schoolhouse, they believed their military guards would protect them. But a few hours after they had fallen asleep a crowd of young locals burst in, hauled them out, and took them to where Tom made his life or death decision to flee. Only when he returned after Germany’s defeat to help a war crimes investigation did he discover what had happened next. Four of his colleagues were not hanged as he had imagined, but were taken further and shot in the churchyard, where he found their rough graves. Two others escaped at the same time as Tom,

but one was hauled out of a police station in a nearby village the next day and lynched there. At the trial of those involved it emerged that local Nazi leaders had ordered teenage members of the Hitler Youth to dress in civilian clothes, pretend they were a 'spontaneous outburst' of popular anger against the RAF, and murder the prisoners. Tom had to identify the suspects. 'I walked along the line, there were 22 men and boys, and I despised them, I had a feeling of hatred.' He returned to London and vowed to his wife that 'I would never go to Germany again in my life.'

And he remained true to that bitter resolution for half a century, until another fateful moment brought Huchenfeld back into his life. Living quietly in retirement near London after his wife had died in the mid 1990s, absorbed in his golfing and gardening, Tom was preparing for the rubbish collection one week when he came across an edition of the SAGA travel magazine he had been sent some time before. An impulse of what he calls his 'inner being' persuaded Tom to take off the plastic wrapping, and the magazine fell open at an article headed: 'The village that asked forgiveness'.

He read with astonishment of how, in the late 1980s, a retired pastor from East Germany, Curt-Jurgen Heinemann-Gruder, had come to live in Huchenfeld, had heard mention of the killings of prisoners of war there, and had resolved that a memorial plaque be put up to the RAF men. There was much initial opposition from villagers who felt that local Germans had suffered as much if not more than any British individuals. But Dr Heinemann-Gruder, a former Prussian army officer of intense moral persistence, pushed his project through, and made contact with a British family related to one of the murdered men. Once the plaque had been unveiled, it was discovered that the pilot of the plane from which the RAF men had baled out was still alive. John Wynne had intended to bale out too from the Flying Fortress, which was on fire and apparently about to disintegrate. But his parachute gear was tangled, and trapped him in the cockpit. So he flew his aircraft standing up, in the dark, for about half an hour, until the fire had gone out, after which he was able to continue all the way to England.

Now a sheep farmer in Wales, John Wynne was horrified to learn what had become of his crew, but then became an enthusiast for reconciliation, donating a beautiful Welsh rocking horse called Hope to the Huchenfeld kindergarten. However, no-one had imagined that any survivors of the 1945 lynchings would be alive, let alone prepared to come and accept the village's repentance. When Tom Tate made contact with John Wynne after reading the article, John suggested immediately that he go to Germany himself.

The first visit, Tom confesses, was immensely stressful. Nightmarish thoughts persuaded him that some in the village might 'still want to finish me off'. But his gifts of emotional generosity soon showed themselves. Tom was eager to recall not only the horror of the lynching but also moments of bravery by some German individuals, like the soldier who protected him later when he had given

himself up to the army but was found by another angry mob at Pforzheim railway station. 'He put his cap on my head,' recalls Tom, an instinctive gesture that probably saved his life a second time.

Most remarkably of all, there was the woman who sent him a precious pair of boots. He had fled barefoot, his feet were bloodied when he gave himself up. But his escort suddenly produced boots and a reviving bottle of schnapps with some bread. They had been sent by Emilie Bohnenberger, a Huchenfeld woman who had heard of his plight. The boots belonged to the husband she had just lost in the war. Emilie was not one of the aristocratic plotters or Communist organisers who dominate textbook accounts of German resistance to Nazism, but simply a woman who refused to accept her society's descent into casual barbarity. 'She would have gone to prison at least, if she had been betrayed,' marvels Tom, who met her several times, 'moved beyond words,' before she died two years ago.

She is buried now in Huchenfeld churchyard, scene of the murders in 1945, but scene now of the most moving moments of reconciliation. On one visit Tom was standing by the plaque when a woman approached shyly. 'RAF?' she asked. Tom nodded. 'Meine Kameraden,' he gestured at the plaque. 'My brother,' replied the woman, as she indicated a grave opposite the plaque where a 14-year-old victim of the 1945 Pforzheim firestorm lay. They embraced, and the woman told Tom her story, of how her only brother had taken refuge in a shelter during the raid, which rescuers were unable to open until many days afterwards, because of the intense heat. Inside they found its occupants sitting as if alive, but their lungs had burst. The boy's family later recovered his body from hundreds piled waiting to be taken to the mass grave. They wrapped it in a cloth and pushed it in a wheelbarrow up the hill to Huchenfeld – just the route the captured RAF men were to take towards their fate a few days later.

When Tom visits now he lays a flower at this grave too, in memory of all those who were unable to seize life from death as he did in the street nearby. And in hope of a future in which, as his former pilot John Wynne puts it, 'you can build friendship out of a ruin'.

This article was first printed in *The Times* on 17 December 2002, and is reproduced by permission.

The story of Hywel Roberts – International Eisteddfod, Llangollen

After World War II the International Eisteddfod was founded in Llangollen to promote reconciliation. In 1949 a choir was invited from Germany for the first time. The group of 20 or so men and women from Lübeck north of Hamburg nervously arrived in Britain after struggling to get passports and foreign

currency on the black market. They did not know what to expect when they arrived at Llangollen station; everybody had 'afraid faces'.

Moreover, the man who found himself appointed as compere of the International Mixed Choir Competition, Hywel Roberts, was in a particularly difficult situation. On the last day of the war his brother had been killed in action on German soil. Aware of his dilemma, the audience waited to see how he would cope with this personal tragedy in introducing the choir from Lübeck. He said, 'And now please welcome to the stage our friends from Germany'. It was a sensational moment in the history of the International Eisteddfod, and it has never been forgotten. The audience and the choir were in tears, and the competition was suspended for twenty minutes in order that the German choir and the audience and indeed the adjudicators could compose themselves. This was the start of a long association between the choir and the Eisteddfod. The people of Lübeck took Hywel Roberts to their hearts, and made him a Freeman of their city.

What the people at the Eisteddfod experienced was the power of words. Hywel Roberts named the German visitors as friends, and so enemies were turned into friends. It could so easily have gone the other way; if he had expressed hostility, the audience might have been equally antagonistic. No doubt his own feelings were confused. He could easily have been accused of hypocrisy; did he really feel friendly towards these Germans?

But the words of friendship and reconciliation carried with them their own power to transform the situation. They inspired an ability to love enemies where perhaps it did not previously exist. People discovered within themselves a spirit of hope and trust which they did not know they had.

A visit to the War Graves *Julia Francis*

When my children were aged 15 and 18 we stayed with friends in the Somme Valley. We visited the War Graves Commission cemeteries at Serre Road, Cambrai and Arras, and the Canadian Memorial with its preserved trench layout at Beaumont Hamel. This whole area provided us with views of field upon field of such cemeteries and row upon row of the familiar white stones even in smaller cemeteries in the surrounding villages.

Arras was chosen because it was here in 1916 that the children's great-grandfather had fought along with members of his battalion of the KSLI in the spring offensive. We found his colleagues' graves in a small field at the side of the main trunk road out of Arras, with its lorries and cars moving speedily about the day's tasks. We found a row of seven to begin with, all showing the KSLI insignia, amongst other cap badges. So many of these graves, like others we visited, were engraved with a familiar age: 19 years old. Though not startling

to us, it was salutary: my eldest, approaching that birthday herself, turned to us and said in awe and sadness. 'If this was today, these would have been my school friends.'

She had a clear image in her mind of those young lads with whom she had recently sat in school and taken exams. Her own female friends were choosing universities, rather than taking up VAD uniforms while the young men took up arms.

This is the age to visit the war graves. Take your young people when they are most able to identify with the lives lost. We can never capture the essence of the life they had, but we can come close to their value, when we identify with their condition.



This picture shows students from the Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School and the Wilhelm-Löbe-Schule, Nuremberg on the first joint visit to the First World War battlefields in March 2011

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission can be used to trace soldiers who died in the First and Second World Wars (www.cwgc.org).

War Game is an illustrated novel for young people about the Christmas football match between German and British soldiers in the trenches in the First World War. It was written by Michael Foreman in 1993 and published in paperback by Pavilion Children's Books in 2006 (ISBN 1 84365 089 4). A cartoon DVD version with Kate Winslet and Iain Jones is also available.

Hans-Willi Büttner is the Pastor of Langwasser in Nuremberg (the partner parish of Ludlow). This is his story.

I was born in 1949, my father in 1914. So his war service took place in his 'best years' – his twenties. He was in the artillery, deployed first in France on the Western Front, then for longer in Greece, stationed in the Peloponnese, later on the Aegean islands Lemnos, Lesbos and Kos. He doesn't ever seem to have been involved in actual warfare. At the end of the war he was 'gathered up' by the English and brought to Tobruk in North Africa as a prisoner of war. From there he was finally released to come home in September 1948 to his family – wife and son (born November 1943) – and to his butcher's business, which his wife and mother, together with a butcher's assistant, had kept going after the death of his father in 1944. Nine months after his return I was born.

I grew up in comfortable and well-ordered circumstances in an entirely peaceful world. As a child I was quite unaware that my parents, only a few years before, had been living under the restrictions of an authoritarian tyranny and in a world at war. There were a few bombed buildings nearby, but the only effect on my life was that we played in the ruins.

I only discovered much later what traces the past had left on my parents. 'We shouted "Heil!" a few times,' said my father, shaking his head in revulsion, unable to understand, looking back, how one could have let oneself be drawn into it. In the so-called 'de-Nazification' he was at one time ranked as a fellow-traveller.

Until I was 16 we lived in Behringersdorf, just to the east of Nuremberg. My childhood memories include the American soldiers, whom we were always pleased to see, and who were always friendly towards us. Near me there lived two girls of my age whose fathers were black American soldiers.

As I was learning the cello at my grammar school, they asked me to play in a string quartet in Behringersdorf which every year accompanied the Remembrance Service at the war memorial on *Volkstrauertag*. The day was officially *Volkstrauertag* (people's day of mourning) but colloquially it was known as *Heldengedenkttag* (heroes' memorial day). And Ludwig Uhland's poem 'Ich hat' einen Kameraden', about a fallen comrade, was of course included.

As a boy I read 'Landser' stories, short novels about heroic German soldiers in war. But I don't remember identifying the 'enemy' with the American occupation troops who were there in our neighbourhood. Only the Russians were not the 'goodies' – that was how it was with children and young people at the time of the Cold War. At the end of the 1960s my brother had an English girlfriend.

Our parents had consistently impressed on us to be respectful, polite and honest with everyone, and always to be prepared to stand up and admit what we had done when something obviously wrong happened. I am particularly grateful for this to my father. He was warm-hearted, but had backbone –

nobody could buy him. Was this something he had learned in life despite the politicised seductions of his youth?

In the uprisings of 1968 I played my modest part. However, I now see this as nothing more than the inevitable development of a society which was gradually freeing itself from old-fashioned, centuries-old authoritarian structures. It was not only the young people who were hammering on the door of the conditions of those days. There was a conscious need to change to a more liberal society. Not only the young longed for change; older people – not all, but the ones who were important to me – also grew with it.

Looking back as a 61-year-old, I see that I have never shed the memory of ‘the war’, and the knowledge of the readiness of my people to be politically seduced and made instruments of evil (and as time goes on, this can happen to any other nation).

‘The War’: in the century in which I spent half of my life, there were two wars which directly affected us. Near Verdun, in northern France, there is a military cemetery where my grandfather’s brother is buried. He was 27.

From the 1968 uprisings to the peace movement of 1978 it was just a few years. In 1978 as a budding young minister, I offered to take part in the church organisation which supported and advised people who, having refused to undertake compulsory military service, were carrying out social duties instead. At that time conscientious objectors were made to submit to a severe, embarrassing and humiliating investigation to justify their position. Conscientious objection was seen by many as skiving, even treason.

In our churches the introduction of the ‘Decade of Peace’ at the end of the 1970s also altered the *Volkstrauertag*. The ‘Decade of Peace’ – 10 (more accurately, 11) days in November – runs from the third Sunday before Advent until the Sunday before Advent, from *Volkstrauertag* to *Buß- und Betttag* (Day of Confession and Prayer), which is of great significance in the Lutheran Church. It is a time of self-examination, prayer and reflection on appropriate ways of working for peace in the framework of a responsible Christian life. It is not by chance that this new way of thinking was summed up under the heading of ‘Justice, Peace and the Protection of the Environment’. Working for peace is not restricted to the theme of ‘peace as the prevention of war’. Global peace needs justice, and a world fit to live in. After this it was inevitable that the content of remembrance ceremonies at memorials to fallen soldiers would change.

What I did not want to happen, although I took part in the public ceremonies of the peace movement, was that the remembrance services of *Volkstrauertag* should be marginalised and disparaged. But we needed new words. Conceptions such as ‘heroes’ or ‘war memorial’ had become questionable. I continue to refer colloquially to ‘war memorials’, but for me they were becoming unequivocally places to inspire pain and mourning. Mourning? It is a mixture of horror and rage over attitudes of mind which lead and seduce people to offer themselves as sacrifices to the will for power – human

sacrifices. Looking at the present discussions about ‘necessary’ and ‘justified’ military intervention, I don’t know how I would decide were I in a position of responsibility. But my suspicion remains, because I cannot shake off the impression that the plausibility of military intervention would always be sold to me more cleverly than the necessity of a systematic effort for peace.

In 1986 I was chosen as Pastor to the German-speaking Protestant congregation in Brussels, and I came to understand the history of war from another point of view – that of Belgium, which was cruelly violated in both World Wars. There are countless military cemeteries in Flanders and northern France, gravestone after gravestone, name after name; on the side of the Allies from Great Britain, India, New Zealand, from France and from Algeria, from the Belgian Congo; and also the German military cemeteries of Langemarck and Vladslo.

And in the Belgian province of Limburg, near the little town of Lommel, there is the last resting place of 40,000 German soldiers from WWII. Every year there is a Remembrance Service on *Volkstrauertag*. Many are invited to attend by the German War Graves Association. Several buses come from nearby Germany, including classes of schoolchildren. In my time there the German school in Brussels was always represented by a delegation accompanied by a choir, there were representatives from the German Embassy, and also – of course! – the Belgian mayor and miners’ choir from Lommel.

In 1988 I was rung by the Canon of the Anglican congregation of Ghent and Ypres and asked if I could take part as a representative of the German Church in the Remembrance Service commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Armistice in Ypres, which was to take place in the Anglican pro-cathedral there.

The implication of this invitation only became clear in the course of the ceremony. Apart from many officials there were also some British veterans, as well as the Duke and Duchess of Kent. I was asked to read from the Holy Scriptures. And as I found out later, I was the first German clergyman who had ever been invited to such an occasion. Perhaps I was also the first German since 1914 whose hand the war veterans had shaken. If there were British people who would have preferred me not to be there, I saw no sign of it. On the contrary, I was told several times by British people, and with a sort of relief, that sharing remembrance of the past with descendants of the German enemy and acting out reconciliation, were long overdue.

In Ypres there are two particular places which much impressed me. I understood that WWI continues to this day to haunt the memories of this region in spite of the passage of time, which is not the case with us Germans.

The first place is a mighty arch built in the former town wall in the style of monumental architecture fashionable in the 1930s – the Menin Gate. On the walls of this structure are inscribed the names of 55,000 British soldiers who still have no known grave. Even today, if a soldier’s remains are found, and he can be identified, the remains are interred in his regimental cemetery with his

gravestone, and his name is removed from the Menin Gate. Since the end of hostilities, without a break, every evening there is a remembrance of the fallen at this gate, when the Last Post (*Zapfenstreich*) is played. Whenever I was in Ypres I found British visitors there. The second place in Ypres is the museum 'In Flanders Fields', which has been established in the historic Cloth Hall, lovingly and carefully rebuilt as it was originally.

In 1989, in the little town of Messines, eight kilometres south of Ypres, I met Albert Ghekiere, a devout Catholic, who had set himself the task of assembling for his church, which was rebuilt after 1918, a peace carillon, with bells from all the countries which had been at war. In 1989 he invited me to preach at the service in Messines on the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the war. I spoke to an international gathering of guests and members of the band of the London Scottish Regiment in Dutch, English, French and German. At the end of the service the band took me by surprise and gathered me into their midst and we marched, left, right, with bagpipes, to the memorial to the fallen of the London Scottish, 500 metres away. There I was asked to pray and give a blessing. I, the old peace campaigner, would never have dreamed that I would one day find myself in my robes marching along with a military escort to the accompaniment of martial music. But I admit it: it was a powerful and inevitable sign.

At that time I tried, with the help of friends from the Belgian/Bavarian Society, to obtain a bell for Messines. There would have been good historical justification for it, because in that section of the Front, which German history associates more with nearby Wijtschaate, soldiers from several Bavarian regiments fought and fell. Unfortunately we did not succeed in arousing an equal enthusiasm with the Bavarian authorities. I went back again officially to Messines in 1992, for the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Messines/Wijtschaate, when Messines was totally destroyed by mines. I have also visited the little town half a dozen times since, privately or with groups. Sadly Albert Ghekiere did not live to see the completion of the peace carillon.

In 1997 I visited several memorials in Flanders with a parish group from Nuremberg, including the trombone band. We performed a short service, with prayer and music, in the German military cemetery in Vladslø, which is well-known for the statue by Kathe Kollwitz, *The Grieving Parents*. In the English military cemetery near Ypres we were surprised to find four German soldiers' graves, placed there as a witness of respect for the fallen.

In these meetings in Flanders I learnt to think deeply about something which is in itself trite and obvious: the wars of the past century are deeply embedded in our very bones, ours and those of our neighbours, the former 'enemy', with whom we now live in friendship and partnership. And the willingness, starting from old graves, to build a common European future with trust is many times better than a bitter 'can't forget'.

Back to Brussels, where I lived from from 1986 to 1996. It turned out that my eldest daughter, born in 1974, went to the British School in Brussels, and eventually, after taking British A-levels, studied at an English university, took her doctorate, started a family, and now teaches at an English university. It happened – although very seldom – that she came home upset because some boy or girl at school had called her a ‘Nazi’. We had not only to comfort her, but also to explain and reflect on history and its consequences even in the family.

In 1996 I came to Nuremberg/Langwasser. Since 1979 my new parish had had a partnership with the Anglican church in Ludlow, Shropshire, in the north of the Diocese of Hereford. This partnership goes back to the very beginning of the partnership we have today between the Diocese of Hereford and the Nuremberg Kirchenkreis. I was very happy about this ecumenical link. My Anglican colleague, Dr Brian Curnew, and I quickly became friends. There were visits in both directions of delegations from the parishes, which had started before my time. One day my father confessed to me with tears in his eyes how happy and thankful he was that I, his son, had such a good English friend, ‘After all that has happened between us Germans and the English’.

During a visit to Ludlow, when our church trombone band (now known as Paul Gerhard Brass) was there with other members of the congregation, there was a visit to the local church secondary school. The children were assembled in the sports hall. Our trombonists made a great impression. The Revd Brian Curnew introduced us, and talked about the partnership. A touching moment was when he told the pupils how much it had meant to his father, who by then had died, and to my father, that their sons were friends. I remember a moment of absolute quiet in a hall filled with 400 pupils.

Albert's Memorial is a film starring David Jason and David Warner in which old comrades travel to Germany to try to resolve a wartime trauma. It was produced on ITV in 2010 and is available on DVD.

Extracts from two letters by my father to his
sister in South Africa – Michael Bourke

Stafford, 22 May 1980

Dear Phyll,

War breaks out again! Watching the cup final football match the other Saturday, there is suddenly a ring on the front door bell. ‘Who the hell’s this?’ I mutter to myself as I rush from my chair to the door, where, on opening, I find myself looking into two horribly familiar almond-shaped eyes of an unmistakable Jap!

‘I am EEKO from Japan!’ it squeaks.

‘Oh yes?’ I ask, as thousands of wicked thoughts crowd my evil brain. I’ll kill him, I thought. That’s what I’ll do. I’ll get away with it. They don’t hang you now. I’ll strangle the little yellow weed with my bare hands, and finish him off by banging his horrid head on the flagstones of my garden path. That’s what I’ll do. I had to take a step back into the hall before the impulse became too great for me to resist. But I couldn’t help thinking that this was the chance I had always been waiting for. All these thoughts passed through my mind in the course of a split second; and before he could splutter out any more than, ‘We are Christian missionaries to England,’ I pointed at him and said, ‘Now look. Before you go any further, I was taken prisoner of war by the Japanese in the Far East, and we had a very, very terrible time. Many of my very good friends and comrades perished in the hands of you people, so the best thing you can do is get off back down that path, and shut that gate behind you.’ He didn’t budge, and then he said, ‘It was a long time ago.’ I exploded, ‘Yes, I know all about it, and I haven’t forgotten it yet!’

In the end I had to step outside, turn him round and shove him off, and he went away muttering something about, ‘Before he was born ...’ It’s a pity he was born at all, the yellow swine. What a cheek, appearing at my front door to preach Christianity to me! All Europe was civilized and Christianised centuries before them, when they were still cave-dwellers.

In the middle of the cup final, mind!

Stafford, 1 November 1980

Dear Phyll,

The Japanese chappie has been round to see us several times, and once or twice he has had a meal with us. On his last visit he pleaded with me to write something in his autograph book. I told him to leave it with me as I needed to think about it. This is what I wrote:

‘The humiliation, injustices, cowardly deeds of intense cruelty against unarmed, emaciated prisoners of war; the lack of medical treatment for the wounded, and terrible atrocities not only against military personnel but also inflicted on all civilians, man, woman and child in all the territories overrun by Japanese forces, left me, at the end of three and a half years in the hands of such heathens, with a deep and stony hatred in my heart, which I carried quite proudly and indelibly for 30 years or more.

When I opened the door to find Gen standing before me, he was the first Jap I had met since the war, and was certainly the first unarmed Jap I had ever come face to face with since I was released. I had a sudden impulse to kill him with my bare hands, in retribution for all my gallant comrades who were brutally murdered by the enemy, or who eventually died of broken hearts, gangrene or disease.

I admired his courage when he appeared a second time after his reception from me on his first visit. I felt I had to be tolerant with this young man who was only born ten years after all this had transpired. His sincerity convinced me that here was one to be trusted. I took him to Lichfield Cathedral. We saw the Queen driving through. We shook hands, and became friends.’

(Not good friends, Phyll – just friends!)

Now open the card he sent me on my birthday. It’s all rather remarkable, isn’t it? I never dreamed such a thing could have happened to me in a thousand years.

(The card contains the following verse in Gen’s handwriting:

I sought my soul, but my soul I could not see;
I sought my God, but my God eluded me;
I sought my brother, and I found all three;

and concludes with the following quotation from St John of the Cross:

‘In the evening of life we shall be judged on love’)

The Railway Man by Eric Lomax tells a similar story of Anglo-Japanese conflict, imprisonment and reconciliation (Jonathan Cape, 1995 ISBN 009 958231 7).

Poetry, Music and Drama

Readers are invited to add their own suggestions to this section.

‘Maikäfer, flieg!’ is a German children’s song from the Thirty Years’ War. It was sung at a special service at the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin on 8 May 2005 to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War:

Maikäfer, flieg!
Dein Vater ist im Krieg.
Die Mutter ist im Pommernland,
Pommernland ist abgebrannt.
Maikäfer, flieg!

(Cockchafer, soar!
Your father’s gone to war.
Your mother to the East is fled,
All the East lies burnt and dead.
Cockchafer, soar!)

In Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*, commissioned for the reconsecration of Coventry Cathedral in 1962, the composer combines the words of the Latin Requiem Mass with nine poems by Wilfred Owen (1893–1918):

Anthem For Doomed Youth

What passing bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns,
Only the stuttering rifle’s rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
The shrill demented choirs of wailing shells,
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls’ brows shall be their pall,
Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Voices

Bugles sang, saddening the evening air,
And bugles answered, sorrowful to hear.
Voices of boys were by the riverside.
Sleep mothered them, and left the twilight sad.
The shadow of the morrow weighed on men.
Voices of old despondency resigned,
Bowed by the shadow of the morrow, slept.

The Next War

Out there, we've walked quite friendly up to Death,
Sat down and eaten with him, cool and bland,
Pardoned his spilling mess-tins in our hand.
We've sniffed the green thick odour of his breath,
Our eyes wept, but our courage didn't writhe.
He's spat at us with bullets, and he's coughed
Shrapnel. We chorused when he sang aloft,
We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe.
Oh, Death was never enemy of ours!
We laughed at him, we leagued with him, old chum.
No soldier's paid to kick against his powers.
We laughed, knowing that better men would come,
And greater wars, when each proud fighter brags
He wars on Death – for life, not men – for fags.

Sonnet: On seeing a Piece of Our Heavy Artillery Brought into Action

Be slowly lifted up, thou long black arm,
Great Gun towering towards Heaven, about to curse;
Sway steep against them, and for years rehearse
Huge imprecations like a blasting charm!
Reach at that Arrogance which needs thy harm,
And beat it down before its sins grow worse.
Spend our resentment, cannon, yea, disburse
Our gold in shapes of flame, our breaths in storm.

Yet, for men's sakes whom thy vast malison
Must wither innocent of enmity,
Be not withdrawn, dark arm, the spoilure done,
Safe to the bosom of our prosperity.
But when thy spell be cast complete and whole,
May God curse thee, and cut thee from our soul!

Futility

Move him into the sun –
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields unsown.
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds –
Woke, once, the clays of a cold star.
Are limbs so dear-achieved, are sides
Full-nerved, – still warm, – too hard to stir?
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
– O what made fatuous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?

Parable of the Old Man and the Young

So Abram rose, and clave the wood, and went,
And took the fire with him, and a knife.
And as they sojourned both of them together,
Isaac the first-born spake and said, My Father,
Behold the preparations, fire and iron,
But where the lamb for this burnt-offering?
Then Abram bound the youth with belts and straps,
and builded parapets and trenches there,
And stretchèd forth the knife to slay his son.
When lo! an angel called him out of heaven,
Saying, Lay not thy hand upon the lad,
Neither do anything to him. Behold,
A ram, caught in a thicket by its horns;
Offer the Ram of Pride instead of him.
But the old man would not so, but slew his son,
And half the seed of Europe, one by one.

The End

After the blast of lightning from the east,
The flourish of loud clouds, the Chariot throne,
After the drums of time have rolled and ceased
And from the bronze west long retreat is blown,

Shall Life renew these bodies? Of a truth
All death will he annul, all tears assuage?
Or fill these void veins full again with youth
And wash with an immortal water age?

When I do ask white Age, he saith not so, —
'My head hangs weighed with snow.'
And when I hearken to the Earth she saith
My fiery heart sinks aching. It is death.
Mine ancient scars shall not be glorified
Nor my titanic tears the seas be dried."

At a Calvary near the Ancre

One ever hangs where shelled roads part.
In this war He too lost a limb,
But His disciples hide apart;
And now the Soldiers bear with Him.

Near Golgotha strolls many a priest,
And in their faces there is pride
That they were flesh-marked by the Beast
By whom the gentle Christ's denied.

The scribes on all the people shove
And bawl allegiance to the state,
But they who love the greater love
Lay down their life; they do not hate.

Strange meeting

It seemed that out of battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which titanic wars had groined.

Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands, as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall, –
By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.

With a thousand pains that vision's face was grained;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan.
'Strange friend,' I said, 'here is no cause to mourn.'
'None,' said that other, 'save the undone years,
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
Was my life also; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,
Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.
For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something had been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
Now men will go content with what we spoiled,
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress.
None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
Courage was mine, and I had mystery,
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery:
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.
Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels,
I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
I would have poured my spirit without stint
But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.
Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.

I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this dark: for so you frowned
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.
Let us sleep now ...'

The Lark Ascending by Ralph Vaughan Williams was inspired by the sight of troop ships crossing the English Channel at the outbreak of the First World War. It was based on a poem by George Meredith, and published in 1920. Vaughan Williams composed *Dona Nobis Pacem* in 1936 amid growing fears of a new war; the work includes the following poems by Walt Whitman:

Beat! Beat! Drums!

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!
Through the windows – through doors – burst like a ruthless force
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,
Into the school where the scholar is studying;
Leave not the bridegroom quiet –
 no happiness must he have now with his bride,
Nor the peaceful farmer have any peace,
 ploughing his field or gathering his grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound, you drums; so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!
Over the traffic of cities, over the rumble of wheels in the streets;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses?
 No sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers bargain by day – no brokers or speculators –
 would they continue?
Would the talkers be talking? Would the singers attempt to sing?
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the judge?
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums – you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley – stop for no expostulation,
Mind not the timid – mind not the weeper or prayer,
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie
 awaiting the hearse,
So strong you thump, O terrible drums, so loud you bugles blow.

Reconciliation

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,
Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage
 must in time be utterly lost,
That the hands of the sisters Death and Night
 incessantly softly wash again, and ever again, this soiled world,
For my enemy is dead, a man divine as myself is dead.
I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin –
 I draw near,
Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the
 white face in the coffin.

Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* (1941) is an oratorio about the Kristallnacht, based on Ödön von Horvath's novel *Ein Kind unserer Zeit* (1938) about a Jewish martyr and scapegoat. It is a 'modern passion' with allusions to the poetry of W B Yeats and T S Eliot as well as Negro Spirituals.

Oh What a Lovely War! was inspired by Alan Clark's work about the First World War generals, *The Donkeys* (1961), and adapted for the cinema by Richard Attenborough in 1969, with a cast including Dirk Bogarde, John Gielgud, John Mills, Kenneth More, Laurence Olivier, Jack Hawkins, Ralph Richardson, Susannah York and the Redgraves. The following is one of its best known songs; underlying its savage flippancy is the irony of Tommy humour born out of hideous adversity:

When they ask us
How dangerous it was,
Oh! We'll never tell them,
No! We'll never tell them.
We spent our pay in some café,
And fought wild women night and day,
'Twas the cushiest job we ever had.

And when they ask us,
And they're certainly going to ask us,
The reason why we didn't win the
Croix de Guerre,
Oh! We'll never tell them,
No! We'll never tell them,
There was a front, but damned if we knew where.

An Act of Remembrance

(With thanks to The Revd Jim Cotter)

Let us remember those citizens of the United Kingdom and of the Commonwealth, especially those from (this county/city), (this town/parish) and from our own families, who gave their lives in the World Wars, those who survived, but wounded in heart, mind or body, to the end of their days, and those who were bereaved and who have never since found so close a love.

Let us remember those who died in the bombing of cities, of Swansea and London, of Liverpool and Coventry, of Dresden and Hiroshima.

Let us remember those who have died in wars and conflicts since, in South-East Asia, in Africa, in Northern Ireland, in the South Atlantic, in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Let us remember those who have died through acts of terrorism, blown out of the skies or gunned down in the streets of the world's cities.

Let us remember those who have died as a result of our individual and corporate pride and greed, our folly and despair.

Let us remember those who have suffered at the hands of ruthless men and women who would commit genocide, or who kill in the name of God.

Let us remember those who have died, and continue to do so, in dark cells and concentration camps, as prisoners of conscience, witnesses to faith, courageous prophets who disturb the powers that be.

Let us remember our Jewish brothers and sisters whom Christians have treated so ill for so long. We remember their six million who died in the Shoah in Germany and Poland, and those who died with them: Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexual people, gypsies, all whose way of life challenged the claim of the racial purity.

Let us remember with penitence the seeds of murder within each one of us.

Let us now remember those who sanctified God's name on earth, those who died for their country, for humanity, for freedom and justice, and those who died out of duty and for their friends ...

They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, not the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them
We will remember them.

(Two Minutes' Silence)

So we remember those who have died when evil ruled the world, and madness ran amok:

Those we knew, and those whose very name is lost.
Still we cry to you, O God, out of the darkness of our divided world.
Let not the hope of men and women perish.
Let not new clouds rain death upon the earth.
Turn to yourself the hearts and wills of rulers and peoples, that a new world may arise where all will live as friends in the bond of your peace.

(The Lord's Prayer)

Let us pledge ourselves anew to the service of God, of one another, and of this planet, human beings together on this fair and fragile earth;

Creating and redeeming God, we pledge ourselves to serve you and all humankind, in the cause of the justice that leads to peace, in the relief of need and suffering, and in the compassion that quells our desire for revenge. Guide us by your Spirit, give us wisdom, give us courage, give us hope, and keep us faithful to your will and to your way, now and always. Amen.

Appendix – Questionnaire on Remembrance

This questionnaire was used prior to the consultation on Remembrance in Hereford Diocese to prepare for the event. It is reproduced here in the hope that it will also help those responsible for the preparation of Remembrance Services – not only individuals but also ecumenical groups and those representing Civic and Royal British Legion participants.

WAR AND REMEMBRANCE – THE CONTEXT

- 1 Is the focus of Remembrance Sunday on the wars of the past or on present conflicts? Where do you think the emphasis should lie?
- 2 Are the names of the fallen (past or recent) read out? Is the service regarded as a commemoration of heroes or heroism? Are civilian casualties commemorated as well as military ones, or should they be? In addition to those killed, what mention is or should be made of those wounded, disabled or traumatised by war, or of the difficulties members of the armed forces can have in returning to civilian life?
- 3 Do our Remembrance events commemorate all victims of war, including ‘the other side’ (past or contemporary), or only ‘our own’? What image do they project of the enemy? How do you think the service should deal with these questions?
- 4 How far does the Remembrance Service (with or without parades) function as a celebration of victory? Should this aspect of national pride (‘Wear your poppy with pride!’) play a part, or should the emphasis be more on the tragedy of all war?
- 5 Do you think Remembrance events would be different if we had lost the war, and if so, how?
- 6 Does commemorating the fallen imply approval of the policies that sent them into war, especially in modern conflicts? Should wrongs done by our own country be acknowledged, and is the Remembrance Service the right time to do this? How do you think the service should deal with these aspects of ‘loyalty’?

- 7 Does the service include any reflection on the causes of conflict, such as territory, ethnicity, resources, ideology, religion or honour, and the propaganda which accompanies them? How might Remembrance Sunday encourage us to use our freedom to avoid the likely causes of conflict in the future?
- 8 Who are the people who actually attend the Remembrance Sunday service? What military or civic representation is there? Is there a parade, and do people wear medals? Are the families of local victims of war present, and what is the age structure of the congregation? How does the regular congregation relate to the others who come on this occasion? What are the spoken and unspoken expectations of all these people in terms of the questions set out above? Do you assume you know what their expectations are, or do you discuss them with people beforehand?
- 9 The church is directly related to Remembrance Sunday: does it have any connection with aspects of 'Remembrance' which take place at other times of the year, for example in school syllabuses or the ongoing work of the British Legion?

THE REMEMBRANCE SERVICE OR EVENT

- 10 Who takes part in the leadership of the Remembrance Service? Is it an Anglican 'Establishment' occasion, or ecumenical? Are schools or other faith communities involved? Do any of these others participate in the planning as well as the conduct of the event, or should they do so? Who would invite them?
- 11 What would be the local reaction to having someone from 'the other side' – say a pastor or parish group from Germany, or (today) Muslims – taking part in the event? Would that alter your planning and perception of the event, and if so, how?
- 12 What do you see as the responsibility of the Church in hosting Remembrance services? Is it to invite the community to commemorate as it wishes, or to control the event in an explicitly Christian way, or somewhere in the middle?
- 13 Is the liturgy provided by the church authorities or composed locally? Where do its emphases come on the spectrum nationalism–reconciliation? Would you want to change it, and if so, how?

- 14 Who chooses the readings and hymns? Are any of them theologically dubious in your view? What should you do about that?
- 15 What elements might the liturgy include to help people to cope with wrongs done to them in a constructive and Christian way?
- 16 What relative weight does your sermon give to the themes of sacrifice, victory, defeat, resistance, acquiescence, guilt, atonement, peace and reconciliation? What is your general aim in preaching on this occasion?
- 17 What resources have you found most helpful in preparing to preach on Remembrance Sunday?
- 18 What pressures and expectations do you and your colleagues feel bearing down on you as you prepare the service and the sermon? How do you, and how should you, respond to them? What reactions might you face in seeking to change the emphasis traditional in your locality? Are there ways of getting people 'on side' beforehand?