

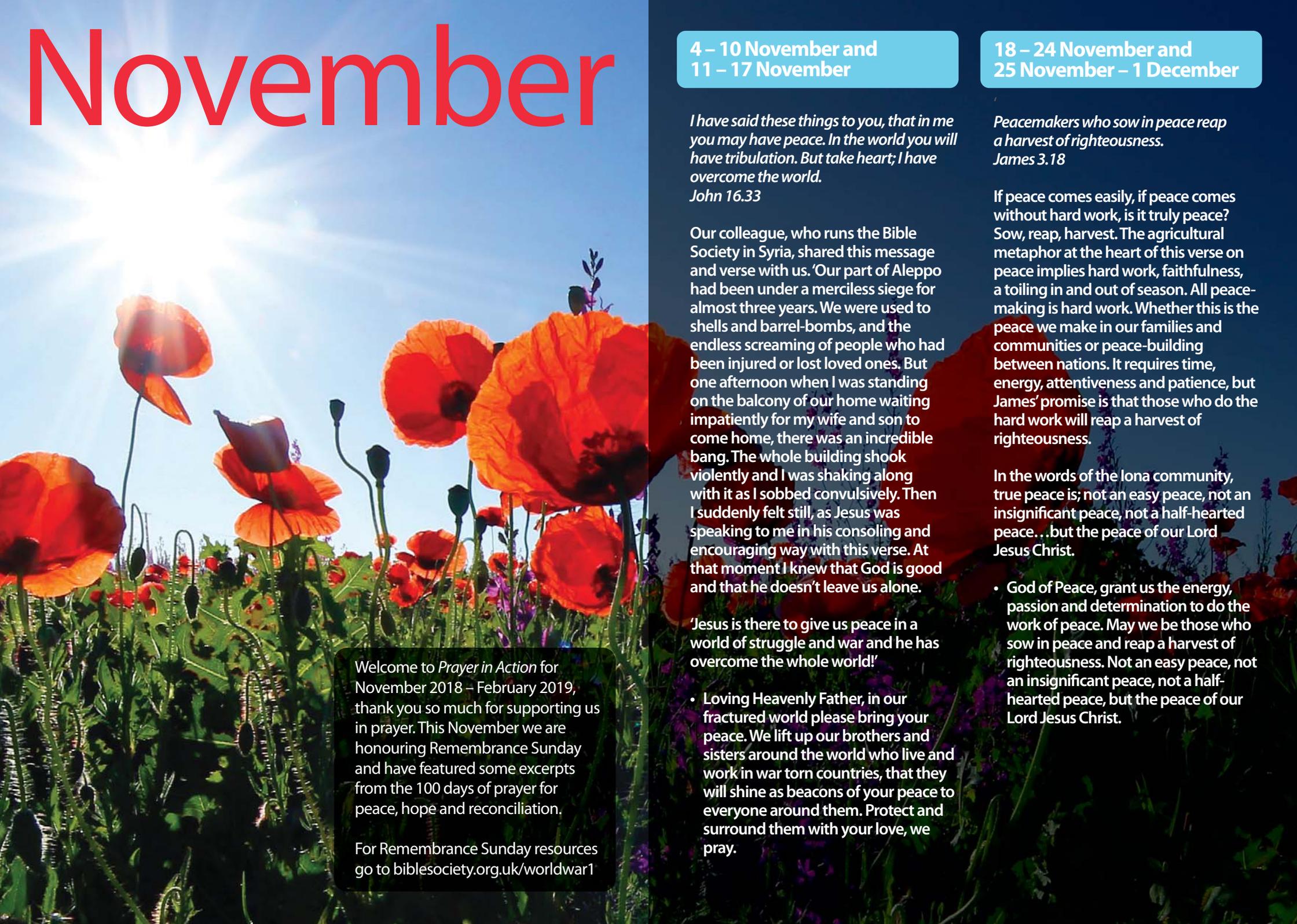


November 2018 – February 2019

prayer *in* action



November



4 – 10 November and
11 – 17 November

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.
John 16.33

Our colleague, who runs the Bible Society in Syria, shared this message and verse with us. 'Our part of Aleppo had been under a merciless siege for almost three years. We were used to shells and barrel-bombs, and the endless screaming of people who had been injured or lost loved ones. But one afternoon when I was standing on the balcony of our home waiting impatiently for my wife and son to come home, there was an incredible bang. The whole building shook violently and I was shaking along with it as I sobbed convulsively. Then I suddenly felt still, as Jesus was speaking to me in his consoling and encouraging way with this verse. At that moment I knew that God is good and that he doesn't leave us alone.

'Jesus is there to give us peace in a world of struggle and war and he has overcome the whole world!'

- Loving Heavenly Father, in our fractured world please bring your peace. We lift up our brothers and sisters around the world who live and work in war torn countries, that they will shine as beacons of your peace to everyone around them. Protect and surround them with your love, we pray.

18 – 24 November and
25 November – 1 December

Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.
James 3.18

If peace comes easily, if peace comes without hard work, is it truly peace? Sow, reap, harvest. The agricultural metaphor at the heart of this verse on peace implies hard work, faithfulness, a toiling in and out of season. All peace-making is hard work. Whether this is the peace we make in our families and communities or peace-building between nations. It requires time, energy, attentiveness and patience, but James' promise is that those who do the hard work will reap a harvest of righteousness.

In the words of the Iona community, true peace is; not an easy peace, not an insignificant peace, not a half-hearted peace...but the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- God of Peace, grant us the energy, passion and determination to do the work of peace. May we be those who sow in peace and reap a harvest of righteousness. Not an easy peace, not an insignificant peace, not a half-hearted peace, but the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome to *Prayer in Action* for November 2018 – February 2019, thank you so much for supporting us in prayer. This November we are honouring Remembrance Sunday and have featured some excerpts from the 100 days of prayer for peace, hope and reconciliation.

For Remembrance Sunday resources go to biblesociety.org.uk/worldwar1

December

The nativity is a great story about a stable, animals and no room at the inn. But it has endured because it's so much more. There's more to the nativity, there's more to Christmas, there's more to life – and it starts with Jesus, the baby in the manger.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1.14 (NIV)

2 – 8 December

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9.6 (NIV)

- Please pray for the Wintershall Nativity, which this year runs from Wednesday 12 December – Sunday 16 December. May all at Wintershall who are performing this year's play communicate the timeless story of Jesus' birth with clarity and integrity, and inspire those watching to explore the Bible for themselves. We pray that all those who experience this moving narrative of the birth of Jesus truly reflect on and are transformed by the real story of Christmas.

For tickets go to wintershall.org.uk

9 – 15 December

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord – and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

Isaiah 11.1 – 3a (NIV)

- Please pray for Bible Society staff as we seek to serve our local community through a series of Christmas events, in local shopping centres and nursing homes and providing gifts to those in need in the local community.

16 – 22 December

But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end.'

Luke 1.30 – 33 (NIV)

- Pray for everyone using our Christmas resources in their communities and churches. Pray that we can reach out to our communities through carol events, and that churches will be blessed sharing the Christmas story with the Four Minute Nativity script. Please pray for everyone taking part in #AdventChallenge as they share God's blessing with their friends and neighbours.

For our Christmas resources go to biblesociety.org.uk/Christmas

23 – 29 December

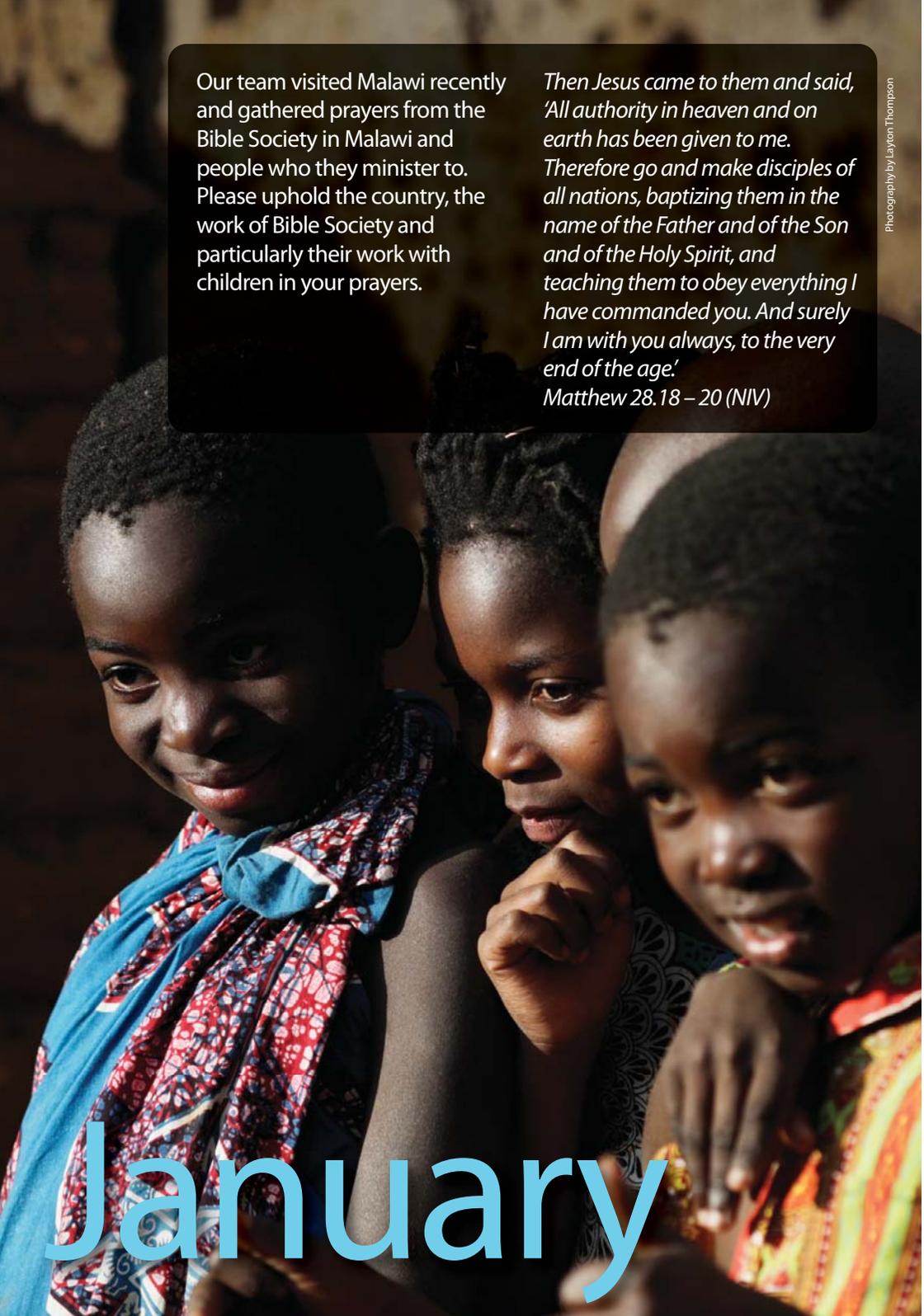
Happy Christmas from Bible Society!

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.'

Luke 2.13 – 14 (NIV)

- Praise God for the gift of his son Jesus to us. Pray for all those who feel excluded at Christmas, for the marginalised, the homeless, refugees and those without family, that they will know the love of Jesus and the real meaning of Christmas.





Photography by Layton Thompson

Our team visited Malawi recently and gathered prayers from the Bible Society in Malawi and people who they minister to. Please uphold the country, the work of Bible Society and particularly their work with children in your prayers.

Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'
Matthew 28.18 – 20 (NIV)

January

30 December – 5 January

Clapperton Mayuni, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Malawi:

'Pray for a great impact in the work we are doing, because unless lives are changing, it's not worth doing. When we go to rural places with Bibles or literacy classes, we see how excited people are. To read for the first time, and learn what the Bible has to say, is life-changing. We go to competitions where people have memorised verses, and it excites me to see how committed they are. We must encourage one another to stay strong in the word. I pray that many young people will live the word, and we'll see children understanding the stories.'

6 – 12 January

Patrick Lifa, uncle to Esther, an orphan, who lives with him and his family, and who received a Bible:

'God provides for us even in these difficult circumstances. Please pray that God will continue to meet our daily needs.'

Tadala Mphatso, age 10, lives in Manase township:

'Please pray that God protects my family and helps me in school. I pray for a better future, with a good career and a good family. Please pray that God keeps blessing us with Bibles; there are many children who don't know God who need these Bibles so they can get to know him.'

13 – 19 January

Pastor Vincent Ndovi, Pastor at Manase Assemblies of God Church:

'My prayer is that our children keep growing spiritually, using these Bibles. Secondly, we want to build another classroom for our Sunday school. Currently we have a small class for all 120 children; they take it in turns to use the building. And I pray that more children will be able to access the Bible, and have better education. Poverty is also a hindrance. Pray that God will bless our church.'

'It's very, very important for children in Malawi to have the Bible. The future of the church is these children. We need to invest in children's ministry. But these books are very expensive according to standards in Malawi, and many people in the villages are unable to afford them. Even poor people in the city would not be able to afford this.'

20 – 26 January

Joseph Khondowe, part-time Bible promoter, has worked on the children's Bible distribution project for three years:

'To people who have helped provide Bibles, thank you very much. Together, we have reached more than 6,000 children. But there's a need for more Bibles. We value your support so much, not just money but prayer too. Pray for our Sunday school teachers. Pray they will have time to study the Bible and prepare their lessons for children. Also pray for the pastors, that they will start to understand the importance of children in their churches. Pray the pastors will support the teachers.'

This month our Deputy Chief Executive, Paul Woolley, shares the story of his grandfather in World War One and encourages us to pray for peace.



*You must be very careful not to forget the things you have seen God do for you. Keep reminding yourselves, and tell your children and grandchildren as well.
Deuteronomy 4.9 (CEV)*



February

My grandfather was 15 when World War One was declared. He lied about his age in order to sign up. The first his mother knew about it was when a friend of hers told her how smart Bernard looked in his uniform. Needless to say, he was frogmarched back to the army office and had to wait another year before he saw action. He was a gunner in the Royal Medical Corps and took part in the second battle of Ypres. Unlike so many young soldiers, he returned to live a long life.

In the Old Testament, there is a constant encouragement to remember the past without living in it. The people of Israel are commanded to remember the trials

they have endured and the way God has liberated them whilst faithfully living their lives with God in the present.

It's important that I remember the sacrifices of those, like my grandfather, who fought in the war, whilst, at the same time, remembering that I am called to live life faithfully with God in my day. Getting this balance right should mean I fight evil wherever I encounter it and work for peace.

- Lord, as I remember your action in history and the actions of those who took part in World War One, help me to live my life as Jesus would live it if he were me - in this day. Amen.