

November 2018

Greetings,

On November 11th, the world will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armistice that brought the First World War to an end.

The dreadful conflict that became known as the “Great War” witnessed the death of some nine million service personnel. The wounded numbered in the twenties of millions. Civilian casualties are estimated to have been around 16.5 million.

Yet, despite this dreadful carnage, the 1914-18 conflict was not, “the war to end all wars.” From the Second World War to the current “global war on terror” the evil of state-sponsored violence continues. Strong arguments can be made that many of these campaigns represent a “just war.” They may; but that does not diminish the horror or the tragedy of battle.

It is customary on November 11th to pause for two minutes silence to remember all of war’s victims. But, this year, New Zealand will add to this memorial. The time of silence will be followed by a “roaring chorus of gladsome sounds.”ⁱ

Just as the first news of the armistice was greeted with “songs and cheers, ...pipings and blastings, and tootings and rattlings,” New Zealand and its churches will mark this year’s 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month with a “raucous joyous noise.”ⁱⁱ Britain and Germany will also commemorate noisily. Bells will peal at 11.02 am from churches throughout both countries.

Men and women who lost their lives, their wellbeing, or their loved ones to war, deserve at least two minutes a year of our prayerful respect. But peace

should also be celebrated. Scripture tells us that God's dream is for all violence and harm to end. It is a hope that God cherishes for the whole of Creation.

We should – and we must – celebrate every moment that peace breaks out. We should- and we must- do all that we can to ensure that it is sustained. It is God's greatest desire.

*The wolf will romp with the lamb,
the leopard sleep with the kid.
Calf and lion will eat from the same trough,
and a little child will tend them.
Neither animal nor human will hurt or kill
on my holy mountain.
The whole earth will be brimming with knowing God-Alive,
a living knowledge of God ocean-deep, ocean-wide.
Isaiah 11: 6, 9 The Message*

Peace, Salaam, Shalom,

Brenda

ⁱ "Making Noise on Armistice Day," Anglican Taonga," 10/10/18

ⁱⁱ *ibid.*