

RECTOR'S PINT

It is with a heavy heart that I write this. In truth, I never really know how to tackle the subject of remembrance, but this year, that has been hugely amplified.

We do not have boots on the ground, yet. But we are effectively at war, or at least involved in a proxy war between the 'West' and Russia. I wonder what history will actually tell about the causes of this. It was an invasion, and Ukraine with its already creaking infrastructure, is being pulled to pieces. Any possible diplomatic solution seems to have receded, if it was ever in sight in the first place, beyond a blood-tinged horizon. Once again there is war in Europe; what will our emotions be this year at our remembrance services, when we all say, 'we will remember them'?

A prayer at times of international unrest

Almighty Father,

Whose will is to restore all things

In your beloved Son, the King of all:

Govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,

And bring the families of the nations,

Divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,

To be subject to his just and gentle rule;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

November will be a month of remembrance, not only with our remembrance services (please see the service list in this newsletter) but also with our special service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the Departed. This is a time we can reflect on loved ones who are no longer with us, sing some familiar hymns, listen to a brief reflection, read out names, and light candles in their memory. It will also be the day when our books of condolence following the death of Queen Elizabeth II will be closed, after we kept them open for a while to allow as many people who wanted to sign to do so. I know that I wrote about the death of Her Majesty the Queen last month but when I took the first Book of Common Prayer service (the historic form of worship in the Church of England, dating from 1662 which we use once a month) it was very strange, as several of the prayers refer to Elizabeth our Queen and her governors. All those of us who take these services had to adapt, and make sure that we prayed for Charles, our King, and *his* governors. (Some of the books are very dog eared – after all, they are 70 years old! At some point we will need to replace them).

The service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the Departed will take place at 4.00pm on Sunday 6th November at St Peter's in Great Haseley. I am hoping that there will be tea and cake to follow

Simon