Weekly News

11th November 2026

What do you think about during the two-minute silence on Remembrance Day? Who do you remember?

Perhaps you think of family members. Comrades. A generation all but gone, on whose shoulders we now stand. What do you think about?

For some of us, the silence is tinged with grief. Remembering can be uncomfortable. Perhaps we need to hear those words of Jesus: “blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

God meets us in the middle of even the most uncomfortable and painful memories. We are not on our own.

And yet all of us who’ve lost a loved one will know that grief doesn’t stand still. It ebbs and flows and, over time, changes. Sometimes God even uses it for good.

I first learned that 10 years ago while on a study trip in Israel, led by the Dean of Coventry Cathedral. We were in Galilee, walking on the hillside where Jesus is said to have preached his famous sermon on the mount. The Dean had been telling me about how the cathedral congregation had taken Jesus’ words ‘blessed are the peacemakers’ and ‘love your enemies’ and tried to actually live them. A movement began, focused on peace and reconciliation, which now spans the globe.

When we reached a place which overlooked the lake, we stopped and shared communion around a simple stone table. And I began to realise that peace isn’t just something we should hope and pray for, it’s something made, often when people come around a table.

Some of you will know the story of Coventry Cathedral. On the night of 14th November 1940 the city was bombed. Huge areas were destroyed and hundreds died. Amidst the smoke and burning rubble of the cathedral, the stonemason Jock Forbes noticed two old roof beams which had fallen into the shape of a cross. He tied them together, stood them up, took stones from the broken pillars and formed a simple altar. A table made out of the wreckage.

Psalm 23 talks about a table like that: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies."

The psalm doesn't promise that God will clear the danger away first, and then lay on a meal once everything's safe. God sets the table while the danger is still there. Before anything's been fixed.

In Coventry, two words were written behind the table: Father forgive.
Father forgive *them*. And *us*. *Me*.
We all need the same mercy. Jesus calls us all to be peacemakers.

Our world today is still filled with conflict.
To be a peacemaker can seem so abstract when we see the complexities of war. But I believe our remembering can inspire us to be peacemakers.

Maybe not to end wars between nations. But we can make peace within our own communities and relationships.
It could be with a relative we’ve fallen out with. A neighbour who’s annoyed us.
A colleague who walked over us.

Can you think of someone who fits that bill? You don't have to like them.

Before anything’s been fixed, why not bring before God their name and our own, with those two words: Father, forgive.

And as we remember, let us pledge to be peacemakers.

Peter



Notices

Free Bible Giveaway in Newbury

On Saturday 14th November, 11am-5pm, volunteers from "The Bible Table" will be giving out free bibles on the streets of Newbury. Their mission is to make the Bible, accessible to all by giving away free Bibles (including giant and large print versions), and equipping the church to do the same affordably.

They will be prayer walking between 10 & 11am around the town and would welcome your support either in person or praying remotely. To get involved please contact David Clark: davidclark_888@hotmail.com or visit their website for more information.

Encounter - Joint Baptist Service THIS SUNDAY

We're joining forces with Thatcham and Basingstoke Baptist Churches for "Encounter" - a praise and prayer evening at 7pm this Sunday, 15th November at Basingstoke Baptist Church.
It's a brilliant opportunity to worship God together, led by a gifted band, and is just as suitable for new believers as it is for those who've been following Jesus for decades.
No booking required. If you'd like a lift then please contact the Church Office.

Prayer Meeting

A reminder of our prayer meeting in church on **Wednesday 18th November, 7.30pm.**
We will be praying for our search for a new minister and for Jess, who visited us a few weeks ago.

Christmas Choir

Do you love singing? Would you like to be in our Christmas Choir at the Carol service on 20th December?
From this Sunday (15th) we will be holding a short rehearsal in the Hall after the service.
If you have any questions please speak to Claire T or Hannah.

Christmas in a Shoebag - Update

Thank you to everyone who has supported Hope Now Christmas in a Shoe Bag initiative 2026, by sewing bags, filling, donating money and praying. 117 bags and £400 from NBC were taken to Hope Now in Southampton, plus 290 blanket squares, most of which were knitted by one caring lady. These will be sewn together by ladies in Cherkasy as a form of therapy.

Please pray for safety of the lorry driver, that the bags reach their destination safely and that many happy children will know they are loved and cared for by people whom they will never meet.
May God Bless each child who receives a 'snippet of joy' this Christmas time. Kelvin & Judith

Pre-Service Prayer

A reminder that every Sunday at 9.30am a group gather in the prayer room for 15 minutes to pray for the service and for our church and community in general. All are welcome.
The prayer room is immediately through the door to the left as you face the stage.

Prayers

Church Family

John P Please pray for John who was recently admitted to hospital following a couple of falls, and was diagnosed with pneumonia. Thank God that he has responded well to the treatment, but pray that he will continue to rebuild his strength and be able to return home.

Pray too for **Audrey** who has also not been in the best of health lately.

Prayers for Remembrance

God of comfort and of peace,
We remember before you those we have loved and lost,
and a generation to whom we owe so much.
Meet us in our grief and in our hardest memories,
for you have promised comfort to those who mourn.

We pray for those caught up in current conflicts;
For those who have been injured or disabled through war.
For those who have lost homes and security through conflict;
for those who have lost loved relatives;
for refugees and all those in need of aid and other help.
for those who face danger and take risks for peace;

Lord, you call us to love our enemies and to be peacemakers.
Forgive us the grudges we carry and the peace we have not made.

Help us to recognise those we find hard to love, bring them to mind Lord, and bless them.
Forgive us for holding onto old hurts and resentments, and soften our hearts.
Help us to forgive as we have been forgiven.

Make us peacemakers in our families and our community,
and give us courage to pledge ourselves to peace.

In Jesus' name.
Amen.