We will re-member….



Remembering. It's an interesting word – the opposite of dis-membering. To dis-member something means to pull it part, leaving it destroyed.

War comes from a process of dis-membering. From all sorts of different pressures of greed, mis-use of power and oppression that twist and corrupt hearts into acts of violence and terror. From all those disfigured and whose lives are cut short. From the innocent who get caught up in conflict; lives and homes destroyed. From the impact, even, on our environment – the damage to land and plants and animals. From the need of men and women to stand against that in the world, and put themselves into harm's way in the name of justice and peace. It dis-members society, and the world we live in, pulling us apart as a civilisation and leaving deep wounds.

But when we *re-member* we do what the word suggests. As we remember those whose lives have been destroyed in so many ways in war … in a way they are put together again in our hearts, minds and prayers. Re-membering in love and prayer is, in a way, an act of healing and restoration, drawing us into compassion and empathy, honouring and treasuring the people, the stories, and the love and lives broken within tragedy, and forming us as a community of love, hope, integrity and peace.

Do this in memory of me, Jesus says at the Last Supper, before his crucifixion, when he is giving his disciples strength to get through to, and live into the Resurrection to come, and make it their own. Jesus

shows them the broken things, and promises them he is within them – he promises he can work within broken bodies and spilt blood, to bring peace, hope and new life. Do this, he says. Tell this story. Trust in this truth. *Do this in memory of me.*

Jesus tells us that memory, and story, are absolutely essential to healing and hope. And that, somehow, in that remembering, there is an active commitment, a way of becoming channels of his life and peace into a world so broken by violence. You are now my body, he says. He teaches us to take responsibility for each other, and for the world.

Remembering becomes a commitment for the future. And we stand in that place today. Remembering the stories, honouring those who gave their lives standing in the face of violence. We stand also alongside those who are still in active service in the name of justice and peace, and we commit our hearts as places of peace through justice. For it is only through justice that peace can make whole.

Somehow, as we re-member together, we form ourselves into one community. A community of hope, of peace, and of promise.

When we look at the news, and the frightening developments on the world stage, and we see the government urging us to stockpile water and essential supplies, it is easy to despair, and the sorrows of the past join to the fears for the future and create something that can be destructive, driven by fears that can distort our sense of humanity.

Yet, today, we do something beautiful. As we processed down the streets amongst our community, as we remembered at the War Memorial, as we sing and pray here in Church, we form a body. And we join to the body of those remembering all around the world on this day. Re-membering – drawing together what is broken, into a Body of Hope. Of healing, and working and committing to making things whole once more.

The world needs hope at this time. Hope that stands for peace, that speaks for peace, and prays for peace, because it believes it is something worth doing. That, in the believing, in the remembering, we can form a real force for change and healing, and deep roots of integrity and justice that form who we are, and what we bring to this fragile time.

Remembering after all, as Jesus called us to do, just before he died and rose again, brings with it the promise and reality of Resurrection. And resurrection is the life-force that speaks from within the darkness of evil, and says *do not despair.*

Jesus promises us that life, love, and healing are always the stronger force. That goodness does win through. He promises us that his ability to bring life from death is something that he shares with us – and that we are entrusted with our chapter, our story in which to bring healing, and to live hope and peace in the world. And that we have the power to stand for and work for change; for life and love and beauty. That what we do, what we believe, and speak and pray for, matters.

As we remember the huge sacrifices of those who went before us, we take up their story anew today, and we join it with the deep truths that Jesus gave us. And we trust in his truth. That love can work within the broken places, and the spilt blood, and that we must not despair. That there is a stronger power, and it is ours to share.

We pledge ourselves to live and work for a tomorrow where hatred, division, war and injustice will be no more.

And that means something deep and powerful.

The sacrifices are not in vain, we commit ourselves that such pain will not tear our world apart again, that we will re-member – draw the brokenness and dis-membering together in all the small and great choices of our everyday - and that we will build on the legacy they leave us.

We do this in memory of you, we say, *we will re-member.*