

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

20 November 2013: Simon Mason, Life Church Petersfield



Give thanks

Thanksgiving and Remembrance are very significant at this time of year.

Harvest Festival services, giving thanks for the food we eat and the people who produce it, take place earlier in the autumn, and in North America Thanksgiving is a public holiday. In the USA it takes place on the last Thursday in November, as it has done for nearly 400 years; traditionally turkey and pumpkin pie are eaten, and people celebrate the blessing of the harvest and the good things in their lives.

In the U.K. Remembrance is a hugely significant event. It began in 1919, on 11th November, the first anniversary of the ending of the Great War. Poppies are worn by many, many people, and Remembrance Services, such as the one in Petersfield on Sunday 10th November, are extremely well attended, with many members of the armed services present too. We remember the heroism and courage of all those who fought and died for this and other Commonwealth countries, for standing up to cruelty and oppression wherever it is found. We remember the sacrifices made on the home front too, for all the work done by hospitals and relief agencies, in factories and on farms. We remember the work of the Royal British Legion, and the care and support they bring to those who are suffering. We commit to stand up for peace and justice in the world.

John Maxwell Edmonds' words, 'When you go home, tell them of us and say, For your tomorrow, we gave our today', really do sum Remembrance up. Think of the sacrifices and suffering that took place so that we might have freedom.

Jesus came to show peace and justice in the world. He suffers too when there is grief and turmoil, he is there when we give remembrance and thanksgiving. He is the good shepherd, who willingly chose to lay down his life for us. Let's experience and give thanks for that, as his love and peace rule in our hearts.

This article was submitted for publication in the Petersfield Post on 20 November; it is possible that it was published earlier or may be published later.