

# **Sermon on Remembrance Sunday, 13 November 2022 by Rev. Bill Church**

Recently, I stayed in a lovingly restored Landmark Trust house near Hereford.

On the outside, it looked like a 17<sup>th</sup> century stone farmhouse. On the inside, there was a splendid 14<sup>th</sup> century timber Great Hall, so we had a living room two and half storeys high. But in the kitchen, there was a modern electric cooker with more knobs and programs than I knew what to do with.

If the whole house was up-to-date like the cooker, nobody would be very interested. If it had all been like the 14<sup>th</sup> century, no modern person would want to stay there. It was a skilful blend of ancient and modern, heritage and convenience.

In a way, Remembrance is, or should be, like that.

Our pattern of Remembrance began over 100 years ago, to mark the horrendous and unprecedented losses in World War 1, which is now history. Even World War 2 for most people is now history.

If Remembrance were just a traditional marker of history, it would be a bit irrelevant and a missed opportunity.

If Remembrance were used only as a call for peace and reconciliation, it would be out of context and floating in a void.

It is right to remember those who served and those who fell in war. In the World Wars, they were mostly conscripts who went to war with a greater or lesser degree of enthusiasm. Only a few were heroes in the traditional sense of the word, but together and with civilian groups like the fire service and merchant navy, they achieved a heroic task.

Their service and suffering, and the service and suffering of the services in various conflicts since, needs to be remembered and saluted.

If that is not to be just a footnote to history, then a lesson must be learned about duty and a willingness to put others above your own comfort and safety.

As the Letter to the Hebrews says: "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with patience the race that is set before us."