

**Remembrance Sunday,
Sunday, 14th November 2021**



Dear Friends,

‘Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.’

(Daniel 12: 3)

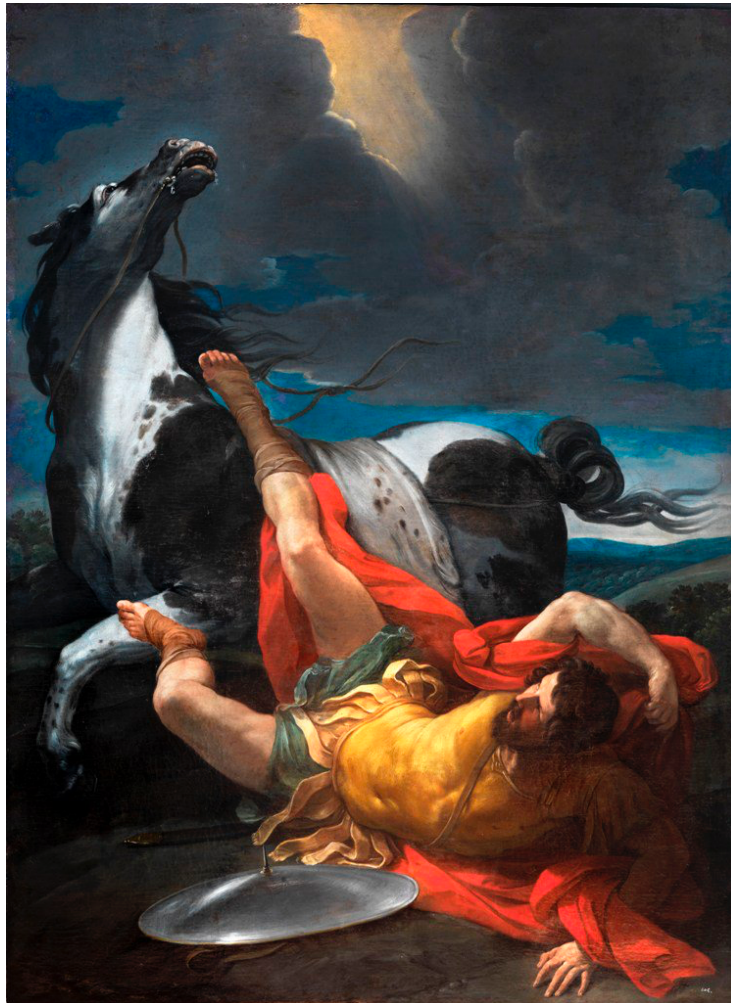
The posthumous release of an extraordinary video statement by Frederik Willem (FW) de Klerk, who died on 11th November, has inevitably caused controversy. De Klerk, responsible for defending apartheid with brutal force, was also recognised for releasing Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990 and working with him in bringing about the end of apartheid. For many, de Klerk’s posthumous apology for the sin of apartheid is being hailed as cowardly, for others it is a welcome admission, which brings the light of healing on its wings to a country still wracked by the pain of its past. Here is part of the transcript of F W de Klerk’s last words to the people of South Africa:

I, without qualification, apologise for the pain and the hurt and the indignity and the damage that apartheid has done to black, brown and Indians in South Africa. I do so not only in my capacity as the former leader of the National Party, but also as an individual. Allow me in this last message to share with you the fact that since the early 80s, my views changed completely. It was as if I had a conversion. And in my heart of hearts, I realized that apartheid was wrong. I realized that we had arrived at a place which was morally unjustifiable.



Nelson Mandela and F W de Klerk receive Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 – BBC

De Klerk's refusal to apologise for the pain and suffering of apartheid has been widely documented as a problematic feature of attempts at reconciling black and white South Africans. Listening to him speak these powerful words of apology on his death-bed, full of emotion, pain and what sounded to me like a remorseful confession, I found myself deeply moved. In his statement, de Klerk went on to re-enforce the importance of South Africa's democratic Constitution and the need for the nation to work together for peace. I am sure you will join me in praying for the words of this contrite soul to bring healing and light to the hearts of the people of South Africa.



'The Conversion of Saul' by Guido Reni

As Christians, perhaps in these last repentant words of F W de Klerk we might see something of the radical conversion of St Paul. In his letter to the people of Galatia, Paul reflects on the sins of his life before Jesus opened his eyes to the light of His truth: *'For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.'* (Galatians 1:13)

Perhaps there is also something spiritually auspicious in the death of de Klerk falling on Armistice Day, coming with it the release of his personal call for peace and reconciliation. In our own lives, we are each of us capable of wrongdoing, yet, like de Klerk we are equally capable of turning our lives around; of repenting past mistakes and shining the wisdom of Christ's light out to the world as we work together for peace.

Last weekend we gave thanks in our All Saints and All Souls services for those who have pointed us to Christ and who have been wise role-models in our families and communities. On this Remembrance Sunday, we give thanks for our fallen heroes of war: for the lives of all too many men, women and children who have given their lives in defence of peace. Importantly, we also give thanks for all those who continue to fight for the defence of our realm and act as peace-keepers in our troubled world. Theirs will be a heavenly destiny – their suffering healed through God’s grace in the radiant gift of everlasting life. *‘Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.’*

Through Daniel’s vision, God shows us how we can each be part of that promise – by our commitment to seek His forgiveness for the things we have got wrong in our lives and our determination to change past behaviours and live in His wisdom, which will only radiate light and life out to other souls who also seek peace in their hearts, and a solution to the pain of their life’s hurts.

Today, we are blessed by Charlotte Nash’s reflection on Remembrance, which I hope will comfort you with her gentle, Christ-shaped light. We have a little too much in this week’s newsletter to include the latest ‘Top Tips’ from Austen Hooker, but we look forward to hearing more of his gardening wisdom in the weeks to come.

Yours, in the peace of Christ,

Jax
Rector, The Downs Benefice

Reflection on Remembering – Charlotte Nash, LLM



I expect many of us have trouble remembering, it seems a fairly common problem! I resort to lists – shopping lists, lists of things that need doing, and as this coming Sunday is the Second Sunday before Advent there will soon be Christmas lists!

We may not be good at remembering, but we all like to be remembered. A phone call or a card shows us someone is thinking and cares about us. Whilst we may have short memories and are forgetful let us be encouraged that God always remembers. He remembers and cares for his people and creation.

A long time ago, in the days of Noah, when the rains had stopped and the land was drying out, God made a covenant with his people, sealing it with an arc of colours in the sky, saying:

‘Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and I will remember the everlasting covenant I have made with all living creatures on the earth.’ Genesis 9:15, 16.

God gives human beings a symbol as a reminder of his covenant with us.

Cesare Pavese said, ‘We do not remember days, we remember moments.’ Remembering is an important part of who we are. We all have times we remember, hopefully good times, and good stories of things that have happened to us.

The Israelites also had a story, a miraculous story about how God intervened and freed them from the tyranny of slavery in Egypt. After he had led them to freedom, he spoke to them saying: *‘Remember you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.’* (Deuteronomy 15:5). Time and again in the Old Testament God tells the Israelites to *‘Remember.’* The story of the Exodus has shaped the Jews, and each year families continue to meet to share the special Passover meal and recite the story to one another.

The Passover looks forward to its fulfilment in Jesus at the Last Supper where Jesus gave the New Covenant. Jesus took the bread and broke it, saying, *‘This is my body that is broken for you’*, and he shared the cup, saying, *‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood, Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.’* At Holy Communion we share the bread and wine, in remembrance of Jesus and his sacrificial death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus gives us two everyday symbols of bread and wine that nourish our bodies, a reminder that he is here, he lives in and through us.



'Breakfast at Dawn' by Mike Moyers

God remembers us. But there are times in the Bible, and perhaps in our lives, when we do not feel remembered or that God is close to us. At those times we cry out to the living God as does the Psalmist:

'Remember your great mercy according to your love, remember me.'
'Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love
remember me.' (Psalm 25: 6&7)

On the Cross, one of the criminals asked Jesus, *'Remember me when you come into your kingdom'* and Jesus' replied, *'Today you will be with me in paradise'*.

Deep down there is a human longing in all of us to be remembered. On Remembrance Sunday as we remember the fallen, those who gave their lives in war for our freedom, we will join in the words, *'We will remember them.'*

God remembers them,
and God remembers us.
We are never far from his love and care.

Charlotte Nash, LLM



Collect Prayer for Remembrance Sunday

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;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Daniel 12:1-3 - The Resurrection of the Dead

At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.



Mark 13: 1-8 - The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!' Then Jesus asked him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.'

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 'Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?' Then Jesus began to say to them, 'Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.'

Schedule of Services

This schedule is correct at this time but may be subject to future alterations – please check on our website for the most up-to-date information.

All services start at 10am, unless marked differently on the table below

Please could you continue to book to attend services by contacting the Benefice Office on 01962 880 845 or office@downsbenefice.org.uk

Please would you also continue to wear masks until we are advised otherwise.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>14th Nov</i>	10.55am Remembrance Service	10.55am Remembrance Service at the War Memorial	<i>Service at Sir John Moore Barracks</i>	10.55am Remembrance Service	<i>With Chilbolton</i>
<i>21st Nov</i>		Morning Prayer		8am – Holy Communion (BCP)	
<i>24th Nov (Wed)</i>			Mid-Week Holy Communion		
<i>28th Nov</i>			Patronal Festival	Morning Prayer and Baptism	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)

<i>5th Dec</i>	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	4pm – Posada		6pm – Autumn Mediations – Maximillian Kolbe
<i>12th Dec</i>		6pm – Carol Service	Holy Communion	6pm – Carol Service	10am - Carol Service
<i>19th Dec</i>	4pm – Carol Service	Holy Communion	6pm – Carol Service		
<i>22nd Dec (Wed)</i>			Mid-Week Holy Communion		
<i>24th Dec</i>	4pm – Crib Service	4pm – Crib Service	4pm – Crib service	4pm – Crib Service and 11.30pm – Midnight Service	2.30pm – Carol Service
<i>25th Dec</i>	Family Service	Family Service	Holy Communion	Family Service	Family Service
<i>26th Dec</i>	No Services				
<i>2nd Jan</i>	Morning Prayer		4pm – Café Church	10am - BCP Sung Eucharist	