

FBC Remembrance Day Sunday November 9, 2025, Peace Through Sacrifice

Intro: I have to confess, emotions swept over me as I worked on the message for today. What a text John 15:13 is, and how fitting for a Remembrance Day Sunday service!

Slide 1: *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”*

Slide 2: The Power of Remembering

On Nov. 11, Canadians will gather to honour, as countless plaques put it, the “**memory**” of those who died for “King and Country.” What then is that memory? How shall we remember that sacrifice?

The shared memories of a people are in large part what constitute them as a people. No memory, no identity. No shared story, no nation.

This vast land has been marked by the sacrifice of so many. Remembrance Day awakens a memory of those sacrifices, including those we have forgotten in the past.

As the old hymn says “Precious memories, unseen angels, sent from somewhere to my soul

How they linger, ever near me, and the sacred past unfolds

Precious memories, how they linger, how they ever flood my soul

In the stillness, of the midnight, precious sacred scenes unfold

This morning we pay tribute to all of our veteran's, and especially we want to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice to serve our country and preserve our freedoms!

Let us thank God that we live in Canada! Surely of all the countries in the world we have been supremely blessed! And largely that’s due to the men and women who laid down their life on a battlefield fighting for us.

I wonder how many unmarked graves there are of Canadian soldiers in the jungles, or the deserts, or the forests, or in the water who are never recognized and honoured. **Their graves are unmarked.** No one preached a funeral service over them when they departed this world.

They may have been shot and thrown in a ditch and left to die, like my uncle Jimmy, who was miraculously saved by a motorcycle dispatch rider.

But God knows where every one of them is! And we thank the Lord for all of them, whether marked or unmarked! God will bring that body back to life one day in the future! He knows where every particle of that body is, and He will put it all together again!

Remembrance Day is a necessary challenge to remember what we were, what happened

On Remembrance Sunday, we come with a particular sense of gratitude to men and women, who through their gift of service to the nation in World War One and onwards, have enabled the rest of us to enjoy the incredibly precious gift of freedom.

Slide 3: Gratitude In Action

Slide 4: Cenotaph Image: The memorials written on cenotaphs; in stained glass windows and on communion tables, are a powerful reminder of the trauma experienced by this nation in the 1914-1918 war.

It was meant to be the war to end all wars, but there was too little effort to put in place an effective peace settlement, that led ultimately to a second world war, after which at last a more effective peace settlement plan was formulated and executed.

Yet wars have not ceased, and conflicts have continued to the present day.

The bells of liberty ring in Canada today because of these men and women we honour. The memory of their sacrifice will always live in our hearts, and to us is committed the trust to keep their memory alive.

These battlefields of the world we remember today are hallowed to every Canadian, and we pause to give them our highest honours, humbly realizing the sacred trust that these, our war dead, have handed to us.

They found, as have brave men of all ages, that there are principles well worth dying for.

Their noble, unselfish sacrifice is a silent, eloquent rebuke to the self-centeredness of our generation.

The freedoms we cherish, the freedoms we overlook, the freedoms we too often treat lightly—were not purchased with the wealth of millionaires, nor won by the brilliance of scientists, nor secured by the noble efforts of those at home, vital though they were.

These freedoms were forged in the blood, sweat, and sacrifice of those we honour today—those who laid down their lives so that we might live.

Slide 5: Lest We Forget We remember the young men and women who never came home. We remember the families who bore the ache of absence. **We remember the veterans who carry memories too heavy for words.**

We remember the nurses, chaplains, and medics who served in quiet courage. We remember those who laid down their lives — not only in death, but in daily sacrifice.

We move freely across this great land, scarcely pausing to consider the cost. Yet such liberty was not always ours—it was bought with the lives of our forefathers, who stood and fell to break the iron grip of military conquest and secure a future unchained.

Today, we want to honour the memory of all those who laid down their lives on the altar of freedom. **Those precious lives were not given in vain!**

Because of their sacrifice, we are free today to assemble together in fellowship and worship.

Let us thank God that Canada is still the land of prosperity and opportunity, both for our children and ourselves.

Slide 6 Image: At the Eleventh Hour of the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month, A Nation Hushes. Two minutes. No engines, no chatter, no scrolling thumbs on smart phones.

Just the wind across Flanders fields and the piercing echo of a trumpet.

Each November, as poppies bloom on our lapels and wreaths are laid in quiet circles of remembrance, we stop to remember.

We remember names etched on granite and faces that never returned home.

We remember silence broken only by the wind, the bugle's cry, and the beating of hearts that will not forget.

Remembrance Day is more than an act of national memory — **it is a sacred moment of gratitude.**

We remember the courage of those who served, the sacrifice of those who died, and the hope for peace that still calls to us.

And as we do, we hear the words of Jesus in John 15:13.

Slide 7: “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

This is not only a verse for soldiers.

It’s a verse for sinners.

It’s a verse for saints.

It’s a verse for caregivers.

It’s a verse for peacemakers.

It’s a verse for Christ-followers.

It’s a call to remember love that costs something.

Slide 8: Remembering the Cost of Freedom

Freedom has never been free.

It was bought with courage, suffering, and blood.

When we look back on the great wars, the peacekeeping missions, and the sacrifices of our veterans, we see ordinary men and women who stepped forward in extraordinary times.

They left homes and families, comfort and safety, not for glory or gain, but for something larger than themselves — **for peace, for justice, for the hope of a better world.**

In the mud of the trenches, on the beaches of Normandy, in the skies over Europe, and in the deserts and mountains of later conflicts, lives were laid down.

Each one a story, each one a gift.

For gratitude is one of the deepest forms of worship.

When we give thanks for those who laid down their lives, we honour what Jesus Himself called “the greatest love.”

Slide 9 Image: The Cross: The Love That Inspires All Sacrifice

When Jesus spoke these words in our text, He was on the way to the cross.

Within hours, He would lay down His own life, not just for His friends, but for a world that had turned away from God.

The soldier who shields a comrade, the medic who runs toward danger, the peacekeeper who stands between conflict and chaos — all mirror in part, the self-giving heart of God.

Slide 10: Every act of sacrificial love in this world points back to the greatest act of love ever shown — **Jesus on the cross.**

He took our guilt, our sin, our shame, and offered His life in our place.

The freedom we enjoy as citizens is precious.

Slide 11: But The Freedom We Receive as Believers Is Eternal.

Through Christ, we are freed from sin and reconciled to God —

not because we earned it, but because He laid down His life for His friends.

Slide 12: In Our Text, The Disciples Are Called Christ's Friends

Webster's defines “**friend**” as “a favoured companion.” **Thank God today for our true friends!**

The Lord has allowed my life to be blessed by having enjoyed the friendship of some very special people

However, there is a Friend Who is more special than any other I have ever met in this life. His name is Jesus, and I don't call Him my Friend, **but He calls me His.**

Throughout Scripture, we find several places where God and Jesus referred to certain ones as their friends.

God spoke to Moses as a man speaks to his friend, Exodus 33:11.

Abraham is called the friend of God, 2 Chronicles 20:7, James 2:23.

Abraham's future offspring, the faithful of Israel, are called the friends of God, Isa. 41:8.

Lazarus is called a friend by Jesus, John 11:11.

Even more amazing is the fact that one of the charges His enemies made against Jesus was that He was a *“friend of tax collectors and sinners.”*

In Matthew 26:50 when Judas is leading an army to arrest Jesus, the Lord calls him **“friend”**.

And in His grace, He calls us friends.

Slide 13: A Hope That Does Not Fade

For all who have suffered loss in war, and for those still burdened by conflict, there is comfort in Christ’s promise.

He said, *“No one has greater love than this.”*

As we lay wreaths and bow our heads in silence, we do so not as people without hope, but as those who believe that love will triumph and peace will one day fill the earth.

Slide 14 Micah 4:3: The prophet Isaiah foresaw the day when:

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

That is the future promised by the God of peace.

Until that day comes, we remember, we pray, and we serve —

in faith, in gratitude, and in hope.

Slide 15: On this Remembrance Sunday, May We Honour the Fallen by How We Live:

By serving others instead of ourselves,

By forgiving as we have been forgiven,

By loving as Christ has loved us.

Slide 16: Honouring the Living

Today, as we remember with solemn gratitude those who laid down their lives for our freedom.

We remember too, the Saviour who laid down His life for our salvation.

The cross and the cenotaph both stand as symbols of sacrifice — **but only one is empty**, because Christ rose again, conquering death itself.

So let us in quiet thanksgiving, resolve to live as people of peace, grateful for freedom, and faithful to the One who gave Himself for us all.

Let us also honour those who still serve — in the military, in hospitals, in homes, in churches.

Let us honour the veterans among us, not only with applause, but with listening hearts.

As we wear our poppies and bow our heads, remember those who made it possible to build a better nation and a stronger faith.

Remember those precious young lives who fell on land and sea and air. Those husbands who never returned, those sons and daughters, who so young left home for the last time.

Remember the 66,000 who fell in World War One.

Remember the over 45,000 in World War Two

Remember the 516 in Korea

Remember the 158 in Afghanistan.

Remember the nurse who held the hand of the dying COVID patient when family could not.

But, above all this morning, let us remember, the One who said, *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends,”* **Jesus Christ Himself.**

Let us remember the one who on a Cross, poured out His lifeblood for the sins of the whole world, through whom we have forgiveness and peace with God.

The one, whom the Bible says was a *“man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,”* who knew only too well, the opposition and rejection of men, the one who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Slide 17 Image: Remember Me

As with grateful hearts today we honour those who have fallen, whose blood cries out from battlefields around the world – **“Remember this day,”** so too Jesus Christ comes to us, holding His nail pierced hands and saying, **“Remember Me”**

The One who says to all who will trust Him, *“I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly.”*

“I am the way the truth and the life”

“I am the door”

“Come unto me all you that labour.”

Have we truly acknowledged Him as our Saviour and Lord?

Slide 18 Tomb Image: One Final Word - From Poppy to Empty Tomb

Though the poppy is beautiful and at this service we remember how so very very meaningful it is to us.

We also remember the greatest love of all did not stay on a cross or forever stay laid down in a tomb.

It stood up, walked out, and commissioned trembling friends to go into all the world to preach the Gospel:

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

Slide 19 Lest We Forget - Lord – We Remember

Prayer:

We bow before You in solemn gratitude, remembering those who laid down their lives so that others might rise in freedom.

As we have heard today, *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”* We remember those who lived this truth, not only their sacrifice, but the love that moved them to serve.

And above all, we remember the great love of Jesus, whose great love for sinners took him to the tree of Calvary to bear our sins and rise victorious over sin and death.

Amen