



Vigil for the 25th Anniversary of 9/11

Coventry Cathedral Ruins

Friday, 11th September 2026 at 3pm

Welcome to the Ruins of Coventry Cathedral

Twenty-five years ago today, on 11th September 2001, almost 3,000 people lost their lives in acts of terrorism in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. The consequences of that day continue to be felt around the world. For Coventry, this is not a distant story. People in our city lost loved ones in the attacks, and today we hold them, and all who continue to grieve, in our prayers.

We also have a particular connection with St Paul's Chapel in Lower Manhattan, which became a place of refuge and care for first responders and rescue workers following the attacks. For weeks and months, volunteers offered food, rest and spiritual support to those working at Ground Zero. St Paul's Chapel is also a member of the *Community of the Cross of Nails*, the worldwide network born from Coventry's own experience of destruction and reconciliation. In 2005, the Revd Stuart Hooke of St Paul's visited Coventry and stood among these ruins, recognising the deep connection between the stories of our two places.

Coventry knows what it is to be a city wounded by violence. But these ruins also tell us that destruction does not have to have the final word.

So today, we remember those who died on 11th September 2001, those who responded and served, and those who continue to carry its wounds.

But we also remember in hope.

May our remembering become prayer, our prayer become commitment, and our commitment become peace.

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The Gathering

We gather in this place of memory.

Twenty-five years ago, on 11th September 2001, thousands of lives were violently taken in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania.

We cry out together:

“Father, Forgive!”

Today we remember those who died, those who were injured, those who lost loved ones, and all whose lives were changed forever.

We remember also the many who have lived with grief, fear, anger and unanswered questions in the years since.

And we pray that, from places marked by violence, there may yet grow a deeper commitment to peace.

Let us keep solemn silence together.

2 minutes silence is kept. *During the silence, four white roses are placed on the altar in the ruins, remembering the four hijacked planes and those who were on board.*

The Crucifixion

³² Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’ And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ while the sun’s light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.’ Having said this, he breathed his last.

⁴⁷When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.'⁴⁸ And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts.⁴⁹ But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Luke 23:32-34,44-49

Silence.

The Prayer of Saint Francis

**Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in forgiving that we are forgiven,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.**

A meditation on time and love

Time is
Too Slow for those who Wait,
Too Swift for those who Fear,
Too Long for those who Grieve,
Too Short for those who Rejoice;
But for those who Love, Time is not.

Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933)

Silence

A reflection may be offered.

Prayer of remembrance

God of life and love,
we remember before you all who died on 11th September 2001.
For those whose lives were taken suddenly,
receive them in your peace.

For those who mourned then, and those who still mourn,
hold them in your love.

For those who carry wounds of body, mind or memory,
bring healing and rest.

For those whose lives were changed by that day and all that followed,
give courage for tomorrow.

For those who work for peace in a world still scarred by violence,
strengthen their hands and hearts.

And for us, standing here today,
make us people who remember without hatred,
who grieve without despair,
and who seek peace with courage.
Amen.

A moment of commitment

Twenty-five years have passed.

Yet the work of peace remains before us.

In this place, where destruction became a summons to reconciliation,
let us renew our commitment to seek a world in which human life is
honoured, and the wounds of history become places from which peace
can grow.

Silence.

Coventry Cathedral's Together for Hope Pledge

For love, which heals wounds,
we will stand.

For generosity, which opens space for hope,
we will stand.

For nurturing, which builds a culture of peace,
we will stand.

For compassion, which seeks the best for all,
we will stand.

For respect, which enables us to love with difference,
we will stand.

For humility, which allows healthy relationships with others,
we will stand.

Together for hope,
we will stand.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.**

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive them that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

The power, and the glory,

For ever and ever.

Amen.

Blessing

May God, who holds all people in love,
comfort those who grieve.
May Christ, who breaks down the walls of hostility,
make us instruments of reconciliation.
May the Holy Spirit,
who breathes life into what has been broken,
give us courage to work for peace.
And may the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and remain with us,
now and always.

Amen.

At the close of our vigil, you are invited to light a candle at the Kiel Globe Candle Stand, a gift from our friends in Kiel, Germany, today offers us a place to hold in light those who died on 11th September 2001, those who grieve, those impacted and our shared hope for peace.