

November 11<sup>th</sup> 2018 marks a very special day in our national history. It will be the centenary of Armistice Day, the day when an agreement was signed in Compiègne in Northern France for the Allies and Germany to stop fighting. The agreement came into effect at 11am.

Although hostilities continued in some areas, the armistice essentially brought an end to four years of fighting in the First World War.

This year we will mark Remembrance Sunday in each of our parish churches on that day.

We are very fortunate to have been awarded an art installation, which will be displayed in St Lawrence Church Effingham. The installation is entitled: '**There, but not there**'

It consists of 10 life-size Perspex silhouettes of WW1 soldiers. These will be seated randomly on the church pews to represent local men who went to war from our parish but never returned.

*"The poppies at the Tower of London captured the start of the national WWI commemoration – There But Not There will be the abiding concluding image."*

General the Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL  
PATRON

During WW1, much of the fighting took place in Western Europe. Previously beautiful countryside was blasted, bombed, and fought over, again and again. The landscape swiftly turned to mud, bleak and barren. It must have seemed that nothing would ever flourish there again. But, despite the devastation, bright red Flanders poppies, delicate but resistant, grew in their thousands.

The well-known poem by Lt Col. John McCrae says it all:

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

Very few of us were alive on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 and yet each year it seems that more and more people feel the need to mark this period of history and to stand and reflect.

As Christians, we believe that even in the darkness of days there can be hope for a better future. The poppies are a symbol of that hope and I also hope that the art installation will encourage moments of reflection and prayer for peace for all..... and for always.

Your Rector,  
Reverend Mandy