



Worship Service Theme: Honor
(appropriate for Veterans or Remembrance Day)

Helpful elements:
Green table covering (Ordinary Time)

Welcome: Welcome! It's so good to be together to celebrate faith and community today. My name is _____ and I'll be leading our worship time today.

Our theme for today is **honor**. In the United States and Canada, this week is the celebration of Veterans Day or Remembrance Day. The United Kingdom celebrates Armed Forces Day in June, and Australia and New Zealand recognizes their veterans on Anzac Day in April.

Who here has ever served their country either stateside or overseas? Who knows a relative or someone else who served in the armed forces? (Those two questions should include pretty much everyone!) The Bible has much to say about why we rightly honor men and women for their sacrificial service – and why it's important to honor all people as image bearers of God.

Please pray with me as we open our time together.

Opening Prayer: Great and loving God, we ask your Holy Spirit to bless our time together and to refresh us with your presence. In the midst of a world full of trouble and strife, we thank you for watching over us, guiding us, and as we confess our sins, for forgiving us. Enable us to enter your presence joyfully and reverently, and let us depart today with the assurance that our sins are forgiven. Fill us, O God, with the peace which passes understanding. Amen.

Opening Hymn: Doxology

Statement of Faith: Let us affirm our statement of faith by reciting Psalm 23, "The Lord is My Shepherd," together:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Suggested Hymns:

For the Beauty of the Earth

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

Amazing Grace

First reading: Psalm 8

O Lord, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

² Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.

³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the angels
and crowned him with glory and honor. ...

⁹ O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

Suggested Hymns:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Jesus Loves Me

Second reading: Philippians 2:25-30

The apostle Paul (St. Paul) writes to the believers in Philippi about one of his brothers in Christ and why this brother should be honored. Paul writes:

²⁵ I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶ for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. ²⁹ So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, ³⁰ for he nearly died for the work of Christ...

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

Suggested Hymns:

Be Thou My Vision

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

Interactive Homily: Let's think a little more about honor.

- How would you define honor?
 - High esteem; respect; good reputation
 - A title given as a distinction ("served with high honor," "graduated with honors")
 - Pay public respect to
 - A personal quality we use as a promise ("on my honor"—see U.S. Boy Scout and Girl Scout pledges, last page)
- What sorts of people do we honor?
 - Parents: "honor your mother and father" (Exodus 20:12). This is the only one of the Ten Commandments that includes a promise: "That you may live long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."
 - Teachers: We call them sir, ma'am, professor, doctor, Mr., Mrs.

- People in authority. Does that mean you always agree with your leaders? No! But respect them even in disagreement; don't stoop to name-calling or insults.
- Military, police, emergency responders, and the like: They serve a high calling, to serve and sacrifice for their country's principles, sometimes even giving their lives.
- *Why do we honor these people?*
 - Selflessness
 - Sacrifice
 - Even more profound: They are made in God's image
- *Why do we sometimes forget to honor people like veterans?*
 - They are too familiar – it's easy to take them for granted, forget they are there, forget what they have done, treat them as ordinary or in the background.
- *Who else do we forget to honor? God!*
 - We sometimes treat God as common or ordinary, not as the reigning King of King and Lord of Lords.
 - But when we see God as God is, we won't see people as common or ordinary, because being God's children and bearing God's image makes people more valuable than anything else in the universe.¹
- *Could a casual attitude toward God have anything to do with why we sometimes forget to honor our veterans and others?*
- *How can we honor our veterans and service people today?*
 - Say "thank you!" Acknowledge their choice to serve as honorable.
 - Consider supporting organizations that are dedicated to veterans, such as:
 - [Canine Companions](#), which trains and provides service dogs for vets (and others) at no cost.
 - [Wounded Warriors Family Support](#), which "provides, free of charge, family-friendly retreats where wounded veterans, spouses, and children can reconnect with each other in a low-stress setting."
 - [Homes for Our Troops](#), which builds mortgage-free and specially adapted houses for multiple amputees and veterans with traumatic brain injuries."

¹ Adapted from <http://www.faithgateway.com/3-ways-to-show-honor-in-bible/#.WgW9ixNSw8Y>

A friend gave me this special **Prayer for Our Veterans**. Please join me in prayer:

Oh God, our heavenly Father,
You have blessed us with brave men and women
who are willing to defend our freedom.
May Your protection and grace surround them each day.
Let Your healing hand be upon those who suffer wounds and injuries.
May those who have made the ultimate sacrifice
rest forever in Your Holy Presence.
Comfort the families who mourn and are left to remember
the precious lives of their loved ones.
Help us to honor and support them.
Let us ever be mindful of each sacrifice made on behalf of our country
by our sons, daughters, husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, and friends.

And now let us pray the Lord's prayer together:

Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

Suggested Hymns:

This is My Father's World

In the Garden

Standing on the Promises

Third Reading: Quotes on Honor

True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost. –
American tennis great and Army veteran Arthur Ashe

Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. With freedom comes responsibility. –First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt

Humility forms the basis of honor, just as the low ground forms the foundation of a high elevation. –actor, director, and martial artist Bruce Lee

Never was so much owed by so many to so few. –WWII British prime minister Winston Churchill

I believe we should do more than sing the praises of the bravery and patriotism that our veterans have embodied in the past. We should take this opportunity to re-evaluate how we are treating our veterans in the present. –former Texas Congressman Nick Lampson

When you go out to fight for freedom and truth, never wear your best trousers. –Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen

Suggested Hymns:

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Shall We Gather at the River

Fourth Reading: A story about George Washington and honor²

After the U.S. Revolutionary War, an officer wrote General George Washington with the suggestion that Washington should become King of America.

Washington wrote back: “[If] you have any regard for your country—concern for yourself or posterity—or respect for me, banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate [them], as from yourself, or anyone else.” In refusing to become king, Washington was more concerned with his country than his own glorification. That attitude is why he deserves honor to this day.

[optional reading:] The respect George Washington earned helped the new United States again shortly after the Revolutionary War, when the Continental Congress did not pay the army and former soldiers threatened to revolt.

Washington met with the leaders of the offended group, and as he was about to beg them to show restraint, he paused and took a pair of eyeglasses from his pocket. The soldiers had never seen Washington use eyeglasses before.

Addressing the soldiers again, Washington began: “Gentlemen, you must pardon me. I have grown gray in your service, and now find myself growing blind.” This

² <https://user.xmission.com/~wake/honor.html>

humble statement touched the soldiers greatly, and [in honor of Washington,] they agreed to give the Continental Congress more time to provide their pay.

Suggested Hymns:

Blest Be the Tie that Binds

Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

Closing Blessing: (Strike bell as you say the word “Lord”)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and grant you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Doxology (Reprise)

Extra material:

U.S. Boy Scout Oath:

On my honor, I will do my best

To do my duty to God and my Country and to obey the Scout Law;

To help other people at all times;

To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

U.S. Girl Scout Promise:

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God and my country,

To help people at all times,

And to live by the Girl Scout Law.