The Church of England has launched new worship and prayer resources to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War.

On Monday 11 November 1918, the treaty known as the Armistice of Compiègne came into effect, ending hostilities between the Allies and their last opponent, Germany. The agreement ended four years of conflict which had mobilised 70 million military personnel worldwide, at a cost of more than 18 million lives and over 20 million casualties.

One hundred years later, civic remembrance services in the UK's churches and cathedrals will take on additional significance. A variety of ideas for worship, prayer, and remembrance have been available to help communities to remember those who were lost, and to pray for peace.

These resources include a prayer for families to say while visiting a war grave or memorial (below) in addition to other prayers; an Act of Commitment to work together for peace, a Vigil Service to mark the centenary, and a monologue interspersed with suggested words and music, entitled *Steps towards Reconciliation*.

The Bishop at Lambeth, Tim Thornton, the Bishop to the Armed Forces, said: “There are, of course, very few people now left to tell first hand stories of the First World War. As we commemorate its centenary, remembering those who gave their lives, it is important therefore also to pause and commemorate those who have lived with the memory of war, and the manifold challenges that brings.

“These resources offer an excellent way for churches, groups, families and individuals to connect with a generation whose lives were inexorably altered by desperate conflict.

“The season of remembrance each year sees churches and cathedrals come to the fore as communities bring to mind those lost and affected in any way in conflicts, give thanks for the sacrifices of our armed forces, and pray for peace.

“By connecting with ancestors or those locally who served in the First World War, our prayer in their names is above all for a peace which is lasting.”

The resources, put together by members of the Liturgical Commission, are available on our website.

A copy of the prayer and worship materials can be downloaded here.

An extract of one of the prayers can be read below:
A Prayer to be said by families visiting a war grave or memorial:

Lord Jesus, we believe that you stood beside N and his fellow-soldiers as they fought to bring peace to your world.

We believe that you have stood among us as we have tried to imagine the fear and pain and loneliness of the wounded and the dying on the battlefield.

We believe that you stand beside us now, as we remember and honour N.

In your great mercy, bless our good memories, comfort us when we grieve for the life that might have been, and strengthen us in all we do to seek the peace and freedom which are your desire for the world.

Amen.

Further resources will be available over the coming months.