

Veterans Day

By [Rich Simpson](#)

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O Judge of the nations,
we remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our
country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we
now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all people of this land
share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines.
This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*
(*The Book of Common Prayer, page 839*)

On
this day in 1918, World War I ended. Wikipedia says that there was a
"cessation of hostilities." That gets it about right. There was not
peace and there was not justice; people were just sick and tired of war.

Certainly
that is understandable. And yet most historians argue that the end of
World War I (ironically fought as the "War To End All Wars") marked the
beginning of World War II, or at least the roots of it.

In my
experience, soldiers never glamorize war. The ones who do that are the
politicians who remain a safe distance from the front lines. By all
accounts, those front lines in "The Great War" were pretty awful.
Armistice Day would eventually become Veterans Day because, well because
it wasn't the war to end all wars at all. Because you don't end war by
making war, or even with cease-fires. You end war, as the prophet said,
by beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. You end
war by doing justice, and loving mercy, and by making peace--which is
an active verb, not a passive one.

Our yearning for peace is not at odds with honoring the men and women who have served in uniform. In fact, it seems to me that the greatest honor we can pay those who have "ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy" is to work for peace and justice, and to help create a world where our children and grandchildren "study war no more." That requires realists, not idealists. It requires hope, not wishful thinking. It requires peacemakers, not "crying peace where there is no peace."

At 11:00 a.m on this day, I hope readers of this blog will pause for two minutes of silence to remember those who have served this country and who are currently serving this country. Give thanks for the sacrifices they have made and are making. If you have a chance to thank a Veteran then do that. Give thanks for their families who also know the costs of war.

But be sure to also pray for peace, true peace, lasting peace: the peace that passes all understanding - the shalom that allows us to convert instruments of war into instruments of peace.

Originally posted at [Rich's Ruminations](#), part of the [CCblogs network](#).