

## Remembrance Sunday

*Remembrance Sunday is not an easy theme to explore with children but the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War is part of the Primary curriculum albeit focusing more on the blitz and life on the home front rather than the Holocaust or life and death in the trenches.*

*This Dancing Story makes the links between Remembrance Sunday and the Biblical story of the massacre of the innocents (from Matthew 2: 13 – 18) and the ongoing conflict in Israel Palestine. It could be part of a Remembrance Day Service and scaled up and used as a Story Box for a bigger congregation*

*Resources:*

*Cloth*

*Poppy*

*War memorabilia e.g. ration cards, replica tickets, adverts*

*Bible*

*Mary holding baby*

*Joseph*

*Presents (gold crown, incense stick or frankincense rock, tiny tub/sample pot of lip balm/body lotion*

*Wooden bricks (for Bethlehem)*

*Moon and stars (made out of felt*

*Pyramids (make out of yellow card)*

*Herod*

*red felt poppy shaped petals*

*white tear shaped petals*

A poppy, red and delicate.  
A poppy, fragile and beautiful.  
A poppy that reminds us of war and destruction.  
A poppy that reminds us of death and decay.

*Unfold cream fabric and then take out a single poppy from the box and place in the centre*



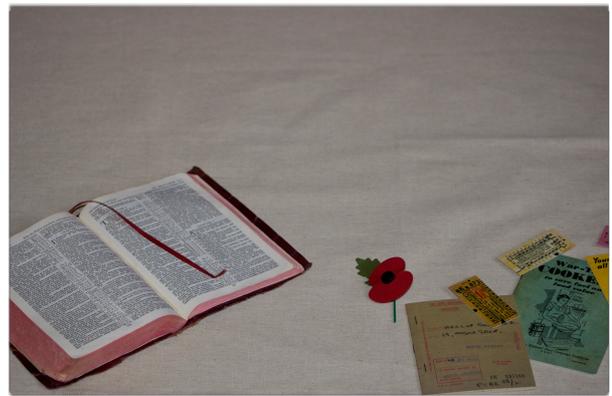
Poppies that specifically remind us of the first and second world wars and other conflicts our country has been involved in since then.

*Take out ration cards etc and place on one side with the poppy*



So what relevance has the Bible got to our reflections this morning? When the Bible was written there were no tanks or guns, no submarines or fighter planes. No atomic bombs or chemical weapons.

*Take out a bible and place it open with the poppy*



But let me take you back to the first century to the bustling town of Bethlehem in Palestine.

*Take out wooden bricks and lay them out as a town*



We all know the story of how Jesus was born, we hear it every Christmas, but we usually only tell part of the story, the part with donkeys and inn keepers, angels and shepherds, wise men and expensive gifts.

*Take out Mary and Joseph and baby and place three gifts before them.*



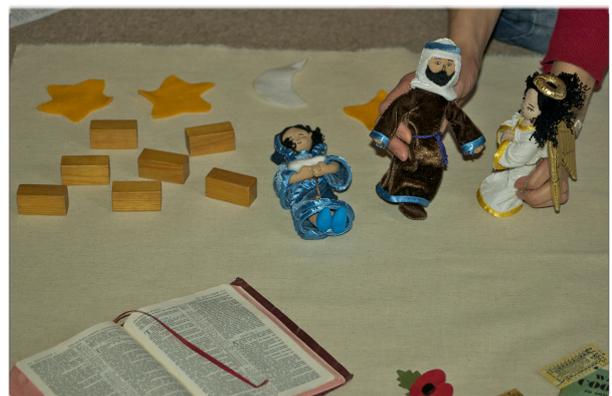
Well in our story today the wise men have just left and Mary and Joseph settle down for a nights sleep – at least as much sleep as one can get with a new born baby.

*Take out moon and stars.*



And this night, Joseph certainly isn't getting very much sleep. Instead he has a strange and frightening dream in which an angel tells him they are in great danger.

*Add angel*



Before the sun comes up, Joseph has woken up Mary and baby Jesus, packed up the gifts and their few possessions and they are creeping out of Bethlehem before the people of the town wake up.

*Remove angel and move Mary, Joseph, baby and gifts out of Bethlehem*

They travel a long way, all the way to Egypt where they have to live as refugees in a strange land. And this is where our Christmas story usually ends, with Mary, Joseph and Jesus safe and sound.

*Place figures far away and add pyramids*



But meanwhile, back in Bethlehem, King Herod is furious that the three wise men did not return to his palace and tell him where they had found baby Jesus.

*Add Herod*



Herod is worried that a new king might threaten his power and disturb the relative peace of a land ruled by the Romans. So in a fit of rage, he orders his soldiers to go to Bethlehem and kill the babies they find.

*Make him jump up and down*



So as day breaks the soldiers arrive and massacre children and their parents and anyone else who stands in their way.

*Sprinkle red petals over Bethlehem*



And the ancient scriptures are fulfilled: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation. Rachel weeping for her children; she refuses to be consoled because they are no more."

*Sprinkle white tears over Bethlehem*



So right from the beginning Jesus was born into a war-torn world and the land of Israel Palestine has not been at peace. So at the rising of the sun and at its going down we will remember them.

*Place Poppy between Jesus in Egypt and Bethlehem.*

