

1914 CHRISTMAS TRUCE

Resource Pack

for Church Leaders



We have worked with church leaders from various denominations and backgrounds to develop a free resource pack that aims to provide inspiration and ideas for Christmas services, Sunday school activities, and school assemblies. The pack includes outlines of complete services, plus suggestions for prayers, Bible passages, readings and poems which could be incorporated into carol services and other acts of worship.

The resource pack is intended to be used for Christmas services throughout the 1914-18 centennial commemorations, and comes complete with PowerPoint slideshows and service plan text files to download.

To access the resource pack, please visit our website www.mlkpc.org or email andii.bowsher@northumbria.ac.uk or nick.megoran@newcastle.ac.uk

Between 2014 and 2018, the UK will mark the centenary of the First World War. That more than 15 million people lost their lives in a conflict marked by new forms of weaponry and warfare is accepted, but amongst historians, politicians, and the general public alike, interpretation of the war continues to divide opinion.

The Northumbria and Newcastle Universities Martin Luther King Peace Committee has developed a resource pack to help church leaders negotiate these debates by using the commemorations to tell a Christian story, specifically through one of the most remarkable events in the annals of modern warfare... the December 1914 Christmas Truces.

The truces began with German soldiers putting up Christmas trees, writing greetings, and singing carols recognisable to their British counterparts such as *Stille Nacht*. From these beginnings, soldiers met in no-man's land to bury their dead, exchange gifts, share food, take photographs, conduct bilingual Christian services, and even in some cases, play football. These were not isolated incidents, but occurred right along the front from the North Sea to Switzerland, offering a hopeful moment of recognition of the soldiers' shared God-given humanity, and an albeit brief rejection of the terrible violence of war.

www.mlkpc.org

MARTIN LUTHER KING



COMMITTEE