

God of truth and love,
in all ages you have blessed our
race with prophetic souls,
humble to listen for your truth,
and bold to share it in love.

Make us, we pray,
humble in heart to listen
to your prophets for our time,
and brave in love to act
on the truth they bring. Amen

SPACE in the CITY

Nov 11 **George Bell** Speaker: **Rachel Moriarty**

Some key quotations - but there may not be time to discuss them all

1 **Bell's Memorial in Chichester Cathedral:**

*George Kennedy Allen Bell
Bishop of Chichester 1929 - 1958
A True Pastor
Poet and Patron of the Arts
Champion of the oppressed
and Tireless Worker for Christian Unity*

2 **Bell on Christian Unity, 1941**

I see the Universal Church steadily unfolding . . . as an innumerable company of living human beings. I see them speaking to one another in the Spirit, linking up with one another, however distant in space, through waves of prayer. I see them supporting one another across the frontiers with spiritual forces. The Universal Church is a life-giving Church; it is a reconciling Church; the Church of the Spirit; the Church of the Word of God. Do you want this vision to be realized under God?

3 **Bell on Peace and War, 1930s**

1930 *'War as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of Our Lord Jesus Christ.'*

1939 *'The Church must guard and maintain moral principles in the war itself. It must not hesitate, if occasion arises, to condemn the infliction of reprisals, or the bombing of civilian populations, by the military forces of its own nation. It should set itself against the propaganda of lies and hatred. It should be ready to encourage a resumption of friendly relations with the enemy nation. It should set its face against any war of extermination or enslavement, and any measures directly aimed to destroy the morale of a population'.*

4 **Bell on the Arts, in his Enthronement address, 1929**

Whether it be music or painting or drama, sculpture or architecture or any other form of art, there is an instinctive sympathy between all of these and the worship of God. Nor should the Church be afraid to ask the poets and the artists for their help, or to offer its blessing to the works so pure and lovely in which they seek to express the Eternal Spirit. Therefore I earnestly hope that in this diocese (and in others) we

may seek ways and means for a re-association of the Artist and the Church: learning from him as well as giving to him: and considering with his help our conception alike of the character of Christian worship and of the forms in which the Christian teaching may be proclaimed.

5 Bell sums himself up, in his last address to his clergy, 1958

'I have had something of a conscience about the place which the Church should take in the general life of society. Not for me a fugitive and cloistered Church, which slinks out of the race and refuses to meet the problems and crises of the modern world... I have therefore taken a very definite interest in social welfare. . . , in the Health Service and hospitals and the work of education in its many aspects. . . .I have tried to help the Church encourage religious drama, poetry, [and] painting, . . . I have been engaged in the search for Church unity... I am ardent for international justice and world peace. . . .

I will not say that I have always succeeded in doing my best, for I am conscious of many failures and faults. But I have never given up hoping or trying.'

6 Bell the poet: his best-known hymn.

Christ is the King! O friends, rejoice;
Brothers and sisters, with one voice
Tell all the earth he is your choice:

Alleluia!

O magnify the Lord, and raise
Anthems of joy and holy praise
For Christ's brave saints of ancient days:

Alleluia!

Christ through all ages is the same:
Place the same hope in his great name;
with the same hope his word proclaim:

Alleluia!

O Christian women, Christian men,
All the world over, seek again
The Way disciples followed then,

Alleluia!

Let Love's unconquerable might
Your scattered companies unite
In service to the Lord of light:

Alleluia!

So shall God's will on earth be done,
New lamps be lit, new tasks begun,
And the whole Church at last be one:

Alleluia!

Recommended further reading

Andrew Chandler, *Piety and Provocation: A Study of George Bell, Bishop of Chichester*, Humanitas 2008

- and a full booklist can be found in my study course

Rachel Moriarty, *George Bell, 1883 – 1958: A Bishop to Remember*, Chichester Cathedral, 2007