

PLAYLETS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY | 13.11.2022

**Read by five members of the congregation. Parts:
Jake, Jake's Mum, Dad, Jake's younger brother and sister**

1. Jake (I) (Sam Lewis)



My name is Jake.

I got my call-up papers two weeks ago and I'm off to war in the morning.

My friends all want me to go drinking tonight but I don't think I will. This may be the last night I spend with my Mum and Dad and with my brother and sister. I want to be with them tonight.

Am I scared of going to war? I don't think so. I'm pretty fit and I've done the training. I can look after myself and I will soon make friends. And this is a war that needs to be fought. There is an enemy out there that needs to be stopped. I can't duck out and leave that to someone else. It's my duty and that's the end of it.

My Mum says she will pray for me – and that I must ask God for help when things get tough. I'm not sure I will. Somehow I'm going to have look after myself when I'm out there. And my mates of course. I'll look out for them and I know they'll cover my back too.

But I will be lonely at times. Not knowing what's around the corner is really scary. Big noises, huge flashes and explosions, bullets whizzing past; being cold, being hungry, not getting any sleep, marching for hours. I've never had to cope with any of these things before.

But I'm not complaining. In a way it's just as hard for the people I'm leaving behind. One thing's for sure: we won't be the same people this time next year.

2. Jake's Mum (Poppy Wheatley)



I'm Jake's Mum.

Never in a million years could I imagine Jake carrying his rifle down the street when he was called up.

My Jake, my little boy, the one who cried and cried when his dog died and who was too shy to ask girls out. How could he be a soldier now, going off to war?

But he was very calm about it all and told us that it was his duty. He kept telling us how much he loved us and that if anything should happen to him, he had already had a great life.

There was never anyone more honest than Jake and I know the officers will really respect him.

I told him I would be praying for him. I don't know if that helped him or not but it helped me! He is a great thinker is Jake and I hope this terrible experience of war will made him realise that there is nothing better in this life than loving other people – and being loved back.

3. Jake's Dad (Chris Carter)



I'm Jake's dad.

If only the recruiting office had let me take Jake's place! He has a whole life in front of him – a career and a family to look forward to. It would have been so much better if they had let an old man like me go instead.

But of course I was far too old. And to be fair he is fitter than I have ever been!

So his Mum and me had to let Jake go. We had to let this war take its course. We could do nothing - one way or the other, except worry of course.

All too often we hear the news that one of the children we knew around here is said to be 'missing in action'. And we go on hoping against hope that Jake never ends up on one of those lists.

But why should Jake be spared when others aren't so lucky? Just because he is our son is no reason for him to survive if others don't. Whether someone lives or dies in this war is just a matter of chance. It is so unfair.

Do I pray for Jake? Maybe. But whether it is just a prayer for Jake's safety or something a bit less selfish I don't know. My wife says our prayers help her to cope with not being able to keep Jake out of harm's way. In the end that's all we can do, having faith that God will care for Jake and learning to accept - as best we can - whatever happens to him.

4. Jake's younger brother (Arnold Carter)



Jake is my big brother. And I think it's right that Jake is going away to fight.

Our enemy is just so bad they've got to be stopped. They are doing terrible things everywhere they go. They are bombing people at home, people in hospital, people at school. They hurt women and children and they steal or break everything they can lay their hands on.

Our army is great! It will wipe out everything that stands in its way. I think Jake will be given all the best jobs because he is so strong and clever. He won't take no for an answer and I bet our enemies will be dead scared of him. All my friends say he looks like a real soldier - and they talk about him a lot.

The only thing is I wish I knew where he was going but he isn't allowed to tell us that. But I know he'll come back with great stories and we can go back to playing with him again.

I know that Mum and Dad are a bit worried about Jake but I'm not. We will win this war and we'll make the world a better place to live in, a place where everyone gets on with everyone else.

And Jake will be my super-hero!

5. Jake's sister (Amariah Greenaway)



I don't care what this war is about. And I don't want Jake to go and fight. He might get hurt – or something even worse...

How can a load of old men in London sit there and make Jake risk his life in a battle?

It's not fair. I only have one big brother and he's always been there for me. I need him here - not in some cold field miles away, full of crazy people with guns.

Where's Jake going to sleep? Who's going to get him his food? Who will play cards with him and sing songs with him? Who will creep down in the middle of the night and look at the stars with him or go down to the sea and watch the waves? Who will know how he likes his tea and what his favourite biscuits are? Anyway our cousins say he is too brainy to be a soldier.

He's not just the number he has pinned on his back-pack you know! He's Jake!

And he's mine.

6. Jake (2) (Sam Lewis)



My name's Jake. And I'm back from the war.

Actually I'm lucky to be back because there were a couple of times when I thought I wouldn't make it.

Everyone wants to know what it was like out there, in the middle of a battle. But how can I tell them what hell looked like?

How could I tell them the things that I saw that no one should ever see? How could I tell them about the hours I was scared to death - or talk about my best mates who were laughing and joking one minute – and gone the next. Or how could I describe what it felt like to be face to face with an enemy soldier - probably my age - who was just as scared as I was. And to find that I couldn't hate him when I had the chance to sort him out.

All I could think of in that moment was his Mum and Dad - like I never stopped thinking about my Mum and Dad and my family at home. And how much our parents loved us and wanted us to get back home, safe and sound. Him and me.

And I am safe – now. But am I sound? Am I the same person that I was? No chance!

I am tougher too. And I think more.

I think about all the deaths and the things that have changed people's lives for ever. And I keep asking myself why God ever allowed any of this to happen?

But I did listen to the chaplain one night who simply said this: War starts with hate. And God never hated anyone.

So war isn't God's fault. All he can do is to keep loving people who are unlovable and keep loving people who are different.

And help me to do the same. That's what I learnt in this war.