

A Service for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day – 8th May 2020

The Greeting and Introduction

Heaviness may endure for a night:

All: But joy comes in the morning.

God has been our refuge and our strength:

All: A present help in time of trouble.

We join together on this day to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe, when the sounds of war fell silent on this continent. We come together conscious of our need for God's forgiveness for the sin and the desire to dominate others that leads to conflict between people, and war between nations.

And as we remember the many soldiers, sailors, and airmen who gave their lives restraining evil and opposing tyranny, so we also come in thanksgiving for the years of peace that the nations of Europe have enjoyed since the Second World War.

We gather joyfully today, as those who gathered on that first Victory day, glad of each other's company, and grateful for the laughter and love that follows times of sadness and loss.

But above all things, let us pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, as we join our voices together and say the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Hymn

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless:
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Glorious in his faithfulness.

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Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hand he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise with us the God of grace.

Old Testament Reading

Micah 4.1–4: God's Promised Time of Peace

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say:

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;
but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees,
and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Hymn

Lord, for the Years

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

Lord, for our land in this our generation,
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:
for young and old, for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

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Lord, for our world where men disown and doubt you,
loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,
hungry and helpless, lost indeed without you:
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us-
self on the cross, and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

New Testament Reading

2 Corinthians 5.16–21: The Call to be Reconciled

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Responsory

Your salvation is near to those who fear you,

That glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

That glory may dwell in our land.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.

Your salvation is near to those who fear you, that glory may dwell in our land.

Hymn

Now Thank We all our God.

Now thank we all our God,
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom this world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us still in grace,
and guide us when perplexed;
and free us from all ills,
in this world and the next.

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All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given;
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven;
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

Reflection

Tribute to the Millions

Let us remember those who so selflessly gave their lives at home and abroad,
Whose sacrifice enables us to enjoy the peace and freedom we have today.

Let us remember those who came home wounded, physically and mentally,
and the friends and family who cared for them.

Let us remember those who returned to restore their relationships and rebuild
their working lives after years of dreadful conflict and turmoil.

Let us remember the families that lost husbands, sons and sweethearts.
Let us remember the servicemen, merchant seamen, miners, brave civilians and others
From Commonwealth and Allied countries who fought, suffered and died during those years of war.

Let us remember those in reserved occupation and the brave people who kept us safe on the home front – the
doctors and nurses who cared for the wounded, the women and men who toiled in the fields, those who
worked in the factories, who all played such a vital role in the war effort at home.

Prayers

For those who served and died in World War II

O God of truth and justice,
we hold before you those men and women
who have died in active service,
particularly in the Second World War,
whose sacrifice brought Victory in Europe.
As we honour their courage and cherish their memory,
may we put our faith in your future;
for you are the source of life and hope,
now and for ever.

Amen.

For those who serve today

O Lord God of Hosts,
stretch forth, we pray, your almighty arm
to strengthen and protect our service men and women.
Support them in times of conflict,
and in their rest and training keep them safe from all evil;
endue them with courage and loyalty;
and grant that in all things they may serve without reproach;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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For the peace of the world

O God, who would fold both heaven and earth in a single peace;
that the design of your great love lighten
upon the waste of our wraths and sorrows
and give peace to your church, peace among nations,
peace in our dwellings and peace in our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

An Act of Commitment

Let us pledge ourselves anew to the service of God and our fellow men and women: that we may help, encourage and comfort others, and support those working for the relief of the needy and for the peace and welfare of the nations.

**Lord God our Father,
we pledge ourselves to serve you and all humankind,
in the cause of peace,
for the relief of want and suffering,
and for the praise of your name.**

**Guide us by your Spirit;
give us wisdom;
give us courage;
give us hope;
and keep us faithful now and always.**

Amen.

O Lord our God,
as we remember, teach us the ways of peace.
As we treasure memories, teach us to hope.
As we give thanks for the sacrifices of the past,
help us to make your future in this world,
until your kingdom come.

Amen.

Collect for Peace

Almighty God,
from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:
kindle in the hearts of all people the true love of peace;
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth;
that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward,
till the earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Prayer for the Sovereign

Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness,
bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth,
and all who are in authority under her;
that they may order all things
in wisdom and equity, righteousness and peace,
to the honour of your name,
and the good of your Church and people;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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The National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen!

The Blessing

God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the Church, the Queen, the Commonwealth, and all people, peace and concord;
and to us and all his servants, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
come down upon us and remain with us always.

Amen.

Hymn

Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim though this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fiery cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through;
strong Deliverer,
be thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
bear me through the swelling current,
land me safe on Canaan's side;
songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee.

Following the service at 7pm the church bells will be rung to mark this occasion.