

**Fifth Sunday of Easter
Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day
8th - 10th May 2020**



Dear Friends in Christ,

'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob.

He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.'

(Micah 4: 2)

After a great deal of controversy, the early May bank holiday was moved this year from Monday 4th May to Friday 8th May to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day, enabling people to pay tribute to those who served in one of the most significant events in our country's history. In the event, our nation barely noticed the change. Caught in the grip of a contemporary war against a silent enemy, we come to commemorate the beginning of the end of World War Two in the unprecedented circumstances of Lockdown. Phrases such as self-isolation, shielding, social-distancing and furlough have each taken on a very different meaning than that which our friends and families might have understood in 1945. I wonder what people would have made then of the concepts of virtual communities and video conferencing?



This weekend, our churches are closed against corporate worship, our bells cannot be rung and our beautiful organs will remain silent. Many flagpoles will remain undressed, yet the faith and indomitable spirit of our people remains as determined as ever before. We will remember. We will rejoice. We will give thanks to God for peace and for the lives of all who served, all who lost their lives and all who continue to fight for that peace today.

VE Day was first celebrated on 8 May 1945 when Allied Forces formally accepted Germany's surrender. This weekend, our commemorations will remember the contribution of British, Commonwealth and Allied armed forces personnel; those who contributed to the war effort and safeguarded the Home Front. As well as marking the Allies' victory in 1945, the Bank Holiday will serve as an opportunity to pay tribute to those who have served and continue to serve in the UK Armed Forces and their families. As one voice, we will be saying: ***Thank you for bringing us peace!***



At 10.30am this Sunday morning, 10th May, our nation will gather in faith and worship from our own homes as we celebrate and commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. To help you do this, you will find a written Order of Service below. You can follow the whole liturgy or choose parts of it to use for your personal reflections.

I encourage you to make a peaceful space in your home and, if possible, light a candle or put on a lamp and/or some evocative music. The BBC will be screening services on radio and Television and you can also look at our Benefice Website to connect to the many on-line services which are available.

On Friday, 8th May there will be many times and opportunities to celebrate and commemorate. Here are a few of them:

11am: The Royal British Legion is calling on people across the UK to join in a moment of reflection and Remembrance at 11am when we will pause for a **Two Minute Silence** from the safety of our homes.

2.55pm: Solo buglers/trumpeters/cornet players are encouraged to play the Last Post & Reveille along with the Pipers undertaking *Battle's O'er* and *VE 75 years*, a specially commissioned piece, at **3pm**.

Also at 3pm: Dame Joan Collins will be leading the **Nation's Toast** on behalf of the women of the nation from the balcony of her apartment in London. From our homes, we are also invited to join with WW II veterans to raise a glass in our **Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW II**.

6.00pm: Mezzo Soprano Katherine Jenkins OBE will perform in an empty Royal Albert Hall in a special half-hour concert that will be streamed to audiences for free via YouTube and will also be available on the BBC and via the Royal Albert Hall Website.

6.55pm: Chelsea Pensioner, Colin Thackery will lead the Nation's Pensioners in the Cry for Peace Around the World. Town Criers and other people around the world will be undertaking a special international Cry for Peace Around the World in all manner of locations.



I am mindful that, though a great deal of us will spend this Bank Holiday in jubilant mood, many others will feel the sadness of loss as they remember loved ones lost in conflict. Sadly, many others will be struggling with anxiety at the illness or death of family and friends to illnesses like Coronavirus. However you come to this auspicious commemoration, may you know the healing love of Christ who teaches us to walk in His way of peace,

Jax

Revd Jax Machin, Rector, The Downs Benefice



ORDER OF SERVICE and RESOURCES for 75th Anniversary of VE Day

On the 8 May 1945 the Allied Powers formally accepted the unconditional surrender of the Armed Forces of Nazi Germany and the end of the Third Reich. Adolf Hitler had committed suicide on 30 April during the Battle of Berlin. The surrender of Germany was therefore authorised by his successor, Grand Admiral Doenitz, and the Instrument of Surrender was signed at Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force at Reims on 7 May. This surrender was formally ratified the next day.



More than one million people converged on the streets of the United Kingdom. In London, people thronged the city's streets and monuments. Winston Churchill made a radio broadcast at 3pm announcing that war in Europe was finally at an end.

In the suburbs, parties were thrown, with furniture and tables brought into the street. Fancy dress parades were held for children, and many people went to church to give thanks to God for victory.

Huge crowds, many dressed in red, white and blue, gathered outside Buckingham Palace in London and cheered as The King, The Queen and the Princesses appeared a total of eight times on the balcony over the day and into the evening, at one point joined by Winston Churchill.



In the evening London landmarks, such as the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's Cathedral and Nelson's Column, were floodlit specially for the occasion. There were fireworks and effigies of Hitler burned on bonfires around the Capital. On the day, crowds sang a popular song which expressed this joyous return to light: *'I'm Going to Get Lit Up When The Lights Go Up In London.'* Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret - escorted by Guards Officers - left the Palace and mingled anonymously with the great crowds outside, joining in the celebrations.

During the course of the day, Churchill delivered two short speeches from the balcony of the Ministry of Health building to the crowds in Whitehall. In the first he told them: *'This is your victory!'* to which the crowd roared back: *'No! It's yours!'* And during his second appearance at 10.30pm, he conducted the crowds in the singing of *'Land of Hope and Glory.'*

The exuberance of the day was tempered by the fact that, for many, this would be a time of sadness and reflection, and that because of the ongoing war in Japan, many other parts of the world would not be able to join in the celebrations. It would not be until the Japanese surrendered to the Allies on 15 August 1945 (now known as Victory over Japan Day) that World War II would finally come to an end.



ORDER OF SERVICE

The Greeting and Introduction

We say together:

Heaviness may endure for a night:
But joy comes in the morning.

God has been our refuge and our strength:
A present help in time of trouble.

On this day, at this hour, we commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. We give thanks for all who played their part in achieving victory in the Second World War. We look back with pride and respect at the remarkable generation of men, women and children who helped secure peace and freedom for us today.



Let us pray:

Gracious God, our loving Father,
We remember with sorrow all those who were killed,
And for all who fought and returned;
For those who worked on the Home Front
and for all those who continued to fight in Japan, Burma and the Far East;
For those who worked for peace, and for
All those whose lives were changed forever.
Amen.



We read together:

We have come 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 those 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:

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,
Forever and ever, Amen.



Hymn

You might like to listen to a piece of music or sing the following hymn:

**1 Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet your tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored,
forgiven,
evermore his praises sing.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King!**

**2 Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress.
Praise him, still the same as ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Glorious in his faithfulness!**

**3 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.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Widely yet his mercy flows!**

**4 Angels, help us to adore him;
you behold him face to face.
Sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace!**

Henry Francis Lyte



Old Testament Reading

Micah 4: 1–4: God's promised time of peace

In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say:

'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.
He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.'

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the Lord Almighty has spoken.



Hymn

You might like to listen to a piece of music or sing the following hymn:

**1 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope in years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home**

**2 Beneath the shadow of thy
throne,
thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone,
and our defence is sure.**

**5 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guard while trouble last,
and our eternal home.**

**3 A thousand ages in thy sight,
are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the
night
before the rising sun.**

**4 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all its sons away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.**

Isaac Watts

New Testament Reading

Luke 15: 18–24: The welcoming joy of God

I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate!



A Time of Reflection



Historic Reading Extracts from Winston Churchill's speech of 8 May 1945

Yesterday morning at 2:41 am, at Headquarters, General Jodl, the representative of the German High Command, and Grand Admiral Doenitz, the designated head of the German State, signed the act of unconditional surrender of all German Land, Sea, and Air Forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Force, and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command.

Hostilities will end officially at one minute after midnight tonight (Tuesday, May 8), but in the interests of saving lives the 'Cease fire' began yesterday to be sounded all along the front, and our dear Channel Islands are also to be freed today.

The German war is therefore at an end. After years of intense preparation, Germany hurled herself on Poland at the beginning of September, 1939; and, in pursuance of our guarantee to Poland and in agreement with the French Republic, Great Britain, the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations, declared war upon this foul aggression. After gallant France had been struck down we, from this Island and from our united Empire, maintained the struggle single-handed for a whole year until we were joined by the military might of Soviet Russia, and later by the overwhelming power and resources of the United States of America.

We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing; but let us not forget for a moment the toil and efforts that lie ahead. We must now devote all our strength and resources to the completion of our task, both at home and abroad.

Advance, Britannia! Long live the cause of freedom! God save The King!



Prayers

Given by Charlotte Nash, LLM

Lord, we pray for our world:

For all who are suffering from Coronavirus, especially those who do not have access to medical facilities; for those who live in close proximity with one another; especially we remember Karis Kids in Kampala, Uganda, their families and communities; and those in refugee camps where there is no escape.

Lord, we pray for our country:

We give thanks for our doctors and nurses who are working so hard and putting themselves on the front line, and for all who work in our hospitals; For all involved in research; For those who are keeping our country running; particularly for our Government, for wisdom in the decisions they make, especially as we come out of Lockdown.

Lord, we pray for the sick:

We ask for Your healing. We pray for their families, especially those going through the trauma of seeing loved ones in intensive care. We bring before you all who are grieving, and who don't have the opportunity to say 'goodbye' to their loved ones. Lord, as you calmed the storm, we ask that you calm the storm of this pandemic and that this virus and its impact on humanity be weakened.

Lord, we pray for those self-isolating:

We pray today for those who are staying at home, those stuck in the sameness of each day with no escape, nothing new. We pray for the isolated and the lonely. May they know you, Jesus, as their friend.

Lord, may your love hold us and sustain us in these days. Amen.



Prayer for VE Day 75

Gracious God, our loving Father,
On this 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day,
we remember with sorrow all those who were killed, and all who fought and returned;
For those who worked on the Home Front,
and for all those who continued to fight in Japan, Burma and across the Far East;
For those who worked for peace, and for
All those whose lives were changed forever.
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.

A prayer for our Sovereign Queen

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. All Amen.

The National Anthem

You may wish to stand as we sing:

**1 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.**

**2 Thy choicest gifts in store
On her be pleased to pour,
Long may she reign.
May she defend our laws,
And ever give us cause,
To sing with heart and voice,
God save the Queen.**

An Act of Commitment

Let us pledge ourselves anew to the service of God and our fellow brothers and sisters across the world: 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.



Hymn

You might like to listen to a piece of music or sing the following hymn:

**1 Guide me, O thou great
Redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven
Feed me now and ever more;
Feed me now and ever more.**

**2 Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth
flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer;
Be thou still my strength and
shield;
Be thou still my strength and
shield.**

**3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will ever give to thee;
I will ever give to thee.**

William Williams

The Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face to shine upon us
And be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us,
And give us His peace this day and always. Amen.





Unmentioned in Despatches by Peter Wyton

Some of them never come home to fanfares,
they dump their kit-bags down at the door,
kiss their wives and let their children
wrestle them down to the kitchen floor,
switch the telly on, pour out a whiskey,
search for the local football score.

Some of them skip the quayside welcome,
dodge the bunting and cannonade,
make their landfall in silent harbours,
nod to the coastguard, but evade
the searchlight of public scrutiny
like those engaged in the smuggling trade.

Some of them land at lonely airfields
far removed from the celebration,
hang their flying gear in a locker,
cadge a lift to the railway station,
make for home and take for granted
the short-lived thanks of a grateful nation.

Some of them miss the royal salute,
the victory parade along the Mall,
the fly-past, the ships in formation
passing the cheering crowds on the harbour wall.
Remembered only by friends and relatives,
some of them never come home at all.

Wartime carrot cake

During the Second World War, when sugar was rationed to 8oz (230g) per week, carrots were used to naturally sweeten cakes and biscuits. The sweetness of the carrots replaced some of the sugar used in the original recipes.



Ingredients

230g self-raising flour

85g margarine or cooking fat

85g sugar

115g finely grated carrot

55g sultanas

A little milk or water

1 reconstituted dried egg or 1 fresh egg

Method

Preheat oven to 220°C / 200°C (fan) / gas mark 7.

Sift the flour into a mixing bowl.

Rub in the margarine or cooking fat.

Add sugar, carrot, sultanas and egg. Mix well and then add sufficient milk or water to make sticky.

Pour mixture into a lined baking tin and cook in the oven for 40 - 45 minutes or until golden in colour.