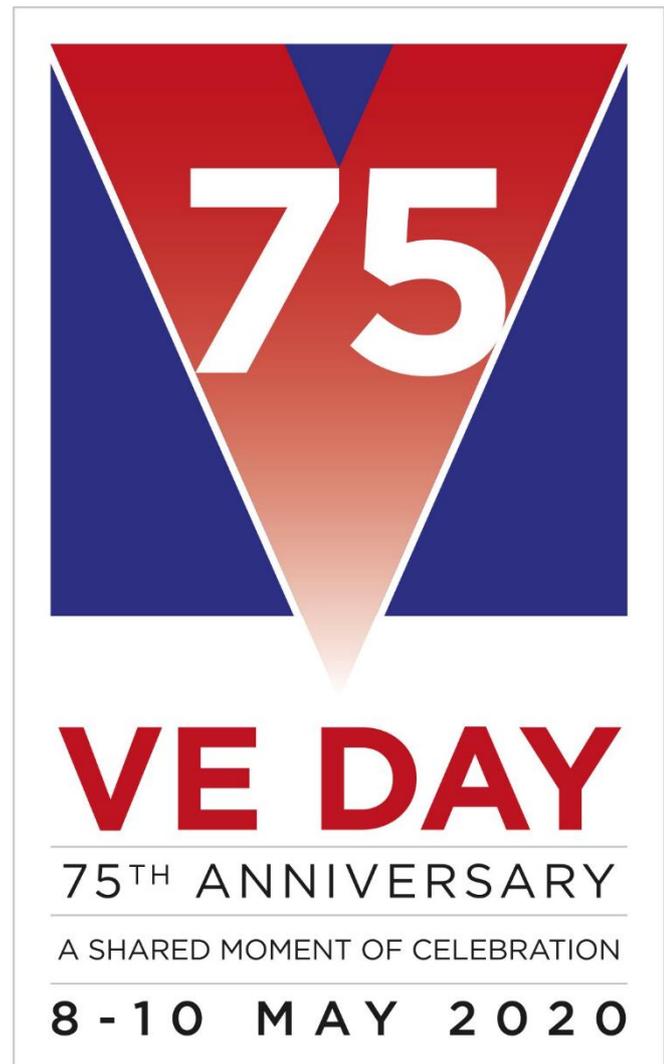


# St Mary's Church

Tadley North



**10 May 2020 at 10.30**  
**MORNING PRAYER**  
**For VE Day 75**



## Welcome

Welcome to St Mary's Church Tadley North and to our special service for VE Day 75. I'm Charles, a Licensed Lay Minister at St Mary's and Chaplain to Dorset and Wiltshire and Thames Valley Wings of the Royal Air Force Air Cadets.

This is not what was originally planned for our VE Day service, but circumstances have dictated that we find other ways of worshipping due to the COVID 19 outbreak and this is our offering for the VE Day 75 commemorations and celebrations.

Some of you may have memories of VE Day in 1945 and if you would like to share them via our Face Book page then please contact me and I'll try to arrange for them to be put up.

I am grateful to Councillor Avril Burdett, Vice Chairman of Tadley Town Council for her contribution to the service and to Nick Jack, Malcolm Chappell, Marilyn Lewis and acting Pilot Officer Paul Barker, of 2403 Sqn ATC who have taken part in this morning's worship. I am also grateful to Peter Wood for his work in ensuring that all the offerings have been brought together in one place and to Charles Burge for his help in ensuring that we have the copyright issues resolved to allow us to have the words and music for our two hymns.

It was always the plan for Church services for VE Day 75, on the Sunday, to start at 10.30 and if we are able to join in the worship at that time then we will be worshipping with many other people around the United Kingdom.

Do please sing the hymns and the National Anthem at the appropriate time and join in with the responses and make this a fitting act of commemoration and celebration.

We will shortly start our service with Councillor Avril Burdett, Vice Chairman of Tadley Town Council reading the Tribute to The Millions.

### ***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 several 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.***

## ***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.**

Dear friends, 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 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:

**All 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***

**All 'Eternal Father, Strong to Save'**

1. Eternal Father, strong to save,  
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,  
Who bid'st the mighty ocean deep  
Its own appointed limits keep;  
O hear us when we cry to thee,  
for those in peril on the sea.

2. O Christ, the Universal Lord,  
 who suffered death by nails and sword,  
 from all assault of deadly foe  
 sustain thy soldiers where they go;  
 and evermore hold in thy hand  
 all those in peril on the land.
  
3. O Holy Spirit, Lord of grace  
 Who fills with strength the human race;  
 Inspire mankind to know the right,  
 Guide all who dare the eagle's flight;  
 And underneath thy wings of care  
 Guard all from peril in the air.
  
4. O Trinity of love and power!  
 Our brethren shield in danger's hour;  
 From rock and tempest, fire and foe,  
 Protect them wheresoe'er they go;  
 Thus evermore shall rise to Thee,  
 Praise from the air, the land and sea

*Tune Melita. John Bacchus Dykes (1823 – 1876)*  
*vv. 1 & 4: William Whiting [1825-78]. Public domain.*  
*vv. 2-3: Brian Elliot. Copyright control.*

**Old Testament Reading**  
*Acting Pilot Officer Paul Barker, RAFAC*

*The first Reading is from the Book of Ecclesiasticus Chapter 44 verses 1-15*

- 44** Let us now sing the praises of famous men,  
 our ancestors in their generations.
- <sup>2</sup> The Lord apportioned to them great glory,  
 his majesty from the beginning.
- <sup>3</sup> There were those who ruled in their kingdoms,  
 and made a name for themselves by their valour;  
 those who gave counsel because they were intelligent;  
 those who spoke in prophetic oracles;
- <sup>4</sup> those who led the people by their counsels  
 and by their knowledge of the people's lore;  
 they were wise in their words of instruction;
- <sup>5</sup> those who composed musical tunes,  
 or put verses in writing;
- <sup>6</sup> rich men endowed with resources,  
 living peacefully in their homes—
- <sup>7</sup> all these were honoured in their generations,  
 and were the pride of their times.
- <sup>8</sup> Some of them have left behind a name,  
 so that others declare their praise.
- <sup>9</sup> But of others there is no memory;

they have perished as though they had never existed;  
they have become as though they had never been born,  
they and their children after them.

- 10** But these also were godly men,  
whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten;  
**11** their wealth will remain with their descendants,  
and their inheritance with their children's children.  
**12** Their descendants stand by the covenants;  
their children also, for their sake.  
**13** Their offspring will continue for ever,  
and their glory will never be blotted out.  
**14** Their bodies are buried in peace,  
but their name lives on generation after generation.  
**15** The assembly declares their wisdom,  
and the congregation proclaims their praise.

*Hear Ends the First Reading*

**Second Reading**  
*Malcom Chappell*

*The Second Reading is taken from Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to the Corinthians Chapter 5  
verses 16-21*

**16** 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. **17** So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! **18** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; **19** 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. **20** 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. **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

*Hear ends the Second Reading*

**Responsory**

Your salvation is near to those who fear you,

**All That glory may dwell in our land.**

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

**All That glory may dwell in our land.**

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

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

*Cf Psalms 84, 89*

## **Address**

*Charles A Lewis*

*Wing Chaplain Thames Valley and Dorset and Wiltshire Wings RAF Air Cadets*

75 years ago the United Kingdom was celebrating the end of the second World War in Europe. After nearly six years of fighting, the Nazi menace had been defeated and the German authorities had signed documents of unconditional surrender.

Since 3 September 1939 almost half a million British people had died as a direct result of this war, including civilians, who had borne the brunt of bombing raids on our major cities such as Coventry, Swansea, Plymouth Bristol, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Southampton, Birmingham, Belfast, Glasgow, Manchester and Sheffield, and, of course, London that suffered so badly during the blitz and then with the V1 and V2 raids towards the end of the war.

For nearly 6 years this country had lived with the daily news of deaths, bombings, land battles, such as El Alamein, the Battle of France leading to the evacuation at Dunkirk, the Battle of Monte Casino and the Battle of Normandy, following D Day; Sea operations such as the Arctic Conveys, the D Day Landings, the invasion of Italy and the Battle of the River Plate; Air operations such as the Battle of Britain, The Dambusters raids, the heavy bombing campaign over Germany, the air cover for the Dunkirk evacuations and the Normandy landings.

Now was a time for celebration, not of war, but of peace and time to rebuild, a time to work to resume normality of life and a time for reconciliation as we heard in our second reading. That would take time. Food rationing continued for another 9 years, until 4<sup>th</sup> July 1954; rebuilding housing, where whole communities in the east end of London had been destroyed would take until the 1960s and for some people normality would never be resumed; those who had lost family members during the war and those who had been severely injured both physically and mentally. Reconciliation continues to this day as we still try to understand the mentality of those who could commit such barbaric acts as we saw in Belson, Auschwitz and other such places.

In our first reading we heard these words "Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name lives on generation after generation." It is right that we should remember those who died during World War 2, and we do, with their names on the war memorials up and down the country which commemorate the dead from the two world wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. We must never allow the words of verse 9 of our first lesson to become true, "But of others there is no memory; they have perished as though they had never existed; they have become as though they had never been born."

We must never forget because, if we do, we risk making the same mistakes all over again. We do not forget, because of our war memorials and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and all those whose remains are still being discovered and then being reburied.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Army, under, General William Slim, is often referred to as the Forgotten Army as it fought against the Japanese in Burma and, of course, we must remember

that VE Day did not mark the end of World War 2, as the war in the far east would continue for another 4 months; but, for the vast majority of people living in this country, they were free from the dangers that war against Nazi Germany had brought.

Then, as now, there was a bank holiday to accommodate the street parties, church services and many other forms of celebration before the work of recovery began and VE Day was a day to celebrate, not fight. It was also a day to think to the future and the recovery that would be required as a result of the war.

Easter Day, in 1945, was on 2 April and, at the time of the surrender, we were still, as we are today, in the season of Easter with its message of hope and resurrection. St Matthew's Gospel tells us that "...Suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it ...said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus ...He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said'.

This was the beginning of the recovery from the crucifixion that had taken place on the previous Friday and there is the connection with Easter, for Christians, to the end of the war, because the world would have to rise again from the ashes of war.

I believe that this reconciliation and rebuilding has taken place over the past 75 years as we now have good relationships with our former enemies and places like Coventry Cathedral and Cologne in Germany are good examples of the rebuilding that has gone on.

Finally, this is an extract from the reading used in the order of service for the Thanksgiving For Victory Service held at Westminster Abbey in 1945. *"And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."* Old fashioned words, maybe, but words that express that Gods wants all of us to live in peace with one another, and why he sent Jesus to die for us.

As we look forward to a time when we are all out of lockdown let us try to concentrate on the themes of reconciliation and resurrection so embodied in VE Day and the theme of helping others that has come to the fore during this difficult time for us all.  
Amen

## **Prayers**

### **A LITANY OF HOPE**

*Nick Jack*

Let us pray with hope for the future of the world and for the needs of all people.

For peace and justice in our world,  
for an end to war and conflict,  
for the leaders of all nations and peoples,  
and for those who make peace and foster reconciliation.

Lord, in your mercy

**All hear our prayer.**

For the unity of all Christian people,  
for the Church of God in every land,  
for all who seek God and the truth,  
and for all who follow the way of conscience with integrity.

Lord, in your mercy

**All hear our prayer.**

For the healing of memories,  
for those who suffer as a result of war,  
for communities where past wrongs and violence persist,  
for all in pain or distress and those who care for them.

Lord, in your mercy

**All hear our prayer.**

For friendship and trust amongst all,  
for an appreciation of our interdependence,  
for the new partnerships between the nations,  
and for a world that is in harmony with itself.

Lord, in your mercy

**All hear our prayer.**

Most merciful Father,  
accept our prayers  
that we may know your peace in our hearts,  
and your love in our lives,  
through Christ our Lord.

**All 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.

**All 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.

**All 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.

**All 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.

**All Amen.**

***The National Anthem***

**All 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.

**All Amen.**

**All 'Guide me, O thou great Redeemer'**

1. 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.
  
2. 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.
  
3. 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.

*Tune: Cwm Rhondda John Hughes (1873-1932)*

*Words William Williams (1717-1791)*

*Translation: Peter Williams (1727-1796) and others*

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