

The Churches of the Parish of Berkswich

in the Church of England Diocese of Lichfield

Friday 8 May, 2020

Online service of thanksgiving for VE Day



Gathering

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.

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:

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

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Alleluia, alleluia,
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:
Alleluia, alleluia,
glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us,
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes:
Alleluia, alleluia,
widely as his mercy flows.

Frail as summer's flower we flourish;
blows the wind and it is gone;
but, while mortals rise and perish,
God endures unchanging on:
Alleluia, alleluia,
praise the high eternal One.

**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:
Alleluia, alleluia,
praise with us the God of grace.**

The Word of the Lord

FIRST 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 ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning-hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
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

SECOND READING: Luke 15.18–24

The welcoming joy of God

I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to
him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and
before you; I am no longer worthy to be called
your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'"

So he set off and went to his father. But while he
was still far off, his father saw him and was filled
with compassion; he ran and put his arms around
him and kissed him. Then the son said to him,

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before
you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring
out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a
ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat
and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is
alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they
began to celebrate.

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.**

cf Psalms 84, 89

**Now thank we all our God
with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
hath 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 in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.**

**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.**

Prayers of intercession

Let us bring our prayers and the concerns of our hearts to the one who hears every heart that beats and sees every tear that falls. We pray for

- *an expression of sorrow for the atrocities of war;*
- *that former enemies may be forgiven,*
- *that we may be freed from feelings of fear, revenge, and xenophobia,*
- *and finally, that we may be thankful for times of peace and find joy in the company of one another.*

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.**

Two minutes silence is kept

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

The 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

Collect 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

Collect 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 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

**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.**

**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.**

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 you and remain with you always.
Amen.

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