



**7.30pm, Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

**A Live-streamed Service for Peace from the  
Parish Churches of Henfield  
with Shermanbury and Woodmancote.**

*Before or after the service you might like to listen to some music taken from the original thanksgiving services held in 1945 including: 'Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son', 'All creatures of our God and King,' 'O God , our help in ages past,' and 'Now thank we all our God'. These can be found on YouTube or music streaming services.*

## **Welcome and Introduction**

Dear Friends, we gather in our homes this evening, at the same time as our community did in 1945, to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory in Europe, when the sounds of war fell silent across this continent. As we remember those who gave their lives from across our nation, the commonwealth and also within our own villages, we also give thanks for the years of peace that the nations of Europe have enjoyed since the second world war. This evening we have the opportunity once more to reflect on the enormous sacrifice made by people from all walks of life, whose spirit of determination saw our nation through one of the darkest periods in its history. We remember the joyful gatherings in our streets, in our pubs, and our public spaces, and the sound of church bells ringing as people gave thanks following the years of sadness and loss. As we remember, and as we give thanks for peace, let us pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven, as we join 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.**

## **The Readings**

From the VE Day speech of His Majesty King George VI

Today we give thanks to almighty God for a great deliverance. Speaking from our Empire's oldest capital city, war-battered but never for one moment daunted or dismayed—speaking from London, I ask you to join with me in that act of thanksgiving.

There is great comfort in the thought that the years of darkness and danger in which the children of our country have grown up are over and, please God, for ever. We shall have failed and the blood of our dearest will have flowed in vain if the victory which they died to win does not lead to a lasting peace, founded on justice and good will. This is the task to which now honour binds us. In the hour of danger, we humbly committed our cause into the hand of God and he has been our strength and shield. Let us thank him for his mercies and in this hour of victory commit ourselves and our new task to the guidance of that same strong hand.

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans 8.31-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### **The Prayers**

Trusting the promises of God, and with faith in his mercy, let us pray to the Lord. Let us give thanks for the selfless and courageous service and sacrifice of those who brought peace to Europe, and for the good example they have given us; let us bless the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

We pray for nations still devastated by war, for their people and their leaders, and for those who suffer the effects or memories of past wars; for veterans, for those who mourn, and for all innocent victims whose lives have been shattered by the cruelty of others; Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, graciously hear us.**

Let us give thanks for those who work for peace and liberty throughout the world, for Her Majesty's Armed Forces, and for all who strive to bring an end to injustice and oppression; let us bless the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

We pray for those in our own day who have grown weary or lost hope as a result of violence or terror; for all refugees and displaced people, and for those who seek to address the causes of discord and distrust; Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for the young people of our own day and for all who will shape the future of this nation, that they may be inspired by those who have gone before them to serve as they have been served; Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the reconciliation of former enemies and for the flourishing of goodwill between them, and for the many freedoms and benefits we enjoy as a result of the sacrifices which have made for peace; let us bless the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### **The Collect for Peace**

(from the Book of Common Prayer)

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **All: Amen.**

### **The Fallen**

The names of the fallen from the Second World War, from Henfield, Shermanbury and Woodmancote are read.

Silence

### **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 Act of Rededication**

They fought for peace, that the world might never again know such violence and destruction.

Will you work for peace and reconciliation in your homes and communities, and promote peace throughout the world?

**All: With the help of God, we will.**

They fought for justice, that the scourge of prejudice and oppression might never again take root in our societies. Will you work for a world in which hatred and injustice never have the final word, and where all people can flourish with dignity and hope?

**All: With the help of God, we will.**

They struggled so that the whole human family might know good will, security, and freedom. Will you always acknowledge how precious are the gifts which God has entrusted to us, and exercise the freedoms and responsibilities you have with gratitude and humility?

**All: With the help of God, we will.**

May almighty God, who has given us the will to undertake these things, bless us with the strength to perform them.

**All: Amen.**

*You are invited to join in the **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,  
evermore His praises 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.**

**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.**

*Text: Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847) Music: John Goss (1800-1880)*

### **The Blessing**

God, grant to the living grace, to the departed rest,  
to the Church, the Queen, the Commonwealth and all people,  
unity, peace and concord, and to us and all God's servants, life everlasting;  
and the blessing of God almighty, + the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**All: Amen.**