



CHORAL EVENSONG

ON THE SIXTEENTH

SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

**Commemorating
the 81st Anniversary of the
Battle of Britain**

**Sunday 19 September 2021
at 4.00pm**

Welcome

A warm welcome to York Minster and to this service of Choral Evensong at which we commemorate the 81st anniversary of the Battle of Britain, and the great victory won by the Royal Air Force which saved Britain from invasion in 1940. The enemy's objective was to eliminate the Royal Air Force both in the air and on the ground, and to obtain air superiority in preparation for a seaborne and airborne invasion.

Confident of success, the gathered formations of the Luftwaffe along the French and Belgian coasts began their first heavy onslaught early in July, directed against British shipping and the channel ports. The intention of this first phase was to draw our Air Force into battle and wear down its strength. The second phase, from 8–18 August, consisted of intensive day operations against coastal radar stations and fighter airfields. The third phase began after a five-day lull with increased night attacks and attacks on the fighter airfields in the London area.

The daylight assault on London itself marked the beginning of the fourth phase which opened on 7 September with attacks on the docks which, though serious in themselves, brought vital relief to the fighter airfields which had been under pressure. This phase lasted most of the month and reached a climax on 15 September, when over one thousand sorties were flown against the capital in the afternoon and at night. The Luftwaffe suffered a heavy defeat losing 56 aircraft. Throughout October, the fifth and last phase saw the decline of enemy daylight attacks on London and an increase in the night bombing of Britain's major ports and industrial centres.

At the beginning of the battle the Luftwaffe had no fewer than 2,790 aircraft to launch against England. To meet the aerial armada, we had fewer than 60 fighter squadrons, representing some 650 aircraft, and the ground staff had to work sometimes 16 hours a day to keep the machines in the air. Between 24 August and 6 September alone, Fighter Command lost 103 pilots killed and 128 seriously wounded, while 366 fighters had been put out of action. The position was grave.

Sir Winston Churchill described the events of Sunday 15 September as 'one of the decisive battles of the war,' and with it the Luftwaffe's greatest defeat. In his immortal words, 'The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by the odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, turned the tide of the world war, by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.'

Order of Service

A bell is rung and these prayers are sung:

O praise the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord.

Let us pray.

O Lord, open thou our lips and purify our hearts, that we may worthily magnify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O praise the Lord with me, and let us magnify his name together.

Introit

Holy is the true light, and passing wonderful, lending radiance to them that endured in the heat of the conflict; from Christ they inherit a home of unfading splendour, wherein they rejoice with gladness evermore. Alleluia.

Words Salisbury Diurnal ♦ *Music* Richard Shephard (1949–2021)

Please remain standing as the clergy enter and the Standards are marched to the Altar and received by the Precentor.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Revd Maggie McLean, Canon Missioner, says:

God's grace, mercy and peace be with you all
and also with you.

We are gathered today to remember in the presence of God the victory given to us in the Battle of Britain; and to pray that we may have such devotion to duty that neither the loving kindness of God nor the heroism of those who fought may have been in vain.

So let us offer our thanksgiving to Almighty God, who made us and all creation, who in Christ has triumphed over evil and death, and whose Spirit abides with us to guide and inspire.

For the deliverance granted our nation in the Battle of Britain and the freedom which was then preserved for us:
thanks be to God.

For those who with foresight and wisdom laid down the foundation of the Royal Air Force:

thanks be to God.

For those who planned and prepared, to the end that our country should not be helpless before the challenge of an invader:

thanks be to God

For the men, who undaunted by the odds, unwearied in their constant challenge, and in the face of mortal danger, turned the tide of the World War by their prowess and by their devotion:

thanks be to God.

For the courage of those who served in the Royal Air Force, both on the ground and in the air,

and especially for those who laid down their lives.

thanks be to God.

For those still serving today across the world, in places of danger and uncertainty, for their dedication and selfless commitment:

thanks be to God.

Gathering our prayers, praise and thanksgiving into one, let us pray in the words our Saviour taught us:

**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.**

Preces

O Lord, open thou our lips;

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us;

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end.

Amen.

Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord's name be praised.

Music William Smith (1603–45)

Please sit as the choir sings the psalm but stand for the final GLORIA.

Psalm

Lord, thou hast been our refuge ♦ from one generation to another.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made ♦ thou art God from everlasting, and world without end.

Thou turnest man to destruction ♦ again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men.

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday ♦ seeing that is past as a watch in the night.

As soon as thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep ♦ and fade away suddenly like the grass.

In the morning it is green, and groweth up ♦ but in the evening it is cut down, dried up and withered.

For we consume away in thy displeasure ♦ and are afraid at thy wrathful indignation.

Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee ♦ and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

For when thou art angry all our days are gone ♦ we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.

The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years ♦ yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow; so soon passeth it away, and we are gone.

But who regardeth the power of thy wrath ♦ for even thereafter as a man feareth, so is thy displeasure.

So teach us to number our days ♦ that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Turn thee again, O Lord, at the last ♦ and be gracious unto thy servants.

O satisfy us with thy mercy, and that soon ♦ so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

Comfort us again now after the time that thou hast plagued us ♦ and for the years wherein we have suffered adversity.

Shew thy servants thy work ♦ and their children thy glory.

And the glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us ♦ prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper thou our handywork.

Please stand.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son ♦ and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be ♦ world without end. Amen.

PSALM 90

Please sit.

First Lesson

*read by Squadron Leader Andy Bryne, BA(Hons), MOPD RAF (Ret'd)
Honorary Secretary of RAFA York*

The First Lesson is from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel,

‘My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God?’

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Here ends the First Lesson.

ISAIAH 40.25-31

Please stand.

Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his hand-maiden.
For behold from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud, in the
imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and
meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty
away.
He remembering his mercy: hath holpen his servant Israel.
As he promised to our forefathers: Abraham and his seed, for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Words LUKE I. 46-55 ♦ *Music* SERVICE IN E FLAT (NO 2), Charles Wood (1866-1926)

Please sit.

Second Lesson

*read by Group Captain Blythe Crawford, OBE
Station Commander, RAF Leeming*

The Second Lesson is from the Revelation to John.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

Here ends the Second Lesson.

REVELATION 22.1-5

Please stand.

Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word,
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation: which thou hast prepared before the face
of all people,
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Words Luke 2.29-32 ♦ *Music* SERVICE IN E FLAT (NO 2), Charles Wood

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth:
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead,
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic Church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lesser Litany and Responses

The Lord be with you;
and with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.**

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us;
And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the Queen;
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness;
And make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people;
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord;
Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us;
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collects

O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant, that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 both 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. Amen.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Music William Smith

Please remain seated.

The Ceremony of the Turning of the Page

During the playing of the 'Spitfire' Prelude by William Walton, the Book of Remembrance is borne to the head of the Nave.

The Revd (Sqn Ldr) Geoffrey Firth, RAF Station Chaplain, RAF Leeming, says:

O Lord God, we give you humble and hearty thanks
for the deliverance granted our nation in the Battle of Britain.

We remember with deep thanksgiving those
who by their sacrifice won that deliverance.

We bring before you the sorrow of the bereaved,
the pains of the sick and the injured.

Comfort and relieve them, O Father,
according to your great mercy,
for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

A page of the Book of Remembrance is turned on behalf of the survivors of the Battle of Britain.

The choir sings:

Anthem

Remember for good, O Father, those whose names we commemorate before thee: to whom we render honour and give thanks in thy holy house. They went through the air and space without fear, and the shining stars marked their shining deeds. They counted not their lives dear unto themselves but laid them down for their friends.

O Christ, O Lord of Lords, prince of the armies of heaven, write their names in thy book of immortality. And give to them that on earth were faithful unto death, thy crown of life in the paradise of God.

Words Compiled by Eric Milner-White (1884–1863), Dean of York (1941–1963)
Music Francis Jackson (*b.* 1917), Organist of York Minster (1946–1982)

Please stand.

The Act of Remembrance and Re-dedication

The Revd (Sqn Ldr) Geoffrey Firth, says:

Let us remember those who gave their lives in the Battle of Britain and in the whole course of the War.

Remember in your kingdom, O Lord Christ,
those who loved not their lives unto death,
but gave them freely for their country.
Shed forth upon them the light of your countenance,
and grant that they may be numbered among the host of the redeemed,
going forth conquering and to conquer with you, their everlasting Lord.
For you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old;
age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
we will remember them.

We will remember them.

A trumpeter sounds THE LAST POST.

Silence is kept.

A trumpeter sounds REVEILLE.

Please sit.

Sermon

The Revd Dr Victoria Johnson, Canon Precentor

Prayers of Intercession

The Revd Catriona Cumming, Succentor, says:

Let us pray for the peace of the world.

Almighty God from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed: kindle we pray 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 knowledge of your love.

Lord, in your mercy:

hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who suffer.

Gracious Lord, we commend to your care all who suffer through war and strife; the wounded, the sick, and the prisoners; the homeless, the hungry, and the oppressed; the anxious, the frightened, and the bereaved. Grant them O Lord, in this world, the comfort of your Holy Spirit and in the world to come life everlasting.

Lord, in your mercy:

hear our prayer.

Let us remember the fallen.

Heavenly Father we give you praise and thanksgiving for every splendid deed of those your servants whom we commemorate this day. More especially we bless your holy name for those who have been faithful unto death. Into your holy keeping we commend their souls, beseeching you to grant unto all of us, for whom they died, that their love and devotion might bear fruit in us through more abundant love for others.

Lord, in your mercy:
hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the Royal Air Force.

Almighty God, Who has promised that they who wait upon you shall renew their strength and mount up with wings, as eagles. We commend to your fatherly protection all who serve in the Royal Air Force. Uplift and support us in our high endeavour, that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth and a sure defence to our homeland. Help us to fulfil our several duties with honour, goodwill and integrity, and grant that we may prove to be worthy successors of those, who by their valour and sacrifice, did nobly save their day and generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Please stand.

Let us dedicate ourselves anew to the service of God in the world.

All say together:

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
the inheritance is ours, the responsibility is ours.
We would accept the challenge;
and, as we offer ourselves to your service,
grant us courage, discipline, and love of justice and freedom;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Please remain standing to sing the hymn, during which the Book is returned to the West End of the Nave, and the Standards are returned to their bearers.

Hymn

1. O Ruler of the earth and sky
be with our aircrew when they fly;
and keep them in thy loving care
amid the perils of the air.
O let our cry come unto thee
for those who fly o'er land and sea.

2. Strong son of man, save those who fly
swift-winged across uncharted sky;
each anxious hour and lonely flight
serenely challenged day and night.
O'er land and ocean safely bear
all those in peril in the air.

3. O Holy Spirit, God's own power;
give peace in sudden danger's hour:
bring calm of heart and be thou near
to those who watch and those who fear.
To thee will rise the grateful prayer
of those who serve thee in the air.

4. O Trinity of love and grace,
true guide of all who fly through space;
in peace and war, mid friend or foe,
be with them whereso'er they go.
So shall be our praise with heaven's blend
and joyful hearts to thee ascend.

Words author unknown • *Tune* MELITA, J B Dykes (1823–76)

The Blessing

A Minister says:

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage;
hold fast that which is good; render to no-one evil for evil;
strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak;
help the afflicted; honour all people;
love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The National Anthem

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.

Words v1 Anonymous, v2 W E Hickson (1803–70)

Tune NATIONAL ANTHEM, Thomas Arne (1710–78)

Please remains standing as the procession leaves.

Voluntary

The Royal Air Force March Past

Henry Walford Davies

The Standards are marched out of the Minster.

The congregation remains standing as the Procession leaves.

Members of the congregation are asked to remain in their places until requested by the stewards to move.