

# **The Royal Air Forces' Association**



## **Order of Service Battle of Britain Sunday Civic Service of Commemoration**

**The Parish Church of  
St John the Baptist, Windsor**

*Officiant: Revd Canon Sally Lodge,  
Rector of Windsor*

**Sunday 21 September 2025  
11am**

## THE COMMEMORATION OF THE FALLEN

- 1 The Parade is brought to attention by the Parade Commander.
- 2 The Parade Commander invites the Mayor to lay the first wreath.  
The laying of other wreaths will follow.
- 3 Parade stands at ease.
- 4 At the command 'Parade Attention – General Salute' (hats off) the bugler plays the Last Post at which standards are dipped. After the silence, the bugler plays the Reveille and standards are raised (hats on).
- 5 The words of remembrance are spoken by the minister:  
  
Let us remember before God those who made the great sacrifice. In friendship and service one to another, we are pledged to keep alive the memory of those of all nations who died whilst serving in the Royal Air Force, and in the Air Forces of the Commonwealth. In their name we give ourselves to this noble cause.  
  
Proudly and thankfully we will remember them.  
  
All present respond: We will remember them.
- 6 The Parade Commander will request permission to dismiss the Parade.
- 7 Standards will 'fall out' and the Parade will dismiss.
- 8 The Service of Commemoration continues inside Windsor Parish Church. Everyone is welcome.

*Organ music before the service*  
'Le jardin suspendu' by Jehan Alain

*Please stand*

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

O praise ye the Lord!  
Praise him in the height;  
Rejoice in his word,  
Ye angels of light;  
Ye heavens adore him  
By whom ye were made,  
And worship before him,  
In brightness arrayed.

O praise ye the Lord!  
Praise him upon earth,  
In tuneful accord,  
Ye sons of new birth;  
Praise him who has brought you  
His grace from above,  
Praise him who has taught you  
To sing of his love.

O praise ye the Lord!  
All things that give sound;  
Each jubilant chord,  
Re-echo around;  
Loud organs, his glory  
Forth tell in deep tone,  
And sweet harp, the story  
Of what he has done.

O praise ye the Lord!  
Thanksgiving and song  
To him be outpoured  
All ages along:  
For love in creation,  
For heaven restored,  
For grace of salvation,  
O praise ye the Lord!  
Amen, Amen

*Text: HW Baker; Music: CHH Parry*

*Please sit*

## **WELCOME AND NOTICES BIDDING AND CONFESSION**

Priest

On this Sunday we have come together in the presence of God to offer him praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive his holy word, to bring before him the needs of the world, and to remember with thanksgiving those who took part in the Battle of Britain, many of whom gave their lives that we might live.

But first, let us confess our failure to use to the full the freedom won for us at such cost, saying together on our knees:

*Please kneel*

All

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and  
against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought,  
in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love,  
and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed,  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and lead us out from darkness  
to walk as children of light. Amen.**

*Priest*

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life  
eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*Please stand*

## HYMN

O Ruler of the earth and sky  
be with our airmen 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.

Strong Son of Man, save those who fly  
swift-winged across th'uncharted sky;  
each anxious hour and lonely flight,  
serene, unchallenged, day and night.  
O'er land and ocean safely bear  
all those in peril in the air.

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.

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

*Text: Anonymous*

*Music: JB Dykes ("Eternal Father, strong to save")*

*Please sit*

### **The First Lesson - Ecclesiastes 3. 1-8**

Read by the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead  
Councillor Mrs Mandy Brar

<sup>1</sup>There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens:  
<sup>2</sup>a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
<sup>3</sup>a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,

<sup>4</sup>a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
<sup>5</sup>a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,  
<sup>6</sup>a time to search and a time to give up,  
a time to keep and a time to throw away,  
<sup>7</sup>a time to tear and a time to mend,  
a time to be silent and a time to speak,  
<sup>8</sup>a time to love and a time to hate,  
a time for war and a time for peace.

*Ecclesiastes 3.1-8*

*The word of the Lord*

*All: Thanks be to God*

*Congregation to remain seated*

**PSALM**

To be sung by the Choir

Psalm 103 v 8-13

- 8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy : long-suffering, and of great goodness.  
9 He will not alway be chiding : neither keepeth he his anger for ever.  
10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins : nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses.  
11 For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth : so great is his mercy also toward them that fear him.  
12 Look how wide also the east is from the west : so far hath he set our sins from us.  
13 Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children : even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him.

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

## Second Lesson – James 3. 13 - end

Read by a Cadet from the Royal Air Force Air Cadets

<sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. <sup>16</sup> For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

*James 3.13-18*

*The word of the Lord*

*All: Thanks be to God*

*Please stand*

### HYMN

Love Divine, all loves excelling,  
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,  
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
All thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesu, thou art all compassion,  
Pure unbounded love thou art;  
Visit us with thy salvation,  
Enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,  
Let us all thy life receive;  
Suddenly return, and never,  
Never more thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve thee as thy hosts above,  
Pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,  
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,  
Pure and spotless let us be;  
Let us see thy great salvation,  
Perfectly restored in thee,  
Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

*Text: Charles Wesley*

*Music: WP Rowlands, Blaenwern*

*Please sit*

## **ADDRESS**

Revd Canon Peter Johnson

*Please stand*

## **HYMN**

(Sung to the Dambusters' March)

*During which a collection will be taken*

God is our strength and refuge,  
our present help in trouble;  
and we therefore will not fear,  
though the earth should change!  
Though mountains shake and tremble,  
though swirling floods are raging,  
God the Lord of hosts is with us evermore.

There is a flowing river,  
within God's holy city;  
God is in the midst of her -  
she shall not be moved!  
God's help is swiftly given,  
thrones vanish at his presence -  
God the Lord of hosts is with us evermore!

Come, see the works of our maker,  
learn of his deeds all-powerful:  
wars will cease across the world  
when he shatters the spear!  
Be still and know your creator,  
uplift him in the nations -  
God the Lord of hosts is with us evermore.

*Text: Richard Bewes*

*Music: Eric Coates*



*Please sit or kneel*

**THE PRAYERS**  
(including this Thanksgiving)

Living God, Father of light,  
Hope of nations, Friend of sinners,  
Builder of the city that is to come,  
your love is made visible in Jesus Christ,  
you bring home the lost, restore the sinner  
and give dignity to the despised.  
In the face of Jesus Christ your light shines out,  
flooding lives with goodness and truth,  
gathering into one a divided and broken humanity.  
With people from every race and nation,  
with the Church of all the ages,  
with apostles, evangelists and martyrs  
we join the angels of heaven  
in their unending song:

**Choir**

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might  
Heav'n and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Sanctus (Richard Shephard, Addington Service)

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

Standards will be collected during the hymn  
‘Thy hand, O God, has guided’.  
Standard Bearers will then remain in the Sanctuary with their  
Standards until after the National Anthem has been sung.

*Please stand*

## HYMN

Thy hand, O God, has guided  
thy flock, from age to age;  
the wondrous tale is written,  
full clear, on every page;  
our fathers owned thy goodness,  
and we their deeds record;  
and both of this bear witness:  
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Thy heralds brought glad tidings  
to greatest, as to least;  
they bade men rise, and hasten  
to share the great King’s feast;  
and this was all their teaching,  
in every deed and word,  
to all alike proclaiming  
one Church, one Faith, one Lord

Through many a day of darkness,  
through many a scene of strife,  
the faithful few fought bravely,  
to guard the nation’s life.  
Their Gospel of redemption,  
sin pardoned, man restored,  
was all in this enfolded:  
one Church, one Faith, one Lord

And we, shall we be faithless?  
Shall hearts fail, hands hang down?  
Shall we evade the conflict,  
and cast away our crown?  
Not so: in God's deep counsels  
some better thing is stored;  
we will maintain, unflinching,  
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Thy mercy will not fail us,  
nor leave thy work undone;  
with thy right hand to help us,  
the victory shall be won;  
and then, by men and angels,  
thy name shall be adored,  
and this shall be their anthem:  
one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

*Text: EH Plumptre*

*Music: B Harwood, Thornbury*

## DEDICATION OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCES' ASSOCIATION

Priest            In friendship and service one to another, we are pledged  
to keep alive the memory of those of all nations who  
died while serving in the Royal Air Force, and in the Air  
Forces of the Commonwealth. In their name we give  
ourselves to this noble cause.

All                **Proudly and thankfully we will remember them.**

## THE BLESSING

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast  
to that which is good, render to no one evil for evil; 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, remain with you now and always.

**Amen**

*Please remain standing*

## **THE NATIONAL ANTHEM**

God save our gracious King,  
Long live our noble King,  
God save the King.  
Send him victorious,  
happy and glorious,  
long to reign over us:  
God save the King.

Thy choicest gifts in store  
on him be pleased to pour,  
long may he reign.  
May he defend our laws,  
and ever give us cause  
to sing with heart and voice,  
God save the King.

*Members of the congregation are asked to remain in their places until the Civic Party and official representatives have left the church.*

*Organ Voluntary*

Prelude in E flat, BWV552 by JS Bach

*Organist and Choirmaster*

John Halsey