

An Order for Choral Mattins

from the Book of Common Prayer
On
Battle of Britain Sunday



HISTORICAL NOTE



The Battle of Britain was the first decisive battle in history fought entirely in the air. Battle of Britain Sunday commemorates a dramatic turning point in both the Battle itself, and the history of the Second World War. The German objective in the summer of 1940 was to eliminate the Royal Air Force, both in the air and on the ground,

in order to obtain air superiority in preparation for a potential seaborne and airborne invasion. Operating principally from airfields in France and Belgium, the Luftwaffe began their first heavy onslaught early in July 1940, directed against British shipping and the Channel ports. The intent behind this first phase of the battle was not only to sink shipping but also to draw the Royal Air Force into combat and wear down its strength. The second phase, from 8th to 18th August, consisted of intensive day operations against coastal radar stations and fighter airfields. The third phase began after a five-day lull due to poor weather, with attacks on fighter airfields in the London area and increased night attacks on Britain's cities. The first daylight assault on London was made on the 7th September and marked the beginning of the fourth phase, lasting most of that month, during which the capital became the Luftwaffe's primary target. These attacks, although serious in themselves, brought vital relief to the fighter airfields, which until that time had been under considerable pressure. The Battle reached a climax on the 15th September, when the Luftwaffe flew more than 1,000 sorties over England during daylight hours. On that occasion the Luftwaffe lost 56 aircraft. Throughout October, the fifth and final phase of the Battle 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 struggle the Luftwaffe had approximately 2,700 aircraft to launch against England. Britain had fewer than 60 fighter squadrons – around 700 aircraft – and the ground crew had to work sometimes 16 hours a day to keep aircraft in the air. Between the 24th August and 6th September alone, Fighter Command lost 103 pilots and 128 were seriously wounded; 366 fighters had been destroyed or badly damaged. Fighter Command lost over 1,000 aircraft during



the Battle and the Luftwaffe nearly 1900. Through the efforts of fewer than 3000 aircrew from Britain, the Commonwealth, and Allied nations, many firmly under Nazi control, along with some from neutral countries, together with the men and women who supported them from the ground, Hitler's Third Reich suffered its first significant strategic defeat. In all 544 aircrew from Fighter Command were killed during the Battle, and a further 791 died before the end of the War. The cost was grievous but the stakes immeasurably high. The campaign was, in Sir Winston Churchill's words: 'One of the decisive battles of the war.' In a speech that has gone down in history Churchill went on to say: 'The gratitude of every home in our Island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world... goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of 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.' The Battle drew to a close with the onset of winter and the Luftwaffe used the longer nights to mount its night-time Blitz which lasted until May of the following year, when Hitler turned eastwards to attack the Soviet Union. With the home base now reasonably secure, the Royal Air Force could turn to wider tasks: including the long fight for Malta, North Africa and control of the Mediterranean; the mounting bomber offensive against Germany; the struggle for air supremacy over North-West Europe without which the Normandy Invasion would have been impossible; and support of the invasion and liberation campaign itself. Without these essential contributions, victory in Europe would not have been possible. The Royal Air Force also played a vital role in the Far East, most memorably in the appalling conditions of the Burma campaign. Nor should we forget the unstinting efforts of our maritime airmen, who doggedly quartered the hostile seas around the globe searching out enemy U-boats, shipping and surface raiders. In commemorating the airmen who fought in the Battle of Britain, we pay tribute also to those who in later years of the war served in all the Allied Forces at sea, on land and in the air.



ORDER of SERVICE

ALL STAND

As the choir and clergy process to the Quire, the Voluntary is played, Elegy – George Thalben-Ball.

With the Union flag upon the High Altar, we sing 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.**

All remain standing. The Rector gives the Bidding:

WE meet in our parish church where our community so often gathers to remember, to celebrate, and to mourn. Here, we give thanks for the dedication and daring of members of the Royal Air Force and allied air forces during the Battle of Britain. Their sure courage halted the advance of a terrible tyranny. They held fast in days of greatest danger. For their resilience and their skill we give thanks, for their pain and loss we grieve. Once again, we commit ourselves to the duty of an honest remembrance.

Calling to mind those days, and those individuals, we remember too all who have served and still serve in the Royal Air Force. We pray God's blessing upon them and pray too for their safety. Remembering conflict past and present in which they have served, we come before God penitent that we are so often divided and

so easily tempted into violence. Now, we renew our commitment to seek out, together, the ways of peace and reconciliation.

As we remember before God all those who serve in the Royal Air Force and those who work alongside them, we look for the coming of a kingdom ruled in righteousness and loving justice.

HYMN 485

The Versicles

H C Stewart

Priest O Lord, open thou our lips
All and our mouth shall show forth thy praise
Priest O God make speed to save us
All O Lord, make haste to help us

¶ STAND

Priest Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
 and to the Holy Ghost
All **As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
 world without end, Amen.**
Priest Praise ye the Lord:
All **The Lord's name be praised.**

¶ SIT

Venite
(Chant, R Goodson)

O come, let us sing unto the Lord :
let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving :
and shew ourselves glad in him with psalms.
For the Lord is a great God :
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are all the corners of the earth :

and the strength of the hills is his also.
The sea is his, and he made it :
and his hands prepared the dry land.
O come, let us worship, and fall down :
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is the Lord our God :
and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his
hand.

Bow heads for

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 46

(Chant, adopted from Martin Luther)

*The choir sings the Psalm.
We stand for the Gloria.*

¶ **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.

¶ **SIT**

A reading from the OLD TESTAMENT

THE angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel.And so the cloud was

there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.' Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Exodus 14: 19–end

Thanks be to God.

Te Deum
Eric Thiman in F

We praise thee, O God : we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee : the Father everlasting.
To thee all Angels cry aloud : the Heavens,
and all the Powers therein.
To thee Cherubin and Seraphin : continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy : Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty : of thy glory.
The glorious company of the Apostles : praise thee.
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets : praise thee.
The noble army of Martyrs : praise thee.
The holy Church throughout all the world :
doth acknowledge thee;
The Father : of an infinite Majesty;
Thine honourable, true : and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost : the Comforter.
Thou art the King of Glory : O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son : of the Father.
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man : thou didst not
abhor the Virgin's womb.
When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death :
thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God : in the glory of the
Father.
We believe that thou shalt come : to be our Judge.
We therefore pray thee, help thy servants :
whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with thy Saints : in glory
everlasting.
O Lord, save thy people :
and bless thine heritage.
Govern them : and lift them up for ever.
Day by day : we magnify thee;
And we worship thy Name : ever world without end.
Vouchsafe, O Lord : to keep us this day without sin.

○ Lord, have mercy upon us : have mercy upon us.
○ Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us :
as our trust is in thee.
○ Lord, in thee have I trusted : let me never be confounded.

¶ SIT

A reading from the NEW TESTAMENT

WE do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.
Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister?
Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God.
For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.'
So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Romans 14:7–12

¶ STAND

Jubilate Deo
Charles Wood in A flat

○ be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands :
serve the Lord with gladness,
and come before his presence with a song.
Be ye sure that the Lord he is God :
it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
○ go your way into his gates with thanksgiving,
and into his courts with praise :
be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.
For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting :

and his truth endureth from generation to generation.
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.

The Apostles' Creed

All 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 Responses

Priest The Lord be with you.
All And with thy spirit.
Priest Let us pray.

¶ SIT or KNEEL

Priest The Lord be with you:

All **And with thy spirit.**

Priest Let us pray. Lord, have mercy upon us.

All **Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Priest Lord, have mercy upon us.

Priest Our Father,

All **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.**

Priest O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

All **And grant us thy salvation.**

Priest O Lord, save the King.

All **And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.**

Priest Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

All **And make thy chosen people joyful.**

Priest O Lord, save thy people.

All **And bless thine inheritance.**

Priest Give peace in our time, O Lord.

All **Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.**

Priest O God, make clean our hearts within us

All **And take not thy Holy Spirit from us**

The Collects

The Collect of the Day

Remember in your kingdom, Lord Christ,
those who laid down their lives
for their friends and their country:
let your face shine upon them,
and, as they sacrificed themselves
to bring peace to others,
give them that lasting peace which you have won for us;
who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

The Collect for Peace

O GOD,
who art the author of peace and lover of concord,
in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life,
whose service is perfect freedom;
Defend us thy humble servants
in all assaults of our enemies;
that we, surely trusting in thy defence,
may not fear the power of any adversaries,
through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Collect for Grace

LORD, our heavenly Father, Almighty
and everlasting God,
who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day;
Defend us in the same with thy mighty power;
and grant that this day we fall into no sin,
neither run into any kind of danger;
but that all our doings, being ordered by thy governance,
may be righteous in thy sight;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Anthem

The souls of the Righteous – Ralph Vaughan Williams

Written for the Dedication Service of the Battle of Britain Chapel Westminster Abbey, 10 July 1947

*The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
and there shall no torment touch them.
In the sight of the unwise they seem to die,
and their departure is taken for misery,
and their going from us to be utter destruction.
But they are in peace,
For though they be punished in the sight of men,
yet is their hope full of immortality;
and having been a little chastised,
they shall be greatly rewarded.
For God proved them and found them worthy for himself.*

The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-5

The Prayers

Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness, we humbly beseech thee to bless our most gracious Sovereign Lord King Charles, Queen Camilla, William Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family: endue them with thy Holy Spirit; enrich them with thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift; Send down upon our Bishops, and other Clergy, and upon the Congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and, that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing.

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, we, thine unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men; We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting.

All The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,
be with us all evermore. Amen

¶ Stand for the 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.

The Blessing

The Rector pronounces the Blessing

GOD grant to the living grace; to the departed rest; to
the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all
people, peace and concord; and to us sinners 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**

The Organ Voluntary: The Spitfire – William Walton