

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

Service to commemorate the
80th Anniversary of VE Day

Sunday 11th May 2025 at 4pm





Victory Parade, passing the saluting dais at the entrance of Corporation Park, Blackburn.



Accrington Town Hall decorated for V. E. Day Celebrations.

Welcome to this evening's service

The service is led by
The Very Reverend Peter Howell-Jones
Dean

The Preacher is
The Right Reverend Philip North
Bishop of Blackburn

The choir is
The Youth Choir
Directed by
Helen Davies

The Organist is
John Hosking
Organist in Residence

The Singer is
Poppy Holiday

The Bands are
The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment and
The Lancashire Artillery Volunteers

The Bugler is
Darryl Cartwright

An induction loop is available in the Cathedral, for both speech and music, for those who are hard of hearing. Please turn your hearing aid to the appropriate setting. If you, or someone you are with would benefit from a large print Order of Service, please ask one of the Stewards.

Advice about **posture** is given throughout the service. If you find it more comfortable to sit rather than stand or kneel, please do so.

Procession

3.50pm

Mayors of Lancashire

4.00pm

Cross

Choir

Virger

County Chaplain, Order of St John and Royal British Legion

Residentiary Canons

Archdeacon

Virger

Dean

The Bishop of Blackburn

Mace Bearer

The Mayor and Mayoress of Blackburn with Darwen

Vice-Chairman of Lancashire County Council

Lancashire Constabulary

The High Sheriff of Lancashire and Mrs Annabel Carter

Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire

and Mr Robert Parker DL

Cadet Standards

Union Flag

Senior Standards

Remaining Standards

Victory in Europe 8th May 1945

On 8th May 1945 the guns fell silent in Europe for the second time following the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany. British and Allied Forces had fought for almost six years to defeat Fascism on the Northern European land mass and fought numerous campaigns across several other theatres to secure the final victory. Campaigns such as those conducted in the Mediterranean, in the Western Desert, in Italy, the Balkans, Greece and Southern France saw much sacrifice and heroism and contributed significantly to securing the peace, so longed for and finally realised on "VE-Day". Most prominent in all the various campaigns, were those actions that became known as the Battle of Britain and the Battle of the Atlantic which together laid the foundations for the final defeat of tyranny in Europe by the Invasion of Germany. As we remember the sacrifices made by the whole nation and commemorate the victory of freedom over oppression, and give thanks for the peace that was secured, we will recognise the contributions made by the Royal Air Force, the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy and the British Army in those critical campaigns

Mrs Amanda Parker JP

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant

The Gathering

Please stand for the hymn, during which the procession enters and the Dean receives the Standards.

Hymn - St Anne



O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home;

Beneath the shadow of thy throne
thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone,
and our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received her frame,
from everlasting thou art God,
to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight
are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the
night before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly, forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guard while troubles last,
and our eternal home.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Welcome

The Dean introduces the service then prays:

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 comes. **Amen.**

Please sit

Defiance – The Battle of Britain

Introduction

Read by Cadet Warrant Officer William Slater

Following the Battle of France, in June 1940, the United Kingdom stood alone. Between July and October 1940 and thereafter until May 1941, during the bombing campaign known as "the Blitz," Britain stood firm in defiance of the might of the German Air Force. The population frightened yet unbowed, but united in faith and hope. Unable to defeat the Royal Air Force and break the spirit of this Island Nation, Germany's strategy shifted to the seas and British families said goodbye to their servicemen, preparing to take the fight to the enemy.

Theme: Spitfire Prelude

Music: William Walton (1902-1983)

Please remain seated, and sing along if you wish

Music: We'll Meet Again

Sung by Poppy Holiday

We'll meet again Don't know where Don't know when But I know we'll meet again some sunny day	We'll meet again Don't know where Don't know when But I know we'll meet again some sunny day
Keep smiling through Just like you always do 'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away	Keep smiling through Just like you always do 'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away
So will you please say hello To the folks that I know Tell them I won't be long They'll be happy to know That as you saw me go I was singing this song	So will you please say hello To the folks that I know Tell them I won't be long They'll be happy to know That as you saw me go I was singing this song
We'll meet again Don't know where Don't know when But I know we'll meet again some sunny day	We'll meet again Don't know where Don't know when But I know we'll meet again some sunny day

Ross Parker (1914-1974)
& Hughie Charles (1907-1995)

The Old Testament Reading (Psalm 8)

*Read by Mrs Amanda Parker JP,
 HM Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire*

A reading from Psalm 8.

O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
 You have set your glory above the heavens.
 Out of the mouths of babes and infants
 you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
 to silence the enemy and the avenger.
 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
 the moon and the stars that you have established;
 what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
 mortals that you care for them?
 Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
 and crowned them with glory and honour.
 You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
 you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen,
 and also the beasts of the field,
 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
 whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
 O LORD, our Sovereign,
 how majestic is your name in all the earth!

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Deliverance – The Battle of the Atlantic

Introduction

Read by Cadet Colour Sergeant Ian Hammer

From 1939 until 1945, but particularly following Germany's failure to win the Battle of Britain in 1940, Germany laid siege to the British Isles, at sea. The Merchant Navy, in convoys protected by the Royal Navy, provided the necessary means to take the ground and air war to Germany. The course to eventual victory was set, as the D-Day invasion was launched in 1944. The people of these Islands had endured and prevailed.

Music

Theme: *Distant Shores*, David Roylance (1948-2006)

The New Testament Reading (Ephesians 6.10-17)

Read by Colonel Peter Stitt, Commander HQ Army North

Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please remain seated as the choir sings

Choir: *For the Fallen*

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal
sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,
there is music in the midst of desolation
and a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
they fell with their faces to the foe, the foe, the foe.

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.

Text Laurence Binyon (1869 - 1943),

Music Karl Jenkins (b. 1944)

Defeat – The Allied Invasion of Germany

Introduction

Read by Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major Charles Wiltshire

Following the successful Normandy landings on D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, the combined Allied Armies prepared for a rapid penetration into the heart of Germany. A daring and heroic effort to force the crossings of the River Rhine by an airborne "coup de main" at Arnhem, in September 1944, was ultimately unsuccessful. Germany sought to disrupt the invasion of their home territory, and in the attritional "Battle of the Bulge" Allied troops largely destroyed the last remaining German armoured reserves. The major Rhine crossings, supported by airborne landings, were successful in late March 1945 and the British Army advanced rapidly. A mere 6 weeks later, British Forces had reached the Baltic Sea ports and the guns fell silent. Families prepared to welcome their loved one's home!

Please remain seated and sing along if you wish

Music: The White Cliffs of Dover

Sung by Poppy Holiday

There'll be bluebirds over
The white cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow
Just you wait and see

There'll be bluebirds over
The white cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow
Just you wait and see

There'll be love and laughter
And peace ever after
Tomorrow
When the world is free

The shepherd will tend his sheep
The valley will bloom again
And Jimmy will go to sleep
In his own little room again

The shepherd will tend his sheep
The valley will bloom again
And Jimmy will go to sleep
In his own little room again

There'll be bluebirds over
The white cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow
Just you wait and see

VE Day In Germany

S Longden, "To the Victor the Spoils"

Read by Mr Jim Carter DL, High Sheriff of Lancashire

The recollections of Lieutenant Ken Hardy, 5th Battalion the King's Regiment (Now Duke of Lancaster's Regiment), Germany 8th May 1945

My memory of it is enormous relief, that I could wake up next morning with no more fear. I had been sent forward to reconnoitre a way into Lübeck. And the next day I led the company plus a company of paratroopers and a company of Marines into Lübeck ready to go to Kiel. When we got into Lübeck we heard on our looted radio that the war was over and there would be no further troop movements. But the Parachute Regiment Major in charge said, "My orders are that we go to Kiel tomorrow morning and you're coming with us." So, we went. That was VE Day for us. And it was absolutely hilarious, we rolled into Kiel and the German population who thought the war was over stood aghast as this mob marched in. But there was this enormous relief that we weren't going to do anymore fighting!

Music

Theme: *Band of Brothers, Michael Kamen (1948-2003)*

Prayers

Led by the Reverend James Lawrence, Canon Missioner

Lord our God as we commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day, we pray with thanks for all whose effort, skill and courage continues to be used for the good of our nation and our world: for members of the armed forces for those working in intelligence and logistics, for those manufacturing vital supplies, for medics and chaplains, and for the families and communities that support them.

Amen.

We pray for healing and wholeness for people and nations, and for wisdom for our world leaders.

We pray for peace where there is hostility: for troubled hearts to find peace, and hatred to find its resolution.

Amen.

Prayers

We remember those
who have died in service of their country:
and all who have lived and died in the service of humankind.
Confirm, O Lord, what is founded on truth,
and establish your love in our hearts:
that justice may abound on the Earth,
and all peoples rejoice in your peace.

Amen.

God our refuge and strength,
grant us courage to pursue what is right,
the will to work with others,
and strength to overcome tyranny and oppression
through Jesus Christ,
to whom belong dominion and glory, now and for ever.

Amen.

We pray together in the words that Jesus 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.

Please stand to sing the hymn, during which a collection will be taken.

Gift Aid envelopes are available for use if you are a UK taxpayer.

Hymn - Eventide



Abide with me; fast falls the eventide:
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide:
when other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see:
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

Please sit

Sermon

The Right Reverend Philip North, Bishop of Blackburn

A pause is observed to reflect on the sermon

The Victory is Yours

Read by the Vice Lord-Lieutenant Brigadier Peter Rafferty MBE DL

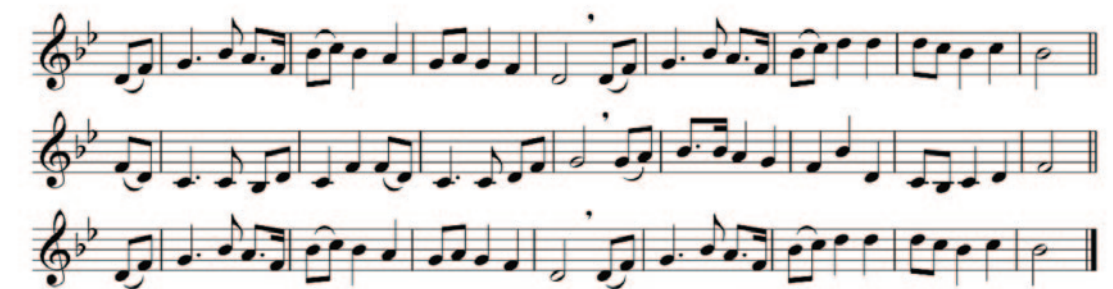
Winston Churchill's Address to the VE Day Crowds in London.

My dear friends, this is your hour. This is not victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation as a whole. We were the first, in this ancient island, to draw the sword against tyranny. After a while we were left all alone against the most tremendous military power that has been seen. We were all alone for a whole year.

There we stood, alone. Did anyone want to give in? Were we down-hearted? The lights went out and the bombs came down. But every man, woman and child in the country had no thought of quitting the struggle. London can take it. So, we came back after long months from the jaws of death, out of the mouth of hell, while all the world wondered. When shall the reputation and faith of this generation of English men and women fail? I say that in the long years to come not only will the people of this island but of the world, wherever the bird of freedom chirps in human hearts, look back to what we've done, and they will say "do not despair, do not yield to violence and tyranny, march straightforward and die if need be-unconquered."

Please stand for the hymn, during which the Standard Bearers receive the Standards

Hymn - Thaxted



I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love:
the love that asks no question, the love that stands the test,
that lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
the love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
the love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.

And there's another country I've heard of long ago,
most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;
we may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;
and soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,
and her ways are ways of gentleness and all her paths are peace.

Cecil Arthur Spring-Rice (1859-1918)

Please remain standing for the act of remembrance

The Remembrance

The Dean says

Let us remember before God,
and commend to his sure keeping
those who have died for their country in war;
those whom we knew, and whose memory we treasure;
and all who have lived and died
in the service of humankind.

Last Post

One minute silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

*Sergeant Richard Brock, 1st Battalion East Lancashire Regiment,
D-Day to VE-Day, will then say:*

*When you go home, tell them of us and say,
'For your tomorrow we gave our today.'*

The Blessing

The Dean says

God grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, the King, 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. **Amen.**

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted,
either by death or life:
hear our prayers and thanksgivings
for all whom we remember this day;
fulfil in them the purpose of your love;
and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please remain standing to sing

The National Anthem

**God save our gracious King,
long live our noble Duke,
God save The King!
Send him victorious,
happy and glorious,
long to reign over us;
God save The King!**

Band Recessional Music

The Royal British Legion, Didgood

*Please remain standing as the standards and procession leaves and
then please follow the directions of the wardens.*

- Cadet Standards
- Union Flag
- Senior Standards
- Remaining Standards

Organ Voluntary

Imperial March, Elgar

The recollections of Lieutenant Ken Hardy are referenced in S Longden,
"To the Victor the Spoils" Arris Books, Gloucestershire, 2004, p.337-338

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Recession

Cross
Choir

Virger
County Chaplain, Order of St John and Royal British Legion
Residentiary Canons
Archdeacon

Virger
Dean
The Bishop of Blackburn

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire
and Mr Robert Parker DL
Lord-Lieutenant Cadets
The High Sheriff of Lancashire and Mrs Annabel Carter
Colonel Peter & Mrs Lisa Stitt
Vice Lord-Lieutenant, Brigadier Peter Rafferty MBE DL and
Mrs Joanne Rafferty
Lancashire Constabulary
Mace Bearer
The Mayor and Mayoress of Blackburn with Darwen
Vice-Chairman of Lancashire County Council
Our World War II Veterans
Mayors of Lancashire

With special thanks to our musical performers

Miss Poppy Holiday

A local singer and songwriter from Darwen. Poppy is a versatile singer who performs across the Northwest and across a range of genres including the 1920s, 30s and 40s and the modern era. Poppy has performed for over 8 years covering popular pieces as well as her own material.

"I am honoured to be part of the VE Day celebrations and pleased to perform for our Heroes & my local community today"

The Band of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

By kind permission of the Commanding Officer, 4th Battalion
Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Nancolas
Director of Music: Lieutenant Dario Salvi

The Band of the Lancashire Artillery Volunteers

By kind permission of the Commanding Officer
103rd Regiment Royal Artillery
Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Billups

Bugler

Trooper and Retired Musician Darryl Cartwright,
King's Royal Hussars

And special thanks to Star Academies Trust and all our generous sponsors who made this Parade and Service possible



V. E. Day - The crowd in Broadway, Accrington.



V. E. Day Celebrations, Milton Avenue, Clitheroe.



V. E. Day Celebrations outside Burnley Town Hall.





**BLACKBURN
CATHEDRAL**

