

VJ 80 Remembrance 2025



On Friday 15th August 2025, The Oxted & District Branch of the Royal British Legion held informal VJ 80 memorial events at the Oxted, Hurst Green and Old Oxted War Memorials.



Thanksgiving Service

On Sunday 17th August a Service of Thanksgiving was held at St Mary's Church, Oxted; commemorating the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day and the end of WW2.

The service was led by Reverend David Weightman and Rob Cogan, Chairman of the Oxted & District Branch.

The full speech given by King George VI during the VJ Day Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral, London, on Sunday 19th August 1945, was read by our Branch President, The Rt Hon the Lord Astor of Haver PC DL (a grandson of Field Marshal the Earl Haig).

The full order of service can be seen here: [Vj80-service-of-thanksgiving-17th-august-2025.pdf](#)
Or as Below:

Service of Thanksgiving to mark the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day (the end of WW2)



*The Parish Church of Oxted & District Branch,
St Mary the Virgin Royal British Legion*



Sunday 17th August 2025, 9.30am

VJ Day



Thanksgiving Service

Join us to remember VJ80, the day peace returned 80 years ago. We will honour the bravery and sacrifice of the Second World War generation, and those whose lives were changed by war in defence of the freedoms we enjoy today.

We come together to honour the past, and to look forward to the future with hope.



Sunday 17 August - 09.30

St. Mary's Church, Oxted, RH8 9NB



Oxted & District Branch

Registered Charity no. 219279

ORDER OF SERVICE

Throughout, text in bold is for the congregation to join in.

Reverend David Weightman welcomes the congregation.

As the choir processes, all stand and sing the Hymn:

**Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
to his feet your tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like you his praise should sing?
Alleluia, alleluia!
praise the everlasting King.**

**Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him, still the same as ever,
slow to blame and swift to bless;
Alleluia, alleluia!
glorious in his faithfulness.**

**Father-like, he tends and spares us,
All our hopes and fears 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;
you behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
praise him all in time and space.
Alleluia, alleluia!
praise with us the God of grace.**

John Goss (1800-1880)

Remain standing for the Exhortation, read by Major (Retired) Mike Hurman Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's), a Veteran of the Oxted & District Branch of the Royal British Legion, and for a two-minute silence.

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.

from: For the Fallen
Laurence Binyon (1869-1943)

All sit.

The Reverend Weightman, says the Collect.

Let us pray.

Remember, O Lord, all those, the brave and the true, who have died the death of honour, and are departed in the hope of resurrection to Eternal Life.

We praise thy holy name for the gift of their matchless courage.

We thank thee that, warfare is accomplished, that their sorrows are assuaged, and their grievous wounds be healed.

Crown, we beseech thee, with thy loving mercy, the offering of their brave lives. Grant unto them thy eternal peace; and the blessing of thy perfect comfort unto all who mourn.

We ask it in the name of him who died and rose again for us all, thy son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen

Collect used at Westminster Abbey on VE Day 1945

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Remain standing, Reverend Weightman gives the Bidding.

We gather on holy ground, where prayers of thanksgiving were offered on this day eighty years ago. We are here to remember all that was suffered and all that was lost. We are here to honour those whose courage, strength, and skill through the long year of conflict brought victory and a new dawn. We are here to renew our hope and to reaffirm a commitment to a peace that will endure.

In this we proclaim the life that defied the powers of death and of destruction and the final victory of God. May he always lead us in the way of peace.

All sit.

During the VJ Day Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral, London, on Sunday 19th August 1945, His Majesty King George VI gave a speech.

Read by: The Right Honourable the Lord Astor of Hever PC DL, President of the Oxted & District Branch of the Royal British Legion.

Three months have passed since I asked you to join with me in an act of Thanksgiving for the defeat of Germany. We then rejoiced that peace had returned to Europe, but we knew a strong and relentless enemy still remained to be conquered in Asia. No one could then tell how long or how heavy would prove the struggle that still awaited us.

Today, Japan has surrendered so let us join in thanking Almighty God that war has ended throughout the world, and that in every country men may now turn their industry, skill and

All stand and sing the Hymn:

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

**Under 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 its sons 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.**

Man frail, and God eternal
Isaac Watts (1674-1748)
after Psalm 90: 1-5

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science to repairing its frightful devastation and to build prosperity and happiness.

Our sense of deliverance is overpowering, and with it all we have a right to feel that we have done our duty. I ask you again, at this solemn hour, to remember all who have laid down their lives and all who have endured the loss of those they love.

Remember, too, the sufferings of those who fell into the hands of the enemy, whether as prisoners of war, or because their homes had been overrun.

They have been in our thoughts all through these dark years; let us pray that one result of the defeat of Japan may be many happy re-unions of those who have been long separated from each other.

The campaigns in the Far East will be famous in history for many reasons.

There is one feature of them which is a special source of pride to me, and also to you, the citizens of our British Commonwealth and Empire to whom I speak. In those campaigns, they have fought, side by side with our Allies, representatives of almost every unit in our great community-men from the old country, men from the Dominions, men from India, and the Colonies. They have fought in brotherhood through their courage and endurance, they have conquered.

To all of them, and to the women who shared with them the hardships and dangers of War, I send them my proud and grateful thanks.

The War is over. You know, I think that those four words have for the Queen and myself the same significance, simple, yet immense that they have for you.

Our hearts are full to overflowing, as are your own. Yet there is not one of us who have experienced this terrible War who does not realise that we shall feel it's inevitable consequences long after we have forgotten our rejoicings of today. But that relief

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from past dangers must not blind us to the demands of the future.

The British people here at home have added lustre to the true fame of our islands, and we stand today with our whole Empire in the forefront of the victorious United Nations.

Great, therefore, is our responsibility to make sure by the actions of every man and woman here and through-out the Empire and Commonwealth that the peace gained amid measureless trails and sufferings shall not be cast away.

In many anxious times in our long history the unconquerable spirit of our peoples that served us well, bringing us to safety out of great peril. Yet I doubt if anything in all has gone before has matched the enduring courage and quiet determination which you have shown during the last six years. It is of this unconquerable spirit that I would speak to you tonight. For great as are the deeds that you have done, there must be no falling away from this high endeavour.

We have spent freely of all that we had; now we shall have to labour and work hard to restore what has been lost, and to establish peace on the unshakable foundations, not alone of material strength but also of moral authority. Then indeed the curse of war may be lifted from the world, and States and peoples, great and small, may dwell together through long periods of tranquillity in brighter and better days than we ourselves have known. The world has come to look for certain things for certain qualities from the people of the Commonwealth and Empire. We have our part to play in restoring the shattered fabric of civilisation. It is a proud and difficult part and if you carry on in the years to come as you have done so splendidly in the War, you and your children can look forward to the future, not with fear, but with high hopes of a surer happiness for all.

It is to this great task that I call you now, and I know that I shall not call in vain. In the meantime, from the bottom of my heart I

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Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Given during the VJ Day Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral, on Sunday 19th August 1945

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thank my peoples for all that they have done, not only for themselves but for mankind.

The Reverend Weightman says:

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, by the grace may these singular and simple offerings invite our faithful remembrance of all who served and suffered for this nation in ways too numerous to know or to name. May our thanksgiving be heartfelt, and the offering of our own lives be to their honour and thy glory. **Amen.**

All sit.

The Lesson – Isaiah Chapter 35.

Read by: The Reverend Weightman.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.

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All stand and sing the Hymn:

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.**

Urbs Dei
Cecil Spring-Rice (1859-1918)

All sit.

Commander Rob Cogan Royal Navy (Retired), Chairman of the Oxted & District Branch, Royal British Legion, gives the Address.

A Candle of Peace is lit.

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The Reverend Weightman introduces the prayers.

Let us hold before God the remembrance of the dark days of war in the Far East; and give thanks to God for the victory of liberty, light and peace.

We give thanks for the selfless and costly sacrifice of all who were called to duty at home and abroad in the service of this nation; let us pray for the welfare of veterans, and for all serving today in the Armed Forces and Intelligence Services of the Crown.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We give thanks for all nations who shared with us the trials of war in the pursuit of peace; for the grace of reconciliation and friendship between former enemies. Let us pray for the Commonwealth, and all our allies and partners today; for unity in diversity; for the healing and flourishing of all.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

We give thanks for the courage and resilience of the wartime generation and those who led this nation through the years of war. Let us pray for; his Majesty The King, his Government, and for all called to serve in public life today.

Lord in your mercy

hear our prayer.

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The Reverend Weightman leads the Rededication to Peace.

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

We will

Will you commit to an honest remembrance of the cost of war and resist all forms of evil, hatred and injustice?

We will

Will you recognise that the freedoms and responsibilities you have were hard won, and exercise them with gratitude, generosity, and humility?

We will

On this eightieth anniversary of VJ Day, let us dedicate ourselves anew to one another and to the cause of peace, justice and liberty as people of faith, hope, and love.

The Reverend Weightman says:

May God grant us courage always to seek and defend the ways of justice and mercy.

Amen

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Let us pray for peace in Europe and across the world; in our time and for generations to come. For the sacrifice of those who have gone before us to be honoured in the defence of liberty, justice and peace.

Lord in your mercy

hear our prayer.

The Reverend Weightman says:

Let us pray together:

We commend, O Lord God, into the arms of thy mercy those who have died in the service of their country: beseeching for them thy Son's blessing upon all who lay down their life for their friends, and the immortal crown of the faithful who overcome: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Said by the congregation during the VJ Day Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral, on Sunday 19th August 1945

Let us pray 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

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All stand and sing the Hymn:

**O Praise ye the Lord!
Praise him in the height;
Rejoice in his word
ye angels of light
ye heavens adore
by whom you 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.**

Henry Baker (1821-77)
After Psalm 150

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In Retrospect

Remain Standing for the Kohima Prayer; read by Signaller (Retired) Alex Starr Royal Corps of Signals, a Veteran of the Oxted & District Branch of the Royal British Legion.

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

Reverend Weightman pronounces the final Blessing.

God grant to the living grace; to the departed rest; to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all the people 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. **Amen**

All 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.

Remain standing as the choir processes.

*The world asks a great deal of the poppies,
insists they carry the wounds of war
and shoulder the weight of remembrance.
Such flimsy, wavering plants;
we painted their flowers the colour of blood
and punched dark holes in their heads
as if bullets had passed through,
then trimmed them with green sprigs of hope.
And from deep in the seeds we concocted
the essence of sleep and dreams and resting-in-
peace.
Almost weightless even in full bloom
we made them souls, the poppies, souls
of those who we lost, and – let it be said –
those who we killed.*

*Poppies - nursed in darkness, nourished by dirt.
But for all their spindly roots, frail stalks
and papery petals - as easily smudged
as a butterfly wing –
they joggle into existence
again and again, unearthing themselves
in fallow fields and railway sidings,
on roundabouts, verges and no man's land,
from the brickwork of old chimneys and bridges
and cracks in the pavement.
They nod and they nag,
reminding us not to forget, flagging a red alert
as their crumpled petals unfold.
So, rightly, the poppies ask a great deal of the world*