

Westminster Abbey



A Service of
Thanksgiving and Rededication
on
Battle of Britain Sunday



Sunday 16th September 2018
11.00 am

HISTORICAL NOTE

This year marks the 78th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, 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 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 15th September, when the Luftwaffe flew more than 1,000 sorties over England during daylight hours. On that occasion the Luftwaffe lost fifty-six 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 sixty fighter squadrons—around 700 aircraft—and the groundcrew had to work sometimes sixteen hours a day to keep aircraft in the air. Between 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 1000 aircraft during the Battle and the Luftwaffe nearly 1900. Through the efforts of fewer than 3000 aircrew from Britain, the Commonwealth, and Allied and even some neutral nations, together with the men and women who supported them, the Nazi war machine 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.

Today we record our continuing sense of gratitude for what was achieved in the darkest moments of war, and we rededicate ourselves to strive untiringly for peace, justice, and freedom in the world. We also remember the tireless efforts of Royal Air Force servicemen and women who have served in nearly every part of the globe as far eastwards as Hong Kong, Borneo, and Malaya; westwards to Belize; or southwards to the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. We also acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and sacrifices of the men and women of the Royal Air Force still serving in the troubled regions of the world, some of which would have been all too familiar to previous generations of their families who served in the early decades of the Service's existence.

*Sebastian Cox
Head of Air Historical Branch (RAF)*



*Dispersal point at Pembrey with Supermarine Spitfire Mk. Is
(X45?? QJ-H and QJR) of 92 Squadron on ground, 1940*



*Supermarine Spitfire Mk. I (R6596 QJ-S) of 92 Squadron, rear port side views
with Pilot Officer Allan Wright and ground crew standing in front,
Biggin Hill, September 1940*



Supermarine Spitfire Mk. I (R6596 QJ-S) of 92 Squadron, front starboard view, refuelling and rearming, Biggin Hill, September 1940



Supermarine Spitfire Mk. I (P9372 GR-G) of 92 Squadron, in flight, 1940

These photographs were kindly provided by the RAF Museum

Members of the congregation are kindly requested to refrain from using private cameras, video, or sound recording equipment. Please ensure that mobile telephones and other electronic devices are switched off. The church is served by a hearing loop. Users should turn their hearing aid to the setting marked T.

The service is conducted by The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster.

The service is sung by the Choir of Westminster Abbey, conducted by James O'Donnell, Organist and Master of the Choristers.

The organ is played by Peter Holder, Sub-Organist.

The Central Band of the Royal Air Force is directed by Wing Commander Piers Morrell RAF, Principal Director of Music, Royal Air Force.

Before the service the band plays

Homage March *from Sigurd Jorsalfar* *Edvard Greig (1843–1907)*

The Vision of Leonardo da Vinci
from Conquest of the Air *Arthur Bliss (1891–1975)*
arranged by Wing Commander (retired)
Barrie Hingley (b 1938)

March
from Conquest of the Air *Arthur Bliss (1891–1975)*
arranged by Barrie Hingley

Elegy on the RAF March *Barrie Hingley*

The Lord's Prayer *Albert Hay Malotte (1895–1964)*
arranged by Wing Commander Piers Morrell (b 1971)

Band of Brothers *Michael Kamen (1948–2003)*
arranged by Warrant Officer Ian Laidler (b 1963)

Dawn Patrol *Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)*
from Coastal Command Suite *transcribed by Barrie Hingley*

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Before the Service, a Lining Party is formed at the Great West Door, comprising members of The Queen's Colour Squadron, Royal Air Force, accompanied by the National Standards of the National Service (RAF) Association, the RAF Regiment Association, the Royal Air Forces Association, the Royal Observer Corps Association, the Royal Air Force Halton Apprentices Association, together with twenty Standards from branches of the Royal Air Forces Association.

The Lord Mayor of London, Charles Bowman, is received at the Great West Door by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Presentations are made, and he is conducted to his seat in Quire.

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Westminster and Deputy High Steward, Councillor Lindsey Hall, is received at the Great West Door by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Presentations are made. All stand as she is conducted to her seat, and then sit.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns GCB KCVO CBE RAF, representing His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, is received by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster at the Great West Door.

All stand.

ORDER OF SERVICE

All remain standing as the choir and clergy, together with the Representative of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, move to places in Quire and the Sacrarium.

All sing

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

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.

arranged by Gordon Jacob (1895–1984)

All remain standing. The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster, gives

THE BIDDING

ONCE again we come together on Battle of Britain Sunday in this House of Kings and House of Prayer to give thanks for the dedication and heroism of members of the Royal Air Force and the allied air forces in that remarkable struggle for air supremacy over Britain in October 1940. Their courage marked a turning point in the war, for without their bravery it is hard to see how the Second World War could have been won. As we reflect today on their gallantry and fortitude, we remember all who have served and still serve in the Royal Air Force. We honour all who fight in the service of freedom; we express penitence for the suffering and destruction caused by armed conflicts; and we renew our commitment to work for justice, freedom, and decency. Today we pray especially for the Royal Air Force and all those who continue to work, often in immense danger, for justice and peace. We ask for God's guidance that we may hold courageously to the values we profess, that we may indeed do his will, as we say together the prayer 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.

The Standard of No 92 Squadron of the Royal Air Force is borne through the church, presented, and laid upon the High Altar, as the band plays

Fanfare to the Royal Air Force R E C Davies (1920–95)

Fanfare on the Royal Air Force Call R F O'Donnell (1885–1961)

Standard Bearer
Squadron Leader S Coates RAF

Escorts
Squadron Leader P Holt RAF Squadron Leader N Smith RAF

The Dean says

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God, who makest the clouds thy chariots and walkest upon the wings of the storm, look in mercy, we beseech thee, upon the Royal Air Force. Make us a tower of strength to our Queen and to our country. Help us to do our duty with prudence and with fearlessness, confident that in life or in death the eternal God is our refuge and strength. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen.**

All sing

THE HYMN



PRAISE, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King.

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

Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! Praise him!
widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him;
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace.

Praise, my soul 436 NEH
John Goss (1800–80)
arranged by Christopher Robinson (b 1936)

Henry Lyte (1793–1847)
after Psalm 103

All sit. From the Nave Pulpit, Sergeant Nicolette Munro RAF reads

THE FIRST READING

GIVE ear, O heavens, and I will speak;
let the earth hear the words of my mouth.
May my teaching drop like the rain,
my speech condense like the dew;
like gentle rain on grass,
like showers on new growth.
For I will proclaim the name of the Lord;
ascribe greatness to our God!

The Rock, his work is perfect,
and all his ways are just.
A faithful God, without deceit,
just and upright is he;
yet his degenerate children have dealt falsely with him,
a perverse and crooked generation.
Do you thus repay the Lord,
O foolish and senseless people?
Is not he your father, who created you,
who made you and established you?
Remember the days of old,
consider the years long past;
ask your father, and he will inform you;
your elders, and they will tell you.
When the Most High apportioned the nations,
when he divided humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of the peoples
according to the number of the gods;
the Lord's own portion was his people,
Jacob his allotted share.

He sustained him in a desert land,
in a howling wilderness waste;
he shielded him, cared for him,
guarded him as the apple of his eye.
As an eagle stirs up its nest,
and hovers over its young;
as it spreads its wings, takes them up,
and bears them aloft on its pinions,
the Lord alone guided him;
no foreign god was with him.

Deuteronomy 32: 1–12

The choir sings

THE PSALM

GOD is our hope and strength :
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved :
and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea.
Though the waters thereof rage and swell :
and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.
The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God :
the holy place of the tabernacle of the most Highest.
God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed :
God shall help her, and that right early.
The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved :
but God hath shewed his voice, and the earth shall melt away.
The Lord of hosts is with us : the God of Jacob is our refuge.
O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord :
what destruction he hath brought upon the earth.
He maketh wars to cease in all the world :
he breaketh the bow, and knappeth the spear in sunder,
and burneth the chariots in the fire.
Be still then, and know that I am God :
I will be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth.
The Lord of hosts is with us :
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

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.

after Martin Luther (1483–1546)

Psalm 46

*From the Great Lectern, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier KCB CBE DFC
ADC RAF, Chief of the Air Staff, reads*

THE SECOND READING

JAMES and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Jesus and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They replied, 'We are able.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.'

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.'

St Mark 10: 35–45

All stand for

THE ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

The Battle of Britain Roll of Honour is borne from the Grave of the Unknown Warrior to the Sacrarium, escorted by a veteran of the Battle of Britain and serving Royal Air Force pilots and aircrew.

The Band plays

March Theme
from The Battle of Britain

William Walton (1902–83)
arranged by Barrie Hingley

Honorary Steward
Group Captain J G Eaton MBE

Roll Bearer
Flight Lieutenant W Cambridge RAF

Escorts
Wing Commander P Farnes DFM
Flight Lieutenant S Lamb RAF Flight Lieutenant C Bennett RAF
Flight Lieutenant B Wildblood RAF Flight Lieutenant M Stannard RAF
Flight Lieutenant R Pratley RAF Flight Lieutenant J Leslie RAF

All remain standing. The Dean says

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God, into thy hands we commend the souls of those who laid down their lives for the cause of freedom; praying that thou wouldst grant them the joys of thy eternal kingdom, and, to all who mourn them, fortitude of spirit and constant faith in the power of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All sing

THE HYMN



ALL my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown,
he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

God's great goodness eye endureth, deep his wisdom, passing thought: splendour, light, and life attend him, beauty springeth out of naught. Evermore from his store new-born worlds rise and adore.	Daily doth th'Almighty giver bounteous gifts on us bestow; his desire our soul delighteth, pleasure leads us where we go. Love doth stand at his hand; joy doth wait on his command.
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Still from man to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

Michael 333 NEH
Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

Joachim Neander (1650–80)
translated by Robert Bridges (1844–1930)

THE ADDRESS

by

The Venerable (Air Vice-Marshal) John Ellis QHC RAF
Chaplain-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force

The choir sings

THE ANTHEM

BUT those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; They will rise, they will soar, they will fly up on wings like eagles; They will run and not grow weary; March on and not feel faint.

They will Rise

Isaiah 40: 31

Jonathan Dove (b 1959)

*composed for the Service to mark the Centenary of the Royal Air Force,
held in Westminster Abbey on 10th July 2018*

The Reverend Christopher Stoltz, Minor Canon and Precentor, leads

THE PRAYERS

Let us pray.

All kneel or sit.

LET us give thanks to God for his many gifts; for our creation and redemption in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace, and for every opportunity to serve him in serving the needs of our brothers and sisters.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Flight Lieutenant Paul Kiczma RAF says

LET us give thanks to God for the freedoms we enjoy; for the courage of those who served during the Battle of Britain in the Royal Air Force, the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, and especially for those whose lives were lost in the cause of liberty.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Flight Lieutenant Adele Brown RAF says

LET us give thanks for the service rendered by the Royal Air Force and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, in peacetime and in conflict, to the peoples of this and of other lands; for those who fly, and those who support them as mechanics, ground crew, radar operators, engineers, and in logistics; for peace preserved, and for peril averted.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Flight Lieutenant David Miles RAF says

LET us pray for all who suffer exploitation, oppression, or terrorism; and for those who live amidst warfare, unrest, or the threat of violence. Let us pray for the leaders of the nations and for all who influence opinion; that they may act with wisdom, discernment, and integrity.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

The Reverend (Wing Commander) Ian Brown says

LET us pray for all who bear the scars of war in body, mind, or spirit; for veterans and for all who assist them, especially the Royal Air Forces Association, the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust, the Royal Air Force Widows' Association, the War Widows' Association of Great Britain, and the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund; that all who have made sacrifices in the cause of peace may know peace in their own lives.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

The Venerable David Stanton, Canon in Residence, says

LET us pray for all who serve today in the Royal Air Force and in all the Forces of the Crown; particularly those currently serving in the Middle East, the Gulf, the South Atlantic, and other operational environments. We remember especially those whose duty places them in danger and pray that they may be granted spiritual fortitude, with physical and moral courage.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

The Precentor concludes

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.
Amen.

St John Chrysostom (c 345–407)

All stand to sing

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.

Melita 354 NEH
John Dykes (1823–76)
arranged by James O'Donnell (b 1961)

The Airmen's Hymn

All remain standing for

THE ACT OF REDEDICATION

The Dean says

LET us rededicate ourselves to building a world in which there is justice and peace for all, and where women, men, and children live a life of full human dignity.

LORD God our Father, we pledge ourselves to serve you and all people in the cause of justice and peace, and for the relief of want and suffering. Guide us by your Spirit; give us wisdom, courage, vision, and hope; and keep us faithful to our calling now and always, for the honour of your name. Amen.

The Dean pronounces

THE BLESSING

GOD grant to the living grace; to the departed rest; to the Church, The Queen, the Commonwealth, and all mankind, 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. Amen.

All remain standing for

THE CALL OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

THE LAST POST

REVEILLE

The Standard of No 92 Squadron of the Royal Air Force is returned to the Standard Party as the band plays

Fanfare for the
Ensign of the Royal Air Force

Barrie Hingley

The Royal Air Force March Past

*Henry Walford Davies (1869–1941)
and George Dyson (1883–1964)*

The choir and clergy, together with the Representative of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, move from Quire and the Sacrarium to the west end of the church.

Music after the service

Spitfire Prelude

William Walton

Procession of the Nobles
from Mlada

*Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)
arranged by Erik Leidzen (1894–1962)*

The bells of the Abbey Church are rung.

**Members of the congregation are kindly requested to remain
in their seats until invited to move by the Honorary Stewards.**

*There will be a retiring collection in aid of
the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund and the Royal Air Forces Association.*

*The Royal Air Force Memorial Chapel, at the far eastern end of the Abbey, will
be open after the service until 1.00 pm for all who wish to visit.*

*The Royal Air Force Coastal Command Book of Remembrance 1939–1945 will
be open in the Chapel during Battle of Britain week.*

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