



**ST GEORGE'S
ROYAL AIR FORCE CHAPEL OF REMEMBRANCE
BIGGIN HILL**

VETERANS' SERVICE

and COMMEMORATION DDAY 80.

Sunday 30th June 2024 at 11am



Minister: Mr Mark Newman

Organist: Mr Eric Johnstone

Bugler: Miss Vicky Mace



29th June 2024

Collection for SSAFA and towards Chapel Services.

SSAFA is the Armed Forces charity, (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association). It is a UK-wide charity that provides lifelong support to serving men and women and veterans from the British Armed Forces and their families or dependants.

Services are held in this Chapel on Sundays at 9.30am
Everyone is very welcome.
You don't need a RAF connection to attend
Just come along, if only now and then.

*Please stand for the arrival of the
Mayor of Bromley, Councillor David Jeffreys
Remain standing for the procession of Minister Mark Newman
and the Standard and Banner Party to present the flags.*

Please sit.

Minister: O Lord, today we honour our veterans, worthy men and women who gave their best, when they were called upon to serve and protect their country.

We pray that you will bless those in our Armed Forces today for their unselfish service in the continual struggle to preserve our freedoms, our safety, and our country's heritage, for us. Amen

Please stand.

**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 guide while troubles last,
and our eternal home.**

Please sit.

Margaret Wilmot: 'Yard by Yard' by R C Bell

This poem was written by R C Bell for the 70th anniversary of D Day. This year is the Anniversary of D-Day, now 80 years ago, when the allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy, in France, in World War II. It is considered a turning point in the war as the Allies began to gain a foothold which contributed to its victory. So many sacrificed lives and limbs on that day. We should never forget.

Yard by yard
They stormed the beach
While brothers fell
From guns far out of reach.

There was no withdraw
There was no retreat
Just a hail of bullets
And a blood-soaked beach.

Move forward or die
The order was given
The beach is a graveyard
No place for the living

So we crawled forward
Our faces in the sand
Prayed for salvation
By God's mighty hand

And triumph we did
By the end of the day
But so many lost
On the longest of days.

Minister: Veterans Ann Galley, Harry Winters and Peter Lemon have each chosen their favourite song. “There'll be bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover” is Ann Galley’s choice, because it reminds her of her youth and everyone she has known in her life. Harry Winters has chosen “Country Roads”, because it’s a jolly song and the words 'take me home' is an important message for him. The Abba song “I have a dream” is Peter Lemon’s choice. It has one particular line that reflects his belief. There were no explanations for his surviving several incidents during the war as Peter says 'I believe in angels'.

A compilation of the songs will be played on the piano.

Minister: This year, the 80th anniversary of the D Day Landings, Rodney Cairns returns to the Veterans Service, to read his special tribute again to Harry Billinge MBE, who died on 5th April 2022. Rodney, who attends Charles Darwin School, in Biggin Hill, went to Normandy for the Anniversary of the Landings. He joined the commemorative events and visited the beaches of Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha and Utah.

Harry Billinge was a local lad, born in Petts Wood in 1925. He was a British Soldier; and served as a sapper with the 44 Royal Engineer Commandos during the D Day Landings. He raised more than £50,000 for the British Memorial at Ver- sur-Mer, Normandy.

Rodney Cairns: A Tribute to Harry Billinge

John Callaghan: 'The Longest Day'

Rob Aitchison wrote this poem for his grandfather. Whenever Rob asked him about D Day, his grandfather would give one sentence answers and not talk about it. Rob penned the poem using those answers.

Do not call me hero
When you see the medals that I wear
Medals maketh not the hero
They just prove that I was there.

Do not call me hero
Now that I am old and grey
I left a lad, returned a man;
They stole my youth that day.

Do not call me hero
When we ran the wall of hail
The blood, the fears, the cries, the tears
We left them where they fell.

Do not call me hero
Each night I stop and pray
For all the friends I knew and lost
I survived my longest day

Do not call me hero
In the years that pass
For all the real true heroes
Have crosses lined upon the grass.

Please stand.

Len Alfieri: The Royal British Legion Exhortation

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall now weary them, not the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

The Last Post.

1 minute silence

Reveille

Len Alfieri: The Kohima Epitaph

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

Please sit or kneel.

Minister: As we commemorate the 80th anniversary of D Day, we remember the soldiers, sailors and airmen who were killed that day and in the fighting that followed. We remember the French civilians who died.

We think of those who were maimed physically or scarred mentally; of the young men and women who went into battle for the first time, against war-hardened troops.

Let us remember them all in a prayer as we say together:

All: Heavenly Father, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women who served in our armed forces, at home and abroad, in peace time, and in many conflicts from WWII to the present day. They gave their best when called upon to serve and protect their country. They faced danger with courage and put their lives at risk so that others might live in safety. Bless each one, draw them close to you and grant them the peace that passes all understanding. In Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please stand and during the hymn, the collection will be taken.

**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.**

Please sit.

Collection is presented to the altar.

Minister: Trusting the promises of God, and with faith in his mercy, let us pray to the Lord. Let us give thanks for the selfless and courageous service and sacrifice of those who brought peace to Europe, and for the good example they have given us.

We pray for nations still devastated by war, for their people and their leaders, and for those who suffer the effects or memories of past wars, for veterans, for those who mourn, and for all innocent victims whose lives have been shattered by the cruelty of others. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us give thanks for those who work for peace and liberty throughout the world, for the Armed Forces of the Crown, and for all who strive to bring an end to injustice and oppression.

We pray for those in our own day who have grown weary or lost hope because of violence or terror, for all refugees and displaced people, and for those who seek to address the causes of discord and distrust. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us give thanks for the reconciliation of former enemies, for the flourishing of goodwill between them, and for the many blessings we enjoy because of the sacrifices, which made for peace. We pray for the young people of our own day and for all who will shape the future of this nation, that they may be inspired by those who have gone before them, to serve as they have been served. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, graciously hear us.

Pauline Garlick: We pray for all those in the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom, all those who have served, all who are serving and those who are suffering. We pray they will find peace.

We thank God for those who today, step forward to defend us against evil, we pray they may be kept safe; and we thank God for those who fought against tyrannies in the many conflicts since World War II.

We pray for all war-torn countries, especially Gaza, Israel, Ukraine and Sudan.

We remember the people who have lost their homes and their families, we pray that wars may cease and that there will be peace in these countries.

We remember service veterans known to us here, who have died in the year, Chris Cureton and Dickie Moon.

All: Amen

Minister: Gathering our prayers together, let us say the prayer that Jesus taught us.

All: 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.

Ecclesiastes Ch3 vv 1-8

Read by

His worshipful, the Mayor of Bromley, Councillor David Jefferys.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

Please stand.

Act of Commitment

Minister: Let us pledge ourselves anew to the service of God and our fellow men and women: that we may help, encourage and comfort others, and support those working for the relief of the needy and for the peace and welfare of the nations.

Lord God our Father, we pledge ourselves to serve you and all humankind, in the cause of peace, for the relief of want and suffering, and for the praise of your name. Guide us by your Spirit; give us wisdom; give us courage; give us hope; and keep us faithful now and always.

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.

All: Amen.

The return of Standards and Banners for the Royal Salute.

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.**

Minister: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Flag Bearers leave followed by the Minister.

*Please remain standing and honour our veterans as they leave the Chapel,
followed by the Mayoral Party.*

'Nimrod'
played by our Organist

Nimrod means a skilful hunter is the name given to the ninth and best-known variation of 14, in Edward Elgar's Enigma Variations composed between 1898 and 1899. Each variation is a portrait of members of Elgar's family and friends. 'Nimrod' is a celebrated work in its own right. It is a portrait of Elgar's editor and publisher, Augustus Jaeger, whose surname means hunter in German.



The Chapel and Museum are open Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 5pm.

The Café opens at 10am and closes at 4pm

www.bhmm.org.uk
01959 422414

Please help to ensure the future of this place
as a living Chapel with services,
by joining the Friends of St George's Chapel.

Forms are at the back of the Chapel.

Friends of St George's Chapel www.rafchapelbigginhill.com

ST GEORGE'S RAF CHAPEL OF REMEMBRANCE

This Chapel was built in 1951, replacing an earlier station church which was destroyed by fire in 1946. Its simple style follows that of the original church. Sir Winston Churchill said "My personal association with Biggin Hill during the Battle of Britain lives in my mind. As a nation we have short memories, and it is well that Memorials such as this should bring to our remembrance the cost of our victory in the days when one of our fighter pilots had to be worth ten. They died without seeing the reward of their efforts; we live to hold their reward inviolate and unfading".

The names of 453 aircrew of the 52 squadrons of the Biggin Hill Sector who made the supreme sacrifice during the Second World War are inscribed on the reredos which is the actual memorial. Flags of the Commonwealth and Allied countries, whose pilots served in the Biggin Hill Sector are each side of the altar. The altar frontal is embroidered (as it was in 1943) with emblems of the British Isles and Allied countries and bears the quotation from Psalm 63 - "In the Shadow of Thy Wings Will I Rejoice".

The Chapel has 12 stained glass windows by Hugh Easton, designer of the RAF Memorial Window in Westminster Abbey. The theme is a cloud of witnesses, and each depicts the winged spirit of a young pilot embracing a badge in his arms. The badges are of the 7 squadrons operating from Biggin Hill during the Battle of Britain, - Fighter Command, No 11 Group, the Station crest with its motto 'The Strongest Link' and portraits of the Spitfire and Hurricane.

The Aircrew Association Memorial Window above the main door, shows the ACA badge of a three-bladed propellor surmounting the RAF roundel with the inscription - 'Dedicated to British, Commonwealth and Allied Aircrews'.

The Battle of Britain Memorial window illustrating the symbolic victory of St George, over the forces of evil. Is in St George's Room. At the top are the badges of the squadrons at Biggin Hill during July to October 1940 and the army badge, a reminder of its invaluable support. Four other stained-glass windows depict ground support activities, so vital for the air victory. The scenes are aircraft servicing, parachute packing, rescue services and ground control. You may spot something strange about the descending parachutist!

Only six Military Medals were awarded to the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in the war. Three of these Military Medals were conferred on WAAFs serving at Biggin Hill in the Battle of Britain. They are shown on the Ground Control window. Roads in the Married Quarters were named after these WAAFs Henderson, Mortimer and Turner.

