The Chapel of Gonville & Caius College
SERVICE FOR V.E. DAY

CHOIR  Kyrie from the Mass in E flat, Josef Rheinberger
https://open.spotify.com/track/0mONmuHdv1BwiGHzEVkUH?si=5500-wSqQ5e5rBqHT3G97Q

The Greeting and Introduction

Heaviness may endure for a night
But joy comes in the morning.

God has been our refuge and our strength
A present help in time of trouble.

Dear friends, we have come together on this day to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe, when the sounds of war fell silent on this continent. We come together conscious of our need for God’s forgiveness for the sin and the desire to dominate others that leads to conflict between people, and war between nations. And as we remember the many soldiers, sailors, and airmen who gave their lives restraining evil and opposing tyranny, so we also come in thanksgiving for the years of peace that the nations of Europe have enjoyed since the Second World War. We gather joyfully today, as those who gathered on that first Victory day, glad of each other’s company, and grateful for the laughter and love that follows times of sadness and loss. But above all things, let us pray that God’s will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, as we join our voices together and say:

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.

CHOIR  The Earth is the Lord’s (Psalm 24), William Child
https://open.spotify.com/track/53aFP66jv97huYZhWTsFrk?si=6T0OiLvqQICuL0JHqSE6mQ

READINGS
Micah 4.1-4 (RSV)  
*God’s promised time of peace*

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall sit every one under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

CHOIR  
*Out of the Deep (Psalm 130), Charles Wood (G&CC)*

https://open.spotify.com/track/0QQJxw0WqMDwpUuuKdibh5?si=d-lt7ixXSxJxVgh9mZ9HA

Revelation 22.1-5  
*The end of conflict*

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Respondsory

*Your salvation is near to those who fear you,*

*that glory may dwell in our land.*

Mercy and truth have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
*Your salvation is near to those who fear you,*

*that glory may dwell in our land.*

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;
steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.
*Your salvation is near to those who fear you,*

*that glory may dwell in our land.*  
*cf Psalms 84 and 89*

CHOIR  
*O Thou the Central Orb, Charles Wood (G&CC)*

https://open.spotify.com/track/1l9HWSGWiwIFBaZ1UKvuYD?si=ggLHdTkS-G3C42X8miSDg

REFLECTION
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall sit every one under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.

The joy and blessing of a day like VE Day is self-evident. It needs no explanation. I offer only three brief points for further thought, drawn from the readings.

First, the lesson of Micah’s vision is that war is something we learn to do. If we learn it, we also have the capacity to unlearn it.

Second, the individual fulfilment of that vision: ‘none shall make them afraid.’ What drives war, and other kinds of conflict, is fear. We can be taught to fear: individuals, situations, ideologies, nations. And we can unlearn fear, because God’s kingdom has no room for it, since perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4.18).

Third, the corporate fulfilment of God’s promises: the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations. Those who are healthy need no healing; it is the weakened and corrupted nature of our institutions, our nations, and ourselves, which makes war possible, and sometimes inevitable. But war is no part of God’s plan for us, and it cannot prevail.

PRAYERS

COLLECT for Peace

Almighty God,
from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:
kindle in the hearts of all people the true love of peace;
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth;
that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward,
till the earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A PRAYER for the Sovereign:

Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness,
bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth,
and all who are in authority under her;
that they may order all things
in wisdom and equity, righteousness and peace,
to the honour of your name,
and the good of your Church and people;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AN ACT OF COMMITMENT

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. Amen.

In place of THE NATIONAL ANTHEM
CHOIR The Queen Shall Rejoice William Turner
https://open.spotify.com/track/39jITO7hTk2L3WkkjdLsxc?si=7o9Wd49NTpacMAjqkyq0Bw

THE BLESSING

God grant to the living, grace; to the departed, rest;
to the Church, the Queen, the Commonwealth,
and all people, peace and concord;
and to us and all his servants, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God almighty,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
come down upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

CHOIR FESTIVAL TE DEUM John Sanders (G&CC)
https://open.spotify.com/track/60hN01r0vzRdk4U4c8MzTV?si=FgRfkUjMT7aSDNPVuO20Uw