
Called to be Peacemakers

Worship Material

Prayers for Peace

Creator God, you sustain all that is whole.
We gather to worship you in the midst of a broken world. Overshadowed by violence and war, poverty and injustice, fear and suspicion, we pray for guidance and clarity so that we may be true peacemakers. Be with us and cast your light on our work. Amen.

Prayer for Peacemakers

Continually remind us, Lord, that it is not peacelovers who are blessed, but peacemakers. Shape our lives into an expression of our faith, so that others can see the correspondence between the meaning of the life we have found and the style of life we lead. Help us not to spoil it by considering certain areas as immune to your touch, thus regarding you as not quite the total truth.

Protect us from cultural forces which seek to conform us to an image other than yours - which seek to destroy our distinctiveness. Show us the harm we do when we water down the gospel, when we become a mirror reflecting the world's brokenness and hate rather than a window through which your wholeness and love can shine.
(Andrew Farlow)

Inter-Faith Prayer for Peace

Lord,
lead me from Death to Life,
from Falsehood to Truth;
lead me from Despair to Hope,
from Fear to Trust;
lead me from Hate to Love,
from War to Peace.
Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.
Peace Peace Peace

Father,
when the nations seek peace
they make their treaties and alliances.
There is a peace of a kind
but it is still subject to betrayals and denials;
there is still a lack of brotherhood and love.

But your peace draws people together with their neighbours.

Your peace makes us one with you.
Your peace is sacrificial love
which recognises the good in all people,
stands out against injustice and oppression,
and frees the people
to realise their full potential.
Your peace is health and holiness;
it is wholeness and salvation.

May we find our peace through Christ. Amen.
(John Johansen-Berg)

Give us courage, Lord, to stand up and be counted,
to stand up for those who cannot
stand up for themselves,
to stand up for ourselves
when it is needful for us to do so.
Let us fear nothing more than we fear you,
let us love nothing more than we love you,
for thus we shall fear nothing also.
Let us have no other God before you,
whether nation or party or state or church.
Let us seek no other peace
but the peace which is yours
and make us its instruments,
opening our eyes and our ears and our hearts,
so that we should know always
what work of peace we may do for you.
(Alan Paton)

Responsive Prayers and Prayers of Commitment

Covenant Statement

- L. We are not called to be fearful
R. We are called to love.
L. We are not called to be perfect
R. We are called to be faithful.
L. We are not called to be fearless
R. We are called to be obedient.
L. We are not called to be all-knowing
R. We are called to believe.
L. We are not called to claim
R. We are called to give.
L. We are not called to be victorious
R. We are called to be courageous.
L. We are not called to lord it over others
R. We are called to serve.

All:

For it is in serving that we shall reign.
It is through courage that we shall find victory.
It is in giving all that we shall gain all.
It is in believing that we shall find certainty.
It is in obedience that we shall overcome.
It is in faithfulness that we shall find perfection.
It is in loving that we shall dispel fear.
It is in slavery to Christ and his justice and
peace that we shall find freedom,
now and always, for ourselves and for the world.
Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

L: You came into this world to bring true peace - a
right relationship between all people and God, between
individuals and between nations

All: Lord, you are the Prince of Peace.
You are the light of the world.

L: In you alone can we find peace and in the doing of
your will is our peace. Grant us your peace in our
hearts and may this peace go out from us to touch
others. May we be true peacemakers.

All: Lord, you are the Prince of Peace.
You are the light of the world.

L: Give us the strength to renounce our material
comforts and securities. May there be a fair
distribution and use of all resources. May there be
justice and freedom from discrimination for all peoples.

All: Lord, you are the Prince of Peace.
You are the light of the world.

Called to be Peacemakers

Responsive Prayer

Leader: Jesus, you are our peace.

R: In you we become new, one single humanity.

L: Come among us with your gift of peace:

R: Not as the world gives, in fear and suspicion,
but as you give, in love and truth.

L: Come among us and banish the weapons of war

R: Speak peaceably to every nation, that your
rule may extend from sea to sea, to the ends
of the earth.

L: Come among us with the new covenant of love.

R: Sweep off the earth the instruments of
destruction that all living creatures may lie
down without fear.

L: Come among us with good news for the poor,

R: With release for prisoners and captives,
with sight for the blind,
with deliverance for the oppressed,
with the fair distribution of the resources of
your world.

L: Come among us that we may hunger and
thirst to see right prevail;

R: That we may show mercy,
that we may be peacemakers.

All: You are our peace.

You are the way,
you are the truth,
you are the life.

Fill our lives with your spirit of love, joy and
peace. Amen.

John Ferguson

Blessing

L: This is the day that the Lord has made

All: We rejoice and are glad

L: We will not offer to God

All: Offerings that cost us nothing

L: Go in peace and serve the Lord

All: We will seek peace and pursue it

L: In the name of the Trinity of Love

All: One God in perfect community. Amen

Readings

The Web of Peace

Peace is like gossamer – vulnerable yet indestructible: tear it and it will be re-woven.

Peace does not despair.

Begin to weave a web of peace:

start in the centre and make peace with yourself and your God.

Take the thread outwards and build peace within your family, your community – and in the circle of those you find it hard to like.

Then stretch your concern into all the world.

Weave a web of peace and do not despair.

Love is the warp in the fabric of life, truth is the weft; care and integrity together – vulnerable, but ultimately indestructible.

Together, they spell peace...

Kate Compston

We are Brothers!

Jean Goss, an international peacemaker, was invited to Lebanon during the civil war of the 80s, with Christian, Muslim and Druse militia fighting one another. He recalled the following personal experience told to him by a young Christian:

"A young Druse soldier had to survey the wood-covered slope of a hill near their camp. I belonged at that time to a Christian militia and was ordered to investigate the Druse position. The Druse soldier discovered me and took me prisoner. He led me up the hill towards his camp. But as I was better trained than he, I was able to set myself free and take his gun, thus reversing the situation.

"As I was walking with my prisoner, ready to kill him if he should try to escape, I suddenly saw inside myself the image of Christ on the Cross. The passage from the Gospel, 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you' resounded powerfully in my mind. It was with great urgency that I felt I had to follow the example of Jesus, and I decided to act. I threw down the gun and walked away, ready to be killed by my enemy who could pick it up and shoot at me. And as I walked I heard steps behind me. I did not turn around. Suddenly I felt the arm of the young Druse around my neck and with deep emotion heard him say to me: 'You have spared my life. I also shall not kill you.

We are brothers!' We separated, each one walking

back to his camp. Later on I found out that he had been executed for not obeying the orders he had received. I left the militia and I refused ever to return to it."

Hildegard Goss-Mayr, widow of Jean Goss

The House of Love

How can we live in the midst of a world marked by fear, hatred and violence, and not be destroyed by it? When Jesus prays for his disciples he responds to this question by saying, "I am not asking you to remove them from the world but to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world." To live in the world without belonging to the world summarizes the essence of the spiritual life. The spiritual life keeps us aware that our true house is not the house of fear, in which the powers of hatred and violence rule, but the house of love, where God resides.

Hardly a day passes in our lives without our experience of inner or outer fears, anxieties, apprehensions and preoccupations. These dark powers have pervaded every part of our world to such a degree that we can never fully escape them. Still it is possible not to belong to these powers, not to build our dwelling place among them, but to choose the house of love as our home.

Henri Nouwen

Some Scripture Readings

Deuteronomy 30: 15-19

Psalms 46

Isaiah 65: 17-25

Micah 4: 1-5

Matthew 5: 38-48

Matthew 26: 47-55

John 14: 25-27

Romans 12: 9-21

Ephesians 2: 13-18

James 3: 13-18

Hymns

For the Healing of the Nations (Fred Kaan)

For the healing of the nations.
Lord, we pray with one accord,
for a just and equal sharing
of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us, Father, into freedom,
from despair your world release
That redeemed from war and hatred
all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living.
let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, creator-God, have written
your great name on humankind:
for our growing in your likeness
bring the life of Christ to mind;
that by our response and service
earth its destiny may find.

Lord, make me a means of your peace

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
Where there's hatred grown,
let me sow your love.
Where there's injury, Lord,
let forgiveness be my sword.
Lord make me a means of your peace.

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
Where there's doubt and fear.
let me sow your faith.
In this world's despair.
give me hope in you to share.
Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Lord, make me a means of your peace.
When there's sadness here, let me sow your joy
When the darkness nears,
may your light dispel our fears.
Lord make me a means of your peace.

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Be Not Afraid (Bob Dufford S.J)

You shall cross the barren desert,
But you shall not die of thirst.
You shall wander far in safety
Though you do not know the way.
You shall speak your words in foreign lands
And all will understand.
You shall see the face of God and live.

ALL: Be not afraid.
I go before you always.
Come follow Me,
And I will give you rest.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea
You shall not drown.
If you walk amid the burning flames,
You shall not be harmed.
If you stand before the pow'r of hell
And death is at your side,
Know that I am with you through it all.

Blessed are your poor.
For the Kingdom shall be theirs.
Blest are you that weep and mourn.
For one day you shall laugh.
And if wicked men insult and hate you
All because of Me,
Blessed, blessed are you!

Some Additional Suggestions

God of freedom, God of justice (Fred Kaan)
Put peace into each other's hands (Fred Kaan)
Thy kingdom come, O God (Lewis Hensley)
Make me a channel of your peace (attr. St Francis)

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Fellowship of Reconciliation
The Eirene Centre
Clopton, Kettering
Northants, NN14 3DZ
tel 01832 720257

email office@for.org.uk
website www.for.org.uk

