



United for Peace

The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada

Unis pour la paix

Worship Resources

United for Peace Worship Resources



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L'Église Unie du Canada

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Introduction to the United for Peace Campaign



*Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.
(Romans 14:19)*

Within the context of pursuing and making peace, The United Church of Canada has initiated the United for Peace Campaign as a commitment to renew and enliven the church's peacemaking ministry. The campaign includes a focus on education, advocacy, and fundraising and will help renew the vision of justice and peace that the United Church has stood for throughout its history. This vision is grounded in our understanding that there can be no peace in our world without justice. At the 38th General Council in 2003, the United Church named six core pillars that sustain peace and justice: equitable global economic development; promotion of human rights; democratic governance; a healthy, sustainable, physical environment; war prevention and peacebuilding; and arms control and disarmament agreements.

The United for Peace Campaign officially launches on Peace Sunday, November 4, 2007. The roots of this campaign come from the action of the 39th General Council 2006 to establish a \$1 million peace fund to support peace initiatives in Palestine and Israel. At a subsequent meeting, the Executive of the General Council decided to expand the initiative to a \$2 million fund to support peace work in all parts of the globe.

The \$2 million peace fund will augment the peace work already supported by the Mission and Service Fund. As money is received, 50 percent will go toward program and initiatives in Palestine and Israel (to honour the 39th General Council's original commitment of \$1 million to the region) and the other 50 percent will go to peace initiatives in other areas of the world, including in Canada.

Worship Resources

The United for Peace Campaign calls us to once again recommit to peace that is grounded in justice. The following worship resources on peace include prayers, sermon illustrations, and an intergenerational service that could be used at any time. As the suggested introduction of the United for Peace Campaign is on Peace Sabbath, Sunday, November 4, 2007, the appropriate lectionary readings have been included as well as suggestions for All Saints' Sunday, which your congregation may also be celebrating on that date. However, these resources can be adapted for use throughout the year.

The sermon illustrations highlight peace with justice experienced by peoples in the Middle East and First Nations peoples in Canada. In both instances there can be no lasting peace until justice issues related to land are resolved.

We invite you to pursue peace in your faith community and to work with others locally and globally, knowing that as we do this we participate in the great work of God's love.

Prayers/Readings/Litanies



Opening Prayers/Calls to Worship

One: We come together on this Peace Sunday
our hearts wide open with love.

**All: We come ready to nourish our spirits
and renew our commitment to peace.**

One: We come together as peace bearers and peacemakers.

**All: May we bear peace in our hearts
and be peacemakers in our communities.**

One: Come, let us celebrate God's presence among us,
an unending source of peace and compassion.

**All: Praise be to God, who calls us to pursue peace
for the benefit of all creation.**

Jennifer Watts

Leader: God of all life, through the Elders we have been taught to walk in this world
in a gentle way, always respecting the life you have given to the animal and
the plant world, and respecting the ways of other human beings. We come
this morning with respect in our hearts for all that is yours and all we will
come in contact with today. Help us to share in a good way with each other
and to know fully that you are with us in all we do. Meegwetch (Thank
you).

Alf Dumont¹

One: Let us give thanks to our Creator, for the Creator is always with us.

All: God is with us in the call of a loon and in the flight of an eagle.

One: Our Creator is with us in the changing of the seasons.

All: God is with us when we gather together and when we are alone.

One: Our Creator is with us in our giftedness and in our search for new under-
standings of ourselves, new visions of our communities.

The Dancing Sun²

Prayers of Confession and Assurances of Pardon

Prayer of Confession

Leader: The drum does not beat alone, nor does the heart, in the circle of life.

All: How difficult it has been, O Creator, for us to be humble and caring. We so easily forget your teachings of the just and right relationships that we are to have with each other, as brothers and sisters, in this land. We so easily forget that our responsibility carries from generation to generation for all those who are hurt and oppressed and denied their place in the circle of life-those who still need our support, who need justice and peace. How difficult it is for us to remain humble as we walk the road of life. May we find peace so that we might share peace that is genuine and real, and help others to know peace within. Spirit of life, help us to walk the road of integrity back to the circle of life, where we will be truly joined by all our brothers and sisters. Meegwetch Che Manido (Thank you Great Spirit).

Prayer of Assurance

Leader: Let your breath, O God, fill us with life anew, that we might love as you love and do what you would do. Let us know the peace that comes from good relations with each other and with you. The Creator has chosen to walk with us. We are blessed.

Amen

*Alf Dumont*³

Confession

O Christ,
In whose body was named all the violence of the world,
And in whose memory is contained our profoundest grief,

We lay open to you:
The violence done in our name in time before memory;
The unremembered wounds we have inflicted;
The injuries we cannot forget
And for which we have not been forgiven.
The remembrance of them is grievous to us;
The burden of them is intolerable.

We lay open to you:
Those who have pursued a violent knowledge
The world cannot forget;



Those caught up in violence they have refused to name;
Those who have enacted violence
Which they have not repented.
The remembrance of them is grievous to us;
The burden of them is intolerable.

We lay open to you:
The victims of violence whose only memorial is our anger;
Those whose suffering was sustained on our behalf;
Those whose continued oppression provides the ground
We stand on;
The remembrance of them is grievous to us;
The burden of them is intolerable.

Hear what comfortable words our saviour Christ says
To all who truly turn to God:
Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy-laden,
And I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me.
For I am gentle and lowly in heart,
And you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.
**We wholeheartedly repent
Of the evil we have done,
And of the evil done on our behalf;
And we look for grace to offer forgiveness,
And to know ourselves forgiven.**

Assurance of Pardon

In Jesus Christ,
God knows and receives us as we are.
Give thanks,
And live in the amazing grace of God.
Worship Service for the Moderator's Day of Justice, Healing and Reconciliation, 2001

Confession

On this Peace Sunday,
we come before you, O God,
to confess the ways we have not supported peace
in our lives and the life of the world.

For the times we have tolerated,
through our actions or inaction,

abuse of human rights,
war and military solutions to conflict,
the growing gap between rich and poor,
and homelessness.

For the times we have condoned,
through our actions or inaction,
personal violence
and family violence.

For the times we have abused creation—
the land, water, and air,
the non-human life of this world,
our global environment.

For the times when we have accepted
a theology that dominates
or limits others.

We confess we can lose the vision
of your peace,
and that we fail to rely on your grace,
which is active in our world.

Hear our call, O God, to be a people
who keep your vision of peace
present and active in this world.
A people who celebrate your grace
in our global community.

Hear our call to come home to you, O God.

Assurance of Pardon

God hears our call. The call from our hearts
for peace, compassion, and understanding.
We gather today in this community
to renew the vision and commitment for a world of just peace
knowing that God's love holds all, sees all, accepts all.
Thanks be to God.

Jennifer Watts

Prayers of Peace

Jesus, son of a carpenter,
you have left us the tools
to be builders of peace in our communities.

Tools that craft peace built on love and justice.
Tools that shape communities built on human rights and respect.
Tools that build understanding and compassion for others.
Tools that create a world that delights in laughter and joy.

We are inspired by your example
to use our creativity, our ingenuity, our love of beauty
in the great work of building communities of love and hope.

Your tools, worn smooth by love, await us.
Guide us to embrace them in our hands
as we continue your ministry of building peace in our world.

Amen.

Jennifer Watts

God, we want to choose a life of non-violence,
to hiss, but not to harm;
to hear the voice that calls us beloved,
to be compassion within compassion;
to choose right action, not results;
to cry out for righteousness, but not kill for revenge,
to throw star after star against a dark sky;
to stretch out our hands and reach what we cannot.
Give us the strength and courage not only to believe but to act;
to recognize our own participation in violence
and our need for conversion;
to challenge the unjust and violent structures of our day;
to gather, time and again, around the table of dialogue;
to create and promote peaceful alternatives wherever we are,
to continue to be a voice and witness of non-violence.

Our journey through the doorway to peace
Begins with the step we choose to take today.
Be with us. Guide us. Love us into your love beyond measure.
Pax Christi USA⁴



God,
I dream of a loving world
where we see each other
with your eyes.

I dream of a resourceful world
where we cherish the unique gift
of each other.

I dream of a hopeful world
where we recognize the power of your grace
to transform and make new.

I dream of peace.
Claire Annelise Smith, Guyana⁵

Almighty God, we pray for your peace on earth.
For peace that is life-giving;
for peace that is love-bearing;
for peace that is true freedom;
for peace that is purposeful;
for peace that is prevailing.
We pray for children in time of war;
they are defenceless.
We pray for the old; they are unable to escape danger quickly.
We pray for those with physical disabilities;
they are at the mercy of others.
We pray for women; they are vulnerable to abuse.
We pray for the innocent;
they suffer from the unjust desire of others.
We pray for those whose lives have been changed by war;
the blinded; the burned;
those who have lost limbs; those who have lost their reason;
those who have lost their peace of mind;
those who have lost their health and strength forever;
O God, above all we pray for those in anguish,
those whose lives will never be the same again;
those who have lost their loved ones; those who have lost their lives.
Deepen us in our desire for peace,
restore our resolve for peace, increase our intent to work for peace.
Will for us your peace, perfect and prevailing
for your Son, our Saviour Christ's sake.
Pamela Wilding, Kenya⁶

Community of Peace

Work us together as contrasting colours.
Join us together across the divides of differences.
Bind us together with loving connections.
United us together combining our strengths.
Knit us together in patterns of worship.
Pull us together demolishing our barriers.
Mould us together retaining our personhood.
Cement us together softening our bitterness.
Design us together to be communities of peace.
Rev. Frances Ballantyre, United Kingdom⁷

Pray not for Arab
or Jew
or Palestinian
or Israeli
but pray rather
for ourselves
that we might not
divide them in our
prayers but keep
them together
in our hearts.

Based on a prayer by a Palestinian Christian⁸

Let us include the world in our prayers,
where God was lost,
let us search for God,
let us tell stories about a new heaven and a new earth.

Let us include the world in our prayers,
where love has to hide,
let us lift it up,
let us discover tenderness again
in the eyes of those whom we meet.

Let us include the world in our prayers,
where justice goes to the dogs,
let us dare risk a revolt,
let us imprint God's grace
upon the hearts of the judges.



Let us include the world in our prayers,
where peace lies wounded,
let us join together,
let us spread hope throughout all of God's creation.
Dr. Sybille Fritsch-Oppemann⁹

God of Peace, of Mercy and Love,
may the Flower of Peace
bloom in the desert of war and adversity,
now and always.
So be it!
Elizabeth S. Tapia, Philippines¹⁰

Let us pray:

One: We pray that someday an arrow will be broken—
Not in something or someone—
But by each of humankind,
To indicate peace with one another, not violence.

Two: Someday, oneness with creation,
Rather than domination over creation and created beings,
Will be the goal to be respected.

Three: Someday fearlessness to love
and to make a difference will be experienced by all.

**All: Then the eagle will carry our prayer for peace and love,
So that all communities can sit in the same circle together,
To communicate in love,
And experience the presence
Of the Great Mystery in the midst.
Someday can be today for you and me. Amen.**

Worship Service for the Moderator's Day of Justice, Healing and Reconciliation, 2001

God, you have been our shelter from one generation to another
overarching sky
shading tree
deepest water
pulsing veins.

You have spread your vine widely
bringing us a bounteous fruitfulness
of care and nurture, fulfillment and peace.

Grow in us
that we may root ourselves in your visions
of justice and mercy.

Open our arms that we might lift another's burdens
speak through our mouths that we might comfort the afflicted
urge our feet that we might march in solidarity with the wounded.

Teach us to be the household of God,
a people spreading out the everlasting branches of love.

*Bobbi Patterson*¹¹



Litanies/Intercessions/Commitments

Litany based on The United Church of Canada's "Song of Faith"

One: Jesus announced the coming of God's reign—a commonwealth
not of domination but of peace, justice, and reconciliation.

**All: Peace, justice, reconciliation—we are called to follow this path in our
world announcing God's love.**

One: He healed the sick and fed the hungry.

**All: Healing and nourishment—we are called to engage in justice and to
fairly share the resources of our world with all.**

One: He forgave sins and freed those held captive
by all manner of demonic powers.

**All: Forgiveness and acceptance—we are called to engage with others in
seeking reconciliation—to hear one another's pain and to see God's
presence in all.**

One: He crossed barriers of race, class, culture, and gender.

**All: Diversity and difference—we are called to enter into relationship with
one another. To struggle with our fear of the unknown and to celebrate
and embrace the uniqueness of God's creation.**

One: He preached and practised unconditional love—love of God,
love of neighbour, love of friend, love of enemy.

**All: Unconditional love—we are called to be people with hearts open wide
with love.**

One: And he commanded his followers to love one another as he loved them.

**All: We are called to follow Jesus—on the path of love and companionship.
Seekers of justice, makers of peace, singers of faith—
To be the common wealth of God in this world.**

Jennifer Watts

Peace Commitment

Compassionate and loving God,
We stand before you today to renew
our commitment to peace in our hearts,
our homes and our world.

We, as members of this faith community,
commit ourselves to peace bearing and peacemaking.
Making peace with the land,
with humanity,
with all creation.

Like the prophets of old and the prophets of today,
we ask for courage to speak truth to power,
to seek alternatives to violence,
to build peace based on justice,
human rights,
and respect for creation.

Like countless numbers of people
in our global community
who refuse to give up hope
and live their lives as peace bearers and peacemakers,
we ask for your grace to work through us
so that we may bear peace and make peace
in our communities.

We commit to living your love
through the great work of nurturing peace with justice,
today, tomorrow, and always.

Amen.

Jennifer Watts

Litany of Intercession

The following responsive reading has been adapted from the opening worship of Sabeel's international conference, *Speaking Truth, Seeking Justice*, held in Jerusalem in February 2001. It can be preceded by a reading of Luke 19:37-40.

One: For all those who have fallen victim to hatred and inhumanity, for those loved ones who are left behind to mourn, for the souls of those whose hearts are cold,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.

One: For the children who are being born into this world of conflict and violence, for women and mothers who suffer needlessly,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.

One: For all those who have been forced into unemployment, who long to return to work, for all those who struggle to support their families,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.

One: For the soldiers who are misguided in thinking that their bullets will bring about peace, and for those who feel called to object conscientiously to military orders,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.

One: For the children who cry in their beds at night and wonder "what have I done?", for the mothers and fathers who must try to explain the unexplainable,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.

One: For all the children who have died before their time, for the soldiers who allow their uniform to strip them of their humanity, for the healers who are denied the opportunity to use their gifts,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.

One: For the redemption of souls of both victim and perpetrator, for those who commit themselves to the forgiveness of sins,

Many: Lord, hear our prayer.¹²

Offertory Prayers

(based on lectionary readings for Peace Sunday, Nov. 4, 2007)

Like Habukkuk, the prophet of old, we search for the ways of God in the world. We bring these offerings as symbols of our commitment to continue the search for peace with justice in our local and global communities. We offer these gifts because we know that change is possible. Like Zacchaeus, we know that God's love can work through us transforming and enabling us to live in God's way. We offer these gifts for the transformation of ourselves and our world for the good of all. Amen.

Jennifer Watts

Like the prophets of old, we search for the ways of God in the world. We bring these offerings as symbols of our commitment to continue the search for peace with justice in our local and global communities. We offer these gifts because we know that change is possible. We know that God's love can work through us transforming and enabling us to live in God's way. We offer these gifts for the transformation of ourselves and our world for the good of all. Amen.

Jennifer Watts

Compassionate and loving God, accept these gifts so that they may work in our world to soften hard hearts and open closed minds. We know your kingdom is at work in this world. May compassion, grace and love bless and enliven the ministry these gifts support here in our own community and around the world. Amen.

Jennifer Watts

We lift up these gifts to you, O God, as symbols of our commitment to the ministry of peace with justice in our world. May these gifts work to challenge systems that exploit people and the larger community of creation. May these gifts nurture alternatives to hate, violence and abuse. May we continue to gift our world with creativity, commitment, and compassion as we live your love when we leave here today. Amen.

Jennifer Watts

Commissioning

Help us O God, achieve
the peace that cares for the wellbeing of the people;
the peace that rebukes injustice and violence;
the peace that seeks freedom for all;
the peace that heals the hurts of the past;
the peace that enables for today
and releases the potential for tomorrow;
the peace that is new life in Christ. Amen.

Sabeel, Alternative Ecumenical Service, June 3–9, 2007¹³



Websites

Waves of Prayer is organized by Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre in Jerusalem. The centre has organized a weekly time for friends around the world to pray for the concerns of Palestinian Christians. Local congregations are encouraged to visit the Sabeel website to incorporate the concerns and prayer requests from Sabeel in their worship services. Visit www.sabeel.org and go to Resources—Waves of Prayer.

The Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace 2001—2010 (DOV) is an initiative of the World Council of Churches. It is a global movement that strives to strengthen existing efforts and networks for overcoming violence, as well as inspire the creation of new ones.

See: www.overcomingviolence.org

Worship services on an Aboriginal theme are available on the websites of KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives (www.kairoscanada.org/e/resources/worship/worshipAboriginal.asp) and The United Church of Canada (www.united-church.ca/en/planning/seasons/firstnations).

All Ages Service for Peace Sunday

Preparation

This intergenerational service uses the story “The Egg” by Carolyn Pogue from *A New Day: Peacemaking Activities for Children* (UCPH, 2005). The process includes community storytime, taking the place of the children’s story and the sermon. During storytime, invite children and their families to come forward.

Worship leaders will need to prepare a big rainbow-coloured egg that can be seen from the back of the church with the word Love posted above the egg. After the story is read, invite children to come forward and place the words of peace in many different languages on the egg. (Prepare the attached list of peace words on paper to be stuck on the egg.) After the Peace egg is finished, invite the congregation to reflect on who will be the nest for peace. Each one of us can be a twig in the nest—supporting and caring for peace. Ask for the children’s help in putting the twigs of Justice, Hope, Compassion, Mercy, and Humour under the egg and then to distribute twigs to each member of the congregation so that they can write their names and one or two words symbolizing their commitment to peace. The children can then bring the twigs forward to build the nest.

Materials:

- Big divider or board to hold the Peace egg and nest
- Peace egg coloured brightly (e.g., red, yellow, purple, green, blue, and gold)
- The word Love printed in large letters to go over the egg
- Words of peace in different languages printed out to be put on egg with sticky material—masking tape, blue tack, or glue sticks
- Twigs with the words Justice, Hope, Compassion, Mercy, and Humour written on them
- Twigs for the congregation cut out of different shades of brown (recycled brown paper bags would work) and markers

Opening

One: We gather today as kids, adults, teenagers, and seniors to celebrate your presence among us.

All: We come because we care for each other, the community we live in, and our earth.

One: We come together on this Peace Sunday to renew our commitment to peace and justice.

All: We come because we know your grace and love are at work in this world—we want to be part of it.

One: We gather to greet one another, to sing, to pray, to share stories, and to laugh.

All: We come because we believe in your love.

Sorry for Hurting Prayer

We are sorry for the things we did that may have hurt others, the environment or ourselves. We ask for the courage to make changes in our lives so that we stop hurting. Thank you for loving us during our hurting times and for believing that we can change.

Thank you for nudging us to live in your way. Amen.

Alternative Scripture Suggestions

Micah 6:8

Romans 12: 18–21

“What happened?” asked Justice. “I don’t know,” cooed Hope, “but I love this egg with all my heart. I’ll care for it with all the tenderness inside me.” Justice spread his wing over the egg and said, “Me, too.”

Community Storytime Suggestions

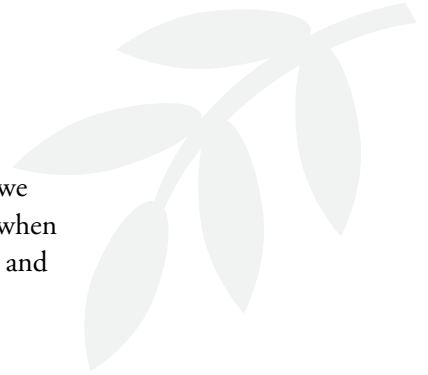
- Start the time together by asking children and their families to come forward. Explain about Peace Sunday and the United for Peace Campaign.
- Read “The Egg” story (page 20). Explain to the kids that they are going to help make a Peace egg for your congregation. Ask them to attach the words for peace to the egg.
- Explain that you now want to make this a Peace egg that is cared for by your congregation. Ask the kids to remember the names of the parents and the other friends of the Peace egg—add the twigs of Justice, Hope, Compassion, Mercy, and Humour as they are named so that you begin to build a nest under the Peace egg. Recall the words of the Peace egg’s parents who said they would need help to raise their baby and explain that we can make a commitment to raising peace in our community. Our job is to build the nest. Hand out the twigs and ask for the kids to go to the people gathered in the church to sign their names to a twig and to write a word or two of how they will work for peace. As the twigs come back, build the nest. (This will take some time and may need the help of older youth and parents to reach everyone, depending on the size of your congregation. Music or a PowerPoint presentation of peace images may be appropriate.)
- When the nest is built, read through some of the commitments people have made to supporting peace. Some suggestions for reflection with the group:
 - We can all be twigs that build nests that support peace
 - Each twig is different but they all can help support peace
 - Every twig is needed
 - Peace is cradled by God’s love and our love
 - Each thing we do for peace helps others do things for peace as well; the nest is a community
- Close with a brief reflection that the Peace egg is being birthed at the beginning of the United for Peace Campaign of the church. Encourage people to see the campaign as a recommitment and reaffirmation of the church’s involvement in and commitment to peace with justice ministry in our local and global communities.

Additional Activities

Your church may want to become involved in making a peace pole for your congregation or neighbourhood. Find out about peace poles from the resource *A New Day*. Peace Sunday could be the day you introduce the idea to the congregation, explaining the intent of the peace pole and inviting the congregation to become involved in the creation of the peace pole for your congregation.

Offering Prayer

Accept these gifts, O God, for your work of peace. We offer these gifts because we know that change is possible. We know we can make a difference in this world when we believe in your love and compassion. Help these gifts do your work of peace and justice. Amen.



Closing

We leave here today carrying peace in our hearts.
Help us to live this peace in our homes, our schools, our workplaces,
our neighbourhoods, our playgrounds, and our sports activities.
We leave here knowing we are loved.
May we live this love in all we do and say.
Amen.

or

Like fragile eggs that sit in nests,
the world awaits peace,
dependent on others for warmth and care.
Hear our prayer, O God,
that we may feather these nests
with joy and love.
May peace be hatched in all nests that rest gently in this world.
Amen.

The Egg

by Carolyn Pogue

Once upon a time, under a shimmering full moon, a dove laid an amazing egg. It was not little and robin's-egg blue. It was not slippery with a black frog dot in the middle. And it was not white and ostrich-egg gigantic. No.

The nest was not amazing. The mother of this egg was not amazing. She looked plain, like every other dove in the world. The father wasn't particularly interesting to look at either.

But in the eyes of Love, who watches all the Earth with tenderness and compassion, all beings are beautiful. So, while the mother and father were ordinary; this really means that they were splendid and beautiful, because that is how Love works.

Justice, the father dove, and Hope, the mother, had been expecting an ordinary, brownish, oval egg. But this egg, laid in an ordinary nest in a tall maple tree, was not ordinary at all.

The eggshell was rainbow red and yellow, purple and green, blue and gold. On top of the radiant colours were marks. They were words: Sken:nen, Shalom, Salaam, Pax, Paz, Heiwa, and so on. Each word meant Peace as spelled in every language used by human creatures. (Other creatures do not need these scratchings, because the rainbow is enough. But Love, the Creator of all things, wanted to make sure that no one misunderstood the name of this egg.)

The sight of this Peace egg was so amazing that the wood ticks stopped ticking to take a look. Clouds laughed out loud. Crickets and grasshoppers went silent. On the end of a rich green maple leaf near the doves' nest, a grandmother spider looked at the egg and nodded. "At last," she whispered. "At last."

"What happened?" asked Justice. "I don't know," cooed Hope, "but I love this egg with all my heart. I'll care for it with all the tenderness inside me." Justice spread his wing over the egg and said, "Me, too."

Now the egg would have hatched in the beautiful maple tree, except that this tree was destined to be destroyed with the forest around it. The day after the egg was laid, logging machines shattered the stillness. Justice and Hope trembled with fear and with rage.

Grandmother spider called to the other spiders. "Come quickly!" she cried. The grandmother spiders came and began spinning and spinning. As the machines came closer, smashing down every tree in sight, the spiders spun faster, never stopping. Grandfather spiders brought food and dew drops and gave neck massages to help. As the machines roared closer, spewing smoke and madness, the spiders quickly, but gently rolled the egg into the web-sack that was sturdy, strong, and soft. Not a second too soon, Justice grasped the end of the sack, and with Hope close by, left the ruined, weeping forest.

For days the doves searched for sanctuary. They wanted to find the perfect place, the safest and healthiest place to raise their baby. Everyone knows you must be brave to carry Peace. You must be brave to do things differently. And you must be brave to leave what is familiar and set out on a quest for new ways of being. Justice and Hope became tired, but they were brave and being brave made them strong.

Day after day they flew on. One afternoon, they found a factory in the country. "Could this be home?" Hope asked. But a ferocious armed guard yelled, "Off with you! We are busy making land mines and bombs so we can keep the world safe. Go away, stupid birds, or I'll shoot you!"

One morning, they found a house with a red geranium on the veranda far away from that factory. But there was fighting in that house, and the doves believed fighting is bad for babies. They flew on.

One evening they found a quiet park. "This looks good," sang Justice. But there were signs that even birds could read: poison on the grass, sewage in the water, and mosquito spray in the air. Wearily, Hope and Justice flew on.

It takes 14 days to hatch a dove egg. Justice and Hope knew that time was running out. Just when they thought their wings couldn't go up and down another minute, they saw a sign: City of Peace. "This will be it," Hope cooed. "Home at last."

Slowly they flew into the city. Gliding silently above the streets, they searched for a suitable tree or building. Suddenly, an explosion ripped through the air. It turned a street into rubble, knocked down a school, flattened a hospital. The explosion created a shock wave that spun Justice and Hope around in the air. Hope couldn't tell which way was up and which was down. Justice felt the web begin to slip. Spinning and falling, spinning and falling, Justice, Hope, and Peace unborn fell fast toward the stones and broken glass and rubble below. Most people were too busy to notice, but the children saw. With sinking hearts, they watched the doves, the web, and the egg hurtle through the dusty air.

The Peace egg landed, rolled, and stopped. Hope and Justice alighted beside it and checked quickly for cracks. The web was tattered.

First one shadow and then others fell over the doves and their precious egg. The shadows belonged to Compassion, Mercy, Humour, boys, and girls, "Look!" said a boy, "It's Peace!" Compassion asked, "Is he hurt?" A girl whispered, "Do you think she will stay?"

For a moment, all were silent. Hope looked at the rubble around her. Then she looked up at the children. "I think," she said, "that this is where we will raise our baby." Justice looked at her with fierce determination, and nodded. "But we'll need help," he said.

"We'll help you!" cried the children and the others. "Then Peace will grow here," said Justice. And Mercy, Compassion, Humour, and the children joined hands and danced to music they could hear above the fear right there in the brokenness and despair and rubble of the world.

Saying “Peace” Around the World

Alafia [Yoruba (Nigeria)] • **Amahoro** [Rundi (Burundi)] • **Aman** [Urdu] • **Amani** [Swahili (Kenya, Tanzania)] • **Apirive** [Guarini (Paraguay)] • **Asomdwoe** [Twi-Akan (Ghana)] • **Baké** [Basque] • **Baris** [Turkish] • **Bekè** [Hungarian] • **Damai** [Malay/Indonesian] • **Eiphnh** [Greek] • **Emirembe** [Luganda (Uganda)] • **Enh taiwan** [Mongolian] • **Erkigsinek** [Inuit (Greenland)] • **Fandriampahalemana** [Malagasy (Madagascar)] • **Fifa** [Fon (Benin)] • **Filemu** [Samoan] • **Fred** [Norwegian/Danish] • **Friður** [Icelandic] • **Frieden** [German] • **Hacana** [Aymara (Bolivia)] • **Hau** [Tahitian] • **Heddwich** [Welsh] • **Heiwa** [Japanese] • **Here** [Bambara (Mali)] • **Hetep** [Egyptian] • **Hoa binh** [Vietnamese] • **Jam** [Fula (Guinea, Mali, Senegal)] • **Jamma** [Wolof (Senegal)] • **Katahimikan** [Tagalog (Philippines)] • **Keamanan** [Malay] • **Khotso** [Sesotho (Lesotho)] • **Khotso** [Tswana (Botswana)] • **Kimia** [Lingala (Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo)] • **Kuthula** [Fanagolo (South Africa)] • **Lâfi** [Mossi (Ghana, Burkina Faso)] • **Lafiya** [Hausa (Nigeria)] • **Melino** [Tongan] • **Mier** [Slovak] • **Mir** [Czech] • **Mir** [Serb, Croat] • **Мир** [Russian (cyrillic alpha. For mir)] • **Nabada** [Somali] • **Nei** [Tangut (China)] • **Nyei njaneyei** [Burmese] • **Pace** [Italian, Corsican, Romani] • **Paci** [Maltese] • **Paco** [Esperanto] • **Paix** [French] • **Pake** [Albanian] • **Pasch** [Romansch (Switzerland)] • **Pau he ping** [Mandarin] • **Pax** [Latin] • **Paz** [Portuguese] • **Paz** [Spanish] • **Phyongh'wa** [Korean] • **Pis** [Bislama (Vanuatu)] • **Pokój** [Polish] • **Qasikay** [Quecha (Mexico)] • **Rauha** [Finnish] • **Rongo** [Maori (NZ)] • **Runyararo** [Shona (Zimbabwe)] • **Salaam** [Arabi, Lebanese] • **Samadanam** [Tamil] • **Samaya** [Sinhalese] • **Santephiep** [Cambodian] • **Santiphap** [Thai, Lao] • **Selam** [Amharic (Ethiopia)] • **Shalom** [Hebrew] • **Shanti** [Hindi, Bengali] • **Sidi** [Tibetan] • **Siócháin** [Irish] • **Sken:nen** [Mohawk] • **Sula** [Pushtu (Afghanistan)] • **Sulh** [Dari (Afghanistan)] • **Taika** [Lithuanian] • **Ukuthula** [Zulu] • **Vrede** [Afrikaans] • **Vrede** [Dutch] • **Yatanapa** [Pintupi (Australia)] • **Zaman** [Hausa (Nigeria)]

Carolyn Pogue, A New Day: Peacemaking Activities for Children (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 2005), pp. 21–22, 26. Used with permission.

All Saints' Day Prayers



Gathering

Come, let us be gathered in the good company of saints and other sinners...the company that reaches back to the beginning of time. Be gathered with Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar and the great parade of those who have struggled to be faithful; faithful to the Creator of the earth and all the nations. Be gathered with those in our time, from every nation, who work for the healing of nations. Be gathered in the good company of God's daughters and sons who are behind us and beside us, ahead of us...surrounding us. Be gathered in God's good company, to praise and ponder the mercy of God.

Bob Haverluck¹

Prayer

For all the saints

Who went before us
Who have spoken to our hearts
And touched us with your fire,
We praise you, O God.

For all the saints

Who live beside us
Whose weaknesses and strengths
Are woven with our own,
We praise you, O God.

For all the saints

Who live beyond us
Who challenge us
To change the world with them,
We praise you, O God.

Janet Morely, Christian Aid²

Prayer

“For the Communion of Saints” (*Voices United* #719)

Closing

May we leave here embraced by the saints
who have gone before us.

May we leave here ready to accompany the saints that live
amongst us.

May we leave here committed to living lives
that honour God's vision of peace with justice.

We go forth celebrating your love that awaits us. Amen.

Jennifer Watts

Sermon Illustrations



Lectionary Readings for Peace Sunday, Nov. 4, 2007

Habakkuk 1:1–4, 2:1–4

Psalm 119:137–144

2 Thessalonians 1:1–4, 11–12

Luke 19:1–10

Like Zacchaeus, help us, O God,
to lose our fear of stepping outside our place,
of doing things differently,
of seeking Christ in our lives.

Christ's invitation awaits us
to start anew,
to make amends,
to live in Christ's way.

God of change and renewal,
we give thanks for your love
that makes this possible
for each one of us.
Amen.

In the book, *Enough Blood Shed: 101 Solutions to Violence, Terror and War*, Canadian authors Mary-Wynne Ashford and Guy Dauncey outline 5 solutions that religious organizations specifically can engage in—seek God in every person; become a track II diplomat (track II diplomats are unofficial supporters of peace processes who work to build connections and trust between parties in conflict—like the renowned work of Mennonites and Quakers in areas of conflict); lead by example; teach nonviolent resistance and tolerance; and meditate, provide sanctuary and pray.

Peace with Justice

In *Artisans of Peace* (Orbis Books, 2003), important lessons from peacemaking initiatives worldwide are compiled:

- peacebuilding should broadly involve many people and many sectors
- local capacities for peace must be strengthened
- peacebuilding and reconciliation should be conceived of as a process
- to create hope, patterns of conflict need to be changed and transformed
- emphasize dialogue and exchanging experiences

It is interesting to compare these lessons learned by modern peacemaking professionals with how Jesus lived his life and carried out his ministry. Jesus was active in all of the above areas, creating dialogue and hope and strengthening local capacity to resist violence. He reached across boundaries and taught by example—modelling relationships built on trust and respect. The story of Zacchaeus is one example of Jesus’ radical approach to peacebuilding based on justice both for Zacchaeus (welcoming him although he was recognized by the community as a sinner) and for the people affected by Zacchaeus’s tax collection (Zacchaeus’s commitment to change and make reparations based on Jesus’ love and fairness). Jesus worked for peace based on justice starting at the community level.

So, if we reflect on how we embrace peace and where we locate ourselves in the struggle for peace we also need to reflect: What is the peace we are working toward? Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa has stated that as a lover of peace, he tries to work for justice—that’s the only way to establish a durable peace. The United Church of Canada understands the pursuit of peace to be intertwined with the pursuit of justice. The 38th General Council in 2003 named six core pillars that sustain peace and justice: equitable global economic development; promotion of human rights; democratic governance; a healthy, sustainable, physical environment; war prevention and peacebuilding; and arms control and disarmament agreements. We need to keep before us the broad vision of God’s love and compassion for all of creation. We need to be asking ourselves: What Christian practices will help create just conditions that will make war and violence less likely? We need to match God’s vision for peace with concrete actions for justice.

“The Greek word for peace, *eirene*, connotes a triple reality of peace, social harmony and justice. The Arabic *salaam* and the Hebrew *shalom* carry connotations of well-being, wholeness, abundance and harmony within one’s self, as well as harmony in social relationships and the absence of violence. The Sanskrit word *shanty* refers to spiritual tranquility and an integrated balance of inner and outer ways of being in the world. In Chinese, the word *ping* carries nuances of harmony and the achievement of unity from within diversity. Finally, the Russian word *mir* means peace with the nuances of both the village community and the entire world.”¹

Middle East

“What is the most significant thing to bear in mind about the Middle East?”

It is tremendously important in any context where there is conflict to listen to the voices of the people most affected. Christ’s gospel tells us that by hearing the voices of the dispossessed, the widow, the orphan, the sick, and the imprisoned, we will understand God’s will for the world.

We seldom hear these voices from Israel and Palestine. We hear pundits and politicians; we see edited reports from journalists. Those who tour the Holy Land usually are only taken to holy sites and have no possibility of speaking to Arab Christians, nor to Muslims, nor to Jews who are working for peace.

Surveys show that most people in North America think that Bethlehem is in Israel, rather than in the occupied Palestinian territories. And they do not hear that Bethlehem, the sister city of Jerusalem, the City of Peace, is slowly dying as a viable community, surrounded by walls, controlled by military posts, and surrounded by Israeli settlements outlawed by the United Nations.

Most people do not know that Gaza was formerly considered a jewel in the necklace of cities bordering the Mediterranean, with a rich variety of cultures and religious sites that are now destroyed. Most people do not know the horrible psychological toll on the young Israelis whose compulsory military service is in the West Bank, and who must do things they cannot face remembering or tell to their families.

Most people do not know that historically ordinary people of the three faiths have lived in this place and have respected each other’s traditions. Most do not know that even today, in the midst of terrible hardships and suffering, Muslims and Christians work together to assist their fellow Palestinians, and that wherever they can, acting against the laws of their country, Israeli Jews of conscience do their best to assist. Most people do not know that in poll after poll, a strong majority of Israelis and a very large majority of Palestinians continue to say that the occupation of the Palestinian territories has to end if there is ever to be a chance for peace.

We in Canada seldom hear those voices from Israel and Palestine. But we are called to do so. There are Israelis and Palestinians there, people of great faith and commitment, who want to speak to us. They want us to know that the conflict that is wreaking havoc in Israeli society and literally destroying Palestinian communities and lives is not about religious differences or about security measures. It is about land.

It is about whether the historical inhabitants of a place can live there when there is so much political advantage and profit to be made from removing them. Huge corporations and arms dealers are reaping enormous profits from the implacable continuous expansion of Israeli settlements and military incursions in the Palestinian territories. The appropriation of land brings neither security or a just sharing. So our Palestinian and Israeli partners ask us to listen to what they are saying about what is actually happening there.

“The Bible itself is primarily concerned with the issue of being displaced and yearning for a place.... Land is a central, if not *the* central theme of Biblical faith.” Walter Brueggemann²

And Palestinian Christians there would like us really to confront the fact that this is the birthplace of our religion. They understand themselves to be privileged and to have the responsibility of walking where Jesus walked, to be part of an unbroken line of believers since his time. They care profoundly about this special part of God's world, and they wish that people of faith around the world could see it as a place meant for the coexistence of many peoples and religions. The vision of the New Jerusalem is the same as that urged by the prophets in the Hebrew Bible: the place where true peace is abundant for all.

These people know the meaning of suffering in ways we do not. They know the meaning of ecumenism and interfaith commitment in ways we do not. They practise *diakonia* in circumstances of bloodshed and deprivation that we thank God do not see in our country. They live out, every day, the cost of discipleship, and they know that peace cannot come when people's rights and welfare are denied.

So we have much to learn from them. We can learn, for instance, from the life and witness of Mrs. Jean Zaru, a long-time Palestinian advocate for peace and Presiding Clerk of the Ramallah Friends Meeting, who spoke these words at a recent international gathering in Palestine:

We are called to conversion, to be converted to the struggle of women and men everywhere who have no way to escape the unending fatigue of their labour and the daily denial of their human rights and human worth. We must let our hearts be moved by the anguish and suffering of our brothers and sisters here in Palestine, in Iraq and throughout the world. But how can we bear the pain, and where do we look for hope? Is there anything meaningful we can do to solve the political chaos and crisis in the world? Is there anything we can do to stop wars of all kinds?

Those of us committed to peace and justice, whether with respect to the Palestinian experience or to any other issue, should not give up, for to give up is to give in, and allow injustice to prevail. Rather we must continue to fan the embers into flames of light that can give hope to those in the forefront of the struggle...

The words of 2 Corinthians 4:8–9 seem to echo our predicament and the promise with which we are blessed:

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed...”

May God's solidarity and promise be mirrored in our words and actions now and in the future.

First Nations Peoples

Ed Bianchi, Aboriginal Rights Program Coordinator, KAIROS

If peace is defined as an absence of conflict and/or evil, then it may be helpful to consider the Mohawk world view, which is similar in many ways to the world views of other Indigenous societies.

The Kanienkehaka or Mohawks regarded the Earth as feminine and the mother of all living forces upon the earth. As a result, in Mohawk society the land is always regarded as the property of women. Also, because the earth is seen as being alive, the Mohawks do not believe in dividing and selling the land.

The Kanienkehaka also feel they should work with nature, and not against her. They do not believe it is necessary to dominate the earth.

These fundamental differences in how the earth and land are viewed are at the root of the many conflicts between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

The Kanienkehaka believe that similarities between their world view and creation story and those found in the Bible are due to the Creator inspiring all peoples equally in terms of how they should relate to the world.

For example there is the story of Col. James Smith, who was captured and adopted by the Kanienkehaka during the colonial wars. At one point, Col. Smith believed he was going to starve to death. There was no food, and the hunting parties could find no game. When the Mohawks realized Col. Smith was becoming worried, chief Tecaughretanego told him that the Indigenous way of life involves seeing and knowing that they are supported by the ruler of Heaven and Earth. The chief told Col. Smith not to worry, that Owaneeyo (the Great Spirit) sometimes allows us be in want, which teaches us our dependence upon him. It reminds us that we are to love and serve him; to appreciate the worth of the favours that we receive, and to be more thankful.

Smith's observations were that the Mohawks appeared to be fulfilling the scriptures beyond those who profess to believe them. He noted as well that the Kanienkehaka live in love, peace, and friendship, together, without disputes. In this respect, they shame those who profess Christianity.

In other words, although the Europeans and the Mohawks do have different world views that give rise to conflict, the Mohawk ideals are not that far from traditional European ideals after all. If Euro-American society followed the teachings of the Christian religion there would be less warfare and evil in the world.



The Great Law of Peace is the constitution of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (People of the Longhouse, also known as the Iroquois or Six Nations). The Confederacy came together to end wars and violent blood feuds among their Nations. Their constitution, the Great Law of Peace, is rooted in the principles of democracy. It describes a complex government structure that includes, among other things, separation of powers, checks and balances, ratification, public opinion, and the equality of all peoples. The constitution's democratic principles so impressed America's founding fathers that they were incorporated in the Constitution of the United States.

Notes



Prayers/Readings/Litanies (pp. 3–15)

1. Alf Dumont, “The Pursuit of Right Relations,” First Nations Day of Prayer worship, *Mandate*, May 2005 special edition, p. 29. Used with permission.
2. From *The Dancing Sun*, Volume VIII (The Anglican Church of Canada and The United Church of Canada, 1996). Used with permission.
3. Adapted from Alf Dumont, “The Pursuit of Right Relations.” Used with permission.
4. From *Love Beyond Measure* by Mary Lou Kownacki, published by Pax Christie USA, Erie, PA, USA. Prayer written by PCUSA staff. Pax Christie USA, the national Catholic peace movement (www.paxchristieusa.org). Used with permission.
5. Claire Annelise Smith, Guyana, from *Timeless Prayers for Peace: Voices Together from around the World*, comp. Geoffrey Duncan (Canterbury press, UK, 2002), p. 33. Used with permission.
6. Adapted from Pamela Wilding, Kenya, *Prayers Encircling the World*, p. 234. Used with permission.
7. Rev. Frances Ballantyre, United Kingdom, from *Timeless Prayers for Peace*, p. 81. Used with permission.
8. Based on a prayer by a Palestinian Christian, © Christian Aid, from *Timeless Prayers for Peace*, p. 17. Used with permission.
9. Dr. Sybille Fritsch-Oppemann, Eng. trans. Barbara Thompson from Sinfonia oecumenica, *Worship with the Churches in the World*, comp. Beatrice Achi et al (German Evangelical Mission Agency, Hamburg, Germany, and Basel Mission, Basel, Switzerland, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh, Germany: 1998), p. 714. © Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh, in der Verlagsgruppe Random House GmbH, München. Used with permission.
10. Elizabeth S. Tapia, Philippines, *In God's Hands*, p. 155. Used with permission.
11. Bobbi Patterson, *Shaping Sanctuary: Proclaiming God's Grace in an Inclusive Church*, edited by Kelly Turney, Reconciling Congregation Program, 2000, p 131. Used with permission.
12. Sabeel, Speaking Truth, Seeking Justice, February 2001. Used with permission.
13. Taken from Alternative Ecumenical Service, June 3–9, 2007 (www.sabeel.org). Used with permission.

The prayers in notes 4–10 appeared in the compilation *In God's Hands: Common Prayer for the World*, ed. Hugh McCullum and Terry MacArthur (World Council of Churches, 2006).

All Saints' Day Prayers (pp. 23–24)

1. Bob Haverluck, *Love Your Enemies—and Other Neighbours* (United Church Publishing House, 1992), p. 116. Used with permission.
2. Janet Morely, *Praying with the World's Poor: Bread of Tomorrow*, copyright © Christian Aid, 1992. Used with permission.

Sermon Illustrations (pp. 25–30)

1. *Building Peace, Overcoming Violence in Communities*, Mary Yoder Holsopple, Ruth E. Krall, and Sharon Weaver Pittman, World Council of Churches Publications, 2004, p. 20. Used with permission.
2. Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), pp. 2–3. Used with permission.