

And None Shall Be Afraid

Please feel free either to follow this as a complete service or to excerpt pieces that you find helpful in your own worship planning. Original sources of prayers and texts are indicated in footnotes.

Call to Worship

One: Come, let us go up to the house of God.

All: **God will teach us God's ways.
And we will walk in God's paths.**

One: Come, let us draw near to God.

All: **Even as God draws near to us,
gives hope to those who walk in despair
grants courage to those who walk in fear
and guides our feet into the way of peace.**¹

Opening Prayer

O Lord,
you love justice and you establish peace on earth.
We bring before you the disunity of today's world;
the obscene violence, and the many wars,
which are breaking the courage of the peoples of the world;
human greed and injustice, which breed hatred and strife.
Send your Spirit and renew the face of the earth;
teach us to be compassionate towards the whole human family;
strengthen the will of all those who struggle for justice and for peace,
and give us that peace which the world cannot give.
All: Amen.²

Hymn Suggestions:

O God of Every Nation (*Common Praise*, #593,
Lutheran Book of Worship, #416, *Voices United*, #677)
For the Healing of the Nations (*Voices United*, #678;
Common Praise, #576)
In Christ There is no East or West (*Catholic Book of
Worship III*, #529, *Common Praise*, #484, *Voices
United*, #606, *Psalter Hymnal* #540)



Prayer of confession

We walk day by day along a Jericho road where we encounter many who have been beaten down by the violence of our times and abandoned for dead. Let us confess the times when we have walked by on the other side. Let us repent of our failures to love our neighbour as ourself. **{Silence}**

One: For our incapacity to feel the sufferings of others,
and for our tendency to live comfortably with injustice,
All: God forgive us.

One: For the self-righteousness that denies guilt,
and the self-interest that strangles compassion,
All: God forgive us.

One: For those who live their lives in careless
unconcern,
who cry "Peace, peace" when there is no peace,
All: We ask your mercy.

One: For our failings in community,
our lack of understanding,
All: We ask your mercy.

One: For our lack of forgiveness, openness, sensitivity,
All: God forgive us.

One: For the times we were too eager to be better
than others,
when we are too rushed to care,
when we are too tired to bother,
when we don't really listen,
when we are too quick to act from motives other
than love,
All: God forgive us.³

Children's Time

Reflect together on the theme poster. What do you see? What are the people in the poster doing? Do the people in the poster feel safe? How can you tell? What makes you feel safe?

Or use the children's "Pieces of Peace" activity outlined in page 19 of this guide. Alternatively, read one of the picture books also highlighted on page 22.

Hymn:

- Lion and Lamb Lying Together (*Common Praise*, #597)
- Shalom Chaverim (*Common Praise*, #571)
- Make Me a Channel of Your Peace (*Voices United*, #684, *Psalter Hymnal* #545)

Readings

Micah 4:1-4	Freedom from fear and freedom from want
Psalms 147: 1-14	God's delight is not in physical strength
Ephesians 2: 13 -22	Peace to those who are far and near
Luke 10:25-37	The Good Samaritan

Reflection

The following thoughts are offered as ideas for you to build upon as you see fit in developing your own homily, reflection, or sermon.

Today's Psalm rejoices not in the "strength of the horse" or the "speed of a runner" but in the abundance of creation — in the rain showered upon all the earth. God does not desire military security for a few but human security for all.

Military security seeks security for "us." It does not address the suffering or the injustice experienced by those outside our borders. It forces us to hide behind our guns, and to see the stranger as our enemy rather than as our neighbour. The story of the Good Samaritan invites us to look upon the stranger with new eyes, to reach out with the hands of compassion, and to pursue an inclusive vision of justice for all.

The Ephesians passage tells us that Jesus came to break down the "dividing wall of hostility" and to make us one people. The notion of human security goes beyond the pursuit of security for my family or my country. Rather, it calls for a world in which everyone might experience freedom from want and freedom from fear. The Micah

text announces a day when everyone shall sit under their own vines and their own fig trees and none shall be afraid. True security, then, is not just about laying down our guns. It is about turning them into ploughshares. God asks us to actively seek the well-being of our neighbours. We are challenged to refuse to walk by on the other side of suffering but rather to take action to bind wounds and share resources.

*For those who would like to offer concrete suggestions for action, consider using this opportunity to introduce our action card, calling on the Canadian government to adopt an **Agenda for Just Peace**.*

Prayers of the People

The melody for the sung response to the following petitions is Common Refrains, #766, Common Praise.

God of justice and of peace, you ask us to pray for all people. Here we offer our prayers for a violent and hurting world, trusting in your great love.

Let us pray for the church: {Silence}

God of Truth, in a world which seeks security by building walls and loading guns, may your church boldly proclaim an alternate vision of the peace which comes from justice and solidarity.

Sung response: Incline your ear, O God, and grant us peace.

Let us pray for those who rule: {Silence}

God of Wisdom, we pray for those we have elected to public office, and for political leaders everywhere, that they may administer the tasks of government with courage and equity, and seek a strong voice for peace and true human security.

Sung response: Incline your ear, O God, and grant us peace.

Let us pray for those experiencing war: {Silence}

God of Compassion, in Colombia, in Palestine and Israel, in Afghanistan, in all regions of the world where your people suffer from the violence of war and the violence of oppression, open the way forward to hope, to healing, to a just and lasting peace. We name before you other regions and peoples in need of peace.

Sung response: Incline your ear, O God, and grant us peace.

Let us pray for those experiencing violence in our own country: {Silence}

God of Justice, for Aboriginal peoples violated in their land rights, for homeless persons violated in their right to shelter, for women and children violated in their own home, for migrants and refugees denied access to new opportunities, we ask for freedom from fear and freedom from want.

Sung response: Incline your ear, O God, and grant us peace.

Let us pray for seekers of a just peace: {Silence}

God of Peace, we pray for courageous and committed people around the world who every day take steps, small and large, along the path to peace. May we too be faithful travellers as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus who came to be our Peace.

Sung response: Incline your ear, O God, and grant us peace.

Hymn

God, Whose Love Is Always Stronger

Tune: BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D (*Found as #35 in Common Praise, #374 in Voices United, #423 Lutheran Book of Worship, #475 Catholic Book of Worship III, #579 Psalter Hymnal*)

God, whose love is always stronger
Than our weakness, pride and fear,
In your world, we pray and wonder
How to be more faithful here.
Hate too often grows inside us;
Fear rules what the nations do.
So we pray, when wars divide us:
Give us love, Lord! Make us new!

Love is patient, kind and caring,
Never arrogant or rude,
Never boastful, all things bearing;
Love rejoices in the truth.
When we're caught up in believing
War will make the terror cease,
Show us Jesus' way of living;
May our strength be in your peace.

May our faith in you be nourished;
May your churches hear your call.
May our lives be filled with courage
As we speak your love for all.
Now emboldened by your Spirit
Who has given us new birth,
Give us love, that we may share it
Till your love renews the earth!

Biblical References: Romans 8:28-39, 2 Corinthians 12:9, John 3:7, Revelation 21:5, 1 Corinthians 13:4-5, John 14:27, Matthew 5-7, 1 Thessalonians 2:2, John 3:16, 17:18, Psalm 46:9, and Romans 8:22.

Suggested Tune: The Sacred Harp, 1844. Harm. James H. Wood, 1958.

Alternate Tunes: ABBOT'S LEIGH 8.7.8.7 D ("God Is Here!") by Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941; HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D ("Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!") by Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831.

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Sharing the Peace

One: Tradition has it that the handshake is a Roman custom showing open hands so that both parties can see that the other is not armed with weapons. As we prepare to greet one other with a sign of peace, let us reflect on all that we commit ourselves to with this gesture. Pax Christi Philippines calls us to commit to a radical vision of peace which encompasses all of life:

"Peace of the heart, the heart of peace. A peace grounded on justice that empowers and reconciles. A peace nurtured in ecological care that respects the integrity of creation. Peace, the fruit of sincere dialogue and authentic solidarity. Ultimately, peace is a gift of our God. For this peace we struggle and work. To this peace we commit ourselves."

Please reach out to your neighbour in peace:

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Offering (Optional)

Response: Declaration of commitment

We share the peace not only as we greet one another today but as we reach out in our daily lives to break down the barriers of injustice and fear that separate us from those who are our neighbours in God's eyes. Let us join together in a declaration of our personal commitment to walk daily the path of peace and nonviolence. This litany is drawn from the **Manifesto 2000**, a pledge that was written by Nobel Peace Laureates as part of the United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World.

Voice 1 God created us as image bearers: we see God in our family members, the homeless person we pass by on a busy street, the distant victims of wars our international community has been unable or unwilling to prevent. Let us pledge to honour that of God in all people.

All We pledge to respect the life and dignity of each human being without discrimination or prejudice.

Voice 2 God calls us to beat swords into ploughshares, to set aside violence and to actively seek justice for all God's people. Let us pledge to walk the way of nonviolence.

All We pledge to practise active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, psychological, economical and social, in particular towards the most deprived and vulnerable such as children and adolescents.

Voice 1 God promises a day when all shall sit under their own vines and their own fig trees. Let us pledge to share our resources with those in need and to work for a more equitable distribution of wealth in our country and our world.

All We pledge to share our time and material resources in a spirit of generosity to put an end to exclusion, injustice and political and economic oppression.

Voice 2 God's love seeks to break down the dividing walls of hostility and misunderstanding, calling us to be attentive to the new truths waiting to be discovered in unfamiliar or challenging points of view. Let us pledge to respect diverse voices:

All We pledge to defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity, giving preference always to dialogue and listening without engaging in fanaticism, defamation and the rejection of others.

Voice 1 God created the world and saw that it was good. Let us pledge to honour all of God's creation.

All We pledge to promote consumer behaviour that is responsible and development practices that respect all forms of life and preserve the balance of nature on the planet.

Voice 2 We share this earth with all God's people. Together we form one community, one body. Without the gifts of each and every part, that body can never be whole. Let us pledge to respect the participation of all.

All We pledge to contribute to the development of our community, with the full participation of women and respect for democratic principles, in order to create together new forms of solidarity.⁴

*This litany has been adapted from the **Manifesto 2000**. As part of this year's Education and Action campaign, KAIROS is encouraging people to sign the **Manifesto 2000**.*

Hymn:

- Will You Come and Follow Me (*Common Praise*, #430, *Voices United*, #567, *Sing! A New Creation* #267)
- Here I am Lord (*Catholic Book of Worship III*, #520, *Voices United*, #509)
- Healer of our Every Ill (*Catholic Book of Worship III*, #363, *Voices United*, #619, *Sing! A New Creation* #205)

Sending

**All: O God, lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love,
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe.**

One: Peace to the nations, east and west.
Peace to our neighbors, near and far.
Peace to all women, peace to all men.
The peace of Christ above all peace.
All: Amen.⁵

1 Inspired by Micah 4:2 and Luke 1:79

2 Adapted from a Monday morning worship in the Ecumenical Centre of the World Council of Churches.

www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/international/iraqprayers-e.html

3 PACSA, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

4 Adapted from **Manifesto 2000**. Congregations may want to provide members with copies of the full text of the Manifesto and encourage them to sign on.

5 Adapted from The Iona Community Worship Book: The Abbey Services of the Iona Community. Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1991, p. 57