

Order of Service for the International Day of Prayer for Peace 2009

and for prayers for peace at other times in preparation for the [International Ecumenical Peace Convocation](#)

The LORD gives strength to his people;
the LORD blesses his people with peace. (Ps 29.11)

In the name of the triune God we gather
to pray for peace
to find courage to continue of the path of peace
to share the promise of peace
in a world where violence does not have the last word.

The LORD gives strength to his people;
the LORD blesses his people with peace. (Ps 29.11)

Song: Travel on travel on ...

Prayer

Almighty God and Creator, you are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, we pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in your image, to your honour and praise.

Amen.

Dusting violence off our feet, preparing to walk in the paths of peace

Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. (John 13.5)

As we prepare to enter into the labyrinth of peace we take time to shake the dust of violence off our feet, to confess our own violence and to hold before God in prayer some of the desperate situations of violence in the world.

Confession and litany

Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. (Ps. 34.14)

Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

God who is the creator, redeemer and sustainer of life in all its fullness,
We ask for your strengthening power to support the victims of violence in the Congo:
we bring before you women and girls who are denied the joy and abundance of life because of the violence perpetrated against them.

Forgive us for the occasions when we have remained silent in the face of such suffering.
Forgive us for the times we have failed to name the violence as a sin and an offence against you.

Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. (Ps. 34.14)
Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

Sing Cuban Kyrie

The fruit of righteousness will be peace;
the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.

Jesus Christ, our brother and saviour,
who walked the roads of the Holy Land and lived as one of her people,
walk with those who find their roads blocked and their families divided through illegal actions in an occupied land.
Jesus Christ, our brother and saviour,
who challenged injustice and offered new definitions of power,
challenge us to express non-violent support to all who suffer and to speak out against the injustice they experience.

The fruit of righteousness will be peace;
the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever

Sing Cuban Kyrie

Too long have I lived among those who hate peace. (Psalm 120.6)
Too long have I lived among those who hate peace.

Compassionate God, who through the death of your son on the cross, suffers alongside wounded humanity,
We remember communities and peoples around the world who have been victims of genocide and mass crimes against humanity.
We bring before you the people of Sudan and Rwanda.
Comfort those who mourn.
Sustain those who live with the scars of violence.
Bless all who work for truth, reconciliation and the healing of memories.

Too long have I lived among those who hate peace. (Psalm 120.6)
Too long have I lived among those who hate peace.

Sing Cuban Kyrie

Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other (Psalm 85:10)

A time of silence and time to name other places and people facing violence, to name and confess our own violence.

Love and faithfulness meet together;

righteousness and peace kiss each other (*Psalm 85:10*)

Promise of forgiveness and peace

In Christ God promises us that all things can be made new and that we are forgiven. For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you. *Isaiah 54.10*

Going on a walk of peace and stepping into the labyrinth ...

At different places in the chapel you will find water, stones, salt and light. Next to them are biblical verses for you to pick up and think about and maybe take away with you. You may also like to light further candles, pick up a stone, dip your hand in the water, put some salt in your pocket ...

To reach them and to walk in the labyrinth you will need to move around, wander about and perhaps step out of your worship comfort zone. It may be best to take off your shoes to walk in the labyrinth. You may find that you bump into other people on your walk or that you have to make space for them. Although each of us will make sense of this spiritual walk for peace in our own way we all need to remember that we can only begin to build peace if we do it together.

Some of you may prefer to remain seated, rather than walk around. The version of the labyrinth printed on the cover can also be followed slowly with your finger.

Before walking we will listen to the words of the prophet Micah, we will rise to sing and then set out.

Reading: Micah 4 1-4

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream 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 that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; 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 all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid.

Sing: Caminando

A guided walk in the labyrinth of peace (you can also do this by tracing your finger slowly on the outline)

Starting is about stepping into the unknown, daring to commit, leaving cynicism behind: yes my contribution to peace-making can make a difference. Take your first step into the labyrinth at the bottom of the heart. Be prepared to meet others on your way and to greet them in peace.

Slowly follow the path from the bottom to the top of the heart and then all the way round the other side, the path will end. Have we reached the end of the road, what do we do?

Take a step forwards in faith, make a quantum leap. Often peace-making requires an act of imagination to go forwards. Step forwards onto the next finger of the path each time the path seems to end.

You will go backwards and forwards, covering the same ground time and again. Perhaps this speaks to you of the grinding hard work of building peace, of sometimes getting lost in the details.

As you reach the point where the two outer parts of the heart meet you will need to decide either to turn left and gently leave the labyrinth or turn right and go over the same broken pathway again, perhaps as a way of symbolising the detailed work of stop - start advocacy. When you decide to leave the labyrinth try to reflect on what resources you need to be a better peace maker. Offer this need to God in prayer.

Four symbols

Water speaks to us of life, of Christ the living water; it speaks also of our physical and spiritual thirsting. In today's world it speaks to us very clearly of the need for justice for those who do not have access to clean drinking water.

Stones speak to us of the need for all our action for peace to be grounded in real projects. Stones remind us of Christ our cornerstone and of the call to each of us to be transformed and be a living stone.

Light reminds us of Christ the light of the world and also of our own need for enlightenment as we try to follow paths of peace, ways which overcome violence.

Salt is so often only noticed when it is missing. Christ calls his followers to be the salt of the world. What does that mean for us today?

*As we discover the four symbols and walk in the labyrinth we will sing Dona nobis Pacem
There will also be some silence to walk in.*

*We begin to find our way back to our places as the worship leader invites us to say together
the Lord's prayer in our different languages*

Setting out in the joy of the Spirit

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news. (Isaiah 52.7)

Say No to Peace!

Say "No" to peace
if what they mean by peace
is the quiet misery of hunger,
the frozen stillness of fear,
the silence of broken spirits,
the unborn hopes of the oppressed.

Tell them that peace
is the shouting of children at play,
the babble of tongues set free,
the thunder of dancing feet,
and a father's voice singing.

Say "No" to peace,
if what they mean by peace

is a rampart of gleaming missiles,
the arming of distant wars,
money at ease in its castle,
and grateful poor at the gate.

Tell them that peace
is the hauling down of flags,
the forging of guns into ploughs,
the giving of fields to the landless,
and hunger a fading dream.

Brian Wren.

Sing Goudeloupe Alléluia.

The LORD gives strength to his people;
the LORD blesses his people with peace. (*Ps 29.11*)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news. (Isaiah 52.7)

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. (Isaiah 55.12)

May the Spirit of peace grant us great joy
As we walk in the ways of the Prince of peace.

As we leave let us offer one another the peace in the name of Christ.

Sing Caribbean alleluia