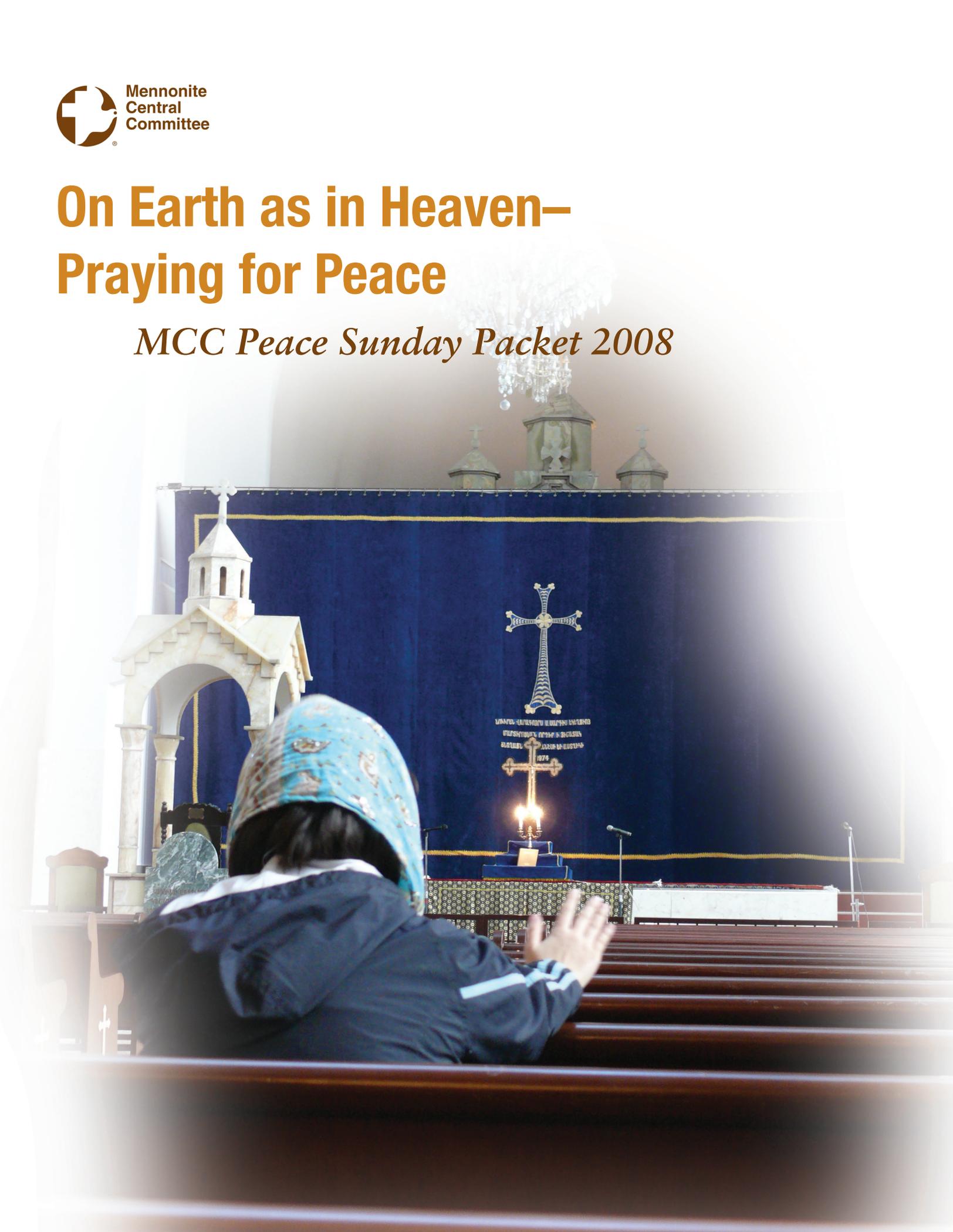




On Earth as in Heaven— Praying for Peace

MCC Peace Sunday Packet 2008



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Peace Sunday is an annual opportunity to preach, teach and reflect upon the gospel of peace as proclaimed and embodied by Jesus Christ. It is a time to deepen our commitment to be people of peace.

Mennonite Central Committee encourages Canadian Anabaptist congregations to observe Peace Sunday in early November (preferably just prior to Remembrance Day). We have prepared this Peace Sunday Packet to assist congregations in planning their Peace Sunday worship service. The packet also includes suggestions that we hope will help youth groups and families with children reflect on and respond to Remembrance Day from an Anabaptist peace perspective.

This year's resource, entitled *On Earth as in Heaven—Praying for Peace*, was written and compiled by a team of three Winnipeggers, led by Christine Longhurst.

Christine developed the theme, wrote the worship materials, and compiled the section on activities for youth. She was pastor of worship at the River East Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg for many years. She now teaches and offers workshops on worship to congregations across Canada.

John B. Epp wrote the sermon starters. He is a long-time pastor in the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba.

Elsie Rempel prepared the children's feature and the activities for families. She is Director of Christian Education and Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada.

As you use the packet, we have two requests:

- Please send comments of evaluation to peacesunday@mennonitecc.ca. Your feedback is critical for planning future packets and other resources. Please write, even if you use only a small portion of the packet. And if you choose not to use the packet at all, tell us why.
- Please let families with children know about the suggestions for conversation and activity at home. You may use the following announcement in your church bulletin to get the word out.

Our congregation will be celebrating Peace Sunday on [insert date] and will be using the annual MCC Peace Sunday Packet for worship. This packet includes suggestions for peace-related activities for families with young children. Please visit: <http://mcc.org/peacesunday>.

Peace,

Esther Epp-Tiessen

Peace Ministries Coordinator
MCC Canada

For additional peace resources, please visit mcc.org/canada/peace

Peace Sunday is an annual opportunity to preach, teach and reflect upon the gospel of peace as proclaimed and embodied by Jesus Christ. It is a time to deepen our commitment to be people of peace.

Introduction to theme

“On earth as in heaven-praying for peace”

For many years now Mennonite Central Committee has made available a lapel button around Remembrance Day which reads “To remember is to work for peace.” I have always appreciated that button. It is a reminder to me that, while remembering is important, it’s also important to let that remembrance spur us on to concrete action on behalf of our world.

As Mennonites we have a long and rich heritage of active peacemaking. This year’s Peace Sunday Packet invites us to consider another way in which we can work together for peace: through corporate intercessory prayer.

The Bible provides us with a rich and broad vision of intercessory prayer. Both the Old and New Testaments are full of examples of people offering prayer for others. Abraham pleads with God to spare the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah; Moses asks God to spare the people after they worship the golden calf; Jeremiah exhorts the captive Israelites to pray for Babylon, the city to which they have been exiled. Throughout the Old Testament there are continual reminders to remember the orphans, widows, and strangers.

This emphasis on intercessory prayer was further strengthened by the example and teaching of Jesus himself. “Pray for those who persecute you,” Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, and then proceeded to do exactly that as he was being crucified: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

The early Christians believed that Jesus had passed this ministry of intercession along to them. The earliest pattern for corporate intercession is found in Paul’s first letter to Timothy, where he suggests that prayers should be offered for everyone, not just members of the faith community.

Later descriptions of early Christian worship show clearly that the believers continued to take the ministry of intercession to heart, often spending a great deal of time in prayer for others. The same was true for the early Anabaptists, who practiced frequent and fervent prayer. Intercessory prayer was seen as an integral part of their witness to the world, and was considered the privilege and responsibility of all who had been baptized. One of the earliest collections of Mennonite prayers includes prayers for “all who hate and persecute Thee and us and do harm unto us. Forgive them for they know not what they do. For that reason do not hold them guilty on our behalf.” The prayer then goes on to intercede for kings and all those in authority.

What do we believe about intercessory prayer? Does it make a difference in our world? Should the practice of corporate intercession be an integral part of our ministry to our world?



Karl Barth has been quoted as saying, “To fold one’s hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.” Through our corporate intercession we participate with God in bringing about God’s vision for our world. Through our continued cries of “hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,” the people of God actively seek the in-breaking of God’s rule in our world.

Christine Loughurst

...while remembering is important, it’s also important to let that remembrance spur us on to concrete action on behalf of our world.

Worship overview

In the following pages you will find a suggested order of worship, as well as ideas for songs, readings, prayers, and a sermon. Some of these suggestions may fit well with your congregation's worship style; others may not. You are encouraged to reshape the order as you see fit, and select the ideas and resources which you feel will suit the unique character of your congregational worship.

The suggested scripture texts for this service are:

Psalm 46

Jeremiah 29:4-7

Matthew 6:9-13

I Timothy 2:1-6

The worship order begins with praise, acknowledging God's faithful presence and the ways in which God is at work in our lives and in our world. We then move into a time of corporate confession, where we are given the opportunity to speak honestly about our world and ourselves—admitting that we have fallen short of what God desires of us, and opening ourselves to receive God's forgiveness and peace. The sermon explores the role of intercessory prayer in the ministry of the gathered community, and then leads us into a time of intercession for people and places around the globe. As the service of worship ends, we again recommit ourselves to live as peacemakers, and we are sent out with the promise of God's continued presence.

To find suggestions and ideas for individual worship elements, simply look for the corresponding capital letter (A, B, etc.) in the *Resources for Worship* section which follows.

Suggested order of worship

Opening songs (A)

Call to Worship (B)

Songs of worship and praise (C)

Opening prayer

Scripture reading: Psalm 46 (D)

Songs of worship and praise (C)

Children's feature (E)

Reflecting on our world today (F) (video presentation or spoken litany)

Prayer of confession (G) and/or song of confession (H)

Receiving God's words of assurance/forgiveness (I)

Song of response (J)

Scripture readings: Jeremiah 29:4-7; I Timothy 2:1-6

Sermon (K)

Prayer of Intercession for our world (L)

concluding with the Lord's Prayer (M)

Song of commitment (N) or Sending song (O)

Challenge and blessing (P)

Resources for worship

Here are a variety of different worship resources you may want to consider using as you plan your service. You are encouraged to reshape and revise these resources to fit your local context and worship style.

The songs listed in this resource come from a wide variety of sources and represent a diversity of different musical and textual styles. They are suggestions only. Feel free to choose appropriate songs from your congregation's current repertoire.

The suggested worship order includes numerous opportunities for congregational singing. These are simply suggestions for where songs might be helpful. Don't feel that you need to sing in each of these spots. Instead, allow the texts of the songs you choose to determine their most effective placement in the worship order.

The songs listed in this resource come from the following sources. You can identify them by the following abbreviations:

WT *Worship Together* hymnal

HWB *Hymnal: A Worship Book*

StJ *Sing the Journey*

StS *Sing the Story*

Hope Hope Publishing Company, at hopepublishing.com/html/main.isx (click on Online Hymnody). These songs are free for use if you subscribe to one of the major copyright licences.

CCLI If you subscribe to CCLI's SongSelect, you'll find lead sheets for these songs on their website (<http://www.ccli.com/CA.aspx>).

A Opening songs

Look for songs which draw people into community with one another and with God, and invite them into worship. For example:

WT 165 *Sing of the Lord's Goodness*

WT 335 *Make Way*

WT 4 / HWB 42 *All people that on earth do dwell*

WT 22 / HWB 68 *O come, loud anthems*

WT 27 & 28 / HWB 37 *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

For a more contemporary harmonization of this piece suitable for worship band, see Greg Scheer's version at gregscheer.com/praise.html

WT 38 / HWB 51 *Let the whole creation cry*

WT 40 / HWB 63 & 65 *Praise, my soul, the King/God of heaven*

HWB 6 *Here in this place*

StJ 9, CCLI 2430948 *Come, now is the time to worship* (Brian Doerksen)

Hope *His kingdom beckons us now* (Tom Colvin, from traditional Malawi)

Look for songs which draw people into community with one another and with God, and invite them into worship.

B Call to worship

Option 1: Psalm 46:1-3, 10-11

One: God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in times of trouble.

All: Therefore we will not fear,
though the earth should change,
though the oceans roar,
though the mountains crumble into the sea.

One: Be still, and know that I am God.
exalted among the nations,
exalted in the earth.

All: The Lord Almighty is here among us;
the God of Israel is our stronghold.

Option 2:

One: In a world filled with violence and war,

All: we gather together to celebrate the promise of peace.

One: In a world filled with tyranny and oppression,

All: we gather together to celebrate the promise of justice for all.

One: In a world filled with hunger and greed,

All: we gather together to celebrate the promise of plenty for all.

One: Our hope is in the name of the Almighty God,
the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of heaven and earth.

C Songs of worship and praise

Look for songs which acknowledge the presence of God in the gathered community, and which celebrate God's attributes and activity throughout history. For example:

WT 19 *Be still*

WT 397 / HWB 319 *Jesus shall reign*

WT 607 / HWB 328 *O God, our help in ages past*

HWB 115 *Jesus, thou mighty Lord*

StS 109 *Blessing and honor*

CCLI 2037688 *Lord Most High* (Don Harris/Gary Sadler)

CCLI 30426 *Shine, Jesus, shine* (Graham Kendrick)

CCLI 861891 *Show your power* (Kevin Prosch)

CCLI 1352419 *Not be shaken* (Norm Strauss)

CCLI 4348399 *The splendour of the King/How great is our God* (Chris Tomlin, et.al.)

D Ideas for using Psalm 46

Option 1:

Read Psalm 46 in a contemporary paraphrase such as one of the following:

- *The Message* by Eugene Peterson
- *Everyday Psalms* by James Taylor (Kelowna, B.C.: Wood Lake Books, 1994), page 63.
- *Psalms/Now* by Leslie Brandt (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1973), page 74.
- *Psalm 46* by Leo Hartshorn peace.mennolink.org/articles/leoanewps46.html
- *Bible Gateway* (biblegateway.com/) makes available a wide variety of other translations and paraphrases. Try the *New Living Translation*, or the *Contemporary English* version. The *New International Reader's Version* is especially friendly if you plan on involving children in the reading.

Option 2: Consider reading Psalm 46 in combination with headlines from a recent newspaper or online news site. You could begin with a few headlines about recent natural disasters, and then read verses 1-7 of the psalm. You might then return to headlines about local and global conflict, and end by reading verses 8-11. Or simply read a variety of headlines first, and then read the psalm in its entirety.

E Children's feature

The Lord's Prayer and Peace (by Elsie Rempel)

Take a few moments to welcome the children and to help them settle into a mood of holy listening. Encourage them to imagine that they are sitting in Jesus' lap.

One day the disciples asked Jesus how they should pray. They wondered, what were the most important things to pray about. So Jesus gave them a prayer about these most important things. It became the most famous Christian prayer there is. Many congregations pray it every Sunday, and many people pray it every day. It is called the Lord's Prayer, because it was given to us by our Lord Jesus. We find it in Matthew 6:9-13.

Even though the disciples wondered what they should pray about, this prayer starts with who we are praying to. It is God, our Father in heaven, whose name we are to honour and respect. Please repeat this prayer's opening after me. "*Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name.*"

The next sentence of the prayer is what today's worship service is all about. Here are the words, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Jesus wanted his disciples to live with him in such a way that God's will was always being respected. If every thing is done in God's loving and true way, then life on earth will be just like life in heaven. This is what Jesus longs for and taught his disciples to pray for. If everything would be done in God's true and loving way, there would be peace, because peace is at the heart of God's way. Please pray this sentence after me, "*Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*"

If God's will is being done, if we are living God's way, the other parts of the prayer will be true, too. Think about that while we pray each of the next three sentences of the prayer (one at a time):

"Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil."

Early Christians, who lived after the disciples, added another prayer to this one to help them remember why we pray. We pray because God can really help us with all these important things. God has made the earth so it can grow enough food for everybody to eat. God has shown us how to forgive through Jesus and gives us the power to forgive through the Holy Spirit. When we live out this prayer by sharing and forgiving, we show how good God's plan for people really is. That gives glory to God and shows that God's way is what really matters, God's way rules.

Please pray the last sentence of this prayer with me: "*For yours is the kingdom, the power and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*" (Amen means we mean it.)

F Reflecting on our world today

If you have access to a video projection unit and screen, you may want to make use of this **Video presentation** (see mcc.org/peacesunday). If you are not set up for video projection, the text of the presentation also appears below in litany form; it can simply be presented by two readers.

One: *“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars... Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains...”* Matthew 24:6-8

Two: Nearly three-quarters of a million people around the world die a violent death each year.¹

One: At present, there are twenty-nine active armed conflicts taking place around the world. Twelve of these conflicts are in Africa; eleven are in Asia.²

Two: Last year the global community spent a total of 1.3 trillion dollars funding militaries around the world...an increase of 45% from just ten years ago. This represents \$202 for every man, woman and child on the planet.³

One: Canada spent just over 19 billion dollars on the military, up 55% from 2000. That amounts to \$572 for every Canadian.⁴

Two: Global arms production continues to increase. Sales of arms by the 100 largest armament companies amounted to \$315 billion in 2006, an increase of 8% from the year before.⁵

One: The five largest arms suppliers in the world are the USA, Russia, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom.⁶ Canada ranks as 6th.

Two: There are 10,200 operational nuclear weapons in the world today. They are owned by just eight countries.⁷

One: At present, more than 38 million people around the world have had to flee their homes to escape violence. Fourteen million of them have had to flee their countries as well.⁸

Two: *“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time...”*

One: *“The creation waits in eager expectation... in hope that creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.”* Romans 8:19-22

1 <http://www.worldmapper.org/index.html>, University of Sheffield.

2 Project Ploughshares

3 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008.

4 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008.

5 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008.

6 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008.

7 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008.

8 UNHCR's "2006 Global Trends" report and Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

G Prayer of confession

Merciful God,
when we see the brokenness and violence of our world
it is tempting to point a finger of blame at others.
Yet we know that we are not blameless.
We also contribute to the brokenness and pain of our world.
In your mercy, hear our prayer of confession.

When we harbour anger and impatience in our own hearts...
forgive us, O God.

When we allow grievances and jealousies to destroy our relationships with others...
forgive us, O God.

When we fail to act with love toward one another, even those within our own church community...
forgive us, O God.

When we harbour hidden prejudices against those who are different from us...
forgive us, O God.

When we hesitate to act or speak out against violence and injustice...
forgive us, O God.

When we hold tight to what we have, even though so many in our world do not have enough...
forgive us, O God.

You have called us to be peacemakers,
to continue the reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ.
Remove from us all those things which would prevent us
from being true agents of reconciliation in our broken world.
**Through our lives, and by our prayers,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven. Amen.**

H Suggestions for a song of confession

WT 205 *Show Me*

WT 210 *We will lay our burden down*

WT 662 *Lord Jesus, we must know you*

WT 115 / HWB 137 *Forgive our sins*

HWB 132 *Holy Spirit, Storm of love*

HWB 142 *Brothers and sisters of mine*

HWB 144 *Kyrie eleison*

StS 68 *Kyrie*

StS 69 *Ya hamalaLah/O lamb of God*

Father, we have sinned/Repentance (Stuart Townend & Keith Getty)

available at gettymusic.com

I Suggested words of assurance

Hear the good news!

The God who confronts us is also the God who encourages us.

The God who calls us is also the God who strengthens us.

Be assured of God's forgiveness and love, and be at peace.

J Suggestions for a song of response

WT 584 *Peace is flowing like a river*

WT 672 / HWB 226 *Bring forth the Kingdom*

HWB 538 *Lead me, Lord*

StJ 54 *Longing for light*

StJ 56 *Make me a channel of your peace*

CCLI 2490706 *Lord reign in me/Over all the earth* (Brenton Brown)

K Sermon starters (by John B. Epp)

Intercessory Prayer: essential instrument of peace

Jeremiah 29:7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Matthew 6:9-13

Prayer and peacemaking belong together. Although intercessory prayer is never a substitute for active peacemaking, it provides the essential base and best motivation for sustained peacemaking activities. Sincere intercession qualifies us and prepares us to speak and act on behalf of peace. It is the ultimate act of faith and hope, relying as it does on the promise of God.

In Jeremiah 29 the captive Israelites had just recently been deported to the capital city of Babylon with no prospects for return. Severed from their Temple and the promised land of covenant, they faced a bleak and uncertain future. (Psalm 137 is a vivid commentary on their dejected and joyless spirit.) While grasping at false prophecies of a speedy release and return, they received a letter from the prophet Jeremiah with this divine counsel: Seek the peace of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper (Jer. 29:7). In other words, no quick return to homeland and freedom was on the horizon. Prayer for the peace and prosperity of their enemy host was now their God-given assignment.

This counsel was contrary to all their national aspirations, and their personal pity. The divine summons to pray for their pagan captors and for the peace of their city affronted their covenant faith. How could God want them to pray for those who cursed and despitefully used God's chosen people, and who dishonoured his name?

The experience of the exiled Israelites raises important questions for us today. A sermon on this text may want to explore one or more of the following issues:

Praying for peace in Babylon and in our world

1. The role of prayer. What is the role of intercessory prayer in promoting and building peace? Both the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah and the New Testament apostle Paul attribute peace to faithful intercessory prayer. Yet, of all the avenues for peacemaking available today, intercessory prayer is often the least utilized.

2. Engaging the heart in prayer. It's not hard to imagine how the captive Israelites would have felt about their aggressive enemies. What might that first prayer have been like? How do we pray for those who wrong us? What attitude of heart is necessary to offer sincere prayer for the welfare of our enemies?

3. Seeing the world through God's eyes. For the captive Israelites, daily face-to-face contact with their captors would have been inevitable, and would have made it impossible to generalize or impersonalize their prayers. In order to intercede for them with integrity and love the Israelites needed to see them as God saw them. God's interest in their enemy's welfare was much more than a temporary measure to ensure the preservation of the covenant community. God's love extended to the world of the Babylonians, too; God's desire was to see all come to a knowledge of the truth (see I Timothy 2). And just like Jonah and the city of Nineveh, God's covenant community had an important role to play.

4. Partners with God. Intercessory prayer is a gift of grace, possible because of the ongoing ministry of intercession of Jesus Christ and the activity of the Holy Spirit. It is the humble yet confident realization that we have access to the heart of God. According to Jacques Ellul, "Prayer is God inserting human initiative into the divine plan. It is through prayer that we are made 'fellow workers for God.'" Intercessory prayer is not simply preparation for ministry. It is ministry. Through prayer we participate with God in fulfilling the divine purpose for the world.

5. How do we pray? Praying for peace requires that we pray within the parameters of true peace. In its very spirit and structure, the Lord's Prayer is a prayer for genuine and lasting peace on earth. Peace is guaranteed where God's name is hallowed, God's kingdom is present, and God's will is done. Peace flourishes where everyone has their portion of daily bread, receives and extends forgiveness, and where evil is overcome. This is how we ought to pray for all humanity.

6. Praying with one another. In the biblical tradition, the coming together of God's people for worship and prayer has special significance. According to Matthew 18:19-20, where the church is gathered, and is of one heart and mind with the purposes of Jesus, it experiences the presence and the authority of the living Christ in a unique way. How can our churches make corporate intercessory prayer an ongoing part of our worship and peacemaking ministry?

L Prayer of intercession

The early Christians spent a great deal of time in prayer for others. A worship order from fourth-century Antioch, for example, includes prayer for the church, her ministers, kings and those in authority, the peace of the world, those who are suffering, widows, women bearing children, those traveling, those involved in business, etc. Little is left unmentioned, and it's not hard to imagine that at least half an hour was spent in corporate intercession every time the believers gathered for worship.

Spending half an hour in intercessory prayer might not be feasible for many of us. Perhaps even the following prayer—which prays for each major continent in our world, and takes between 11-12 minutes—may feel too long. Planners and leaders are encouraged to choose a method of intercessory prayer which suits their own congregation. Below are a number of different options:

Option #1:

Use the prayer as follows:

You'll notice that the prayer includes a sung response by the congregation (**WT 130 / HWB 358** *Hear Our Prayer, O God / Oyenos mi Dios*). Other sung responses would work well, too. See, for example, **WT 131/HWB 348** *O Lord, hear my prayer*, or Dan Damon's *God, hear the prayer* (available from the Hope website).

Although this prayer also includes a short congregational response ("*hear our prayer*") spoken at regular intervals, there is no need to print the entire prayer in the worship order. Simply invite worshippers to respond to the leader's "God of peace and justice", with the words "hear our prayer."

In addition to the spoken and sung responses by the congregation, you may want to consider lighting a candle or tealite during the singing to represent the continent or countries prayed for. If space allows, you could spread a map of the world over the communion table and place the candles on the different parts of the world. Or, if you have access to video projection, you might project a visual image of the part of the globe being prayed for. (Try using <http://encarta.msn.com/>. Click on the 'Atlas' tab and spin the globe to get different views of the world. You can save the different views as pictures for use in a PowerPoint presentation.)

Because the prayer was written in June, 2008, you may want to update some of the prayer requests to more closely reflect current world events.

Option #2:

Use the general format of the suggested prayer below, but make it shorter. The prayer is easily shortened; simply remove a number of petitions in each section.

Option #3:

Craft your own prayer of intercession for people and places in our world. If you have a standard format for intercessory prayer, use that. Or consider using a current newspaper to identify topics for prayer (see suggestion #3 under Youth Activities).

If you choose an alternative approach to a prayer of intercession, note that there are a variety of good song texts which can be useful. For example:

WT 683 *For the healing of the nations*

WT 680 / HWB 372 *O healing river*

StS 115 *Beauty for brokenness*

Hope *O God of peace, who gave us breath and birth* (Timothy Dudley-Smith) (try it to the tune FINLANDIA, WT 572)

Hope *God of freedom, God of justice* (Shirley Erena Murray) (try it to the tune NEANDER / UNSER HERRSCHER, WT 385 / HWB 295)

Prayer of Intercession (full version):

Everlasting God,
As your people we bring before you our broken world
with all its violence, injustice, and suffering.
We seek your healing and transforming grace
in every corner of our world.
O God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

We bring before you our prayers for the continent of Asia:
For the troubled relationship between Tibet and China,
the continued violence in Afghanistan,
the many coastal cities threatened by rising sea levels,
those whose lives and livelihoods were devastated by the cyclone in Myanmar:
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

For Vietnamese factory workers earning poverty-level wages,
the thousands of children forced into the sex trade in Cambodia,
the continuing political and civil unrest in East Timor / Timore-Leste,
the many in India and elsewhere who can no longer afford the price of rice:
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

For the people of Iraq, whose lives have been devastated by war,
the thousands of refugees who have had to flee their homes in northwest Pakistan,
the children forced to work long hours in factories in Indonesia,
the victims of the earthquake in China, still struggling to rebuild their lives:

For all this, and in all the other places in Asia
where there is violence and injustice and suffering,
O God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

Sung response: *WT 130 / HWB 358 Hear Our Prayer, O God / Oyenos mi Dios*
(*a candle is lit for Asia*).

We bring before you our prayers for the continent of Latin America:
For the millions of children who live and work on the streets of Brazil,
the continuing civil conflict in Colombia,
the deforestation of the Amazon rain forest,
the many people in Haiti no longer able to afford the price of food,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

For ongoing crimes and killings related to the drug trade,
the tens of thousands of young children forced into prostitution in Colombia,
the increasing incidence of kidnap and murder in Sao Paulo,
the many rural Nicaraguans who continue to live in poverty,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

For the high rate of domestic violence against women in Bogota,
the indigenous people of Peru, struggling to preserve their land and way of life,
the continued assaults, death threats and killings of human rights activists in Guatemala:

For all this, and in all the other places in Latin America
where there is violence and injustice and suffering,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

Sung response: *Hear Our Prayer, O God / Oyenos mi Dios*
(*a candle is lit for Latin America*).

We bring before you our prayers for the people of Africa and the Middle East:
For increasing food shortages across the continent of Africa,
the millions of children orphaned because of AIDS,
the continued civil unrest in Burundi,
the thousands of displaced people crammed into refugee camps in South Africa,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
For continuing violence in Congo's North Kivu province,
the millions of Africans who have no access to clean water,
the untold number of men, women and children who die each year from AIDS,
the ongoing ethnic violence in Kenya,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
For tens of thousands of children forced to serve as child soldiers,
the political unrest in Zimbabwe,
the continuing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians,
the threat of civil war in Lebanon;
For all this, and in all the other places in Africa and the Middle East
where there is violence and injustice and suffering,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
Sung response: WT 130 / HWB 358 *Hear Our Prayer, O God / Oyenos mi Dios*
(a candle is lit for Africa and the Middle East).

We bring before you our prayers for the people of Europe:
For the millions of children living in poverty in parts of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union,
the thousands who die because of drunk driving each year,
the escalating tension between Russia and Georgia,
the increasing incidence of depression in Great Britain;
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
For the thousands of young people who die of drug overdose each year,
the scores of individuals who regularly feel harassed and bullied at work and school,
the increasing racial violence in Russia,
the many elderly who try to make ends meet on shrinking incomes;
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
For the tens of thousands of men, women and children who suffer physical and mental abuse at the hands of family members,
the continued political tension in Kosovo,
the high suicide rates among young people in Lithuania;
For all this, and in all the other places in Europe
where there is violence and injustice and suffering,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
Sung response: Hear Our Prayer, O God / Oyenos mi Dios
(a candle is lit for Europe).

We bring before you our prayers for the people of North America:
For the many victims of flooding, fire, and other natural disasters who are struggling to put their lives back together,
those whose early experiences in residential schools continue to haunt them,
those caught in endless cycles of addiction to drugs, alcohol, and gambling,
those unable to find adequate employment;
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
For the increased drug violence in Mexico,
those who find themselves caught up in gang violence,
the high suicide rates in some native communities,
those who cannot access adequate medical care;
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**
For American leaders and citizens as they wield power in the world,
For Canadian leaders and for ourselves as citizens
For the will and the wisdom to truly promote peace and healing.
For all this, and in all the other places in North America

where there is violence and injustice and suffering,
God of peace and justice, **hear our prayer.**

Sung response: *Hear Our Prayer, O God / Oyenos mi Dios*
(a candle is lit for North America).

Send your Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth.
Teach us compassion and mercy for one another, and for all of creation.
Encourage and strengthen all who work for peace and justice.
Open our eyes to see ways in which we can be your agents of reconciliation
so that all of your creation may know justice and wholeness,
and may live in peace.
Through our lives and by our prayers,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.
And now, as Jesus taught us, we are bold to pray: [Lord's Prayer]

M Suggestions for using the Lord's Prayer

1. Speak the Lord's Prayer together as a congregation.

2. Sing the Lord's Prayer together. Some suggestions:

WT 142 *Father God in Heaven*

WT 144 *The Lord's Prayer*

WT 685 *"Your Kingdom Come," Great God*

HWB 228 *Our Father who art in heaven*

HWB 351 *Our Father who art in heaven*

HWB 554 *Our Father who art in heaven*

StJ 48 *Our Father which art in heaven*

StS 42 *Our Father which art in heaven*

CCLI 4669748 *As it is in heaven* (Matt Maher & Ed Cash)

Our Father in heaven (Dave Bankhead & Mike Burn) available online at
familyworship.org.uk/songs/chords/lordsprayer.pdf

3. Have a liturgical dancer interpret the prayer through dance or gestures. The following websites suggest possible actions for the Lord's Prayer:

(a) worship.ca/docs/godkids3.html

(b) creativyouthideas.com/blog/drama_ideas/the_lords_prayer_with_actions_1.html

4. Consider using a video presentation of the Lord's Prayer. See, for example, *The Lord's Prayer: a Multilingual Reading*, available for a fee at:
prayerscapes.com/FilmPages/the_lords_prayer_film_wmp.html

N Suggestions for a song of commitment

WT 198 *I'm gonna live so*
WT 415 *We are called to be God's people*
WT 647 *Called as partners*
WT 202 / HWB 369 *Lord, whose love in humble service*
WT 672 / HWB 226 *Bring forth the kingdom*
WT 683 / HWB 367 *For the healing of the nations*
WT 698 / StS 108 *View the present through the promise*
HWB 295 *Christ is coming! Let creation*
HWB 299 *New earth, heavens new*
HWB 323 *Beyond a dying sun*
HWB 410 *Lord of light, your name outshining*
StJ 54 *Longing for light*
StJ 61 *How can we be silent*
StS 114 *God has chosen me*
CCLI 5037070 *God of this city* (Andrew McCann, et. al.)
CCLI 3278422 *Multiply your love* (Andy Park)
From the city (Greg Scheer) available at gregscheer.com/praise.html
Hear the call of the kingdom (Stuart Townend & Keith Getty) available at gettymusic.com

O Suggestions for sending songs

WT 221 *You are the vine*
WT 226 / HWB 478 *Sent forth by God's blessing*
HWB 429 *Go now in peace*
As we go, we go in peace (Loretta Friesen and Diana Epp-Fransen)
Lyrics, guitar chords and audio available at:
campswithmeaning.org/summer/music/music.php
StJ 77 *The peace of the earth be with you*
StJ 78 *Sizohamba Naye / We will walk with God*

P Challenge and blessing

(based on I Peter 3:9 and II Thessalonians 2:16-17)
You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's own people,
that you may declare the wonderful deeds of God
who called you out of darkness into marvelous light.
Go into the world; live as God's people,
through the grace of Jesus Christ
and the power of the Holy Spirit.
And may God,
who has shown us such love,
and given us such unfailing encouragement and so sure a hope,
encourage and strengthen you
in every good deed and word. Amen.

Ideas for youth activities

1. Explore the Lord's Prayer together. How many know it by heart? Try re-writing the prayer in your own words. Find ways to share your new versions with the congregation (use them in worship? post them on the church's website?).
2. Explore a video version of the Lord's Prayer. See, for example, *The Lord's Prayer: a Multilingual Reading* available to download (for a fee) at: prayerscapes.com/FilmPages/the_lords_prayer_film_wmp.html
Or check out the many different videos available at YouTube. For example:
 - *Abwoon D'Bashmaya-The Lords Prayer in Aramaic* at youtube.com/watch?v=MAEIr4MFBE
 - *Michael W. Smith – the Lord's Prayer* at youtube.com/watch?v=_7LJEUcmtw8
 - You might even try making your own video interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. Share it with your congregation. Post it on YouTube or another other video sharing site.
3. Look through a recent newspaper or online news site together. Identify people, places and situations that you might pray for. Spend time praying through the headlines and stories together. You might also want to consider preparing and leading a prayer of intercession based on recent news events for your congregational worship.
4. Take a walk through neighbourhoods in your city or community. Stop to offer prayer for the various people and situations you encounter.
5. If you have video projection capabilities and online access, consider exploring worldmapper.org/ together. Check out how the world would appear if various countries and continents were re-sized to reflect statistical realities. For example, how does the map change to reflect the distribution of wealth? The number of violent deaths? The presence of conflict? Life expectancy? Disease? Poverty? etc. What might our response be to these realities?

Ideas for family activities (by Elsie Rempel)

1. Make up a short story, with each person adding a sentence about God's will being done in the world, or your city, or your street, or your house. Then draw pictures of what this would look like.
2. God's kingdom grows wherever people are living the Lord's Prayer in their lives. It grows in surprising places, like weeds growing through concrete. Go for a walk and look for surprising signs of life, truth, and love.
3. Sing the song in *Sing the Journey 57, Mayenziwe* (Your will be done), to start and end your day for a whole week.
4. Pass a globe or a ball (that you think about as the world), around to each family member at prayer time. When you hold the globe, or ball, say what you think God is hoping will happen in some part of the world today.
5. Create a puppet play that shows a problem between two people who aren't acting in God's ways. Then act out the scene again, showing the better choices the puppets would make if they acted in God pleasing ways.

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Cover photo: Mark Beach
A worshipper prays at the Armenian Orthodox Church in Tehran, Iran.