

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
Prayers for National Peace
January 7, 2021

Opening Prayer

Let us pray

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquility your dominion may increase until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your truth and love.
Amen.

Collect for Peace

God be with you
And also with you
Let us pray

We pray also that those whose hearts are filled with hate might be turned toward love. Help us not to speak or act rashly, but fill our hearts with passion for those in need and strengthen our wills that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly before you.
Amen.

Readings

Buddhist Tradition

Even a tiny spark of fire can set alight a mountain of hay. Do not take lightly small good deeds, believing they can hardly help: For drops of water one by one in time can fill a giant pot.

Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish: Buddha

The Hindu Tradition

May the entire universe be blessed with peace and hope. May everyone driven by envy and enmity become pacified and reconciled. May all living beings develop abiding concern for the welfare of others. May our own hearts and minds be filled with purity and serenity. May all these blessings flow naturally from this supreme benediction: may our attention become spontaneously absorbed in the rapture of pure love unto the transcendent Lord.

Shrimad Bhagavatam: Canto 5, Chapter 18, Verse 9

The Sikh Tradition

The world is on fire (due to avariciousness, ego, self-righteousness and possessiveness). O God, please save it with Your benevolence.

The Jewish Tradition

Once Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai was walking with Rabbi Yehoshua in Jerusalem and they saw the ruins of the Holy Temple that was destroyed by the Romans. Said Rabbi Yehoshua: “Alas for us that the Temple is destroyed—the only place in the world where we can find atonement with God!” Said Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai to him: “My son, do not be distressed. There is another way back to God that is just like the Temple. And what is that way? It is in Acts of Lovingkindness, as it is written (Hosea 6:6) ‘It is Love that I desire, not sacrifices.’”

Avot DeRabbi Natan 4:5 Ben Steinberg (b.1930)

The Muslim Tradition

If any do seek for glory and power, to God belongs all glory and power. To him mount up all words of purity. He exalts all righteous deeds. But those that lay the plots of evil, for them is a terrible penalty; and the plotting of such will he not abide.

Goodness and evil are not equal. Repel the evil with the good. Then will he between whom and you was hatred become as it were your friend and intimate. But no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and restraint, none but persons of the greatest good fortune.

Holy Qu’ran Fatir 35:10 and Fussilat 41:34-35

The Christian Tradition

Jesus began to speak, and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.”

Matthew 5:2-12a

Prayers of the People

Compassionate God, remember us in your sustaining power to bring love, justice, and mercy amid the changes and chances of this life. Be with us as we pray for this world that you love saying:

**Reconciling God, strengthen us
To go into the world in peace.**

Let us pray for the leaders of the world, that they may be led to ways of justice and mercy, laying aside ancient bitterness and current resentment, for the welfare of the people they govern today, for the honor of those who have gone before, and for the sake of those yet to be born.

**Reconciling God, strengthen us
To go into the world in peace.**

Let us pray for all who are dying and all who have died, that they may rest in peace. Let not their lives pass vainly before us, but shine forth a new light which overcomes the darkness of our complacency and illumine for us the compassion to which we are called.

**Reconciling God, strengthen us
To go into the world in peace.**

You have called us to peace, for You are peace itself:

Where there is ignorance and superstition,
Let there be enlightenment and knowledge.

Where there is prejudice and hatred,
Let there be acceptance and love.

Where there is fear and suspicion,
Let there be confidence and trust.

Where there is tyranny and oppression,
Let there be freedom and justice.

Where there is poverty and disease,
Let there be prosperity and health.

Where there is strife and discord,
Let there be harmony and peace.

Collect at the end of the prayers

Eternal God of all peoples and races, you made us in your image: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us, unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion so that the day will come when all humanity will recognize that it is one family, and serve you in harmony and peace.

Blessing

The blessing of God Almighty: the God who created us, the God who liberates us, and the God who stays with us throughout eternity, be with you this day and for evermore. Amen.

Dismissal

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor everyone; love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*This service was shortened and modified from the Washington National Cathedral's service on September 11, 2016
Changes made in order to address the needs of our current moment.*