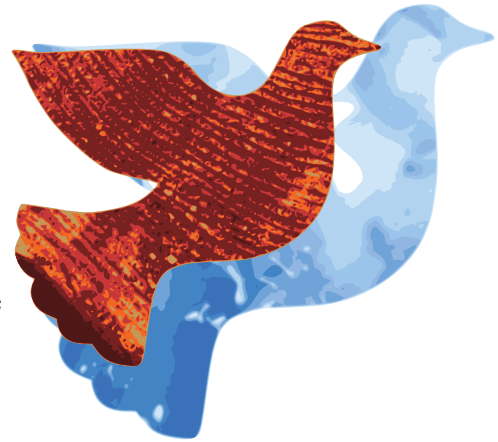


Prayer for Peace

International Day of Peace

September 21, 2011



Setup: Place a candle and symbols of peace on a ritual table in the center of your gathering.

Song: Select a peace song like *Bearers of Peace* or *Let There Be Peace on Earth*

Introduction: 2011 marks the 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Peace. In the statement announcing this year's Peace Day theme—*Make Your Voice Heard*—the United Nations highlights recent events and nonviolent movements for peace:

“Young women and men everywhere are demonstrating the power of connection by reaching out to each other, and rallying together, in the common cause of the dignity and human rights to which their people aspire. It is in tribute to them, and the spirit they represent, that we have chosen ... the theme of ‘Make your voice heard.’”

~UN Message on the 100-Day Countdown to 2011 Day of Peace

Leader: God of peace, you desire peace and fullness of life for all your people. Be with us now as we lift up our voices in hope as a sign of our commitment to build communities of peace.

Reader: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns.’” (Isaiah 52:7)

Leader: People everywhere are reaching out, coming together, and raising their voices for peace. We join our hearts and voices with our global community. We embrace God's call to be bearers of peace in a society faced daily with conflict, violence and war. Grant us the strength and inspiration to use our voices and our lives for peace.

Reader: We remember the men and women of India who joined Mohandas Gandhi and hundreds of thousands of others on the Salt March. They creatively sought independence through nonviolent resistance. Their actions continue to inspire citizens across the globe who embrace creative nonviolence as a way to make their voices heard.

All: How beautiful are the feet of messengers who announce peace.

Reader: We remember the women of the Dolores Mission Catholic Church in East Los Angeles. Overwhelmed by gang violence in their community, they came together in prayer. 70 women then began a procession through the neighborhood. When they met a gang member, they offered him a snack of chips and salsa. Soon someone found a guitar and they began to sing songs. The women continued their “love walks” each night, nourishing a space where voices for peace could be heard.

All: How beautiful are the feet of messengers who announce peace.

Reader: We remember the people of South Africa and members of the global community who said “No” to the system of apartheid. Speaking through a variety of forms of nonviolent action—from marches to hunger strikes, from boycotts to shareholder resolutions—they campaigned tirelessly to bring an end to systemic injustice and violence.

All: How beautiful are the feet of messengers who announce peace.





Mothers of the Disappeared

Reader: We remember Argentina's Mothers of the Disappeared who refused to be silenced by fear and oppression. Raising their voices on behalf of their missing children, these brave women empowered others to speak out about human rights abuses and work for democratic reforms.

All: How beautiful are the feet of messengers who announce peace.

Leader: We pause to remember others messengers who announce peace in our own lives, communities, and nation. *[Brief Pause. You may invite those present to name out loud other messengers of peace if time allows]*

All: How beautiful are the feet of messengers who announce peace.

Reflect & Share

Leader: Let's take a few moments of quiet to consider how we have been invited to announce God's message of peace in our own communities. After the quiet I will invite you to share a brief reflection.

Offering of Prayers for Peace

Leader: I invite you to offer a prayer for peace in the company of those gathered this day.

Silent Reflection

Leader: In the silence of our hearts let us send our prayers to women and men in situations of violence or oppression that they may have the courage to make their voices heard for peace.

Closing Prayer

All: God of peace, we join in prayer today with people of good will from every nation. Inspire our leaders to make decisions that promote human rights, dignity and freedom. Amplify our own voices as we speak on behalf of peace. Guide our feet as we announce peace and bring your good news. Amen.

Act for Peace

- ∞ Pray for peace individually and communally.
- ∞ Organize a prayer vigil for peace at church, work, or in your neighborhood
- ∞ Write your legislators in support of policies that promote peace and development
- ∞ Participate in organizations that promote peace and justice
- ∞ Sponsor a concert or event to raise funds for organizations that promote peace

