

Exploring the year

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First Sunday in the New Year Matthew 28:20

Lord Jesus, as we come to worship you on the first Sunday in this new year, we remember your promise that you will be with us wherever we go. Help us really believe that promise deep down in our hearts so that our daily lives may be a confident outworking of your abiding presence with us. Bless us now as we worship, and may that worship be sweet and your presence here a precious reality to each soul.

Thank you Lord
Amen.

Jennifer Martin

For beginning a New Year

Come now to our God,
the living one,
the Alpha and Omega.
Come to the God of all beginnings
and endings.
At this new year,
come to the God of January
and December.
Come and follow,
that we may walk in God's footsteps
through every month
and every season.
Come and give our love
afresh.

Duncan Tuck

Holocaust Memorial Day

Lord God, in a world of shallow pleasures,
you are the one true joy.
In a world of darkness, you are the one true light.
In a world of pain, you are the one true healer.

And so we come to you now,
with our prayers for your world,
for this place and for our friends
and place into your hands
both our joys and our laughter
and our concerns and our tears.

Lord, we stand baffled as we see those parts of the world
where hatred builds on hatred
and there is little sign of reconciliation.

We remember those situations
where children are again in the frontline of historic
prejudices and injustices.

We remember enmity between particular nations
where the continuing tit-for-tat retaliations
seem to spiral increasingly out of control.

On this Holocaust Memorial Day, these issues seem more poignant,
and we are aware of just how little progress we have really made
since those dark days of the last world war.

We pray for all victims, and the perpetrators, of genocide
and other forms of institutional hatred,
killing and discrimination.

Lord, we pray for peace in those and all places –
but for the true peace that comes only when our
relationships are right with you.

But in asking for peace, we recognise our own stubbornness at times,
and must confess that we are not always ready to forgive
and to build anew,
to turn the other cheek and seek a new way.

In the dark areas of the world, may your shining light bring
new hope and new love.

We pray for our country,
recognising that it is not always a just society in which we live –
that we can so easily find arguments for doing things
in ways that are convenient to us as individuals or as groups,
rather than doing those things which are right.

When we jump in to put our point of view,
help us to pause, and to search and to listen for the
words that you would say.

We pray for this church, and those churches in this area.
We ask for vision to help us determine what you want us to be doing,
and for enthusiasm in carrying out that work.

[At this point, it may be appropriate to pray for specific local needs and for the
local congregation.]

Lord, we have brought you these prayers
for those dark places of the world
and for the dark times in our lives.

Remind us, Lord, that you are with us in the darkness.
When the shades of night seem long, and we cannot clearly
see the way ahead,
 then we feel your hand in our hand, taking us forward
 one step at a time.
When there are tears in our eyes, and we cannot form the
words in our hearts
 then we hear your voice saying: Don't be afraid. I am here.

Allelulia. Praise be to You, Living and eternal Lord.

All Amen.

Brian Hudson

Eucharistic prayer for Mothering Sunday

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Based on Julian of Norwich and Hosea 11

We praise you, blessed Trinity:
your great power, our Father;
your deep wisdom, our Mother;
your great love, our Lord.
In the beginning your Spirit brooded over the waters
and brought forth all created things.
As a mother you loved your people Israel
and called your children out of Egypt.
You taught them to walk in your way,
you took them in your arms,
bent down to them and fed them.
When they went astray you did not let loose your anger:
compassion grew warm within you,
for you are God and not a mortal,
the Holy One in our midst.
Through Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel,
through Ruth and Hannah,
you brought to birth children of promise,
to be patriarchs, priests and prophets.
To accomplish your loving purpose,
Elizabeth bore John the Baptist, last of the prophets,
and Mary bore Jesus, our Brother in being,
our Mother in mercy, our Saviour from evil.
Therefore with all your people in heaven and on earth
we sing the triumphant hymn of your glory:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

As a hen gathers her chicks,
so he longed to gather his children to himself,
and wept over Jerusalem, because our hearts were hard.
We praise you that through his sacrificial death
and by his rising from the grave
we are reborn to grow
into the liberty and splendour of the children of God.
In his mercy he restores us;
in this bread and wine
he joins us to his Passion, death and resurrection.
[The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed
took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it
and said:
'This is my body which is broken for you.
Do this is remembrance of me.'
In the same way he took the cup also after supper, saying:
'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.
For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.']
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering the work and passion of our Saviour Christ
and pleading his sacrifice made once for all,
we set forth this bread and cup
that by the coming of the Holy Spirit
our beloved Mother Jesus may feed us with himself,
granting us by faith to glimpse the Godhead
and to taste of heavenly joy.
May he who like a mother brought us into being
and from whom flows the motherhood of grace
bring to birth in us new works of love,
to the glory of the blessed Trinity,
whose love is over all that has been made,
world without end.

All **Amen.**

Colin Thompson

Mothering Sunday – Introduction to a Eucharist prayer

And here we come, this Mothering Sunday,
to celebrate the one
who gives flesh to what love
is really all about.

We invite you to lay down your worries,
your pre-occupations, and your fears,
and to come to share at this table –
where God lays out his love for us all.

Here, in bread and wine are the elements of passion,
the signs of love that knows no end.

Here is the invitation to come to God
And to speak your own 'Yes' in response.

Duncan Tuck

[The words of institution should be read here.](#)

Mothering Sunday – Eucharist prayer

God whose love is greater than a mother's for her children,
we thank you for this gift of bread – feed us.

God whose care is greater than a father's for his family,
we praise you for this wine – quench our thirst.

God who, in Jesus, reveals love walking with us through the darkest valleys,
we give our money in thanks – sustain us.

God whose strength upholds us when we are down,
we give our lives into your own strong hands – protect us.

Bless this moment of sharing together,
that our eating and our drinking may be more than bodily food,
but may refresh our hearts and minds
and bind us together as one body, caring and sharing.

Send your spirit down upon what we do here,
and enter our hearts,
so that this bread and wine may truly become for us
the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Then we may feast in joy for all you have done,
and work to be one body in anticipation
of what you will do with us, together.

Amen.

Duncan Tuck

Eucharistic prayer for May Day/work

All our work and joy, Creator God, is to sing your praise
for the six days on which you laboured
and for this, the sabbath day of rest and resurrection.
Your glory speaks to us in all creation:
the sun and rain calling life from bare earth
the greening of the hedgerows in the spring
the coming of swallows, the blossom on the apple-tree.
Yet the world you made is spoiled by sin and suffering:
we make war against each other
and in greed for selfish gain
plunder and pollute the gifts with which you bless us.
Through long years you toiled to call your people
to a way of righteousness and peace.
You led us to freedom when we were burdened in Egypt
you gave us the Law and prophets
when we could not find the way.
But your greatest work was yet to come.
You took upon yourself the glory and the shame of our humanity
when Jesus your Son was born of Mary.
All his work to him was joy
though he knew our weariness and sorrow.
He left the workshop of the carpenter
and, as teacher, healer, friend of sinners,
called those who heard him to share in his labours.
In his last and greatest work
through wood and nails he wrought us our salvation,
enduring the Cross for the joy that was set before him.
Risen from the dead, he fills all creation with hope
ascended in glory, he raises all things to the Father;
through him the life-giving Spirit
makes marvellous the common, and drudgery divine.
Therefore with all your people in heaven and on earth
we sing the triumphant hymn of your glory:

All

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

So, remembering the work and passion of our Saviour Christ
we celebrate him crucified and risen
in bread and wine which earth has given
and human hands have made.

[The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said:

'This is my body which is broken for you.

Do this is remembrance of me.'

In the same way he took the cup also after supper, saying:

'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.']

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Send down the Holy Spirit upon us and upon creation's fruit that we may find healing in the broken bread and peace through the shedding of his blood.

May we, his fellow-workers here,

be refashioned by his grace

that all his work may be fulfilled

and all things sing your praise,

one God, Trinity of love.

All **Amen.**

God of all creation

For environmental issues or One World Week

God of all creation,

in your teeming and orderly world,

we have disturbed the balance –

the rich forcing the poor to wreck environments;

the ripping and spoiling of your creation

in order that we may have convenience,

comfort and abundance.

Help us to care –

to share in the renewing of hearts, of lives, of landscape.

As we come to worship a God who gives everything for us,

help us to leave behind our own selfishness.

Help us to restore and see restored what has been destroyed,

even if it means inconvenience for us.

Help us to work and pray and live

for the life you wish to give all this earth. In Jesus' name.

Duncan Tuck

True Inclusivity

Within the context of Communion

Dear God,
we confess that sometimes
we give in to what are often irrational fears.
Strange people and places
can make us feel anxious and edgy.
We are hesitant to welcome others
into what we regard as our own space.
Almost without knowing it,
we establish safe and familiar territories
and hedge them round with self-justification.

We know it will not do.
We know it goes against your nature.
Your love crosses all boundaries to gather all peoples
and makes no distinctions –
and neither should ours.
We seek your help.

We hear you invite us to your table
and to share your broken bread
and we find that everyone is given a place
and none are turned away.
Your love is not choosy, nor hesitant, nor forced.
Your love is open, gracious, accepting.
Sometimes ours is not.
And therefore, in our world,
classes and clubs divide
and what you made to be one human family
is torn by fear and greed.

As we come to your table, therefore,
help us reclaim those yearnings
for a kingdom where all are welcome and wanted,
affirmed and embraced,
even as Jesus stretched out his arms for us.
Amen.

Duncan Wilson

Praise the Lord for Harvest

Based on Psalm 65:5b-11a

Praise the Eternal One!
People on land and sea, trust in the Most High.
Our God calms the roar of the seas,
and softens the turmoil of the peoples.
So shout of the things God has done!
Stand in awe of God's deeds.
Echo God's name in every corner of this world.
Behold God's gentle care for this land –
the richness and fertility;
the streams filling with life-giving water;
the abundance of swelling crops.
This is God's doing.
Without the blessing of rain our fields would be iron.
We would have nothing but the dust of bitter drought,
and the taste of tears too dry to shed.
What a rich harvest is the goodness of God.

Duncan Tuck

Based on Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23

We will praise the Most High, because of God's goodness.
We will praise the Eternal One, because of God's love.
We will tell of all God has done here among us.
We will tell of God's grace in the heavens above.
Yet we will not forget what the Most High is desiring,
for God loves us no matter how badly we live,
and calls us to leave behind all of our idols,
to strive to be those that the Most High loves to be with.

Duncan Tuck

The earth moves through the seasons

The earth moves through the seasons to fruitful maturity.
The lambs fatten the wheat swells and the fruit ripens.
We too grow and learn and find joy as we mature.
Creating God, you too enjoy the fulfilment of your purpose.

But, there are floods and droughts, disease and decay.
There are painful and hurtful experiences,
so we look forward with both trembling expectation
and a terrifying fear to the unknown future.

We are glad that there is growth and joy and satisfaction.
We pray for help and courage to face the disappointments.
We trust that you will be there sharing our sadnesses
and that all in the end will be well.

Your kindness and forgiveness go with us
through the valleys and the mountain tops.
For you are the faithful God, the one who is with us
we know you through Jesus Christ our friend and guide.
We praise you in the name and spirit of Jesus.
Amen.

Terry Oakley

Harvest thanksgiving

Praise from Scripture: Psalm 104 paraphrase

Lord you are great!
You make springs flow down the valleys,
streams between the hills,
giving drink to the wild animals
and river banks for birds to nest,
singing in the trees.

From your storehouse in the sky
you water the mountains
and saturate the earth,
greening the grass for the cattle,
swelling the grain,
bringing bread to sustain our strength,
wine to gladden our hearts
and oil to make our faces shine.

All your creatures look to you in hope –

you open your hand
and we are filled with good things.

Prayer

How good and right it is,
to give you thanks, our God.

All **The sights and scents of harvest
remind us of the wonder of growth.**

Rain and sunshine combine
to bring the best from your creation.

All **Here, in blossom and fruitfulness,
shine all the colours of the rainbow.**

Your promise never fails.

All **Creation tells the everlasting story
of your goodness towards us.**

It is written in your handiwork
and whispered on the breeze.

All **And we are part of it,
called to shape the future,
to care for the earth,
and to share with one another.**

Therefore,
give us grace to do all that is Christlike
so that we may bear fruit in daily acts of goodness
and reap the harvest of our souls.

Amen.

Duncan Wilson

Communion for Harvest

Praise from Scripture: Psalm 19

The heavens proclaim God's glory,
their dome God's handicraft:
day to the following day,
night to night
tell God's story.

No speech, no word,
no voice is heard.
Yet their music sounds across the world,
announcing themselves to remotest peoples!

The sun pitches its tent in the sea,
happy as a bridegroom,
exulting like a runner,
eager to win the race!

Rising from one end of the heavens
the sun travels to the other,
completing a circuit
and all are blessed by its rays.
Amen.

Prayer of approach

God of earth and heaven,
warmth of heart
and fire of love,
bring us into the shining sun of your presence
and banish all coldness from our thoughts.

As autumn steals the last of summer's lingering glory
and our eyes adjust to the fading of this day
we rejoice to see the table set with bread and wine
and to hear again your generous words of welcome.

But our broken world contends with
the harsh realities of war and deprivation
and millions of people, young and old,
are left out in the cold, unblessed, unwanted.

Therefore, we would have you
fling open the doors of your kingdom
and lay such a table upon this earth,
from which none shall be turned away.

May hands that hold your bread and take your cup
find how to hold you also in friend or stranger.
May voices that hymn your praise and stammer in prayer
find courage to press home your truth and justice.

Let some glimmer, some early promise
of the 'sun of righteousness', of Christ our Lord,
be evident, even in the conduct of our daily lives,
and in our modest acts of faithfulness.

Then may your rising
be seen and understood in this and every generation.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Dear Lord Jesus,
ever constant and generous
in all your dealings with us,
you have fed and filled us,
we who came empty to your table,
with much more than bread and wine.

May we who have seen again
your grace at work,
and who know how grandly your love intends
to hold and heal all things,
give ourselves joyfully to all that declares
your saving purpose for our world.

Amen.

Duncan Wilson

A Sunday in the early Autumn

Lord God, we thank you for the fruitfulness of early Autumn. We praise you for all the food our fertile fields and gardens produce. This morning, Lord, we come to worship you, so that our souls too may be fruitful and the glorious Christian virtues of love, joy, peace, kindness, patience, goodness and self-control might begin to grow and bear fruit in our lives. Here, in the garden of your church, may your children feel your loving touch upon them.

For your Son's sake

Amen.

Jennifer Martin

Breads of the world

(Suitable for One World Week and other occasions
celebrating our shared humanity)

Note: a representative sample may be chosen from the various breads; others may be added, with appropriate words. The sharing of the bread may take place in a service of Holy Communion, or at the end of the service (following Orthodox custom).

Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life.' The breads which we offer are symbols of our shared human community and of our diversity within the family of God.

We offer this UNLEAVENED BREAD, which calls to mind exiles and refugees, who, like the Jewish people, have had to leave their homes and flee their homelands. Let this bread represent all women, children and men who have had to flee their homelands and seek a new life elsewhere. Let it represent, as the unleavened bread of Passover does, the journey from slavery to freedom.

We offer this RYE BREAD, staple food of those who labour in much of Eastern Europe. Let it represent all those who struggle to feed themselves and their families, the poor, the unemployed, the over-worked, as a sign of hope.

We offer this CORN TORTILLA in remembrance of all those in Latin America who have struggled for human justice and dignity. Let it represent their coming liberation.

We offer this IRISH SODA BREAD in remembrance of all who have been divided by ancient loyalties and who have suffered in civil strife. Let it represent the hope of peace which still shines in Northern Ireland, and wherever communities are in conflict.

We offer these RICE CAKES, made from the staple food of people in Asian countries. Let them represent the rich and varied cultures of those lands, and be a joyful sign that the peoples of the east and the west have so much to give one another.

We offer these OATCAKES, the food of northern lands. Let them represent all those for whom harshness of climate and terrain make life a constant struggle, and be a sign of work justly rewarded.

We offer this SHORTBREAD, which brings to mind children. Let it represent young lives and all those who care for them into the next generation, and let its richness and sweetness be a sign of Sabbath rest.

We offer this ORGANIC WHOLEMEAL BREAD. Let it represent the bounty of the earth and our responsibility towards the natural world, and let it be a sign of wholeness for one world.

We offer breads from many lands as we pray for all the world's people and places, in the name of the One who took bread, broke it and said: 'Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you.'

All **Amen.**

From Claremont United Church of Christ (Congregational),
Claremont, California adapted by Colin Thompson

Eucharistic prayer for One World Week

We praise you, God of many names:
one God in Trinity,
community of power, wisdom, love.
In the beginning you created all worlds
and gave us this one world to be our home.
You blessed us with dreams of paradise
when nature and humanity lived in perfect harmony;
you inspired us with visions of unity,
when all the world spoke with one voice.
Yet in our foolishness we preferred our own ways:
we forfeited your paradise and spoiled the earth,
filling it with violence and corruption.
We were scattered and became many nations
speaking different tongues, cherishing different goals.

So you called one people, to be a light to all the nations,
revealed to them the Law
and spoke to them through the prophets;
but the burden was too great.

To turn us from our hardness of heart
you sent your only Son, born of Mary,
who heard your call and humbly did your will.
Therefore with all your people in heaven and on earth
we sing the triumphant hymn of your glory:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Through his living witness to your truth,
his unjust death on our behalf
his rising from the dead to break the power of evil
you gave the human race a new beginning,
entered through the waters of baptism by the Holy Spirit.
Through this same Spirit you called into one Church
peoples and nations of many tongues
to be a sign of unity and hope for a divided world.

To your Church you gave this thanksgiving meal
in which your people share one bread, one cup,
following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ
[who, the night he was betrayed
took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it
and said:

‘This is my body which is broken for you.

Do this is remembrance of me.’

In the same way he took the cup also after supper, saying:

‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup,
you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.’]

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Lord, we bring before you this sacrifice of love
made to reconcile all things in heaven and on earth
through Christ your Son, our Saviour.
Send down your Spirit on this bread and wine
that we may receive them for our healing
and for the healing of the nations.

So unite us in the Spirit
that our life together may build one Church
to be a living sign of justice and peace
until all things in heaven and on earth
are reconciled to you,
through Jesus Christ, in whom all are at one
in the fellowship of the Father and the Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Colin Thompson

Eucharistic prayer for All Saints

Lord, we praise you that the story of your grace
is full of names, women and men with many failings,
surprised by your call, transformed by your love.
Today we remember them with thanks:
Abraham our father, who was your friend,
the laughter of Sarah, the faithfulness of Ruth,
Moses the liberator and law-giver,
David the king, the poet and musician,
who saw from afar the One who was to come.
So when the time was ripe,
you sent Jesus your Son, our great High Priest,
who in the days of his flesh
learned obedience in the school of suffering
and who, sharing our weakness,
sympathizes with us in our struggles.
He befriended sinners and ate with outcasts;
people came to him burdened and sick
and he made them free and whole.
Therefore with all your people in heaven and on earth
we sing the triumphant hymn of your glory:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

In this his supper of love
he befriends us time and time again
and takes us with him on his memorable journey
from Cross to Resurrection, from loss to gain.

[The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said:

'This is my body which is broken for you.

Do this is remembrance of me.'

In the same way he took the cup also after supper, saying:

'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.']

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Lord, we offer you these gifts:

Send your Spirit down upon them

that they may be the food and drink of our salvation.

Let your Spirit touch our lives

that we may be conformed to Christ

and follow in the steps of all his faithful friends

of many times and places.

Sanctify your Church, that it may live

as the company of the redeemed,

and bring us at the last to where the saints in light

are one in your eternal presence

lost in wonder, love and praise.

Colin Thompson

A litany for All Saints Day

With an endless procession of God's people, surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, we worship God:

**All With martyr saints whom the flame did not deter,
with scholar saints whose legacy is lasting insight,
with servant saints who lived for others:**

With militant saints whose spirits won on the field of battle,

with eccentric saints who danced before God,

with slow-witted saints who showed the wisdom of God:

**All With artist saints who painted and sculpted
and sang the colours and contours and melodies of the Kingdom,
with royal saints whose rule reflected the rule of God,
with weeping saints whose holy sorrow comforts us:**

With blithe saints whose laughter lifts us,
with irascible saints who drive us to distraction –
and to God – with humble, anonymous saints,
who have no memorial but whose name lives for ever:

All **With holy women and holy men whose lives show
forth the wholeness of God, with holy children
who teach us the wonder and joy of life:**

With this unlikely fellowship, who make human the depth
and riches and power and grace of life before God,
we celebrate the gift of life and the call to faith:

All **Bring us with your saints to glory everlasting.**

From Claremont United Church of Christ (Congregational),
Claremont, California, adapted by Colin Thompson

True Saints

As many as the leaves
golden in autumn
blowing along the streets
are your saints.

As precious as bales
gathered in the barns
or stored at the field side
are your saints.

As strong as the rocks
graining the hillsides
or forming the river bed
are your saints.

As widespread as frost
glazing the meadows
and coating the branches
are your saints.

As strange as it seems
grace makes possible
that me and my neighbour
are your saints.

Terry Oakley

God of all Saints and Martyrs

God of all the saints and martyrs
who called your people
to walk together the path of freedom,
gathering as a community of believers,
surrounded by the great cloud of witnesses,
the communion of loved ones,
friends,
leaders,
teachers,
our forebears in faith;
we approach you
Great Ancestor of our ancestors
in worship and in love,
praying that we might once more
draw from the well of your inspiration
and be renewed in your presence.

Amen.

Vaughan Jones

Autumn

As the nights draw in, and we pull the curtains a little earlier each evening,
we pray that, as we get older, we do not draw the curtains of our mind as well.
Lord, open our eyes to new experiences and new examples of your love and
presence in the world. And may we ever continue to praise you for these new
insights.

Amen.

Brian Hudson

Remembrance Sunday 1

Opening: Psalm 33 paraphrase

All **Let the whole world acknowledge its Creator.
For God spoke and everything came into being,
God commanded, and there it stood.**

The Most High frustrates the purposes of the nations
All **but God's own purpose stands for ever.**
Happy is the nation whose God is the Eternal One,
All **the people God chooses to serve.**

No sovereign is saved by a great army,
All **no warrior is delivered by great strength.**
God's eyes are turned to those who fear the Most High,
All **to those who set their hope on God's unfailing love.**

We wait eagerly for the Eternal One
All **who alone is our help and our shield. Amen.**

Around and within us, dear God,
stir the tender emotions
of people who regret the past
with all its pain and loss
whilst looking to the future
with yearning for peace
and the healing of the nations.

Our greatest fear
is that we learn too little of the past,
and fail to deal with
those tendencies in our human nature
which lead us, either by folly or fear,
towards inevitable conflict
and mutual destruction.

'The good that we will,
we do not do.
The evil we would not do,
that we do.'

Open our hearts, we pray
in a true spirit of confession and self examination
lest we exalt the courage and sacrifice of others
without measuring the expense of our own commitment
to justice, freedom, and peace.
Set before us the example of One
who came and gave everything
that we might have life in all its fullness.

'He was despised and held of no account,
an object from which people avert their eyes,
yet he bore our afflictions
and by his wounds we are healed.'
Therefore, save, forgive and heal us dear Christ.
Amen.

Prayer for peace

God of justice, encircle our earth
with your demand for integrity and openness,
for fairness and sharing

All **and call the nations to live in harmony.**

Prince of Peace, heal your divided world
of its warring madness.
Still our fears and calm our stormy confrontations.

All **and call the nations to live in harmony.**

Spirit of reconciliation, breathe your fertile influence
on all creation and help us find the common ground
where forgiveness may flourish and flower in new friendship

All **and call the nations to live in harmony.**

Holy Trinity of Hope and Love and Joy,
let your desire for justice, peace and reconciliation
mark every encounter with you and with our neighbour

All **that in your presence and to your glory,
the nations may learn to live in harmony.
Amen.**

Duncan Wilson

Remembrance Sunday 2

Opening Scripture: Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength,
a timely help in trouble;
so we are not afraid though the earth shakes
and the mountains move in the depths of the sea.

Nations are in tumult, kingdoms are overturned;
when God thunders, the earth melts.
The God of Hosts is with us,
the God of Jacob and Leah is our fortress.

Come, see what the Most High has done,
the astounding deeds wrought on the earth;
The Eternal One breaks the bow, snaps the spear.
The God of Hosts is with us,
the God of Jacob and Leah is our fortress.
Amen.

Reading: Isaiah 25:1-9

Generation after generation,
dear God,
has lifted its hands and voice to you
in search of peace –
for a world in chaos,
afame with anger,
and torn by hatred.

And thus we come on behalf of our generation.

The horrors of war
are no longer distant or hidden.
We watch the terror unfolding, the smoke rising,
the stricken bodies falling, the earth exploding.
Fear and sorrow well up within us
in equal measure.

With deep sighs approaching despair,
we watch the march of death
across the fields where people laboured in hope of harvest,
and through their towns now turned to rubble.
We sense the breaking of your heart,
the unfinished grieving of Gethsemane.

Brief silence

And we recognise that war is no accident.
We have allowed evil the upper hand.
Just grievances go unheeded,
resentments fester
and indifference clouds
the wisdom and love that would save us.
Forgive us for wanting peace without working for it,
for mistaking talk of sacrifice for the real thing.
Come, Lord, mend and remake us
and show us the way that leads to true peace.
Amen.

Duncan Wilson

Remembrance Sunday 3

Sing

**All Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.**

It is God who forgives all your guilt,
Who heals every one of your ills,
Who redeems your life from the grave,
Who crowns you with love and compassion.

The Lord is compassion and love,
The Lord is patient and rich in mercy.
God does not treat us according to our sins,
Nor repay us according to our faults.

As parents have compassion on their children,
The Lord has mercy on those who revere him;
For God knows of what we are made,
And remembers that we are dust.

(Taizé)

So we remember

All those who died in and from this country and those who died from the countries of the Commonwealth, allies and former enemies, the people of Nagasaki and Hiroshima during the two World Wars;
Those who died in the wars that followed – Korea, Vietnam and too many others;
Those who died in the Genocides of African Slavery in the Caribbean and the Americas, the Holocaust, the Congo, Cambodia, East Timor, Rwanda, and too many others; Those who died in the fight to end apartheid in Namibia, South Africa and too many others;
Those who died in the 'Dirty Wars' of repression – in Chile, in Colombia, Peru, Brazil, the Philippines and too many other countries;
Those who died in countries close to the heart of people in this community – Ireland, Chile, Rwanda, Colombia, and in Bethnal Green itself.

We remember

Those we knew
Those who were brave
Those who were afraid
Those who mourn and grieve
Those who carry the memory of war in their souls
Those whose scars refuse to heal.

Silence

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.

All **Let light perpetual shine upon them.**

May they rest in peace.

All **And rise in glory.**

Sing

God gives peace like a river,
Peace like a river,
God gives peace like a river
In my soul.

God gives hope, hope forever,
Hope, hope forever,
God gives hope, hope forever
For my soul.

God gives life, life forever,
Life, life forever,
God gives life, life forever
To us all.

Let's bring peace like a river,
Peace like a river,
Let's bring peace like a river
To the world.

God of the heavens,
creator of sun and stars
nothing is beyond your power.

Saviour of the downtrodden,
crucified by principalities and power,
nothing can separate us from your love.

Spirit of reconciliation and truth,
awakening the conscience of the just,
nothing is outside your redemptive love.

Embrace the people of this earth with the refreshment of forgiveness
and the wholeness of your new life.

All **Amen.**

Vaughan Jones

Prayers of intercession for Remembrance Sunday

The guns bang; the shells explode; the air is thick with dust and debris.

The terrorist, or is it freedom fighter, decides that this is the day they will die and pauses to say goodbye to their home and walks out to trigger oblivion.

The leaders of governments worry and plan, power as a tool, power as a burden. People wanting to do what is right.

Lazy people wanting to be led by the crowd. Ignorant people following those who forcefully lead.

The soldier prepares.

The politician plans.

Give them all the desire to do what is right. Not what is quick, nor what is easy, nor what the loudest and most powerful voices shout for, but for what is right in your sight.

We wait.

We shout for blood, we do not give them time to debate and explore the issue from the other point of view. We shout that they should be left to it and nothing should rock our boat. We have a narrow circle of interest and assume that our concerns are yours, O God.

We allow our government to bully and insist on valuing life in this country above that in other places.

All are your children

Really, do you really mean that, do you?

The bomber, the corrupt politician they are yours?

We pray for peace.

We pray for justice.

We pray for peace in homes and hearts not based on complacency but on love and respectful relationships.

We pray for the peace of knowing and doing your will.

In the name of Jesus the Prince of Peace.

Lesley Charlton

Colours for remembering

Following each stanza, a large red petal is attached to a display board to form, first, a red poppy.

Red is for Anger – anger in the face of injustice, anger that will not stand by and let another person suffer, anger that says that something is wrong and must be stopped, anger that goes beyond our own selfish concerns to care for others. Red is for anger.

Red is for Love – love which is strong and passionate, not sickly and sentimental, love which knows no limits and encompasses family, friend, neighbour and stranger, love which doesn't count the cost of loving, love which God has for each one of us. Red is for love.

Red is for Sacrifice – sacrifice by the few for the sake of the many, sacrifice for us living today and children yet to be born, sacrifice born not just from duty but from love, sacrifice seen in Jesus for the sake of the world. Red is for sacrifice.

Red is for War – war which cuts short life, war which devastates families and communities, war which destroys the earth God gave us to care for, war which continues in the world today. Red is for war.

Red is for anger, love, sacrifice and war. Red is the colour of remembering the past, lest we forget the true horror of war. On this day we remember and we commit ourselves to ensuring war does not happen again. Other colours help us to look to the future and a vision of a more caring and just world.

After each stanza, a slightly smaller petal of the appropriate colour is added to make a second smaller and multi-coloured flower. The colours used are those found on the Olympic flag and are associated with goodwill across the human family.

Blue is for Life – life giving water, sweet and refreshing, without which nothing can survive for more than a few days. Life is God's most precious gift to us, life is full of relationships and promise, opportunities and experience. In our living we share in the lives of others and in the very life of God. Blue is for life.

Green is for Hope – new shoots, pushing through the earth, buds blossoming into flowers, fruit forming, growing and swelling, ready for harvesting. Hope encourages us to dream dreams and make the impossible a reality, hope breeds excitement and energy, new ideas and enthusiasm. In our hoping we share a vision for a better world where God is central to all we do. Green is for hope.

Black is for Silence – in the depths of the earth, where no light can penetrate rocks and earth, and no sound travels from the surface above, the silence crashes in on our ears. In silence we are still and allow ourselves space to think

and reflect, in the silence we can be ourselves and not what others expect us to be. In the silence we discover ourselves, made in God's image, made to live in God's image. Black is for silence.

Gold is for Warmth – warm rays of sunshine on your back, relaxing tired muscles, easing away aches and pains. Warmth floods our bodies making us feel safe and secure, warmth reassures us that we are loved, valued and cherished. As we feel the warmth shared between family and friends, we experience the warmth of God enfolding us each day of our lives. Gold is for warmth.

After this stanza, a white circle is added to the centre of the flower, binding all the petals together.

White is for Peace – the quiet fall of a snowflake, each individual flake seemingly insignificant, yet before long a blanket of perfection covers the ground, so thick that unless you look closely you can't see the tiny flakes which make it up. Peace begins with the tiny acts of individuals but can become an avalanche for change in our world, peace is not the absence of anything but demands action and commitment. Living in peace with ourselves, our neighbours, and our world, we live in peace with God, whose peace is greater than our understanding. White is for peace.

Red, Blue, Green, Black, Gold and White – colours which unite the people of the world, colours which help us to remember and look to the future, colours which remind us that we are people of faith who travel with God.

Lindsey Sanderson

World AIDS day

The lighting of the first candle

For all those people and countries affected by AIDS

Welcome

Invocation

Anxious, passionate, overwhelmed, determined;

All We come seeking hope and wholeness.

Angry, diligent, confused, enmeshed;

All We come seeking hope and wholeness.

Joyful, cynical, practical, faithful;

All We come seeking hope and wholeness.

The lighting of the second candle

For all people caring for people affected by HIV/AIDS

A reflection

The lighting of the third candle

For all people who have died of HIV related causes

A reflection

The lighting of the fourth candle

For Justice

A reflection

The lighting of the fifth candle

To shine into the darkness of stigma

A reflection

The Eucharist

Everyone is very welcome to receive the Eucharist. If you would rather receive a blessing remain standing holding the order of service. If you do not wish to receive the Eucharist please sit.

We hope you will feel free to do what you wish.

The enormity of the realities and complexity of the issues related to people living with HIV and AIDS confronts us with the realities and complexities of our human community. God is speaking to us in this moment, inviting us to open our eyes and to turn with hope to the promise of new life.

We confess our complacency in the face of this global pandemic;
Our ignorance and fear that breed discrimination and stigma;
Our part in the blame and hatred that isolate people and destroy life;
Our inaction and avoidance that contribute to life-threatening silences.

Let us live out God's light in our struggles, hopes and dreams for justice.

The peace

Peace and new life be always with you.

All

And also with you

(we greet each other with peace)

Communion may be celebrated

Post Eucharistic prayer

Thank you life-giving God,
For feeding us and so clothing us in your grace.
Send us out as people of Christ,
Seeking justice, restoration and freedom.
Amen.

Silence and stillness

The lighting of the sixth candle

For hope and restoration

A reflection

The blessing

Charity Hamilton

Winter

Lord God, in these cold days,
when the frosty air freezes our breath
and chills our bones,
may we know ever more deeply the warmth of your love.

May we recognise it in the welcome of this fellowship,
the kindness of friends or neighbours
the excited laughter of young children
and the beauty of nature, stark and shorn against a winter sky.

Let it unfreeze our hearts,
invigorate our worship,
and direct our daily living.

In Christ's name.

Brian Hudson

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