

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE  
21 SEPTEMBER 2021



**RECOVERING  
BETTER FOR A  
SUSTAINABLE  
AND EQUITABLE  
WORLD**



[un.org/peaceday](https://un.org/peaceday) | [#peaceday](https://twitter.com/peaceday)

The International Day of Prayer for Peace was first adopted by resolution in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly. In 2001, adopted a new resolution, 55/282, declaring 21 September of each year as the International Day of Peace. The intention of the resolution is to have the entire world observe a day of peace and nonviolence.

[www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org)

#### MAY PEACE PREVAIL ON EARTH

The Peace Pole Project – Peace poles are four or six-sided obelisk shaped poles decorated with the message and prayer for peace. “May Peace Prevail On Earth” transcends all differences in race, religion and creed. It radiates to heal, purify and unify the hearts of all people.

The planting of peace poles is an expression of our love for all God’s children and wish for global peace and harmony. Through the active support of individuals and organizations the world over, peace poles are continuously being planted as an international symbol of peace. There are more than 250,000 Peace Poles in 180 countries all over the world dedicated as monuments to peace. They serve as constant reminders for us to visualize and pray for world peace.

Service adapted from the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, World Council of Churches- Decade to Overcome Violence (2001-2010), World Peace Prayer Society, The Peace Pole Project, and the International Day for Peace Org, Peace Tax Fund, and the Community of the Cross of Nails.

Music and Songs & Prayers from Taizé’ and written by Jacques Berhier; published by GIA Publications Inc., and The Gather Book.

# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND PEACE

Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, Ohio

September 21, 2021

*And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.*

James 3:18

Welcome

Debbie Hunter and Bruce Freeman, Episcopal Peace Fellowship

A Prayer for World Peace -1978 (unknown author)

Leader: We pray for the power to be gentle;  
the strength to be forgiving;  
the patience to be understanding;  
and the endurance to accept the consequences  
of holding on to what we believe to be right.  
May we put our trust in the power of good to overcome evil  
and the power of love to overcome hatred.  
We pray for the vision to see and the faith to believe  
in a world emancipated from violence,  
a new world where fear shall no longer lead men or women to commit injustice,  
nor selfishness make them bring suffering to others.  
Help us to devote our whole life and thought and energy  
to the task of making peace,  
praying always for the inspiration and the power  
to fulfill the destiny for which we and all men and women were created.

Litany for Peace (from International Prayers for Peace)

Reader 1 We pray to God to eradicate all the violence in the world:  
that understanding triumph over ignorance,  
that generosity triumph over indifference,  
that trust triumph over contempt, and  
that truth triumph over falsehood. *(from Zoroastrian Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 2 Almighty God, the all-seeing Lord up on high  
who sees even the footprints of an antelope on a rock mass here on Earth.  
Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.  
Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace. *(from Native African Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 3 Although the people living across the ocean  
surrounding us are all our brothers and sisters,  
why are there constant troubles in this world?  
Why do winds and waves rise in the  
ocean surrounding us? *(from Shinto Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 4 Come let us go up the mountain of the Lord,  
that we may walk the paths of the Most High.  
And we shall beat our swords into ploughshares,  
and our spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation--  
neither shall they learn war any more.  
And none shall be afraid, for the mouth of the  
Lord of Hosts has spoken. *(from Jewish Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 5 In the name of God, the beneficent, the merciful,  
Praise be to the Lord of the Universe who has created us  
And made us into tribes and nations,  
that we may know each other, not that we may despise each other.  
Whether your enemy inclines towards peace, you incline towards peace,  
and trust God, for the Lord is the one that hears and knows all things. *(from Muslim Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 6 Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS,  
for they shall be known as the Children of God.  
Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,  
bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.  
To those who strike you on the cheek, offer the other also,  
and from those who take away your cloak, do not withhold your coat as well.  
And as you wish that others would do to you, so do to them. *(from Christian Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 7 God judges us according to our deeds, not the coat that we wear:  
that truth is above everything, but higher still is truthful living.  
Know that we attain God when we love one another,  
and only that victory endures in which no one is defeated. *(from Sikh Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 8 Peace and Universal Love is the essence of the Gospel  
To all have amity, and to none enmity.  
Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the world.  
Violence, in fact, is the knot of bondage.  
“Do not injure any living being.”  
This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual life.

A weapon howsoever powerful it may be, can always be superseded by a superior one; but no weapon can be superior to non-violence and love. *(from Jainist Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 9 Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity.  
Be fair in judgement, and guarded in speech.  
Be a lamp to those who walk in darkness, and a home to the stranger.  
Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light for the feet of the erring.  
Be a breath of life to the body of humankind, a dew to the soil of the human heart,  
and a fruit upon the tree of humility. *(from Bahai' Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 10 Give us the wisdom to teach our children to love, to respect, and to be kind to each other so that they may grow with peace in mind.  
Let us learn to share all good things that  
you provide for us on this Earth. *(from Native American Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 11 May all human beings everywhere suffering in body, mind or spirit quickly be freed from their illnesses.  
May those frightened cease to be afraid, and may those bound be free.  
May the powerless find power, and may people befriend one another. *(from Buddhist Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Reader 12 Oh God, lead us from violence to peace.  
Oh God, lead us from darkness to light.  
Oh God, lead us from death to immortality.  
Oh Lord God almighty, may there be peace on earth.  
May the waters be appeasing.  
May herbs be wholesome, and may trees and plants bring peace to all.  
May we be your hands to propagate peace all through the world.  
May all things be a source of peace to us.  
And may your peace itself, bestow peace on all. *(from Hindu Prayer for Peace)*

**Lord, you are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call.**

**Lord, you are the cornerstone of peace.**

**Lord, strengthen us to create peace.**

Prayer for Peace

*Prayer from the World Council of Churches - Decade to Overcome Violence*

God of all goodness, You have been our refuge from generation to generation.  
Your will is that peace should shine on all people everywhere. With your spirit, guide the efforts of humankind to bring peace and justice to the nations of the earth, and give strength to rulers and all who work to establish  
peace and justice in the world.

Inspire those who come together in search of ways to bring about peace, and through your word, change the hearts of all people so that we shall strive for; Peace and not war, the Common good, rather than individual wellbeing, Your Justice, instead of our own glory.

You have given us your peace. Enable us to share that peace with those around us, so that love and harmony may be always present in our lives, that all the world may know happiness, that we may live with dignity as brothers and sisters, and that all may rejoice in your presence. United in diversity, we call upon your infinite grace, humbly asking you to receive our prayer and make us instruments of your peace. **Amen**

## COVID – THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

*Be kind –*

Everyone is carrying a heavy load.

*Be thoughtful –*

Think about other people's feelings.

*Be respectful –*

We are all God's children – worth listening to.

*Be truthful –*

To ourselves, to others...

Wishful thinking is not helpful.

*Be diligent –*

What can we do to help someone?

Staying at home is not a reason for procrastination.

*Be creative –*

New ways of doing things...

New ways of seeing things.

*Be aware –*

Listen to the birds.

Appreciate the flowers.

Notice people.

*Be flexible –*

Enjoyment and answers can come from unexpected places.

Embrace serendipity.

*Be inclusive –*

"He drew a circle that shut me out –

heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.

But love and I had the wit to win:

We drew a circle and took him in."

*Be careful –*

Be safe.

Be care-full for the least, the lost and the lonely,

*Be joyful -*

Say "thank you."

Look for beauty.

Sing a song (with social distance).

Whistle a tune (see above).

Make this day worth living.

What else can you add?

Can this be a message from God to us on how to bring hope to the world?

Adapted from prayers by Edwin Markham and Neil Deupree

*A Prayer For the Human Family*

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: 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 to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, pg 815

God of justice, in your wisdom you create all people in your image, without exception. Through your goodness, open our eyes to see the dignity, beauty, and worth of every human being. Open our minds to understand that all your children are brothers and sisters in the same human family. Open our hearts to repent of racist attitudes, behaviors, and speech which demean others. Open our ears to hear the cries of those wounded by racial discrimination, and their passionate appeals for change. Strengthen our resolve to make amends for past injustices and to right the wrongs of history. And fill us with courage that we might seek to heal wounds, build bridges, forgive and be forgiven, and establish peace and equality for all in our communities. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

By Janis Greenbaum (Episcopal Diocese of Missouri)

*For Facing Great Uncertainty*

“God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; bring hope and courage to all who wait or work in uncertainty. Bring hope that you will make them the equal of whatever lies ahead. Bring them courage to endure what cannot be avoided, for your will is health and wholeness; you are God, and we need you. Amen”

New Zealand Prayer Book, pg 765

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to root out prejudice and hatred; for You have already given us eyes with which to see the good in all people, if we would only care to look for it.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end starvation; for You have already given us the resources with which to feed the entire world, if we would use them wisely.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end war; for we know that You have made the world in a way that we must find our own path to peace, within ourselves and with our neighbors.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end despair; for You have already given us the power to end poverty and homelessness, and to build hope, if we would only use our resources justly.

Therefore, we pray to You instead, O God, for strength and determination; for wisdom and will power; to do and not just to pray, to become instead of to wish; that our land may be safe, and that our lives may be blessed.

May the words that we pray, and the deeds that we do, be acceptable before You, O God, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Adapted from “Living God’s Justice: Reflections and Prayers,”  
by The Roundtable Association of Diocesan Social Action Directors, p. 155)

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**Episcopal Peace Fellowship  
Diocese of Ohio**



# International Day of Peace

## 21 September (/en/observances/international-day-peace)



The Peace Bell was donated by the United Nations Association of Japan in 1954. It has become tradition to ring the bell twice a year: on the first day of spring, at the Vernal Equinox, and on 21 September to celebrate the International Day for Peace.

**PHOTO:** UN Photo/Manuel Elías

## 2021 Theme: Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.

In 2021, as we heal from the COVID-19 pandemic, we are inspired to think creatively and collectively about how to help everyone recover better, how to build resilience, and how to transform our world into one that is more equal, more just, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and healthier.

The pandemic is known for hitting the underprivileged and marginalized groups the hardest. By April 2021, over 687 million COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered globally, but over 100 countries have not received a single dose. People caught in conflict are especially vulnerable in terms of lack of access to healthcare.

In line with the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire last March, in February 2021 the Security Council unanimously passed a resolution calling for Member States to support a "sustained humanitarian pause" to local conflicts. The global ceasefire must continue to be honoured, to ensure people caught in conflict have access to lifesaving vaccinations and treatments.

The pandemic has been accompanied by a surge in stigma, discrimination, and hatred, which only cost more lives instead of saving them: the virus attacks all without caring about where we are from or what we believe in. Confronting this common enemy of humankind, we must be reminded that we are not each other's enemy. To be able to recover from the devastation of the pandemic, we must make peace with one another.

And we must make peace with nature. Despite the travel restrictions and economic shutdowns, climate change is not on pause. What we need is a green and sustainable global economy that produces jobs, reduces emissions, and builds resilience to climate impacts.

The 2021 theme for the International Day of Peace is "Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world". We invite you to join the efforts of the United Nations family as we focus on recovering better for a more equitable and peaceful world. Celebrate peace by standing up against acts of hate online and offline, and by spreading compassion, kindness, and hope in the face of the pandemic, and as we recover.

### Background

The International Day of Peace was established (<http://undocs.org/A/RES/36/67>) in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly. Two decades later, in 2001, the General Assembly unanimously voted to designate (<http://undocs.org/A/RES/55/282>) the Day as a period of non-violence and cease-fire.