

World Day of Prayer



March 1st, 2024

“I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love.” (Ephesians 4:1-7)

Short Worship Service

GREETING

Salaam. Peace be with you. The service this year has been prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Palestine; A group of ecumenical Palestinian Christian women who have worked collectively over the last 4 years to pray and reflect on the theme, “I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love,” inspired by Ephesians 4:1-7. And now, they are inviting all people around the world to join them in prayer and action.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the Name of the Triune God, Creator, Son and Holy Spirit.

Let us praise the God of peace who brings us together to worship in love and unity transcending all differences between people of faith.

PRAYER

Let us pray.

Triune God, walk with us as we journey through the land where you lived and taught.

Open our eyes to see the present suffering of the inhabitants of this land.

Grant us the strength and courage to act and pray with all who suffer around the world.

God of peace come among us and rain down your peace on the whole world making a path for your goodness and filling every heart with your peace.

We confess our weakness and failure to accept others without judging them.

Let us hear the good news. You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin. We remain strong in our faith, knowing that we belong to God. We are forgiven. AMEN

Hymn - Love Divine (87 87 D)

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art.
Visit us with thy salvation;
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

2. Come, Almighty, to deliver,
let us all thy life receive.
Suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

3. Finish, then, thy new creation;
true and spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise.

GOSPEL READING

In the 15th chapter of the gospel of John, Jesus was talking to his beloved disciples in the hours before his crucifixion:

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

A STORY OF RESILIENCE

At a crucial moment of his life, Jesus gave the disciples this commandment: Love one another. Bear with one another in love. Let us listen to Eleonor’s story a Palestinian Christian woman whose story is a powerful witness to Jesus’ call to bear with one another in love.

I am a Palestinian Christian – a member of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Holy Land.

My skin is wrinkled like the trunk of an olive tree. Like the trees, I have witnessed many wars and violence.

I come from a deeply rooted old Jerusalem family. In the early 19th century, my great grandfather established St. George’s Orthodox Church, which enabled Christians living outside the city walls to have a place to worship.

In 1948, 750,000 Palestinians were forced to become refugees. My family was included. Prior to fleeing, my parents’ Jewish neighbours offered to store the treasures of the church, including icons and precious communion cups until the family’s return. As my brothers and I were growing up, my parents remembered their neighbours graciously as they waited for the big day of return. They imagined themselves collecting these sacred items and thanking these neighbours for keeping their promise. Sadly, my parents have passed away without realizing this dream.

And yet, I vividly remember that, despite their pain and suffering over all they had lost, my parents were always thankful and spoke kindly about these Jewish neighbours. My parents taught me how to bear with others in love, always remembering to be grateful for those who do good.

As I have gone through life as a Palestinian Christian living in Jerusalem, I have chosen to be fully engaged with all members of the community at local and global levels. I learned from my parents’ example how important it is to stay together with others, even when life is harsh and difficult.

I firmly believe that our community can be strong together if there is genuine love, understanding, gentleness, humility and patience. Since my childhood, I have known that life is fragile, and peace is not a guarantee. I could have left the country of my roots, but I made the choice to stay and live out Jesus’ commandment to love others as God has loved me.

HYMN: - Love is the touch of Intangible Joy (10 10 10 10)

Love is the touch of intangible joy;
Love is the force that no fear can destroy;
love is the goodness we gladly applaud:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

2. Love is the lilt in a lingering voice;
Love is the hope that can make us rejoice;
Love is the cure for the frightened and flawed:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

3. Love is the light in the tunnel of pain;
love is the will to be whole once again;
love is the trust of a friend on the road:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

4. Love is the Maker, and Spirit, and Son;
love is the kingdom their will has begun;
love is the pathway the saints all have trod:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

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EPISTLE READING

The scripture theme this year comes from Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift."

HYMN – I Urge You

I Urge You is a song that was composed especially for this World Day of Prayer service. Let us sing together, or listen to, this call to bear with each other in love.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the hymn "I Urge You". The first staff is in treble clef, 4/4 time, and contains the melody for the first line of the hymn. The second staff is also in treble clef, 4/4 time, and contains the melody for the second line. Chords are indicated above the notes: C, G, F, C, G7, and C. The lyrics are written below the notes.

I urge you to be pa-tient with the cal-ling you re - ceive,
Bea - ring one a - no - ther with love and u - ni - ty.

I urge you to be patient with the calling you receive,
Bearing one another with love and unity.

INTERCESSIONARY PRAYERS

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we now pray for women everywhere, for the world, and for those in need.

After the words "Lead us into a life worthy of our calling." you are invited to respond, "**Hear our prayer.**"

Leader: Lead us into a life worthy of our calling.

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray:

Leader: God with us we for peace everywhere, justice and freedom. Freedom of religion, freedom of expression and freedom of movement.
Lead us into a life worthy of our calling.

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray with and for women, refugees, persons experiencing homelessness, and all who are sick, dying and grieving.
Lead us into a life worthy of our calling.

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of Mercy, we have carelessly destroyed your beautiful creation. We have harmed the environment, the flora and fauna, and the creatures of the air, land and water. Our destruction of the earth has caused the climate crisis. Help us to appreciate and love your creation. Help us to repair what we have destroyed.
Lead us into a life worthy of our calling.

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: God of Unity, your child, Jesus, prayed that your disciples and followers would be one, as you are one. Teach us, your servants, to treat others justly, fairly and with love, even though we may speak, live, and pray differently. Bless the global church and bless the faithful women everywhere who share your Good News with others.
Lead us into a life worthy of our calling.

All: Hear our prayer

Leader: How can we thank you, Loving God? We offer these prayers, and the prayers of our hearts known only to you, trusting that you hear and answer them. In the name of God, Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

HYMN – God who sets us on a journey (87 87 D)

1. God who sets us on a journey to discover, dream and grow,
lead us as you led your people in the desert long ago;
journey inward, journey outward stir the spirit, stretch the mind;
love, for God and self and neighbour, marks the way that Christ defined.
2. Exploration brings new insights, changes, choices we must face;
give us wisdom in deciding, mindful always of your grace;
should we stumble, lose our bearings, find it hard to know what's right,
We regain our true direction focused on the Jesus light.
3. End our longing for the old days, grant the vision that we lack –
once we've started on this journey there can be no turning back;
let us travel light, discarding excess baggage from our past,
cherish only what's essential, choosing treasure that will last.
4. When we set up camp and settle to avoid love's risk and pain,
you disturb complacent comfort, pull the tent-pegs up again;
keep us travelling in the knowledge you are always at our side,
give us courage for the journey, Christ our goal and Christ our guide.

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

We continue now with the prayer that Jesus taught us. This prayer calls us to bear with one another in love through all the difficulties of life.

You may wish to read the prayer in Aramaic (the language that Jesus spoke), use this modern translation or pray using the words most familiar to you.

Abwoon d'bwashmaya
Nethqadash
Shmakh Teytey,
Malkuthakh Nehwey sebyanach.
Aykanna d'bwashmaya,
Aphb'arha.
Habwlan lachma ,
d'sunqanan yaomana.
Washboqlan Khaubayn aykana daph
Khnan shbwoqan l'khayyabayn.

Our Creator who is in heaven,
Hallowed be your name
Your kingdom come,
your will be done as it is in heaven.
Our Creator who is in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done as it is in heaven.
Give to us our daily bread.
Give to us what we need.

Wela tahlan l'nesyuna,
Ela patzan minbisha.
Metol dilakhie,
Malkutha wahayla.
Wateshbukhta l'lahm almin Ameyn.

And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen.

WORDS OF COMMITMENT

Leader: Please join me in speaking aloud the commitment of your heart.

**All: May we commit to working for peace as we stand with all women, particularly those experiencing oppression, violence, or discrimination.
May we be faithful advocates with decision makers working on all levels of society, including religious institutions.
May we bear with one another in love until God's justice and peace reign throughout the whole world.**

HYMN: The Day Thou Gavest (98 98)

1. The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended,
the darkness falls at thy behest;
to thee our morning hymns ascended,
thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

2. We thank thee that thy Church unsleeping,
while earth rolls onward into light,
through all the world her watch is keeping,
and rests not now by day or night.

3. As o'er each continent and island
the dawn leads on another day,
the voice of prayer is never silent,
nor dies the strain of praise away.

4. The sun that bids us rest is waking
our brethren 'neath the western sky,
and hour by hour fresh lips are making
thy wondrous doings heard on high.

5. So be it, Lord; thy throne shall never,
like earth's proud empires, pass away;
thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
till all thy creatures own thy sway.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord cause His face to shine upon you and grant you peace.

Let us go now and be agents of peace and justice.

WDP 2025 is on Friday 7th March 2025

The service has been written by Christian women of the Cook Islands and has the theme
"I Made You Wonderful"

World Day of Prayer (Scottish Committee)

Charity Number SC020446

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