



Worship Resource Material for the Unitarian Day of Prayer for Peace



**Compiled by John Philip Carter and edited by Sue Woolley
on behalf of the Local Leadership Strategy Group, September 2013.**

Introductory Note

At the General Assembly meetings in April 2013, a motion was passed designating the third Sunday in October a Unitarian Day of Prayer for Peace, and recommending that congregations host an Interfaith Service for World Peace. Unitarians, who welcome people of all faiths and no faith into our places of worship, who focus on what it is that connects us to each other and who are committed to the idea of peace among the nations – are ideally placed to begin the process of creating a space for people of all faiths and none to come together to hold a special Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace.

Sue Woolley & Christina Smith

Call to Worship and Chalice Lighting

We welcome people of all faiths and no faith into our church / chapel today.
We welcome those who focus on what it is that connects us to each other.
We welcome those who are committed to the idea of peace among the nations.
Let us worship together in peace.

Sue Woolley, based on Christina Smith

We light our flaming chalice to illuminate the world we seek. In the search for truth, may we be just; in the search for justice, may we be loving; and, in loving, may we find peace.

Elizabeth McMaster

May the light we now kindle Inspire us to use our powers
To heal and not to harm, to help and not to hinder,
To bless and not to curse, to serve you, Spirit of freedom.

Passover Haggadah

Hymns for use during the Service

Key to Hymnals:

Hymns of Faith and Freedom	(‘Red Hymnal’)	= RH
Hymns for Living	(‘Green Hymnal’)	= GH
Sing Your Faith	(‘Purple Hymnal’)	= PH

Key to Compact Discs:

Any hymns on CDs will be listed with this code: CD no./Track no. For example CD1/15 means it is Hymns for Living, first CD with track 15, which is ‘To Worship Rightly’, no. 191.

Hymns for Living:	CD1	= CD1
	CD2	= CD2
	CD3	= CD3
	CD4	= CD4
Sing Your Faith	CD1	= CD5
	CD2	= CD6
	CD3	= CD7
	CD4	= CD8
Christmas Hymnals CD		= CD9

'Hymns of Faith and Freedom' (Red Hymnal)

• A voice upon the midnight air	RH 154
• Dear Lord and Father	RH 8
• Ever find I joy in reading	RH 264
• Father, again to thy dear name	RH 466
• Father, we look up to thee!	RH 375
• Fierce raged the tempest	RH 141
• For the Healing of the Nations	RH 309
• God is working	RH 219
• Hark the glad sound	RH 107
• He whom the Master loved	RH 190
• Jesus, good above all other	RH 259
• Joy to the World	RH 128
• Like a mighty river	RH 105
• Lift up your heads	RH 109
• Lord of all hopefulness	RH 257
• Make me a channel of your peace	RH 338
• Midnight Clear	RH 122
• Mine eyes have seen the glory	RH 221
• O God! the darkness roll away	RH 423
• O here, if ever, God of love	RH 405
• O the beautiful old story	RH 263
• Part in Peace	RH 463
• Put Peace into each other's hands	RH 408
• The Voice of God	RH 303
• Thou Power & Peace	RH 367
• Thy way is in the deep, O Lord!	RH 348
• To Mercy, Pity, Peace, & Love	RH 313

'Hymns for Living' (Green Hymnal)

• A Glad, Resplendent Day	GH 224	
• A World Transfigured	GH 209	CD2/22
• All Praise to Thee this Night	GH 285	
• Autumn Ways	GH 277	
• Black & White	GH 215	
• Bread & Roses	GH 216	
• Calm Soul of All Things	GH 53	
• Child of Hiroshima	GH 225	CD3/18
• Closing Verse	GH 308	
• Closing Verse	GH 314	
• Dear Lord and Father	GH 101	CD1/9
• Die Gedanken Sind Frei	GH 143	CD2/13
• For the Healing of the Nations	GH 198	CD3/16
• Hush the Sounds of War	GH 222	
• Joy to the World	GH 96	CD9/14
• Midnight Clear	GH91	CD9/9
• O'er Continent and Ocean	GH 119	
• One Human Commonwealth	GH 125	CD1/11
• Our Parting Hymn of Praise	GH 304	CD4/25
• Shalom Havayreem	GH 317	
• Sing Your Country's Anthem	GH 227	

•	Song of Peace	GH 226	CD3/19
•	The Moment to Decide	GH 168	
•	The People's Peace	GH 219	CD2/23
•	The Vision of a World Set Free	GH 223	
•	The Voice of God	GH 169	
•	Till Greed and Hate Cease	GH 228	
•	To worship rightly	GH 191	CD1/15
•	Tranquility	GH 252	
•	True Freedom	GH 167	
•	Vesper Hymn	GH 286	
•	Walk in the Light (on George Fox)	GH 149	
•	We Shall Overcome	GH 204	
•	When a Deed is Done for Freedom	GH 199	

'Sing Your Faith' (Purple Hymnal)

•	Captive voices cry for freedom	PH 16	
•	Each seeking faith	PH 30	CD5/6
•	Far too long, by fear divide	PH 34	
•	Go now in peace	PH 45	CD8/7
•	God, who stretched the spangled heavens	PH 56	
•	How good it is, what pleasure comes	PH 65	CD8/10
•	I stand outside your door	PH 69	
•	I wish I knew how	PH 70	CD7/12
•	If every woman in the world	PH 73	CD6/3
•	In this time on earth	PH 79	CD7/13
•	Isaiah the prophet has written of old	PH 80	
•	Justice for persons	PH 84	CD8/12
•	Keep me from helplessness	PH 85	
•	Leave behind your bags and baggage	PH 87	CD5/13
•	Let there be light	PH 89	
•	Let us renew our covenant	PH 92	
•	Let us welcome Channukah	PH 94	CD9/16
•	Now we sing to praise love's blessing	PH 110	CD5/15
•	O God our words can not express	PH 112	
•	O yearning hearts	PH 121	
•	O young and fearless prophet	PH 122	
•	One more step	PH 124	CD5/17
•	Open the window children	PH 127	
•	Play trumpet, cello harp and flute	PH 133	CD8/16
•	Sing, sing for joy	PH 144	CD5/21
•	Spirit of Life	PH 148	CD5/23
•	Strong and steadfast	PH 151	CD6/11
•	The peace of the earth be with you	PH 163	
•	The Spirit lives to set us free	PH 165	CD8/18
•	To seek and find our natural mind	PH 175	CD8/19
•	Together now we join as one	PH 178	CD7/19
•	Wake now my senses	PH 181	CD6/17
•	We are a gentle angry people	PH 182	
•	We have a dream	PH 191	CD8/20
•	When will the fighting cease?	PH 231	
•	With heart and mind	PH 218	CD8/24
•	Your life is good, is good, my friend	PH 220	

Readings

Litany for Planet and People

LEADER (L): "We come together in affirmation of the words of Hans Kung:"

PEOPLE (P): "There shall be no peace in the world, until there is peace among religions. There shall be no peace among religions until there is dialogue among religions."

L: "We come together in affirming both the uniqueness of each faith,"

P: "and the experience of the Holy which inspires all."

L: "We come together in affirming the oneness of life and of our planet,"

P: "and our prayerful acceptance or submission to The Reality in the present moment."

L: "We come together to be still and to sense gratitude within ourselves,"

P: "Compassion and Forgiveness that extends from Ourselves to others."

L: "We come together to act against the destruction and pollution of this planet, our home,"

P: "and the tragedies of economics, war and starvation."

ALL: "We come together to listen and to love."

used by permission of the Horsham Interfaith Forum, and the Rev. Richard Boeke

Mother's Day Proclamation by Julia Ward Howe*, 1870

Arise, then, women of this day! Arise, all women who have hearts, whether your baptism be that of water or tears!

Say firmly: "We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies. Our husbands shall not come to us, reeking with carnage, for caresses and applause. Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have taught them of charity, mercy and patience. We women of one country will be too tender of those of another to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs."

From the bosom of the devastated earth, a voice goes up with our own. It says, "Disarm, Disarm!"

The sword of murder is not the balance of justice. Blood does not wipe out dishonour, nor violence indicate possession. As men have often forsaken the plough and the anvil at the summons of war, let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day of counsel. Let them meet first, as women, to bewail & commemorate the dead. Let them solemnly take counsel with each other as to the means whereby the great human family can live in peace, each bearing after his own time the sacred impress, not of Caesar, but of God.

In the name of womanhood and of humanity, I earnestly ask that a general congress of women without limit of nationality may be appointed and held at some place deemed most convenient and at the earliest period consistent with its objects, to promote the alliance of the different nationalities, the amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace.

From Thoughts from a Prison Cell by Sidney Spencer

This issue of conscience is one that goes down to the very roots of civilisation, and one that affects the whole future of humankind. What kind of a world are we going to have after the war? Is it to be a world like the Prison - in which everything is determined mechanically, in which individual personality is completely submerged? Or is it to be a world based fundamentally on respect for human dignity and human freedom? Are material or spiritual forces to be supreme?

One thing is clear: that issue can never be decided on the battlefield. If spiritual and not material forces are to prevail, there must be a new uprising of life out of the very depths of the spirit. For myself I feel that the time I spent in my prison-cell was not lost, because it was a time of renewed consecration, of renewed devotion to the love of God. I was cut off from the world, but I was not cut off from the presence of God; I was not cut off from the fellowship of Christ. And there was born within me with fresh assurance the conviction that it is only through the deep inner contact of the soul within us with the divine and universal Love that we can find the renewal of life, not only for ourselves, but for humankind. There and there alone is the ground of hope and rebirth. I pray today (as I prayed in my prison-cell) that even now, amid the tragedy and darkness of a world at war, the Fire of the divine Love may be kindled in our souls - that the spirit of the living Christ may dwell in us, and may work through us to bring healing and redemption to the world."

New Zealand Quaker Peace Testimony, 1987 taken from Quaker Faith and Practice, 24.10

This is a public statement made at a time when many New Zealand Friends were making submissions to a committee established by their government to review defence policy. It is a marvellous peace testimony.

"We totally oppose all wars, all preparation for war, all use of weapons and coercion by force, and all military alliances: no end could ever justify such means.

We equally and actively oppose all that leads to violence among people and nations, and violence to other species and to our planet.

Refusal to fight with weapons is not surrender. We are not passive when threatened by the greedy, the cruel, the tyrant, the unjust.

We will struggle to remove the causes of impasse and confrontation by every means of non-violent resistance available.

We urge all New Zealanders to have the courage to face up to the mess humans are making of our world and to have the faith and diligence to cleanse it and restore the order intended by God.

We must start with our own hearts and minds. Wars will stop only when each of us is convinced that war is never the way.

The places to begin acquiring the skills and maturity and generosity to avoid or to resolve conflicts are in our own homes, our personal relationships, our schools, our workplaces, and wherever decisions are made.

We must relinquish the desire to own other people, to have power over them, and to force our views on to them. We must own up to our own negative side and not look for scapegoats to blame, punish, or exclude. We must resist the urge towards waste and the accumulation of possessions.

Conflicts are inevitable and must not be repressed or ignored but worked through painfully and carefully. We must develop the skills of being sensitive to oppression and grievances, sharing power in decision-making, creating consensus, and making reparation.

In speaking out, we acknowledge that we ourselves are as limited and as erring as anyone else. When put to the test, we each may fall short.

We do not have a blueprint for peace that spells out every stepping stone towards the goal that we share. In any particular situation, a variety of personal decisions could be made with integrity. We may disagree with the views and actions of the politician or the soldier who opts for a military solution, but we still respect and cherish the person.

What we call for in this statement is a commitment to make the building of peace a priority and to make opposition to war absolute.

What we advocate is not uniquely Quaker but human and, we believe, the will of God. Our stand does not belong to Friends alone – it is yours by birthright.

We challenge all New Zealanders to stand up and be counted on what is no less than the affirmation of life and the destiny of humankind.

Together, let us reject the clamour of fear and listen to the whisperings of hope."

Peace by Lao Tse, author of the Tao Te Ching

If there is to be peace in the world
 There must be peace in the nations.
If there is to be peace in the nations
 There must be peace in the cities.
If there is to be peace in the cities
 There must be peace between neighbours.
If there is to be peace between neighbours
 There must be peace in the home.
If there is to be peace in the home,
 There must be peace in the heart.

The End and the Beginning by Wislawa Szymborska

After every war
someone has to clean up.
Things won't
straighten themselves up, after all.

Someone has to push the rubble
to the side of the road,
so the corpse-filled wagons
can pass.

Someone has to get mired
in scum and ashes,
sofa springs,
splintered glass,
and bloody rags.

Someone has to drag in a girder
to prop up a wall.
Someone has to glaze a window,
rehang a door.

Photogenic it's not,
and takes years.
All the cameras have left
for another war.
We'll need the bridges back,

and new railway stations.
Sleeves will go ragged
from rolling them up.

Someone, broom in hand,
still recalls the way it was.
Someone else listens
and nods with unsevered head.
But already there are those nearby
starting to mill about
who will find it dull.

From out of the bushes
sometimes someone still unearths
rusted-out arguments
and carries them to the garbage pile.

Those who knew
what was going on here
must make way for
those who know little.
And less than little.
And finally as little as nothing.

In the grass that has overgrown
causes and effects,
someone must be stretched out
blade of grass in his mouth
gazing at the clouds.

(shared by Gillian Peel via Facebook group 'The God Article')

***If This Is A Man* by Primo Levi**

You who live safe in your warm houses,
You who find, returning in the evening,
Hot food and friendly faces:
 Consider if this is a man
 Who works in the mud
 Who does not know peace
 Who fights for a scrap of bread
 Who dies because of a yes or a no.
Consider if this is a woman,
Without hair and without name
With no more strength to remember,
Her eyes empty and her womb cold
Like a frog in winter.

Meditate that this came about:
I commend these words to you.
Carve them in your hearts
At home, in the street,
Going to bed, rising;
Repeat them to your children,
 Or may your house fall apart,
 May illness impede you,
 May your children turn their faces from you.

Children's Story

How the Colours Made Peace with Each Other

by Bill Darlison, adapted by Kate McKenna

(Note from Kate McKenna: "I gave each of the children taking part a postcard with one colour on, then a really muddy one for the bit where they get mixed up, then gave them a long scroll to unwind between them when they realised they could be pretty").

Once upon a time, there were seven colours. They were all perfectly happy living by themselves, on little bits of card – and actually, they didn't really think much of any of the other colours. Each of these colours had their own names. Six of the names were easy: there was red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The last one was called indigo.

Now, each of these colours thought they were just great. Whenever they came near to each other, they quarrelled about which was the most important colour.

Green said "Well duh! I'm the most important colour! I'm the colour of life and hope! I'm the colour of grass and trees and new beginnings. I'm the colour of the whole of the countryside! I'm the most important colour!"

But Blue wasn't having that. She said "That's nonsense! I'm far more important! I'm the colour of the sky and the water and without water everything would die. I'm the most important colour!"

And Yellow said "Oh, you're all so serious! I'm the colour of fun and laughter and giggling. I'm the colour of sunflowers and the sun and the moon. I make people smile! I'm the most important colour!"

And then Indigo piped up: "I'm subtle! I'm the colour of peace and reflection and silence and thoughtfulness. If it wasn't for me, you'd all go mad with busyness! I'm the most important colour!"

And then Purple started, as well: "I'm the colour of kings and important things and majesty and ceremonies and royalty! People listen when I talk! I'm the most important colour!"

And Orange said "You're all wrong! I'm the colour of lots of fruit and vegetables and that's where you get vitamins from! I'm healthy and cheerful! I'm the colour of the sunrise! Without the orange sunrise it would always be night time! I'm the most important colour!"

And finally Red got angry. "You're so stupid! I'm the colour of blood, and blood gives us life. I'm the colour of danger and warning and road safety and fighting and force. I'm definitely the most important colour!"

And then it started to rain. And the colours started to run around in a panic. And they all got in a terrible muddle. And you know what happens when colours get in a muddle? They can end up looking much less nice than they did before.

In fact, they ended up looking like: this. (unroll the scroll)

But then the rain spoke to them. "You silly, silly things!" it said! "Stop fighting, stop trying to make yourself sound more important than each other! You were all designed for different things, and you're all needed for your own purposes. If you work together, you won't need to be that muddy brown colour . . . if you work together . . .you can make a . . . RAINBOW."

And from then on – the colours stopped squabbling, started working together, and, every so often, when it rained on a sunny day, they got together to make a beautiful display in the sky to remind everyone about peace and co-operation."

Prayers

The International Prayer for Peace

The words of this prayer, adapted from the Upanishads, were used by Mother Teresa in 1981. She urged everyone of all faiths to use the peace prayer daily at noon.

Let us join together in prayer:

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth.
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

Lord make me an instrument of Thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

Attributed to Francis of Assisi

Eternal God, Eternal Ruler
Who makes peace and creates all things;
Help all of us, that we may ever adhere to the concept of peace,
So that true and abundant peace prevail between man and man, between husband and wife,
And no strife separate humanity even in thought.
You make peace in your heavens, you bring contrary elements harmoniously together;
Extend abundant peace to us and to the whole world,
So that all discords be resolved in great love and peace and with one mind and one heart all
come near to you and your law in truth,
And all form one union to do your will with a whole heart.
Eternal God of peace, bless us with peace. Amen

Nahman of Bratzlav

May the spirit of compassion help us to feel the suffering of the peoples and all creatures of the world.

May the spirit of love melt the cold heart that trample on human rights.

May the spirit of beauty help us to preserve the unique splendours of each country.

May the spirit of wisdom help us to treasure the mystical insights of all religions.

May the spirit of patience and endurance strengthen those who are oppressed and exiled from their homes.

May the spirit of courage strengthen those who speak for those who have no voice.

May the spirit of Nonviolence bring healing peace and justice to all the people's of the world.

May the spirit of unity help us to recognise people of every nation as brothers and sisters and our unity with all creation.

Amen.

Marcus & Mary Braybrooke

Note: All religious traditions have written prayers for peace. Many more are included in the extended version of this Worship Pack, which may be found on the GA website.

Meditation / Reflection

***A Meditation on the Prayer for Peace by Liz Birtles
from *Voices for Peace* (adapted with permission)***

Lead me from Death to Life from Falsehood to Truth,

There are dark and painful times
when I know a dying inside,
a dying of the soul perhaps,
when all my spiritual energy is drained,
when I have nothing left to give,

I need to find the strength
to move from these times
to choose life, to affirm life,
to begin to feel
once again fully human, fully alive.

There are sad and painful times
when I cannot be wholly honest,
when I am too weak to be willing to speak out,
when I compromise my feelings rather than face a person honestly,
when I 'fudge', and blur lines which I know to be clear and straight.

I need to find the strength
to hold on tightly to what I know is true,
to speak the truth even though I risk hurting others,
to be more open and honest even though I risk being hurt.

Lead me O God towards Life and Truth.

Lead me from Despair to Hope from Fear to Trust,

There are dark and painful times
when I am filled with despair,
I sit in meetings where people do not listen to each other
or I hear politicians mouthing empty words about things for which I care deeply,
and I realise my powerlessness and I am overwhelmed by despair.

I need to have my hope rekindled,
to share with others in the sowing of seeds of hope,
to work with others in nurturing hope,
to witness with others the growing signs of hope,
to carry with me a strong vision of hope.

There are dark and painful times
when I am filled with fear,

I stand and witness for peace
close to the razor wires of a military base.
close to the silos which hold the weapons that are
able to destroy our world and I am overwhelmed by fear,

I need to break through the frozenness of my fear,
to help others break through the many different barriers of fear.
I need to be trusted, and I need to find the simple trust of the child
who puts her hand into mine
I need to be willing to risk reaching out to the soldier behind that wire,
willing to risk my trust.

Lead me O God towards hope and trust.

Lead me from Hate to Love from War to Peace.

There are sad and painful times
when my despair and anger become hate.
When the Government orders a peaceful site of protest demolished,

I found myself so angry that I hated the men who had done it.
It is hard some times not to hate
those whose views and actions are different from mine,
whose views and actions fill me with fear, despair and anger.

I need to find the strength to turn away from hating towards love.

I need to open my heart
to the pervading power of the loving spirit that connects all people.
Although I may disagree with the views and actions of the politician or the soldier,
I need to respect, to cherish and to love the person.

These are dark and painful times
when the inevitability and the imminence of the threat may lead to war.

I have not experienced war,
but I have known conflict and the paralysis of fear in the face of conflict.

At the moment when I am confronted with violence
I need to unfreeze my heart and mind,
to allow peace to enter in,
for hope and trust to be reborn.
I need to be empowered by that of God in me.

Lead me O God towards Love and Peace.

Let Peace fill
our heart,
our world,
our universe.

Peace begins with me.

I must start with my own heart and mind.
I need to practise the skills necessary for living
in a world at peace, the skills needed to avoid or resolve conflicts.
The place to begin my work is in my own home,
in my personal relationships, in my place of work, in my church.

Peace begins with me

and works outward,
nurtured by the pervading power of the loving Spirit
which connects all people.

Lead me O God.

Material for Possible Use in the Address

***The Joshua Stories* by John Philip Carter**

(Note from John Carter: "These stories are based on real events, they can be used together or separately, within the address/sermon or as a reading. I have included a moral for when using a story as a sermon illustration in brackets [...]")

Story 1:

There once were two boys, Joshua and Richard, who loved playing the games boys love to play.

In the case of these two boys, the game they most often played was Cowboys and Indians. They ran through the town, their neighbourhood and their houses, using their fingers, for both mothers refused to allow them toy guns, as guns. Shooting each other with a "bang bang you're dead."

One early December morning when Joshua's Grandmother was visiting, they ran into the kitchen where she was cleaning up after the noon meal. She looked down at the two smiling faces looking up at her.

"What are you playing?" she asked, and her toe headed grandson proudly replied, "Cowboys and Indians, and I am the Indian!"

With that said he went running into the sitting room whooping as he did, and his friend chased after him.... "bang bang you're dead", "No I am not" "Yes you are!"

She smiled, that secret smile that all grandmothers have, and shook her head in wonder at the joy of young children.

After a moment of such grandmotherly contemplations, she broke out with a loud chuckle as she realised that while her little blond headed grandson was playing the Indian it was the fact her grandson's best friend, Richard was playing the cowboy, and that he was a Navajo Indian.

[Seeing beyond cultural differences is central to the spirituality of peace. It focuses us on seeing people for who they are and not as issues, objects or stereotypes.]

Story 2:

It was a warm October day when Joshua heard this news item....

A gun man walked into a one room school house today and after allowing several women and all the boys to leave, he barricaded the room and after a few hours standoff with the local police he shot 10 young girls, killing five of them before turning the gun and killing himself.

Over the weeks that followed Joshua was puzzled by the responses to this incident that he heard.

There have been many responses, and much judgment of the way that the community of the victims responded...all forgot or simply didn't notice the spirituality or spiritual centre of this community. Judging the Amish to be inferior and naive in their response.

What the wider community found most bewildering is that the night of the shootings the elders of the Amish community came to the family and the widow of the gun man and visited with her and them. It was reported that they simply wanted to let her know was that "we will forgive".

What wasn't reported was that as they sat and spoke, one of the elders held the gun man's father in his arm as the man cried over what his son had done, that they offer to help the family in what ever ways they could, without limitation. And that the only non-Amish person invited to the funerals was the widow.

All this was done because the Amish decided that "we will forgive."

[The will to forgive is central to the spirituality of peace. It focuses on stopping the cycle of violence but choosing to behave and respond without violence.]

Story 3:

It was small ministry for which Joshua worked. They went out on a nightly basis to offer assistance to the night time community on the streets of northern Chicago. He always joked that what they offered were the four Cs. Coffee, cookies, condoms and Christ. But they gave more than that, sandwiches, counselling, medical check ups and conversations.

One night as he was giving out a cup of coffee with a sandwich and some cookies, biscuits if you will, the young man at the door asked him if they could talk.

So he stepped off the bus, and joined Joe a few steps away from the crowd.

They spoke for a while about sports, work, and other items, when Joe with slight embarrassment asked "Will you bless me Father?"

How many times had he heard this request and he knew that no matter how much he said he wasn't a Catholic Priest but a simple Unitarian minister they saw him as the religious authority of their childhood.

So with a smile, Joshua gave this simple blessing.

"Joe, you are indeed blessed, be at peace."

[The ability to bless is central to the spirituality of peace. It focuses us on the desire for the best in all we met and know.]

Story 4:

A year after Joshua began his studies for ministry, he was invited to join a delegation going to a small war torn country.

Now this country had made the government of Joshua's country angry. A couple of years earlier they overthrew the dictator who had ruled their country with an "iron fist". That is this man used violence, murder, distrust, imprisonment and economic repression, that is he stole their produce so they couldn't live or eat.

The dictator was a real nasty man.

It was said that the President of Joshua's home once said of this man...

"He may be a horrible dictator, but he is our horrible dictator."

After the initial shock of these people actually getting rid of this man, the surviving supporter of his and his government decided to have a counter revolution. They wanted to bring him back.

Joshua's country decided to support this action through various activities both legal and illegal.

So Joshua decided to join with 15 other people to go to this country.

They went and worked with an organisation of religious people called "Witness for Peace".

They were there to simply witness the violence being done by these "contras" against the population of the country.

They went to a small town on the northern border of the country where most of the violent actions were happening.

They all went and lived with various families, getting to know them, and the area. They also worked in the fields, attended worship and other community events alongside these families.

When their time of service had ended and they were preparing to return home, the town where they had lived and worked threw them a going away party.

They all ate a lovely meal and then the speeches began.....all thanking them for coming and the help they gave, but mostly for caring enough to simply be there with them.

As Joshua listened to the speeches he noticed the youngest daughter of his local family come over to him with her arms wide open. He lifted her in his arms and she immediately snuggled into him and before he knew she was fast asleep. She slept through all the noisy celebratory speeches, music and activities. Only to awake as they made their way home, much to the approving looks and comments of the women of the village.

Joshua only noted the feeling he received from the trust she gave him by sleeping in his arms for the evening.

[The willingness to go into dangerous situations to witness to the truth is central to a spirituality of peace, but more importantly is being a place of safety for a child is central to spirituality and to peace.]

Closing Words / Benediction

May there be peace in the higher regions; may there be peace in the firmament; may there be peace on earth. May the waters flow peacefully; may the herbs and plants grow peacefully; may all the living powers bring unto us peace. The supreme Lord is peace. May we all be in peace, peace and only peace; and may that peace come unto each of us. Shanti, shanti, shanti.

from the Hindu Vedas

May the blessing of peace be ours and
may the unity of love enfold us on whatever roads we travel,
As we depart this place, may we remember what we have shared here and use this
fellowship of compassion and peace to sustain and nurture us.
And may our prayers of peace today help heal us, and our wounded world.
Amen

Christina Smith

Our time together is ended,
we have heard that ancient call to be a people united
 in love, in peace, in joy;
to be a people of vision, seeing a world
 where peace and justice rule
 where all are welcomed and celebrated
 where love governs.

we have heard this vision,
and now, we go forth to make it our reality. amen.

John Philip Carter

Useful Resources:

Books and Printed Resources:

Braybrooke, Marcus, 1000 World Prayers. O Books, 2003.

Unitarian Pamphlets, Sidney Spencer addresses, collections held at Harris Manchester College, Oxford Library.

Internet Sites:

Unitarian and Free Christian Peace Fellowship: www.ukunitarians.org.uk/peace

Unitarian Universalist Peacemakers: www.uupeacemakers.org

Unitarian Fellowship for World Peace: www.ufwpeace.org

On Earth Peace: www.onearthpeace.org

'Souled Out' Peace Prayers: www.souledout.org/newworldreligion/worldprayers/peaceprayers.html

Suggested Order of Worship

The following structure is offered as a possible outline order of worship which you may wish to use as a framework when creating your service for the Unitarian Day of Prayer for Peace.

Gathering: *(first movement of worship)*

PRELUDE:

CHALICE LIGHTING: *(without words)*

WORDS OF WELCOME:

CHALICE LIGHTING: *(with words)*

OPENING WORDS:

PRAYER:

HYMN:

Listening: *(second movement of worship)*

REFLECTION ON THEME:

READING:

HYMN:

READING:

REFLECTION ON READINGS:

HYMN:

ADDRESS / SERMON:

Responding: *(third movement of worship)*

REFLECTION & PRAYERS:

REFLECTION

PRAYER

COLLECTION:

NOTICES:

HYMN:

CHALICE OUTING: *(with words)*

CLOSING WORDS / BENEDICTION:

CHALICE OUTING: *(without words)*

POSTLUDE:

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John Carter

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