

TREE OF LIFE: MAKING PEACE WORK
A SERVICE WITH PRAYERS FOR HEALING

(As you enter please take a tag and write a prayer for peace - for personal healing or someone/somewhere in the world; place tags on the tree before or during the service.)

WELCOME & community announcements

INTRODUCTION

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We come in worship to God.

We come in our need, bringing with us the needs of the world.

We come to God who comes to us in Jesus,

And who knows what human life is like.

We come with our faith and with our doubts.

We come with our hopes and with our fears.

We come as we are, because it is God who invites us to come,

And God has promised never to turn us away.

SONG *Abide with Me* *UMH 700

PRAYERS OF APPROACH

We are here, God. We have felt your touch in the sunlight and seen your power in the winter storms. We have wondered at your mystery in the stars and we marvel that the Maker of the universe knows us by name. We are here, God.

We are here to praise and worship you.

We are here, Jesus. We know that you have come to find us. We have listened to your words. We have felt the warmth of your love, and we thank you that you have called us friends. We are here, Jesus.

We are here to praise and worship you.

We are here, Holy Spirit. We are grateful for your presence and for the ways you bring us closer to you, for the way you comfort us and challenge us. We are here, Holy Spirit.

We are here to praise and worship you.

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE FOR LIVING IN PEACE: *Romans 12:1-21*

Left: Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;

Right: Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but do what is noble in the sight of all.

If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

ALL: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

SONG *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace* *TFWS 2171

WORDS FOR HEALING (with music playing while hanging prayers on the tree)

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE FOR HEALING

LEADER: The LORD gives strength and blesses the people with peace. (Psalm 29:11)

ALL: I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.
(Psalm 4:8)

LEADER: Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He sent out his word and healed them. (Psalm 107:19-21)

All: I said, "Have mercy on me, LORD; heal me, for I have sinned against you. (Psalm 41:4)

LEADER: He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds. (Psalm 147:3)

All: But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.
(Isaiah 53:5)

LEADER: LORD, you establish peace for us; all we have accomplished you have done for us.
(Isaiah 26:12)

All: I will listen to what the LORD will say, the One who promises peace to the people and all the saints— but let them not laugh it off. (Psalm 85:8)

LEADER: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace. (Romans 15:13)

All: Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance. (Jude 1:2)

PRAYERS FOR HEALING

(lifting the prayers of the people... followed by petitions)

Hear our prayers, O God. Send your healing, in your grace, with your mercy...

We are your people, O God, in this time and place you have called us to pray for peace and healing. Through the living waters of baptism and the healing waters of your tears, we pray for those close to us and far away -

Hear our prayers, O God. Send your healing, in your grace, with your mercy...

We pray for the people and places or situations we have written on our cards -

Hear our prayers, O God. Send your healing, in your grace, with your mercy...

We pray for those who are in pain or distress or trouble; for all who are in need of healing -

Hear our prayers, O God. Send your healing, in your grace, with your mercy...

We pray for ourselves, O God, you know each one of us by name. Make us into the people you call us to be, and when that is too much, reassure us of how much you love us -

Hear our prayers, O God. Send your healing, in your grace, with your mercy...

Amen.

SONG *Great is Thy Faithfulness* *UMH 140

****GOING FORTH***

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A Work of Peace – idea from United Church of Canada

This idea works best with a small congregation, home group or youth group, etc.

Theme: based on the Beatitude in Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God". The Message version of the same verse is: "You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family." The idea is to put Jesus' message into action and get people to cooperate together to create a work of peace as a collective prayer.

Before the session starts lay out a sheet on the floor. Draw the letters P E A C E (each one A4 size) on the pages of an old magazine or newspaper and cut them out. Lay the letters on the sheet. Download and print out the Bible verse above and put a few copies around the sheet. Explain the theme of the activity to the group, or if using as a silent prayer station, print an instruction sheet and place near the station.

Ask people to write, draw, collage, etc, a prayer for peace on a subject of their choice. It could be a world issue or something going on locally or in their own life. It could be a poem or just a list, a cartoon or a collection of newspaper headlines ... the choice is theirs.

After about 20 minutes ask everyone to put their 'works of peace' onto the sheet, to form one collective work of peace.

Get people to spend some time looking at what other people have done, then ask each person to choose one of the subjects to pray about (either out loud or silently).

Some online worship resources:

United Church of Canada/united-church.ca

engageworship.org

sjbrown58.wordpress.com

ionabooks.com

**SATURDAY WORSHIP & PRAISE: EUCHARIST AFTER EPIPHANY
PEACE & HEALING IN THE TREE OF LIFE**

Welcome & community announcements

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

In the midst of hunger and war

We celebrate the promise of plenty and peace

In the midst of oppression and tyranny

We celebrate the promise of service and freedom

In the midst of doubt and despair

We celebrate the promise of faith and hope

In the midst of sin and decay

We celebrate the promise of salvation and renewal

In the midst of hatred and death

We celebrate the promise of love and life

***PRAYER**

Lord, we do not pray for easy lives, we pray to be stronger people.

We do not pray for a calling equal to our skills,

We pray for skills equal to our calling,

that we may stand together for life in the midst of death. Amen.

***SONG**

I Need Thee Every Hour

UMH 397

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Genesis 2:9-10

Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, *the tree of life* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Revelation 22:1-5

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is *the tree of life* with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

THE TREE OF LIFE

ANOTHER SURVIVOR TREE

(ref. Tree of Life Synagogue, Pittsburgh 2018; The Survivor Tree, NYC 2001)

COSSO CHOIR

"GREATER"

(CCLI Song #7020475)

**HOLY COMMUNION FOR SEASON APPROACHING LENT
(8th Sunday after Epiphany)**

***SONG**

It Is Well with My Soul

UMH 377

***BLESSING**

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*As you leave today, please take a tag from the tree and use it in your prayers this week or sometime before we return in March. Be aware of the healing power of prayer even as someone is praying for you.*