

Litany for Peace

One: From words and deeds that provoke discord, prejudice, and hatred,

All: O God, deliver us.

One: From suspicions and fears that stand in the way of reconciliation,

All: O God, deliver us.

One: From believing and speaking lies about other peoples or nations,

All: O God, deliver us.

One: From cruel indifference to the cries of the hungry and homeless,

All: O God, deliver us.

One: From all that prevents us from fulfilling your promise of peace,

All: O God, deliver us.

One: Deliver us from our brokenness, we pray, O God,

All: and by your grace and healing presence deliver us to You.

One: To still waters and green pastures,

All: O Creating God, deliver us.

One: To the freedom and forgiveness we find in you,

All: O Risen Christ, deliver us.

One: To the tough task of loving our enemies,

All: O Jesus, deliver us.

One: To joyful service in your name,

All: O Servant of All, deliver us.

One: To the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, to the wholeness of justice,
to the power of your peace,

All: O Holy Spirit, deliver us now and in the days to come.

Closing Prayer

Charge our lives and our churches with the power of your peace, O God. Overcome our fears and self-deceptions with the promise of your presence. Make us signs of your generosity and justice. Light us each day with hope, we pray, so that we may walk in your truth and be love in your Name. Amen.

Litany and prayer prepared by the DOV (Decade to Overcome Violence) US Committee



September 1, 2004. Words: Malinda E. Berry, PJSN Reference Committee member. Graphic design: Cynthia Friesen Coyle, PJSN volunteer. Peace Advocate office: SusanML@MennoniteUSA.org, 330-683-6844. Many prayers are available on our website, <http://peace.MennoLink.org>.



“International Day of Peace”

Background

The International Day of Peace, established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly, was first inaugurated on the third Tuesday of September, 1982. Beginning on the twentieth anniversary in 2002, the UN General Assembly set September 21 as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace.

The intention of this special day is to have the entire world observe an entire

day of peace and nonviolence. An ever-expanding number of people worldwide, representing many cultures and from many walks of life, participate in this global 24-hour spiritual observance for peace, demonstrating the power of prayer in promoting peace and preventing violent conflict. Events in our communities also help raise public awareness of the International Day of Peace and directly support the UN's hope of a global ceasefire.

Ways to Get Involved and Make this Day Missional

- Ask your congregation to ring its bells for peace at noon on September 21.
- Be kind, forgiving, and compassionate in all relationships.
- Become involved in the UN International Decade for a Culture of Peace including “Hear the Children Day of Peace.” Visit <<http://www.cpnnew-england.org>> for more information about this project.
- Join people throughout the world in one minute of silence at noon on September 21 (and every day) in our common commitment to peace and nonviolence.
- Join with others to create a 24-hour, International Day of Peace Vigil.
- Participate in a Peace-Building project that is intergenerational and intercultural. Visit <<http://www.WeWantPeaceOnEarth.com>> for ideas.
- Plan a local event using schools, places of worship, libraries, parks, or municipi-

pal buildings to host events. Build partnerships within your community, involve children, spread the good news of the Jesus’ gospel of peace.

- Plant a tree to symbolize God’s call to Christians to be peacemakers with all of creation.
- Plant a Peace Pole or have a World Peace Flag Ceremony. Visit <<http://www.worldpeace.org>> for more information.
- Promote the day as one dedicated to nonviolence and global ceasefire.
- Ring a bell, light a candle, and say a prayer for peace and the victims of violence.
- Send friends, relatives, and colleagues electronic International Day of Peace greeting cards. Visit 123 Greetings: Greetings for the Whole Planet for some creative messages: <<http://www.123greetings.com/>>.
- Write letters of peace to your local newspaper inviting everyone in your community to support the International Day of Peace.



A wealth of websites and Internet resources can help you plan an International Day of Peace event in your congregation, school, or community. A place to begin is The International Day of Peace website: <<http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/>>. This website is provided by “Pathways To Peace,” which is part of the United Nations-designated Peace Messenger Initiative. It supports the International Day of Peace in service of a consortium of non-governmental organizations (including Mennonite Central Committee) in association with the United Nations Department of Public Information.

How one Mennonite community is observing this year’s International Day of Peace

New York City is truly a global village and September 21 is a day that we celebrate that fact. It is also a day that will forever be in the shadow of September 11. The latter is a day that reminds us New Yorkers of the fragility of our lives no matter who we are or where we come from. As Mennonites striving to be missional, our congregation is always on the lookout for ways we can seek the shalom of the city.

Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship is a congregation and community that includes Menno House, a house of hospitality and community living comprised of young adults living in the city, many of whom are students or service workers. Among the current residents is a group of voluntary service workers from France, Tanzania, and the United States whose assignments are with various non-governmental organizations at the UN-which is just twenty-three blocks north of Menno House-including the Mennonite Central Committee UN Office.

At Menno House, the residents have a practice of eating a weekly meal together on “Soup Tuesday.” This year, the International Day of Peace falls on a Tuesday, so our community is going to make Soup Tuesday a congregational gathering. After dinner, we will hear about the work the MCC UN Office is doing with those working for peace and nonviolence in Uganda.

We want to be part of the prayerful resistance to the forces of violence, evil,



The UN also encourages individuals and groups to support this worldwide initiative by committing to holding a 24-hour vigil on this day! Please register your commitment on the International Day of Peace Vigil website at <www.idpvigil.com>.



and destruction in the world. We are going to do that by lighting a candle, sharing a meal together, listening to the stories of those who live in fear and amidst bloodshed, remembering our own experiences of violence, and praying that God’s goodwill and desire for real, lasting cultures of peace continue to grow in us, in our faith community, in our city, and in our world.

We invite you to find ways to observe the International Day of Peace by connecting the work of people in your congregation with Christ’s call to peacemaking and the UN’s affirmation that prayer and spiritual practice are vital tools in bringing violent conflict to an end.