

Call to Prayer

Leader: We come together in this place to worship God whose way is good. God's creative power sustains the world; that is the love which enriches our own lives though we have often failed in our loving response. In Jesus Christ we can see the way to new life, in union with God by the power of Spirit in our hearts. The way of Christ is the way of love, joy and peace. We who try to walk in this way offer up to God our whole being in our presence here today.

As we begin this time together, we remember tonight in a special way, the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, its victims and survivors, and all those who continue to work for a world free once and for all of the threat of nuclear war.

Opening Prayer

- Side 1:** O God, tender and just,
the names of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
cut through our denial
that we are capable of destroying the earth
and all that dwell therein.
Forgive us - and help us to always remember.
- Side 2:** We must remember because this must never happen again.
We must remember because you would have us live
in harmony with each other,
seeing the joy of your creation in our
sisters and brothers.
- Side 1:** Holy God, God of all the ages,
lead us from death to life,
to the stockpiling of hope, and of possibilities, and of love
rather than the stockpiling of weapons,
or stones to throw, or of hate.
- Side 2:** We pray for the healing of the earth and of its peoples,
especially for our sisters and brothers
upon whom a nuclear rain poured down.
We pray too for those trapped in violence in Ukraine, Yemen,
Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and many other parts of our tortured planet.
- All:** Help us to imagine that another world is possible
and guide our actions towards the peace
you envision, the peace you have already given us.
In the name of the One who came so that we might have life,
and have it abundantly, we pray. Amen.

Leader: At approximately this exact moment in 1945, 8:15am on August 6th in Hiroshima, the first atom bomb is dropped by the United States from the Enola Gay. It will fall 6 miles in 43 seconds before exploding 2,000 feet above the city, killing that moment and in its aftermath hundreds of thousands of people. We invite you to kneel or stand in silence for the next 43 seconds as we contemplate that moment and pledge, “Never again!”

– Silence for 43 seconds –

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (2:2-5)

In days to come, the mountain of our God’s house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it. Many peoples shall come and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of God, that God may instruct us in God’s ways, and we may walk in God’s paths.” For from Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of God from Jerusalem. God shall judge between the nations, and set terms for many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again. Come, let us walk in the light of our God!

The word of our God.

R. Thanks be to God.

Litany of Repentance

R. Lead us to repentance.

Leader: For questioning the authority of Jesus’ teaching on the Cross... **R.**

Leader: For placing human standards above divine compassion, we pray... **R.**

Leader: For the moral blindness of our nuclear intention, we beg you... **R.**

Leader: For trusting in instruments of death to save us rather than in the power of the Living God, we beseech you... **R.**

Leader: For betraying Christ’s love by allowing hunger and violence that claim lives daily, we implore you... **R.**

A Reading from Pope John XXIII

“Excerpt from “Pacem in Terris” (Peace on Earth), nos. 112, 113, April 11, 1963

Lector: Nuclear weapons must be banned... Everyone must sincerely cooperate... But this requires that the fundamental principles upon which peace is based in today’s world be replaced by an altogether different one, namely, the realization that true and lasting peace among nations cannot consist in the possession of an equal supply of armaments but only in mutual trust.

All: We pray in the spirit of the great prophet Isaiah: may we work to disarm nuclear weapons. We pray to remember our call from Christ to be makers of peace and to become the children of God.

A Reading from Pope Francis

Excerpt from the Apostolic Address at the Peace Memorial in Hiroshima, November 24, 2019

Lector: With deep conviction I wish once more to declare that the use of atomic energy for purposes of war is today, more than ever, a crime not only against the dignity of human beings but against any possible future for our common home. The use of atomic energy for purposes of war is immoral, just as the possessing of nuclear weapons is immoral, as I already said two years ago. We will be judged on this. Future generations will rise to condemn our failure if we spoke of peace but did not act to bring it about among the peoples of the earth. How can we speak of peace even as we build terrifying new weapons of war?

All: We pray in the spirit of the great prophet Isaiah: may we work to disarm nuclear weapons. We pray to remember our call from Christ to be makers of peace and to become the children of God.

Prayer for Courage and Peace

R. Dona nobis pacem.

Shanthi, amani, salaam, shalom,
Y en la tierra paz.
Paix sur la terre, sekai no heiwa.
Grant us, O grant us peace.

R. Dona nobis pacem.

("Dona nobis pacem" chanted after each petition, followed by pause)

Reader 1: We pray for the courage to respond to Jesus' call to live nonviolently. **R.**

Reader 2: We pray for the courage and creativity to challenge the madness of U.S. nuclear weapons' policy. **R.**

Reader 3: We pray for the courage to question and challenge those things which oppress our sisters and brothers – poverty, violence, indifference... **R.**

Reader 4: We celebrate and encourage those who work for peace. **R.**

Reader 5: We pray that this conference on the 50th anniversary of Pax Christi USA will help us to root ourselves through prayer and reflection in the teaching of the nonviolent Jesus and that we may continue to witness to the peace of Christ in word and action. **R.**