

BRIEF SERVICE OF WORSHIP IN TIME OF UKRAINE-RUSSIAN WAR

BY DEREK WEBER

United Methodist Discipleship Ministries

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/brief-service-of-worship-in-time-of-ukraine-russian-war>

Hope for Those Who Face Enemies and Threats of Violence

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 27

SONG

"When We Are Called to Sing Your Praise," The Faith We Sing, no. 2216

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION OF THOSE UNDER THREAT

God of Love and Compassion: We have come to ask for your protection for a people and a nation invaded by the machinery of war. We pray for those who flee to safety with the most vulnerable, even as they tearfully leave behind husbands and wives, daughters and sons who choose to defend their country and their homes. As they face the myriad challenges and decisions that each day is destined to bring, may they be anchored by their faith, protected by your presence, and comforted by the knowledge that they are loved by you and by a world-wide community of support. We bless them in your name, and look forward to an end to this conflict, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 2:2-5

SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

PRAYER FOR OUR ENEMIES

O God of all nations, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: We confess it is difficult to find sympathy for the aggressor and compassion for the perpetrators of war crimes. Forgive our lack, loving God, and enable us to speak truth and for the world to hear truth. We pray for the victims in both countries – victims of propaganda as well as of violence. We pray the voices of a world inside and outside of Russia will not be silenced but allowed to know and to speak truth. So we pray for those we call enemy and ask that might lead them and us from prejudice to truth; deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SONG

"We Pray for Peace" A Hymn by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgoHc1CKTMg>

https://www.carolynshymns.com/we_pray_for_peace.html

Permission is given for free use of this hymn, including online.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all people and nations may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and forever. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS FOR UKRAINE

A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE FROM REV. BETH RICHARDSON, DEAN EMERITUS OF THE UPPER ROOM CHAPEL

God makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. ...
God breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
God burns the shields with fire.
God says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

Psalm 46:9-10 (NRSV)

God of peace,
Russia has invaded the Ukraine and war seems inevitable.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

God of wisdom,
Rain down your Spirit onto the leaders of the world
That they might find a way where there is no way.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

God of comfort,
Wrap the grieving ones in your cloak of consolation.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

God of courage,
Be present with all those who are in harm's way.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

Amen.

PRAYER FOR UKRAINE, BY KAYLA CRAIG

O God of peace, our hearts are heavy
And our brains can barely keep up with the breaking news.
We don't know what to say or what to do in a world so wounded.

So we come to you with hearts heavy for
All who sit in the crossfires of violence and acts of war.

O God of peace, be with the people of Ukraine.
With the mothers who carry babies to subway shelters.
With the fathers who hold their heads in their hands.
With the children who absorb the traumas.
Of violent acts of powerful men.

O God of peace, we don't know the words to pray
For a warring world and all who are vulnerable in it.
We don't pretend to know the extent of the damages
Or what tomorrow (or today) will bring.
But we know that you are a God of peace
And we can't bomb our way to shalom.

O God of peace, comfort the crying and heal the hurt.
Tend the aching and soothe the fearful.
Make us instruments of your peace
Creating a sacred symphony where
Rhythms of grace are danced upon
And evil has lost its sting, now and forevermore.

O God of peace, hear our prayer.

The National Council of Churches USA reiterates the call for peace and an end to Russian aggression and acts of war in the Ukraine. We lament the loss of life and the unnecessary suffering that is unfolding. We stand with the Ukrainian people and urge Russia to end this pointless and unwarranted conflict. We also recognize and stand in solidarity with those protesting in Russia to try to get their government to choose a different, peaceable course of action. The unrest, uncertainty and trauma this war will cause are immeasurable and will affect the entire global village. In this moment, we pray knowing God hears our cries:

Gracious and Merciful God,

We pray today for the Ukrainian people and ask for Your intervention in this senseless war levied against them by Russia. We pray, O God, for protection and that there would be peace. We pray for restoration and renewed hope. We pray for the families, especially, the children living through the horrors of war and all the upheaval and tribulation it brings. We also pray for those protesting in Russia against these violent acts by their government. We ask that You would protect, cover and keep these protesters as they put their bodies on the line in the name of what is just and righteous. We pray for the entire world community, including the leaders in our own country. Give them wisdom and ingenuity to respond in ways that ends this war and moves us all to a world where Your peace abides. Hear the cries of Your people, O God. Lord, have

mercy. Christ, have mercy. Amen.

National Council of Churches, <https://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/prayers-for-ukraine/>.

A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen

Archbishop Justin Welby, Archbishop Stephen Cottrell,
<https://www.archbishopofyork.org/prayer-ukraine>.

A PRAYER FOR PASSION SUNDAY 3 APRIL

God of all peoples and nations,
Who created all things alive and breathing,
United and whole,
Show us the way of peace that is Your overwhelming presence.
We hold before you the peoples of Ukraine and Russia,
Every child and every adult.
We long for the time
When weapons of war are beaten into ploughshares
When nations no longer lift up sword against nation.
We cry out to you for peace;
Protect those who only desire and deserve to live in security and safety
Comfort those who fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones
Be with those who are bereaved.
Change the hearts of those set on violence and aggression
And fill leaders with the wisdom that leads to peace.
Kindle again in us a love of our neighbour,
And a passion for justice to prevail and a renewed recognition that we all play a part in
peace.
Creator of all hear our prayer
And bring us peace. Make us whole.
Amen

Christian Aid, UK, <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/pray/prayer-ukraine>

A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE FROM THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Lord God,
We ask you to hold the people of Ukraine deep in your heart.
Protect them, we pray;
from violence,
from political gamesmanship,
from being used and abused.

Give, we pray,
the nations of the world the courage
and the wisdom
to stand up for justice
and the courage too,
to dare to care—generously.

Lord, in your mercy,
take from us all
the tendencies in us
that seek to lord it over others:
take from us those traits
that see us pursuing our own needs and wants
before those of others.

Teach us how to live in love
and dignity
and respect—following your example.
In your name and for your sake,
Amen

Issued by Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,
and the Very Rev. Dr. Susan Brown, convener of the Faith Impact Forum, Church of
Scotland, <https://united-church.ca/prayers/prayer-ukraine-church-scotland>.

A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE BY JOHN RUTTER

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJI3kVwl2-U>

A PRAYER IN THE FACE OF WAR

God of Peace,

We have run out of words. Our tears speak volumes as we watch the devastation, the death, the destruction. We don't know how to pray right now. We don't know how to hope any more. Peace seems impossible in a world as broken as this one. Reconciliation seems a vague dream in the face of such violence and aggression.

Yet we are moved by the resilience of a people. We are stunned by the resistance of those who seem overpowered. We are heartened by the stories of generosity and

hospitality by those who also have much to lose if the war were to escalate. Time and again we see those who put safety aside to act out of kindness, and we are emboldened.

So, God who grieves and who weeps, teach us to pray again. To pray with hope. To pray with our hands and our resources as well as our words and our hearts. Teach us to hope enough to pray for peace even in the face of war. Teach us to trust in the resilience of the human soul and the grace of your Spirit and to pray without ceasing until we study war no more. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

Derek Weber, Discipleship Ministries, April 2022