

This resource is provided to assist worshipping communities as they respond to the crisis in the Middle East. Several prayers are provided that could be used during the prayers of intercession or at other times, in public worship or for devotional use at home or in other settings. Learn more about [the ELCA's response to this crisis](#) and how you can support these efforts.

If a longer service of prayer is desired, consider using the "Service of Word and Prayer" as a guide (All Creation Sings, p. 42). The resources for lament in All Creation Sings (p. 61), may also be utilized. These resources are also available to subscribers of [sundaysandseasons.com](#).

Prayer of Lament

The following model for prayer adapted from All Creation Sings may also be contextualized locally. This prayer may be led at the baptismal font.

The leader begins the prayer.

Gracious God, by day and night we pour out our prayer to you.
We are crying out for justice, yearning for what is right, longing for your peace.
Come quickly to help us, O God; save those who call upon your name.

Specific laments are spoken. After each lament, the leader and people may say:

... and your people cry: **How long, O Lord?**

A time of silence may follow each lament and response.

These phrases may be used as models for statements of lament:

We hear of hateful violence and senseless killing . . .
We feel the sorrow, grief, and fear of all who are suffering . . .
We fear that justice will again be delayed or denied . . .
We recognize patterns of privilege and systems of discrimination . . .
We see your creation destroyed by carelessness and greed . . .
We know of the anguish and fear of our Muslim and Jewish neighbors . . .
We weep for the victims of . . .
We pray for an end to . . .
We long for a day when . . .
We remember the deaths of name/s . . .

The prayer concludes with these or similar words:

Gracious God, keep us working and praying for the day when your justice will roll down like waters, and your righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Replenish our strength and stir up our hope as we look for signs of your coming reign. And fill us with the peace that passes understanding—the deep peace of Jesus Christ our Savior, in whose holy name we pray.

Amen. (adapted from ACS p. 61, ©2018 Westminster John Knox Press. All rights reserved.)

Petitions for Prayers of Intercession

One or more of the options below could be included as part of the prayers of intercession. You may select and adapt as needed for your context.

Merciful God, our help in every trouble, we pray for peace in the Holy Land. Protect those traumatized by escalating violence, especially those with no access to safe spaces; release people held hostage; provide food, water, fuel, and supplies for all in need; sustain medical personnel as they work in horrendous conditions; tend to those who are wounded; comfort all who grieve.

Direct your people into the way of peace.

In your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

O God, as war in the Holy Land rages, we pray:

For all trapped by blockades...

For all living in fear of attack...

For all in need of basic necessities and their safe transport...

For those who are hospitalized and all who provide care...

For all who search for safety elsewhere and are separated from loved ones...

For children surrounded by confusion and chaos...

For those consumed by the lure of terrorism and control, that they are filled with compassion for all people...

For the difficult work of diplomats, world leaders, and international organizations in this prolonged conflict ...

For a desire to understand those of different faiths...

For all grieving those who have died...

Other intercessions related to the crisis in the Holy Land may be added.

In your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Holy One, your strength comes not by grasping power and might but is poured out in loving service. Support us with such strength to work for peace, to love our enemies, and to trust in your resurrection life even in the midst of pain and death.

In your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Additional Prayers

The following prayer from Latin America is provided in the original Spanish and adapted in English.

Oh, Señor, Dios de Vida,
que cuidas de toda la creación,
¡danos la paz!

O Lord, God of life,
as you care for all creation,
give us your peace!

Que nuestra seguridad no provenga de las armas
sino del respeto;

May our security come not from weapons,
but from respect;

que nuestra fuerza no sea la violencia
sino el amor;

may our strength come not from violence,
but from love;

que nuestra riqueza no sea el dinero
sino el compartir;

may our wealth come not from money,
but from sharing;

que nuestro camino no sea la ambición
sino la justicia;

may our path be one not of ambition,
but of justice;

que nuestra victoria no sea la venganza
sino el perdón.

may our victory not be one of revenge,
but of forgiveness.

Desarmados y confiados,
queremos defender la dignidad de toda la creación,
compartiendo, hoy y siempre,
el pan de la solidaridad y de la paz.

Unarmed and confident,
help us to defend the dignity of all creation,
sharing, today and always,
the bread of solidarity and peace.

Por Jesucristo, tu divino Hijo, nuestro hermano,
que, hecho víctima de nuestra violencia,
desde lo alto de la cruz,
dio a todos tu perdón. **Amén.**

Through Jesus Christ,
your divine Son, our brother,
who, made victim from our violence,
from high on the cross,
offered forgiveness to all. **Amen.**

—*Red Crearte, a liturgical network of Latin American Christians*

—*Vida en la tierra, Latin American Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (AIPRAL) 2006*

Topical Prayers

For Peace

O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (*ELW p. 76*)

Gracious and holy God, lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth. Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust. Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace. Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (*ELW p. 76*)
You calm and quiet us, eternal God, as a mother holds her children close; all people have refuge in the shadow of your wings. Spread over us the shelter of your peace. Hold before us the wisdom of your cross, where we are drawn to you not by might or power, but by your boundless love and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (*ACS, pg. 48*)

Holy God, out of your great love for the world, your Word became flesh to live among us and to reconcile us to you and to one another. Rekindle among us the gift of your Spirit so that we seek to live in unity with all people, breaking down the walls that divide, ending the hostility among us, and proclaiming peace to those who are near and to those who are far away; through Christ Jesus, in whom we all have access in the one Spirit to you, both now and forever. Amen. (*ACS, pg. 48*)

A prayer attributed to Francis of Assisi

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we 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. Amen. (*ELW, p. 87*)

Time of war

Eternal God, whose steadfast love never ends, we ask that you look upon the nations now engaged in war and hasten the day of peace. Look in mercy on those exposed to peril, conflict, sickness, and death; and show compassion to the dying. In your good providence, remove all causes and occasions of war. Incline the hearts of all people to follow the path to peace and concord, that war may cease and the day of reconciliation may come quickly, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (*Prayer Book for the Armed Services, p. 71*)

Time of Conflict, Crisis, Disaster

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (*ELW p. 76*)

God most mighty, God most merciful, our sacred stories tell us that you help and save your people. You are the fortress: may there be no more war. You are the harvest: may there be no more hunger. You are the light: may no one die alone or in despair. God most majestic, God most motherly, grant us your life, the life that flows from your Son and the Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (*ACS, pg. 49*)

Propers for the occasion of Peace (*ELW, p. 63*)

These propers could be used in a Service of the Word (ELW p. 210), Service of Word and Prayer (ACS p. 45), a Daily Prayer service (ELW pp. 295-331), or Holy Communion (ELW pp. 91-209, ACS pp. 7-41).

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, all thoughts of truth and peace come from you. Kindle in the hearts of all your children the love of peace, and guide with your wisdom the leaders of the nations, so that your kingdom will go forth in peace and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Oración del día

Todopoderoso Dios, de ti proceden todos los pensamientos de verdad y de paz. Enciende en los corazones de todos tus hijos el amor por la paz, y guía con tu sabiduría a los gobernantes de las naciones, a fin de que tu reino progrese en paz y la tierra se llene del conocimiento de tu amor, por Jesucristo, nuestro Señor y Salvador. **Amén.**

Readings and Psalm

Micah 4:1-5

Psalm 85 - *Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* (*Ps. 85:10*)

Ephesians 2:13-18

John 15:9-12

Suggested Hymns and Songs

“Our unity in Christ is reflected in our witness in music throughout the centuries and around the globe” ([Principles for Worship](#), M-14A). Consider singing these two songs as expressions of peace, one a Palestinian blessing and the other an Israeli folk song.

Yarabba ssalami (ACS 989)

Text and music: Palestinian traditional; translation: Mark Swanson and Mark Sedio.

This prayer for peace is best sung unaccompanied.

Approximate pronunciation of the Arabic:

yah-rah-bah sah-laa-mee, ahm-tehr ah-lay-nah sah-laam,

yah-rah-bah sah-laa-mee, im-nah koo-loo-bin-nah sah-laam.

[Link to a sample recording.](#)

Hine ma tov (ACS 1039)

Text: Psalm 133:1; Israeli traditional; music: Israeli traditional

Approximate pronunciation of the Hebrew:

hin-nay mah tohv oo-mah nah-’eem sheh-vet ah-keem gahm yah-khad.

[Link to a sample recording.](#)

Additional songs

ELW 247	Come Now, O Prince of Peace
ELW 325/TFF 66	I Want Jesus to Walk with Me
ELW 626	By Gracious Powers
ELW 632	O God, Our Help in Ages Past
ELW 642	Ubi caritas et amor
ELW 700	Bring Peace to Earth Again
ELW 704	When Pain of the World Surrounds Us
ELW 705	God of Grace and God of Glory
ELW 709	When Our Song Says Peace
ELW 711	O Day of Peace
ELW 713	O God of Ev’ry Nation
ELW 753	Dona nobis pacem
ELW 757	All My Hope on God Is Founded
ELW 773/TFF 193	Precious Lord, Take My Hand
ELW 887	This Is My Song
ACS 989	Let Your Peace Rain Upon Us / <i>Yarabba ssalami</i>
ACS 1023	God Alone Be Praised
ACS 1026	In the Midst of Earthly Life
ACS 1039	Hine ma tov
ACS 1051	For the Troubles and the Suffering / <i>Pelas dores deste mundo</i>
ACS 1052	When Our World Is Rent by Violence
ACS 1055	Ayúdanos, oh Dios / <i>Oh, Help Us, Save Us</i>
ACS 1085	Hope of the World
W&P 17	Beauty for Brokenness
W&P 95	Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

In addition to the hymns and songs suggested above, assembly song under the headings of “Hope, Assurance,” “Healing, Wholeness,” “Justice, Peace,” and “Lament” in ELW and ACS may be especially appropriate.

ELW: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
ACS: *All Creation Sings*
TFF: *This Far By Faith*
W&P: *Worship and Praise*

Resources

- 📖 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006.
- 📖 *All Creation Sings*: Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2020.
- 📖 *This Far By Faith*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999.
- 📖 *Worship and Praise*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999.
- 📖 *Sundays and Seasons*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. Print version published annually by church year.
 - 💻 Also available as an online subscription at www.sundaysandseasons.com.
- 📖 *The Book of Common Worship (2018 edition)*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Westminster John Knox Press, June 2018.

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Additional resources

- 📖 “For the Healing of the Nations,” Intercessory prayer for peoples, lands and nations based on Isaiah 65 and Revelation 21, pp 115-122. [*Holden Prayer Around the Cross*](#): Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. 2009. Other liturgies in this resource may also be fitting in your context.
- 💻 [ELCA Resources for the Middle East Crisis](#)

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