



Peacemakers, Lifegivers

Resources for Peace Sunday, 8 August 2021

“I am the bread of Life”, Jesus

John 6:35

When the world has lost so many people from Covid and disease, war and hunger, violence and disaster, let us turn our attention to what gives life and creates peace – for ourselves, for all people, for the planet. Peacemaking is lifegiving and a way of sharing God’s love for our world. Faith like bread sustains life.

In the Methodist/Presbyterian calendar Peace Sunday is the closest Sunday to 6 August, Hiroshima Day—this year 8 August. Anglicans recognise a Special Intention ‘For the Peace of the World’. These worship resources are based on the lectionary readings. Please join us in our prayer and commitment to make peace. Select the resources or adapt them for your worship together.

The French Government undertook 193 nuclear tests on the islands of Moruroa and Fangataufa between 1966 and 1996 (pictured above). The people continue to seek justice and compensation for the harm testing caused.

For more information, please contact us:

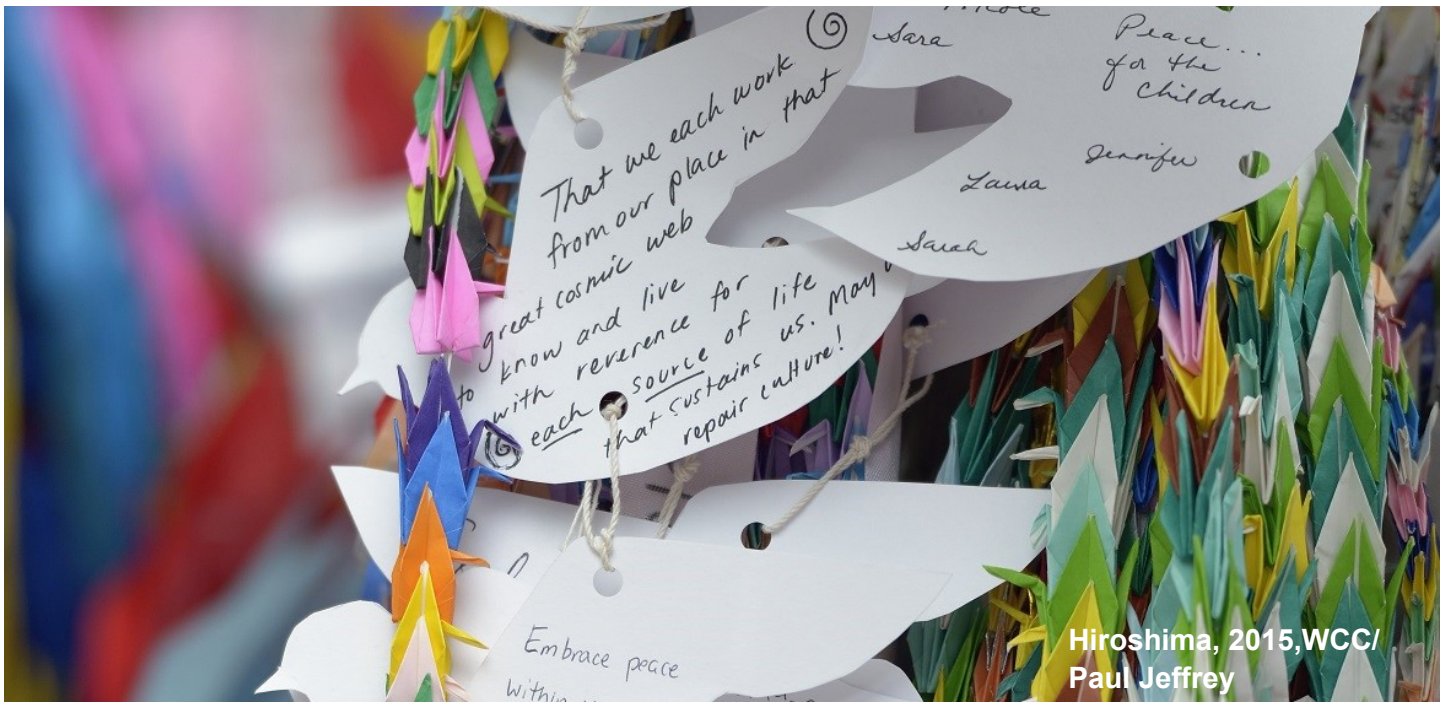
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Hiroshima, 2015, WCC/
Paul Jeffrey

“The first word of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ to his disciples was, “Peace”.”

Rev Dr Olav Fyske Tveit, Preses of the Church of Norway and former World Council of Churches' General Secretary.

On 6 August 1945 US forces dropped the first atomic bomb “Little Boy” on Hiroshima leaving 100,000 -180,000 people dead and 63% of buildings destroyed. Three days later a larger bomb “Fat Man” was dropped on Nagasaki leaving 50,000 -100,000 dead and 22.7% of its buildings consumed by fire.

Today we remember the men, women and children who lost their lives or were harmed at Hiroshima, Nagasaki and through nuclear testing. We pray for all people who have suffered the violence of war and for those who live in conflict zones.

Stories:

- “I was 13 years when I experienced the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, which took the lives of five of my family members.” Terumi Tanaka. He continues to campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Watch/read: https://rise.icanw.org/terumi_tanaka
- Other testimonies of *hibakusha* or eyewitness accounts of the bombing are available at: <http://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/>
- There are many resources to help remember the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two examples: <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/atomic-bomb-dropped-on-hiroshima> Or: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/6/newsid_3602000/3602189.stm
- March 2021 TV One News. Two young Syrian former refugees have gone into business in Newtown, Wellington. The news item gives a brief overview of the situation in Syria, followed by the stories of the two young men. <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/syrian-refugees-reflect-new-life-in-nz-but-memories-decade-long-war-remain> 3.05mins

RESOURCES

LECTIONARY READINGS — August 8

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15,31-33

The story of David provides an opportunity to explore the consequences of war. At a time when land and probably food were short, battles seemed the usual way to secure the survival of your family or tribe. The tensions within David's family were very great. Rape, intrigue, murder and power plays were common. Family members found support from dissenting groups in the newly centralised kingdom. After his eldest half-brother Amnon raped his sister Tamar, Absalom killed him. David sent Absalom into exile for three years.

In exile Absalom found support in Judah, the dissatisfied south of the new kingdom. He led an army that successfully took over his father's palace in Jerusalem. The victorious soldiers raped David's concubines—rape continues to be a weapon of war until this day. David fled with the remnants of his army and was able to rebuild sufficient force to retake the city. The final battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. David instructed his commanders to 'deal gently' with Absalom (v.5). The victory was decisive (v.7).

The forest proved treacherous for the fleeing Absalom who got caught in a tree "hanging between heaven and earth". Mindful of David's commands none of his troops would touch him until one commander, Joab thrust three spears into his heart (v.14,15). The war was won but no one wanted to tell David about the death of his favoured son.

When he heard Absalom had died, David was overwhelmed by grief. He fired Joab, showed mercy to his enemies and set about rebuilding a more stable kingdom.

Wars destroy life. It takes generations to recover what was lost and rebuild trust between people. Can you think of examples



Picturing Peace:

Make a Peace Tree. Ask people to form groups of 4-6 people to talk about actions or people who make peace. Give each person a large paper leaf and felt tip pens. Invite them to write down a name or sentence of a person or action that inspires us to share in the task of peacemaking. They may like to decorate their leaves.

After 5 minutes ask them to attach each leaf to the tree. Finish by sharing the peace.

Pass the Peace:

Another idea is to pass a peace ball. Find a large ball that is safe to throw inside. Pass the ball, challenging each recipient to share one way we can make peace—you could suggest places or situations like at home, in the workplace, at school, in the community and the world.



If people are engaged, you could do what could be a harder task: name the places where justice has been denied or where people are desperate for peace with another round of ball throwing.

where war has touched your life?

Psalm 130

This psalm sits alongside the story of a grieving David, confronted with his past sins and failures. It offers the hope of forgiveness and redemption through the steadfast love of God.

Ephesians 4:25-5:2

Here the writer of Ephesians a follower of Paul gives advice on how to strengthen community. His advice to not lie or tell falsehoods (v.25) or let the sun go down on anger (v.26). The text includes an interesting admonition to thieves, instructing them to work honestly so they can share with the needy (v.28) - the implication is that we all have such a responsibility.

In the same way David turned his life around after losing Absalom, we can choose to live a more truthful, calm and caring life together. When lies and deceit are common, this reading shows that truth is essential to our faith. As Christians we seek truth, looking beyond the surface answer for deeper knowledge and understanding.

How do we stand up for what is true? Think of some of the people who are remembered for standing up against falsehoods and lies. What did truth demand of them? What does it demand of us today?

John 6:35,41-51

The reading begins with what many in the crowd heard as an outrageous claim by Jesus, "I am the bread of life" (v.35). His listeners rejected his claim—they knew his parents (v. 42) and probably everything about him. In response Jesus looked back to those who had been that way before him: the prophets (v.45) and the actions of God (v.44).



In telling the story John added a new twist that made sense to the early Christians. In Jesus's time bread provided 50% of the calories for the peasant farmers. Made from barley it took 3 hours for the women to grind enough to feed a family of 5 or 6.

Jesus spoke of eating the bread that is central to the celebration of the Eucharist or communion. When we share bread, we are affirming all that gives life.

Jesus's claim to be the bread that will give life to the world (v.51) is a political statement pointing to a new way of living and the sharing of resources so that everyone has food.

How can we give life to the world? Think of some of the places where people do not have the food and water that are essential to life. What are some of the ways we can deliberately create peace where violence and danger threaten to engulf people?

FOR CHILDREN

You will need a loaf of bread on a plate, gluten free if you know people are gluten free and gloves or hand cleanser. Cover it with a cloth and begin by asking what might be under the cloth. Uncover it and ask if anyone knows who said "I am the bread of life". If they do not get it right, respond yes, but there was someone



else... If necessary say it was Jesus who said these words.

In saying these words, Jesus was saying we all need to be in touch with him every day just as we need bread every day. Jesus did not want anyone to go hungry. I am going to break this bread. Will you share a piece with everyone here today so we too can share the bread of life. Break up the bread and put some on small plates. Ask your new helpers to take a plate and share bread with whoever wants to eat.

MUSIC FOR WORSHIP

- *Singing from the Lectionary* is a lectionary - based song/hymn resource by Australian Natalie Sims, Brunswick Uniting Church in Melbourne. She suggests songs/hymns for each week of the year and also has these suggestions for peace: <http://lectionarysong.blogspot.com/2016/09/songs-for-international-day-of-peace.html>
- Christ is our Peace by Shirley Murray, Alleluia Aotearoa 16 .
- Make me a channel of your peace (Prayer of St Francis, various hymnbooks).
- Your Peace will Make us One Audrey Assad <https://youtu.be/GTQWSfzY2mw>

CALL TO WORSHIP, AFFIRMATIONS, PRAYERS

Loving God
In the dark of winter
We come as your people

Looking for light to guide us,
Searching for the bread of life,
Seeking the warmth of a world
where God's gifts are shared and everyone has
food to eat and water to drink.

**We come as we are, to find your
peace to share with each other
and the broken world.
Amen.**

Prayer for Peace

Compassionate God

You listen to the cries of your people, broken by
violence and grief.

You hear their pleas for an end to the suffering
that kills and maims people in the battle zone
and those who see war from afar.

You watch as people talk about ending war,
even as they manufacture its weapons and put
their interests ahead of the victims of war.

**Together we seek to make peace in our
broken world.**

We pray for the peoples of Afghanistan, the
Democratic Republic of Congo, Israel and
Palestine, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria, and
Yemen — caught in a cycle of fear and





suffering. May they find the light of peace in the tunnel of violence. May the message of care and compassion drown out the drumbeats of war and greed.

Together we seek to make peace in our broken world.

We pray for those who have lost loved ones, who have been injured, who lack food, shelter and medical care. We pray for the children and young people, men and women. We pray that leaders will turn away from talk of war and find new ways to make peace.

Together we seek to make peace in our broken world.

We remember the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who have transformed the harm they experienced from nuclear bombs into a testimony for peace. We pray for those people

who carry the damage of nuclear weapon tests in their bodies especially for the people of Maohi Nui. May justice be done and compensation made.

Match our prayers with action for peace.

Together we seek to make peace in our broken world.

We pray for all those who work to stop violence and war. Give us all strength and the resources to remake our world as a safe place for all. We pray now and always for peace.

**In the Name of the Prince of Peace.
Amen**

Closing Prayer—Celtic Blessing

Deep peace of the rolling waves to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you

Deep peace of the quiet earth to
you.
And may the peace of Christ, the
son of peace
Always be with you.
Amen

A POEM

No ordinary sun

Hone Tuwhare responded to the
threat of nuclear destruction with
his poem: No Ordinary Sun.
Watch and listen:
<https://youtu.be/qh6dpo9rM5E>

I Dream a World

I dream a world where man
No other man [one] will scorn,
Where love will bless the earth
And peace its paths adorn
I dream a world where all
Will know sweet freedom's way,
Where greed no longer saps the soul
Nor avarice blights our day.
A world I dream where black or white,
Whatever race you be,
Will share the bounties of the earth
And every man is free,
Where wretchedness will hang its head
And joy, like a pearl,
Attends the needs of all [hu]mankind -
Of such I dream, my world!

Langston Hughes



Take Action



CWS supports the international campaign for
nuclear disarmament: [http://
www.converge.org.nz/pma/gdams.htm](http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/gdams.htm)



Last year global military expenditure was more
than US\$1.981 billion - on average, more than
US\$5.42 billion every day - despite the Covid-
19 pandemic and escalating climate crisis.



ACT Alliance/ Paul Jeffrey

Last year, on average more than 14,246 children under the age of five died every day from mainly preventable causes - lack of access to adequate food, clean water and basic medicines. This is one of the prices paid - the collateral damage that is seldom talked about — for maintaining armed forces in a state of combat readiness around the world.

Here in Aotearoa New Zealand the government allocated NZ\$5,188,350,000 for military spending in the 2021 Budget— that's an average of more than \$99.7 million every week. This is in addition to the NZ\$20 billion announced in June 2019 to be spent over the next decade on increased combat capability, including new military aircraft and warships.

Read more: <http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/gdams.htm>

AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS

CWS supports the international campaign for a new treaty to ban fully autonomous lethal weapons or killer robots and legislation in our parliament.

An opportunity for you to have a say and help shape the future by sharing your views on a critical threat to humanity: killer robots, fully autonomous weapon systems with the ability to independently select targets and attack, without any meaningful level of human control.

The survey seeks your views on some of the significant ethical, moral, legal, technical and operational issues around killer robots, and what action should be taken. The survey is for all ages, with an opportunity for you to be part of a Youth Focus Group (if you are under 30 years old) to provide input directly to decision makers, and other opportunities for all to get involved.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/killerrobots>

More information: <http://stopkillerrobots.org.nz>



Maohi Lives Matter

In July, Maohi took to the streets of Papeete, Maohi Nui (Tahiti) and [Tamaki Makaurau](#) demanding French recognition and compensation for the 193 nuclear tests carried out on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls from 1966-1996.

The Maohi Protestant Church has provided support and leadership over decades, especially through the efforts of the late Rev John Doom who helped to form [Moruroa e Tatou](#).

Their demands:

- Recognise responsibility for the 30 years of nuclear testing
- Compensate the whole of Mā'ohi Nui who have carried the sanitary cost of contamination
- Repatriate the unstable nuclear waste buried under the atolls of Moruroa and Fangataufa
- Clean up both atolls
- Start the process of de-colonisation as stated in the 2013 resolution of the UN Charter

For more information, read Nic MacClellan's account: <https://insidestory.org.au/macron-memory-and-moruroa/>

CWS partner the Pacific Conference of Churches [supports](#) Maohi aspirations.



Photo: Yazidi boys returning from school in northern Iraq. ACT Alliance members have supported Yazidi and other displaced people for many years.

OPERATION REFUGEE

CWS invites you to join this year's [Operation Refugee](#) which runs from June 20 to October 24. It is an opportunity to show your concern for refugees and support the work of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon.

Funds raised will enable DSPR to provide more medical care, run education programmes for all ages and distribute emergency supplies for refugees from Iraq, Palestine and Syria in Jordan and Lebanon. DSPR welcomes everyone and makes sure the refugees themselves have networks of support and opportunities to learn new skills for their new situation.

There are two streams:

[Food for Life](#) involves organising a banquet or feast in homes or at church. This new initiative proved popular last year after the isolation of lockdown. Individuals may like to try living on the Food Box (equivalent to an emergency food package distributed in Jordan) or \$32 for five days or two days for students.

[Walk the Talk](#), emphasises the journey people who leave their homes make. Participants can set their own walking goal or organise a sponsored walk or similar event.



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