

# ***Peace Sunday 2012 Worship Resources***

## **“Making Every Effort to Maintain the Spirit of Unity in the Bond of Peace”** (Ephesians 4:3b)



### **Blessed are the Peacemakers**

Violence is something we live with on a daily basis. It can be felt as an unkind word, experienced as a physical injury or extreme hunger, or seen in spectacular actions of armed killers on the television screen. The threat of unexpected violence can mean we live in fear and insecurity, or the shock of violence in far flung places can stop us from understanding what life is like for people living in other places. Fear creates a barrier between peoples and can fuel further violence, prejudice and injustice.

For Christians, called to be peacemakers, violence creates an opportunity and a challenge. The opportunity is to express our faith through actions to end such violence. The challenge is to overcome the fear and discern the best action to take. Jesus talked often of peace. He affirmed the importance of peacemaking in the Beatitudes (Matt 5:9). Biblical *shalom* is peace with justice. Jesus, named the Prince of Peace, is concerned with the full spectrum of peace from the inner self to justice for the planet.

Promoting just peace in an age where there is increased competition over shrinking resources and a greater than ever capacity for violence requires renewed global action. In the Pacific peace remains a priority issue, especially for those countries seeking self-determination and dealing with the continuing damage from nuclear testing. Churches were very much part of the action that led to the nuclear free legislation being passed into New Zealand law twenty-five years ago this year. There is more to be done.

### **Peace Sunday**

This year Peace Sunday falls on August 5. We remember the terrible damage unleashed by the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima by a US B-29 bomber on August 6, 1945. Three days later another followed hitting Nagasaki on August 9. Images and testimony of those who witnessed and survived remind us of the magnitude of the human potential for destruction present in such technology. The testing of nuclear weapons has also created long term damage. Decades after the first nuclear test on Moruroa Atoll on 2 July, 1966, the workers are still seeking some compensation for the many cancers and health problems caused by the 193 tests on Maohi land. Moruroa E Tatou continues to campaign for fair compensation for the workers and their families through the courts. Cracks in the atoll pose continuing ecological hazards.



*More than 60% of Hiroshima was destroyed.*

### **Call to Worship**

When our world is twisted by greed and bruised by violence

**We come seeking signs of hope and healing,**

When our concerns have become inward and narrow

**We come seeking the Peace that passes understanding**

When our actions are small and our vision weak

**We come looking for you in friend and neighbour.**

**God, the Creator and Sustainer of All that is.**

**We come. Amen.**

### **Lectionary Readings**

*2 Samuel 11:26—12:13a*

Even David the most powerful ruler could not escape the consequences of his actions. Committing adultery with Bathsheba and then sending her husband Uriah into the front of the battle where he is killed are actions from which he will never recover. The story is there for all time and so is the dramatic denouncement by Nathan in today's reading. Nathan the prophet effectively tries David by story. He uses a parable of tribal law to show how David has abused his royal power in taking Uriah's life and his wife. David only realises its significance when Nathan turns it on him. David is not an absolute monarch, rather directly accountable to God. The violence of David's actions cannot be undone. Nathan's judgement (v11,12) warns that acts of violence will continue to cause great harm. His family will tear itself apart just as the abuse of government powers destroys community. David dies a lonely and broken man.

*Psalms 51:1-12*

Realising the damage he has done after the prophet Nathan visits him, David offers this psalm of penance to Yahweh. In verse 1 he raises the possibility of forgiveness even as he acknowledges the sin that he has committed against God. After confessing his sin, David appeals to be renewed with a clean heart and a right spirit (v10).

### *Ephesians 4:1-16*

The writer focuses attention on five distinguishing aspects of a Christian, humility, gentleness, patience, love for one another and the 'unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (v 3b). These essential virtues are not a soft option, rather they are a constant challenge in a world where the focus is more often on 'me'. It is on this foundation that the community of faith is built and will continue to grow even as it confronts the torn-apart and violent world in which we live. It is only together the community is equipped to deal with all manner of trickery and

deceitful scheming (v14). The vision of a body made strong by its search for love and unity in the bond of peace happens as we listen closely to the needs of the whole human family. When some live without peace or lack food and decent housing, action is needed for the sake of the whole body.

*John 6:24-35*

For Jesus the material needs of the people were important. The day before he had provided five thousand of his followers with (barley) bread —something that for most people of the time was limited in supply. It was not enough to be a miracle manufacturer of bread—Jesus had more on offer. He told them not to work for the food that perishes (v 27a) but for that which is eternal. He responds to the crowds very public challenge to his message by saying that the manna of Moses's time and the bread from heaven have the same source—they are all gifts from God. For Jesus bread was to be shared but so was the gift of life. The bread of God 'gives life to the world' (v 33b) - for people living at a bare subsistence level as they did in Jesus' time, these ideas were very closely linked. If we forget those who are hungry and the intention for the bread to be shared, we miss Jesus 'the bread of life' (v35).

***"Guide Our Feet in the Way of Peace"*** Luke 1:79

Tiles from Hamilton's Peace Wall.





## For Children

Perhaps you have some peace badges or nuclear free memorabilia or a historian who can talk about when your church became nuclear free or maybe a member who can tell a good story about the campaign against nuclear weapons. It has been 25 years and it is time to tell the story again. Alternatively you might like to tell the story of Sadako available at: <http://h2g2.com/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A302202> or make some peace cranes: <http://monkey.org/~aidan/origami/crane/index.html> For younger children a peace symbol may be sufficient.

## Prayer for Peace on Hiroshima Day

We remember the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as they remember the tens of thousands who lost their lives, their health and their homes from atomic bombs.

**R: We will work for peace**

We remember the many more people who have been injured or killed from nuclear testing, in wars and conflicts not of their making and those who have stood against them.

**R: We will work for peace**

We remember the earth which has been torn by war, poisoned and exploited by human actions.

**R: We will work for peace**

**In your Name we pray. Amen.**

## Closing Prayer

We go with the memory of all those people who have died in wars and suffered from nuclear testing.

We go in the knowledge that you are the Bread of Life and the source of the Peace that passes understanding.

We go with love in our hearts and a new commitment to live and work for Peace.

And we go into the world which you have created for us to share and enjoy.

**We go in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.  
Amen.**



## Moruroa E Tatou

For thirty years from July 2, 1966 France conducted 193 nuclear tests on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls in Maohi Nui or French Polynesia. The indigenous Maohi people have experienced the combined effects of colonisation and nuclear testing. Many of those who worked on the test sites have died, often of cancers related to their exposure to radiation and nuclear fallout. Their descendants have also been born with deformities and developed cancers.

Moruroa E Tatou (Moruroa and Us) was formed in 2001 by the local people to further their efforts to seek compensation. Cancer is affecting eighty per cent of members but the French government continues to deny the link with cancer. However, there is some hope with a new medical report from France's national institute of health and medical research saying there are probable links between the weapons test and ill-health. It found a link in six of the 15 cases it studied. A previous study by the institute was blocked by the defence ministry but Moruroa E Tatou continues to try to receive compensation under French law for the victims and their families. Most recently, they successfully challenged a court decision disallowing the cases of six claimants. The French parliament passed a law in 2010 establishing a compensation fund for victims of nuclear tests but the terms are so restrictive that hardly any one is eligible.

A January 2011 [report](#) by the French Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) acknowledged some of the environmental damage caused by testing, including the collapse in a 1979 test of sections of the coral reef and atoll base that caused a three metre wave which flooded part of the atoll. The report notes that further collapse of the atoll could cause a 15-20 metre wave, enough to swamp the rest of the atoll. There is also the possibility of a tsunami that could endanger the residents of neighbouring atolls, and the affects of leaking radiation.

***"Nevertheless, although they are powerful, I firmly believe that we can win, because we are not begging for any favours. We are struggling for justice, truth, dignity and the rights of our children and future generations."***

Roland Oldham, president of Moruroa E Tatou

## Take Action



Twenty-fifth anniversary:  
Time for a global ban on  
nuclear weapons. The  
twenty-fifth anniversary  
of the commencement

of the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act is a time to celebrate and to remember all those who worked to achieve the ban here in Aotearoa New Zealand, and those who continue to campaign in the Pacific and around the world for a global ban on nuclear weapons. New Zealand could do more to bring about a nuclear weapons-free world.

Contact iCAN Aotearoa New Zealand: email [icanz@xtra.co.nz](mailto:icanz@xtra.co.nz) or write to iCAN ANZ, PO Box 9314, Wellington 6141 or [www.icanw.org.nz](http://www.icanw.org.nz)

## Time for action on military spending

Last year global military expenditure was US\$1.738 trillion - on average, more than US\$4,761,000,000 every day. It would take a small fraction of global military expenditure to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty around the world, and less than 5% of military expenditure to meet the cost of all of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Resources are available at [www.converge.org.nz/pma/gdams11.htm](http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/gdams11.htm) or from Peace Movement Aotearoa, PO Box 9314, Wellington 6141.



The white poppy is an international symbol of remembrance for all the casualties of war, civilians and armed forces personnel, and of peace. White poppies are available for a donation to the White Poppy Peace Scholarships. Two research grants are awarded each year on: impacts and alternatives of militarism, militarisation, and warfare; or collective non-violent responses to state violence in Aotearoa New Zealand or the Pacific.

Contact: White Poppies for Peace, c/o Peace Movement Aotearoa, PO Box 9314, Wellington 6141, or email [whitepoppies@gmail.com](mailto:whitepoppies@gmail.com). [www.whitepoppies.org.nz](http://www.whitepoppies.org.nz)



Peace Be Still, He Qi

## Focus on CWS Partner: The Pacific Conference of Churches

The Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) formed in 1961 has played a strong role in helping to promote a Pacific future for its people. They have called for Maohi Nui/Tahiti's to be re-inscribed on the United Nations Decolonisation list. PCC also supports the efforts for the self-determination of the indigenous peoples in Kanaky/New Caledonia and West Papua. Members continue to offer support to the people of Maohi Nui/Tahiti who have survived nuclear testing, including workers at Mororua and Fangataufa. PCC also has programmes fostering ecological justice, peace, unity, human rights and good governance, and ecumenical life.

**Please consider holding a special collection for PCC this Peace Sunday.** Donations can be sent to CWS, PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8140.

## Further Resources

There are many resources available to help remember the bombing of Hiroshima. One example available is: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=8159127518108796709&q=hiroshima+is%3Afree>  
Or: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/6/newsid\\_3602000/3602189.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/6/newsid_3602000/3602189.stm)

Some testimonies of *hibakusha* or eyewitness accounts of the bombing are available at: <http://www.inicom.com/hibakusha/> and other places.



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