

Hiroshima Sunday

Prayers for Peace

On this day we remember the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, August 6, 1945. We invite US Christians to pray for peace.

Our prayers are inspired by the witness of Christians and churches in Japan, many of whom observe the first Sunday in August as Peace Sunday. Having experienced firsthand the devastation of nuclear attack, they feel God's call to advocate for victims of war and to work for peace.

For example, in 1993 the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church issued a public confession of sin, repenting for its failure to oppose Japanese militarism during World War II and asking "forgiveness from both our Lord and our neighbors." In a spirit of mutual confession, repentance and reconciliation, we remember the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki today, and join Japanese Christians in observing this day as a Day of Prayer for Peace.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: How beautiful upon the mountains

C: are the feet of the one who brings good news, who proclaims peace.

L: Blessed are you, O Christ, Our Peace,

C: for through the cross you have broken down the dividing walls of hostility and created a new single humanity.

L: We ask you, O God of Peace,

C: that you guide us not to learn war anymore, but the things that make for peace.

L: Blessed are they who come

C: to prepare the way of the Lord, to lead our feet in the way of peace.

READINGS:

Micah 4:1-5, Ephesians 2:3-18, John 15:9-12; a hibakusha story

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

(Adapted from the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church's peace prayers for use among Christian Churches throughout the world.)

L: On this 60th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and of the end of World War II, let us remember and pray for peace. *(moment of silence)*

L: With people of every nation we ask God to help us see each other not as enemies or outsiders, but as sisters and brothers.

C: God of peace, hear our prayer.

L: We pray for the victims of war, for the *hibakusha*, atomic bomb survivors in Japan and Korea and for all those who continue to become tragic victims of war. May the gentle hand of God touch them with healing power.

C: God of peace, hear our prayer.

L: We pray for those in positions of leadership in government, in world economies, and in the military. Help them bring an end to the suffering caused by war and violence.

C: God of peace, hear our prayer.

L: We pray for a spirit of repentance. We confess before you that we, your servants, and our churches as the Body of Christ have been lax in our praying and slow in our acting for world peace and reconciliation. Let us pray for God's help, so that we do not build walls, but bridges.

C: God of peace, hear our prayer.

L: Let us pray that we may be peacemakers; that we do not put our trust in ourselves, or military might, or economic strength or any other human power, but find our security only in you, our Creator and Reconciler.

C: God of peace, hear our prayer.

L: We know that you bless the peacemakers and sustain them. Cause us in ways both small and large to be strong, and to seek—through study and action—to witness to the gospel call to nonviolence and reconciliation in our relationships, in our communities and in our world.

C: God of peace, hear our prayer.



Prepared by Lutheran Peace Fellowship, an international network of Christian peacemakers who seek peace according to the Biblical vision of *shalom*, peace with justice, and shared freely with member churches and individuals of the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, and other ecumenical groups. For more information about LPF: lpf@ecunet.org, 206-720-0313, www.LutheranPeace.org about the WCC: www.overcomingviolence.org about LWF: www.LutheranWorld.org about Religious Peace Fellowships active in over a dozen faith traditions, see: www.forusa.org/rpf