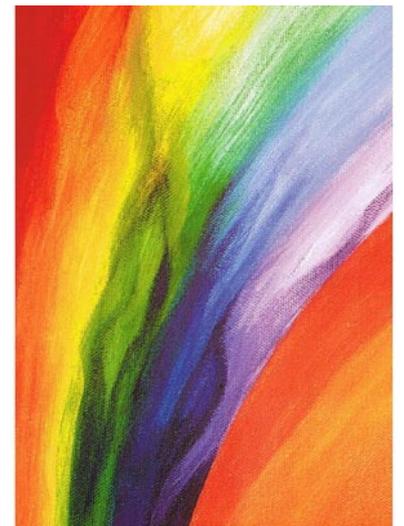
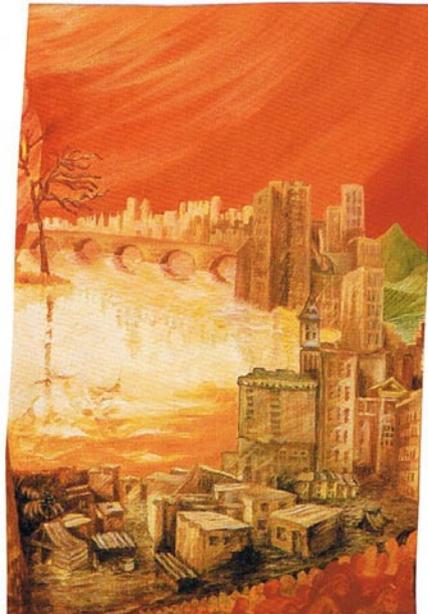


# INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY

## 21 September 2009



Prepared by Marlette Black pbvm  
for the International Presentation Association  
[www.ipa.ozehosting.com](http://www.ipa.ozehosting.com)

*In the sacred space there is*

- *a large glass bowl*
- *a container with strips of ribbon on which are written the names of various countries*
- *a container with short individual reflections written on pieces of paper*
- *a large map of the world or a globe*
- *a lantern or large candle*

**Leader:** The theme of the 2009 International Peace Day on 21 September is “We Must Disarm”. The purpose of the Day is to raise awareness of the true costs and dangers of nuclear weapons and to pray for peace in the world.

I invite you to reflect on the images on the cover. How do they speak to you of the causes of war, the costs of war and the hope for peace? After a few minutes reflection, share your responses with one or two people near you.

**Leader:** Let us pray together...

Let us invoke the Love that moves above us and below us, around us and within us.

Let us invoke the Spirit of Love ... and pray for Peace:

Let us invoke the living spirit of the peacemakers who have gone before us...

Let us invoke their spirit. Let us invoke the Spirit of Love that is lived as solidarity of each with all, of one with the other:

man with woman...

adult with child...

black with white...

Christian with Buddhist with Jew with Muslim...

Let us acknowledge our interconnectedness.

Let us make real the solidarity we know we may make real as we acknowledge that it is broken...

...broken by criminalizing and imprisoning young men of color way out of proportion to their numbers...

...broken by taxing every penny earned at minimum wage while hardly taxing fortunes made on high profits...

...broken by inadequately funding of education in rural towns and inner cities, the education of children who are poor or black or immigrant and by under funding of education making military enlistment in the so-called voluntary army the only way up that many can see...

...broken by sending these oppressed young men and women to kill and be killed by other oppressed men and women, conscripts of a dictator or conscripts of a dictatorial economy...

...broken by bombs however precise that destroy homes, shatter neighborhoods and make children orphans or even kill them.

Let us invoke the Love that moves above and below us, around us and within us.

Let us invoke the Spirit of Love that is greater than us, but which is made real through us – and only through us.

Let us invoke that human solidarity that makes justice possible and through which by making justice, we make peace possible.

Let us invoke love and live it as solidarity.

Our lives are our prayers.

Amen.

*by Rev Anthony P Johnson*

*First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County*

*Orange, New Jersey*

*Delivered at the Isaiah Wall opposite the United Nations on Wednesday, 26 March 2003*



## Reader 1

### Making Peace

A voice from the dark called out,  
'The poets must give us  
imagination of peace, to oust the intense, familiar  
imagination of disaster. Peace, not only  
the absence of war.'

But peace, like a poem,  
is not there ahead of itself,  
can't be imagined before it is made,  
can't be known except  
in the words of its making,  
grammar of justice,  
syntax of mutual aid.

A feeling towards it,  
dimly sensing a rhythm, is all we have  
until we begin to utter its metaphors,  
learning them as we speak.

A line of peace might appear  
if we restructured the sentence our lives are making,  
revoked its reaffirmation of profit and power,  
questioned our needs, allowed  
long pauses...

A cadence of peace might balance its weight  
on that different fulcrum; peace, a presence,  
an energy field more intense than war,  
might pulse then,  
stanza by stanza into the world,  
each act of living  
one of its words, each word  
a vibration of light – facets  
of the forming crystal.

*Denise Levertov*



## Reader 2

No more will the sound of weeping be heard there, nor the sound of a shriek; never again will there be an infant there who lives only a few days, nor an old man who does not run his full course; ... They will build houses and live in them, they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build for others to live in, or plant for others to eat; ... they will not toil in vain ...

*Is 65:19-23*

### All pray:

[Lord], we had hoped that we had found a way to resolve conflict without war,  
we hoped that days such as these would never come again,  
we hoped that the weapons we manufacture would never be used.

We offer our shame for history we know so little of, for confusion of interests.  
We offer our revulsion within the continuing tragedy of war;  
we offer our grief for creation poisoned; for soldiers and civilians killed;  
for cities, towns and villages destroyed; for families bereaved.

We offer the hurt and the resentment that distorts our images of each other;  
we offer our powerlessness in watching and waiting.  
We offer our tension, longing and our hopes - not in gloom and despair,  
but in confidence of God's forgiveness, mercy and healing.

*Sisters of the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage (Oxford)*

## Peace Prayer Ritual

**Leader:** Those who wish to, enter the sacred space one at a time. Take a ribbon out of the container and read aloud the name of the country printed on the ribbon. Then take a reflection from the container and read it aloud. Place the ribbon in the glass bowl while the whole group prays the following prayer for peace:



Great and merciful One,  
God Lord of peace and life,  
You have plans for peace, and not affliction.  
You condemn wars  
and defeat the pride of the violent.

You sent your Son Jesus  
to preach peace to those near and far,  
to gather people of every race  
and nation into a single family.  
Hear the single-hearted cry of all humanity:  
no more war, a spiral of death and violence,  
a threat against all your creatures  
in heaven, on the earth and in the sea.

*John Paul II [adapted for gender sensitivity]*

*(The bowl of ribbons is then passed from person to person as each one quietly or aloud prays a blessing of peace on the nations of the world and on her people.)*

**Leader:** Let us pray together...

May the memory of wars strengthen our efforts for peace;  
May the memory of those who died inspire our service to the living;  
May the memory of past destruction move us to build for the future;  
O God of Peace, O Companion of Our Souls,  
O Builder of Love and Justice in This World.

Lord we commit our time, our energy, our talents, our gifts,  
even our limitations, our failures and very selves  
to the cause of justice, peace and human development.  
We join our lives with those who support the struggle for life.  
Amen.

*Linda Jones*