

People of Other Faiths

We live in a world where large numbers of people live by many different traditions of faith. Recognising that God is the creator and provider of the whole human family, and respecting sincere efforts to know and relate to God, this order of worship, adapted from With all God's People: The New Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, suggests elements that enable us to pray for neighbours of other faiths.

Adoration

The time is coming, indeed it is here, when the true worshippers would worship God in Spirit and in truth.

God is spirit; those who worship him should worship in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23,24)

(silence)

This is the place and this is the time;
here and now God waits to break into our experience.

To change our minds, to change our lives, to change our ways.

To make us see the world and the whole of life in a new light'

To fill us with hope, joy, and certainty for the future.

This is the place, as are all places; this is the time;

Here and now let us praise God.

Be our Freedom Lord, Terry C Falla

Hymn or Song

Psalm

145 or 104:1-15 (read responsively)

Readings

Jonah 4:1-10

Luke 6:37-45 or Matthew 8:5-13

Prayer

Eternal God, you are the author of life; all living things depend on you; you care for the earth. We pray for our neighbours whose expressions of faith are different from ours; the longings of whose hearts we do not always comprehend. Teach us to know that you love all peoples; help us to respect what we do not yet understand; and to rejoice in the words and acts of truth, beauty and love, wherever they may be found. Enable us to love others as you love, and to live with others in ways that build your gracious rule over all life. We ask this in the name of him who gave himself for all, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Responsory

Eternal God, free us from fear and prejudice;

free us from the ignorance that holds us back from rejoicing that we belong to the one human family.

Set us free to belong and to care.

Lord, set us free.

Loving God, free us from narrowness of mind that is too quick to reject,
from self-righteousness that is too ready to judge,
from smallness of spirit that fails to see the good in others.
Set us free to love and learn,
Lord, set us free.

Merciful God, free us from our hesitation to witness to your love,
our unwillingness to listen to the witness of others,
our slowness to discern you in places where we least expect.
Set us free to perceive and to believe.
Lord, set us free.

Litany of gratitude

Let us celebrate our friends and neighbours, men and women whose faith and wisdom
have enriched the earth.

(silence)

Seek the truth.

Listen to the truth.

Love the truth.

Serve the truth.

Teach the truth.

Live the truth.

Let us remember with gratitude to God some aspects of the contribution which
religions have brought to the lives of people.

- We remember the Jewish people, their life centred on God and God's will. We remember the common heritage of scripture which we share with them.
- We remember the rich spiritual traditions of the Hindus; their conviction about the moral laws that rule the universe; the Hindu saints and sages who have dedicated their whole lives in the quest for truth.
- We remember Buddhists who follow the Buddha in the path of enlightenment and seek to live a disciplined daily life.
- We remember the followers of Confucius and Lao-Tse and their conviction that right relationships between people are the path to wisdom.
- We remember Muslims in their total commitment to God; in their zeal of devotion and strength of comradeship.
- We remember the followers of the religions of Africa; and the Native peoples of the Americas, [and the indigenous people of Australia] whose religious understanding embraces the whole of life; and all whose religious traditions have enriched the earth and affirmed the sacredness of all creation.

- We remember Sikhs, Parsis, and many other religious groups who witness to your unsearchable glory and love. Teach us to discern your presence in the midst of all your people.

Adapted from *New World Liturgy*, Yohan Devananda, Sri Lanka

Intercession

Let us pray for all religious communities and especially for all who teach, preach, instruct and lead; that they may inspire true religion and sincere devotion in the hearts and minds of people.

Hear our prayer, O God.

Let us pray for all artists, poets, dramatists, writers and theologians; that they may serve the cause of justice and peace in the interpretation and application of their faiths.

Hear our prayer, O God.

Let us pray for the places where there is conflict or war in the name of religion. Let us remember places where there is suspicion or prejudice against any religious community; let us pray for places where there is no religious liberty or the freedom to practise one's own faith.

Hear our prayer, O God.

Let us pray for all reformers, for all who seek to correct the wrongs done in the name of religion and its propagation; let us pray for all who work for reconciliation and dialogue, for all who seek to enrich their own faith through their openness to others.

Hear our prayer, O God.

Collect

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love,
where there is injury, pardon,
where there is doubt, faith,
where there is despair, hope,
where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,

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,
it is in dying that we are born again
to eternal life.

Traditionally by St Francis of Assisi

Lord's prayer

Benediction

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.

Prayer for Peace, 1981