

*Interfaith Peace Service
International Peace Day
Sunday, 21st September, 2008
2 pm*



*St David's Uniting Church
454 Pacific Highway
Lindfield NSW 2070*

Greetings and Welcome:

Remembering the First People:

Before we commence the service, let us acknowledge that we are here on the land for which the Terramerragal band of the Guringai people are the traditional owners and custodians.

We remember with gratitude the care of their ancestors for this land.

We hope and pray that working together with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters we can create a peaceful Australia and a peaceful world.

Introduction:

Today is International Day of Peace.

It started in 2001, when the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution designating September 21st of each year as the International Day of Peace. At the United Nation's Building in New York and in different parts of the world prayers are offered by different religious groups on this day for peace and the Peace Bell in New York is rung at 12 noon.

Here we celebrate it as *Interfaith* International day of Peace and that's the reason we have gathered here from different religious and cultural backgrounds. We are *not* here to engage in theological debate or discussion. We are *not* here to promote or establish the superiority of any particular religion. We are *not* here to proselytise anyone, that is, not to convert anyone to any particular religion.

But we are here because we all share one planet, one humanity.

And we all yearn for peace.

So breaking the barriers that divide us we are here today as one family to pray for peace.

Lighting of the Peace Candle:

Now I invite Ms Kaylin Simpson Lee to come and light the Peace candle. While she lights the Peace candle we **all** will say the International Prayer for Peace **together**, which is printed in the order of service.

*The International Prayer for Peace:**

Lead us from darkness to light, 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 heart, our world, our universe.

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

For the expanding grandeur of creation,

world known and unknown,
galaxies beyond galaxies,
filling us with awe and challenging our imaginations:
We give you thanks, O God.

For this fragile planet earth,
its times and tides,
its sunsets and seasons:
We give you thanks, O God.

For the joy of human life,
its wonders and surprises,
its hopes and achievements:
We give you thanks, O God.

For our human family,
our common past and future hope,
our oneness transcending all separation,
our capacity to work together for peace and justice
in the midst of hostility and oppression:
We give you thanks, O God.

For high hopes and noble causes,
for faith without fanaticism,
for understanding of views not shared:
We give you thanks, O God.

For all who laboured and suffered for a peaceful world,
who have lived so that others might live in dignity and freedom:
We give you thanks, O God.

For human liberty and sacred rites,
for opportunities to change and grow, to affirm and choose:
We give you thanks, O God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Examination of Conscience:

Let us recall in the silence of our hearts our role in causing division and brokenness:

Do I recognize the dignity of all people?

Do I allow God to speak to me through the lives of the impoverished and marginalized?

Do I strive to remove barriers between people?

Do I play my part in creating a fair and just global society?

Do I challenge unjust systems and structures?

Do I use the earth's resources wisely?

Do I allow society to degrade and dehumanize people?

Do I speak out when others are fearful, oppressed or treated unfairly?

Do I work to influence my country's foreign and domestic policies?

Do I work for peace not only in my community or country, but throughout the world?

*O Great Spirit of God,
fall afresh on us, renew us
and strengthen our resolve to live in love,
peace and harmony with you,
with others and with this planet.*

Musical Items:

"Peace I leave with you" arranged by Donald Moore, based on a Canon by
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

"Love Me Sweet" by Carl Vine and arranged by Mark O'Leary

Aboriginal Prayer:

*Father God, we thank you for this day.
We give you thanks and praise for this peace gathering.
We ask you to embrace us within your everlasting arms.
Your arms are always filled with grace and peace
For all of us, your children, your beloved family.*

*Since time immemorial Gracious God, your Holy Spirit
Kept watch over this Great South Land and its First Peoples.
The First Peoples revered, respected, trusted and always obeyed.
You comforted, rescued, strengthened and redeemed us.
As time went by Lord, many changes happened in this land.
We became lost amongst the tensions of all of the times.
Now Lord, as we re-kindle and restore our campfires
Of faith, hope, love, joy and peace, we ask you to use us,
As your instruments to work with all who call Australia home,
And visitors to this Great South Land of the Holy Spirit.
Please Help, guide and protect all of us, in our homes
Our places of work, our communities as by our words and deeds
We show your Love, your Grace and your Peace to all people,
Irrespective of race, colour, gender or creed.*

*We pray all of this in the name of Jesus Christ
Our refuge, strength and redeemer
Who taught us to pray:*

*Our Father who art in Heaven
Hallowed be Thy name
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
On Earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the Kingdom
The power and the glory
Forever and ever Amen.*

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Baha'i Prayer:

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy.

O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.

O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.

Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.

O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence. Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Buddhist Prayer (Pali):

Homage to him, the Exalted One, the Enlightened One, the Supremely Awakened One.

I go to the Buddha for guidance.

I go to the Dharma for guidance.

I go to the Sangha for guidance.

People of the world, parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, and other family members and kinsmen, should respect and love each other, refraining from hatred and envy. They should share things with others, and not be greedy and miserly, always speak friendly words with a pleasing smile, and not hurt each other. May all beings be happy and safe.

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Christian Prayers:

*Lord of the journey . . .
may we be aware of these
moments together,
of the great company,
past, present and to come,
with whom we join to worship you.*

*And with your Spirit among us
may we look for a time
and work for the day
when there will be joy at sunrise
and peace at sunset,
and all will be free as Christ is free.*

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

*Father of mercies,
Open our spirits and our hearts
So that we may be more truly makers of peace.
Remember all those who are oppressed,
Who suffer and die.
May your kingdom of justice, peace and love
Come for all men of every race and tongue,
And may all the earth be filled with your glory.*

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Hindu Prayer (Sanskrit):

*From the unreal lead me to the real
from darkness lead me to light
from death lead me to immortality
may all beings dwell in happiness
may all beings dwell in peace
may all beings attain oneness*

*may all beings attain auspiciousness,
may all happiness be unto the whole world*

*we pay homage to the universal consciousness which nourishes all beings,
may we be liberated from the death of ignorance through knowledge of our
immortal essence,
just as the cucumber is severed from the bondage of the vine*

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Islamic Prayer (Arabic):

*“Allahumma antassalam wa minkassalam wa alaika yarjessalam, hayyena
rabbana bissalame wa’adkhilna darassalame tabarakta rabbana wa ta’alaita ya
zaljalal-i-walikkram”.*

*O Allah! You are Peace personified; You are the source of Peace for all other
creatures; Peace always turns towards Thee. O Creator and Sustainer! Keep us*

alive with peace, and let us enter the Home of Peace (Paradise). O Lord! O possessor of awe and honour! You are Sublime and Bounteous.

Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

*You will not enter Paradise until you believe,
And you will not believe until you love one another,
And you will not love one another until you promote peace among you.*

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Jain Prayer (Hindi):

MY MUSING

(The Spiritual Conqueror) Who has Vanquished affection, hatred and other sensual temptations, who has gained the Knowledge of the Whole world and who has discoursed upon the teachings of the right path of Liberation (for the benefit) of all in a quite unselfish manner.

(You may call him by the name of) Buddha, Vira, Hari, Hara, Brahma or independence (Deity) Enamoured by devotion to (the Spiritual Conqueror) my mind may remain absorbed in Him and Him only.

(Those ascetics, who) have no desire for sensual pleasure. Whose only possession is mental equanimity who remain engaged always, day and night, in bringing about the good for their own selves & for other as well.

Who always undergo the penance of self sacrifice without any regret- such learned ascetics remove the multitude of troubles of the world! May I ever have their good company and may I ever keep them in mind. May my heart be always engrossed and inclined to adopt the rules of conduct which they observe.

May I never hurt and harm any living being; may I never speak a lie. May I never be greedy of wealth or wife of another May I ever drink the nectar of contentment.

May I never entertain an idea of egotism; nor may I be angry with anybody! May I never become jealous of seeing the worldly prosperity of other people.

May my thoughts and feeling be such that I may always act in a simple and straight forward manner. May I ever, so far as I can, do good in this life to others.

May I always have a friendly feeling towards all living beings of the world and may the stream of compassion always flow from my heart towards distressed and afflicted living beings.

May I never become fretful towards bad, cruel and wicked persons. May I keep tolerance towards them. May I be so disposed!

May my heart be over-flowing with love at the sight of the virtuous and may I be happy to serve them so far as possible.

May I never be ungrateful (towards anybody): nor may I revolt (against anybody). May I ever be appreciating the good qualities of other persons and may I never look at their faults.

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Jewish Prayer (Hebrew):

Grant us peace, Thy most precious gift, O Thou eternal source of peace, and enable Israel to be its messenger unto the peoples of the earth. Bless our country that it may ever be a stronghold of peace, and its advocate in the council of nations. May contentment reign within its borders, health and happiness within its homes. Strengthen the bonds of friendship and fellowship among all the inhabitants of our land. Plant virtue in every soul, and may the love of Thy name hallow every home and every heart. Praised be Thou, O Lord, Giver of peace.

May God bless you and keep you.

May God look with favour upon you and be gracious to you.

May God deal kindly with you, and grant you peace.

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Sikh Prayer (Gurumukhi):

"Assa di vaar" (Morning prayer which deals with Peace and Happiness)

*Human Ego, arrogance or selfishness is our greatest ailment,
but there is a remedy for it too*

*It is sweet humility, the essence of righteous values, and
Ultimate truth will heal us by absolving our maliciousness.*

"Sukhmani Sahib" (Psalm of Peace)

Ask yourself what service have I rendered to His creation when Sikhs believe

*"Creator is creation & creation is Creator". Lip service is not Prayer but
truthful conduct is, soulful devotion is said Guru Nanak.*

What do I pray for?

*It is Supplication to conquer my ego; For help in evolving my spirituality (my
moral sense). For strength to win over my enemies or ailments of anger
falsehood, lust, greed, attachment and arrogance/ego.*

*With humility, I am comfortable, & at Peace; and haughtiness has decomposed
many.*

Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

(silence)

Sufi Prayer (Persian):

Ho Val Allah Hol Ali

*"Glorified be thy Lord, the Lord of Majesty, from that which they attribute (unto
Him). And peace be unto those sent (to warn). And praise be to Allah, Lord of
the Worlds! Holy Quran, Chapter 37 verse 180 182.*

Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has said " Each human being is like mine, gold, silver or Jewel; excavate the goodness within them, so that you may have peace.

Islam which is derived from the root Silm, means peace and tranquility. The words of the lord of believers and the pure Amir-al-Momenin Ali (peace be upon him), the guiding light for humanity, attest to this genuine and sacred goal: Islam is submission, and submission is stability and constancy in the true reality of Existence.

Dreaming of Peace is not peace. Everyone speaks of peace but there is no peace. Everyone wants peace and yet there is no peace. Each human being's innate urge is to live in peace, and yet people do not cease to fight, kill and destroy. Our desire to transform the world must begin with transformation of "i" into "I" the true self. By transforming the "i" one can go a long way towards transforming the greater world in which "I" lives. A successful human society is attained through the outward and inward harmony of its members and their harmonious existence in a unified system. Unless every individual discovers the knowledge and the reality within them, we will not have a peaceful, calm and prosperous society. Oh I wish that pride of hearts would be shattered once again, and the truth would encompass the world, and souls would shine like mirrors.

Until dawn the holy messengers whispered the realistic visions of the Gods upon the sky of existence, And gave power to the life of man. Believers have said that the last psalm of the Gods which was uttered by the angels was:

In following rebellion and corruption's wake, the law of mercy is obstructed; trust in the God and wait, so that the streams of mercy flow in the land of heart, and death reduces its hold. And once again the tree of life blossoms and the messengers silently repeat the Psalms of the God in the sky of life.

Time is short and day of judgment is near.

My Lord grants us the peace and tranquility. Ellahi Ameen

A Reflection:

Peace:

A wise man once said,
 how you see your future
 determines how you live today.
 I didn't understand, couldn't comprehend
 'til it was too late.
 He said, tomorrow starts today.
 So live like you are free,
 put down your weapons,
 burn all your anger,
 and peace you will see ...

A wise man once said,
 how you live your future
 determines how you see today.
 Now I understand, and I comprehend
 and I'll live life this way ...
 Tomorrow starts today.
 So I'll live like I'm free.

*Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, let me bring your light; and
where there's sadness, ever joy.*

Refrain: *Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

*Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive, and
in dying that we're born to eternal life.*

Vote of Thanks:

Before I recite the final words I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks.

I express my sincere thanks to all our guests and religious leaders. You are busy people, and you have come from far and near and that speak volumes about your commitment to the cause of peace. Thank you.

Thanks to Ravenswood Girl's School Vocal ensemble, Mrs. Nicole Smeulders and Mr. Michael Rohanek. Its not a school working day, and still you have come to us and added a special dimension to this service. Thank you.

I thank the media for the publicity they have done for this service

A special thanks to our pianist Malcolm Allerding for his contribution to the service.

A number of people helped me organise this service. While I am deeply thankful to all of them, I would like to mention a few names. They are Kaylin Simpson Lee, Heather Sulerzyski, Kate Boyd, Ros Robinson, Jean Vincent, our office secretary Tania Jagger and my wife Nita. Thank you so much for all your help.

I thank those who have provided food.

And finally a very sincere thanks to all of you for your participation in this service. Thank you very much indeed.

A Final Word:

*"Go not to the temple to put flowers upon the feet of God;
First fill your own house with the fragrance of love.
Go not to the temple to light candles before the altar of God;
First remove the darkness of sin from your heart.
Go not to the temple to bow down your head in prayer;*

*First learn to bow in humility before your fellow humans.
 Go not to the temple to pray on bended knees;
 First bend down to lift someone who is down trodden.
 Go not to the temple to ask for forgiveness for your sins;
 First forgive from your heart those who have sinned against you.”*
 (Rabindranath Tagore, First Asian Nobel Laureate in literature)

And as you go –

May the road rise to meet you
 May the wind be always at your back
 May the Sun shine warm upon your face
 The rain fall soft upon your fields
 And until we meet again
 May God hold you
 In the hollow of his hand.
 (A Traditional Irish Blessing)

Everyone is invited to stay for refreshments and extended fellowship.

- * *The words adapted from the Upanishads, were used by Mother Teresa in 1981 and urged people of all faiths to use the peace prayer daily at noon.*
- ^ *Hymn covered by CAL*



PARTICIPANTS

<i>Presider:</i>	<i>Rev. Manas Kumar Ghosh</i>
<i>Prayers offered by: (according to order)</i>	<i>Ms. Pearl Wymarra Mrs. Shiva Rich Rev. Shigenobu Watanabe Sr. St Jude Doyle OAM Mrs. Heather Sulerzyski Pandit Jatinkumar Bhatt Mrs. Zubeda Rahaman Mr. Pawan Jain Rabbi Richard G Lampert Mrs. Mina Batra Ms. Sariba Jomeidy</i>

Peace Candle lit by: Miss. Kaylin Simpson Lee
Reflection: Ven. David Lungtok
Pianist: Mr. Malcolm Allarding
Musical Items: Ravenswood Girls' school Vocal Ensemble
Music Director: Ms. Nicole Smeulders
Accompanist: Mr. Michael Rohanek
Floral Arrangement: Mrs. Jean Vincent

Our special thanks to all our guests, participants, and those who have helped to organise this special service and who have provided the refreshments.

