



Massachusetts Council of Churches

In Response to a Possible U.S. Military Strike against Syria Resources for Churches

Denominational Statements/Calls to Action

ELCA Bishop Calls on Obama to Pursue Diplomacy, 9/03/13: <http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Communication-Services/News/Releases.aspx?a=5341>

UCC Urges People of Faith to Contact Congressional Representatives, 9/03/13 <http://www.ucc.org/news/syria-crisis-09032013.html>

PC(USA) Clerk Asks Leaders to Refrain from Military Action, 8/30/13: <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2013/8/30/stated-clerk-issues-statement-wake-escalating-viol/>

Episcopal Bishops Request Prayer, 8/28/13: <http://www.diomass.org/diocesan-news/bishops-request-prayer-middle-east>

American Baptists Send Aid to Syria, 8/28/13: <http://www.abc-usa.org/2013/08/28/bwa-sends-aid-to-syria/>

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
<http://www.antiochian.org/metropolitan-philip-urges-faithful-contact-congress-syria-vote>

Andover Newton Theological School:
http://myemail.constantcontact.com/Resources-on-possible-war-with-Syria.html?soid=1102672454251&aid=_hSWGP3PQ5Q

Resources

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship
<http://epfnational.org/epf-news/peace-prayers/>

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Liturgy by TLW Blog
<http://www.liturgybytlw.com/OccChs/PrayerInTimeOfWar.html>

Book of Common Prayer Collect for Peace <http://www.bcponline.org/>
For Peace (traditional)
Almighty God, kindle, we beseech thee, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with thy wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquillity thy dominion may increase till the earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who



liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

For Peace (contemporary)

Almighty God, Kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquillity your dominion may increase until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of *the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever*. Amen.

Syriac Orthodox Church of America, Archdiocese for the Eastern United Stateswoman

Archbishop Karim speaks on the war in Syria and urges for release of the two kidnapped archbishops

<http://syrianorthodoxchurch.org/news/2013/08/30/archbishop-karim-speaks-on-the-war-in-syria-and-urges-for-release-of-the-two-kidnapped-archbishops>

Greek Orthodox Prayers

Greek Orthodox Prayers complied by Transfiguration Greek Orthodox church in Lowell, MA

<http://www.transchurch.org/prayers.html#trouble>

Prayer for Our Enemies

Lord Jesus Christ, in Your great mercy You prayed for the forgiveness of those who crucified You, and You taught us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. Lord, I pray that You forgive those who treat me unjustly and speak out against me, and that You bless them and guide them according to Your will. Take away any bitterness I may have in my heart against them. Lord, may Your forgiveness, goodness and love be revealed in all of us, to Your praise and glory. Amen.

Prayer for Peace

Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.

Mennonite Church USA

Along with Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Church USA celebrates Peace Sunday the Sunday closest to the International Day of Prayer for Peace, which is Sept. 21. However, you may use these materials any Sunday that works for your congregation.

<http://www.pjsn.org/Resources/congregations/Documents/PJSNPeaceSundayFINAL.pdf>

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati

<http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/ministries-offices/worship/liturgical-prep/prayer-in-time-of-war/>

Project Ploughshares

of the [The Canadian Council of Churches](#), is a non-governmental organization that works with churches, governments and civil society, in Canada and abroad, to advance policies and actions to prevent war and armed violence and build peace. They have a well developed page of worship resources: <http://ploughshares.ca/publications/worship-resources/>

Christian Peacemakers' Litany of Resistance



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The Christian Peacemaker Teams offer a general “Litany of Resistance” written by Jim Loney in 1991 during the first Gulf War. CPT uses it regularly in prayer as a spiritual response to violence:

http://www.cpt.org/resources/worship/litany_of_resistance

World Peace Prayer

A paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, this prayer was introduced at a service in Westminster Abbey on Hiroshima Day, 1981. It is also set to music as a hymn in the New Century Hymnal, p 581.

<http://www.hymnary.org/hymn/NCH1995/581>

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth.
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our lives, our world, our universe.
Peace, peace, peace.

For Peace, from the New Zealand Prayer Book:

O God, it is your will to hold heaven and earth
in a single peace.

Let the design of your great love
shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows,
and give peace to your Church,
peace among nations,
peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts.

Collect

Almighty God, govern the hearts and minds of those in authority
and mercifully grant that the peoples of the world
divided and torn apart by sin,
may be brought together
under the gentle rule of Christ.
Almighty and eternal God,
you have made of one blood all the nations of the earth
and will that they live together in peace and harmony;
so order the course of this world that all peoples may be brought together
under Christ's most gentle rule;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Universal and unchanging God,
we are one, unalterably one,
with all the human race.
Grant that we who share Christ's blood
may, through your unifying Spirit,
break down the walls that divide us.

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Prayers for troops being sent to war

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers/prayer-for-troops.cfm>

For Soldiers

All-powerful and ever-living God,
when Abraham left his native land
and departed from his people
you kept him safe through all his journeys.
Protect these soldiers.



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Be their constant companion and their strength in battle,
their refuge in every adversity.
Guide them, O Lord, that they may return home in safety.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

For Government Leaders

God of power and might, wisdom and justice,
through you authority is rightly administered,
laws are enacted, and judgment is decreed.
Assist with your spirit of counsel and fortitude
the President and other government leaders of these United States.
May they always seek
the ways of righteousness, justice and mercy.
Grant that they may be enabled by your powerful protection
to lead our country with honesty and integrity.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Prayers compiled by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship: <http://epfnational.org/epf-news/peace-prayers/>, including:

A Prayer for the Bombed Out, Burned Out, Driven Out:

Lord God, we pray for all the bombed out, burned out, driven out, relocated, wondering , wandering, unwilling pilgrims in this world. Forgive us for our part in uprooting them. Restore their lives, make us partners with in the rebuilding of their lives. We pray in the name of the Son of Man, who had no place to lay His head.

by Arnold Kenseth and Richard Unsworth in Prayers for Worship Leaders

Hymns

“Inspired by Love And Anger,” arr. John Bell of the Iona Community, Iona Abbey Music Book, p. 62
http://www.hymnary.org/text/inspired_by_love_and_anger

“Behold a Broken World” Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith, Music: Max Miller, tune: Marsh Chapel. United Methodist Hymnal pg 426 <http://www.hymnary.org/hymn/UMH/426>

“This is my song” Words by Jean Sibelius, tune: Finlandia, New Century Hymnal pg 591
http://www.hymnary.org/text/this_is_my_song_o_god_of_all_the_nations

“For the Healing of the Nations” Words by Fred Kaan, tune: Westminster Abbey, New Century Hymnal pg. 576
http://www.hymnary.org/text/for_the_healing_of_the_nations

From the Revised Common Lectionary for the week of Proper 18 Sunday Sept 8, excerpt from Luke 14:

³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

