

Prayers

Compiled by Rev. Hiram Brett, Chaplain
Connecticut Mental Health Center

Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I 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,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

Spanish Version -- Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi:

Oración por la paz (San Francisco de Asís)

Señor, haz de mi un instrumento de tu paz.
Que allá donde hay odio, yo ponga el amor.
Que allá donde hay ofensa, yo ponga el perdón.
Que allá donde hay discordia, yo ponga la unión.
Que allá donde hay error, yo ponga la verdad.
Que allá donde hay duda, yo ponga la Fe.
Que allá donde hay desesperación, yo ponga la esperanza.
Que allá donde hay tinieblas, yo ponga la luz.
Que allá donde hay tristeza, yo ponga la alegría.

Oh Señor,
que yo no busque tanto ser consolado, cuanto consolar,
ser comprendido, cuanto comprender,
ser amado, cuanto amar.
Porque es dándose como se recibe,
es olvidándose de sí mismo como uno se encuentra a sí mismo,
es perdonando, como se es perdonado,
es muriendo como se resucita a la vida eterna.
Amén.

Let Us Bless

A Jewish Prayer

There is one who sings the song of his own life, finding everything within himself. There is one who leaves the circle of herself, and sings the song of her people. There is one whose voice rings with the song of humanity, hoping for the highest perfection. And there is one who rises even higher, uniting with all creatures, with all worlds, filling the universe with song. Let us bless!

An Unending Love

Written by Rabbi Rami Shapiro

We are loved by an unending love.
We are embraced by arms that find us
even when we are hidden from ourselves.
We are touched by fingers that soothe us
even when we are too proud for soothing.
We are counseled by voices that guide us
even when we are too embittered to hear.
We are loved by an unending love.
We are supported by hands that uplift us
even in the midst of a fall.
We are urged on by eyes that meet us
even when we are too weak for meeting.
We are loved by an unending love.
Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled,
Ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;
Ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;
We are loved by an unending love.

V'ahavta – Our Love for God

A Jewish Prayer

Love your God with every heartbeat, with every breath,
with every conscious act.

Keep in mind the words I command you today.

Teach them to your children, talk about them at work:

whether you are tired or you are rested. Let them guide the work of your hands;
keep them in the forefront of your vision.

Do not leave them at the doorway of your house, or outside your gate.

They are reminders to do all of My commandments, so that you can be holy for your God.

I led you out of Egypt to become your God, I am Adonai your God!

Mi Chamochah & We Shall Overcome

Arranged by Erik Contzius (Jewish Prayer & Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have a Dream")

When Your children witnessed Your power, they extolled You and gave You thanks. And yet, we, Your children, still need to experience Your redemptive power in the world. We need hope, and we need faith.

In the words of Dr. King: "With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of Hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood..."

With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we (all) will be free one day."

"And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every heart,

from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men,

Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, Muslims and Buddhists, All will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!" Praised are You, O God, the Redeemer of us

מיִּתְּכָּהּ מִבְּאֵלֵם יְיָ מִיִּתְּכָּהּ נְאֻדָּר בְּקִדְשׁ תְּנוּאָה תְּהִלַּת עֲשֵׂה פֶּלֶא
מִלְּכוּתְךָ רָאוּ בְּנֵיךָ
בְּקַעֲתֵם לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה זֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַמְרוּ יְיָ יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

Mi Chamocha ba-eilim, Adonai! Mi kamochah nedar bakodesh, nora t'hilot, oseih fele!
Malchut'cha ra-u vanecha, bokei-a yam lifnei Moshe uMiryam. Zeh Eli, anu v'amru, Adonai
yimloch l'olam va-ed!

Who is like you, O God, among all the gods that are worshipped? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, working wonders: Your children witnessed Your sovereignty, the sea splitting before Moses and Miriam. "This is our God!" they cried. "Adonai will reign forever and ever!"

Prayer for the Future

Written by Ken Untener for Cardinal Dearden
(commonly known as “The Prayer for St. Oscar Romero”)

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying
that the kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation
in realizing that. This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well. It may be incomplete,
but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.
Amen.

Memorial Prayer

By Hannah Szenes

There are stars up above,
So far away we only see their light
Long, long after the star itself is gone.
And so it is with people that we loved ---
Their memories keep shining ever brightly
Though their time with us is done.
But the stars that light up the darkest night, these are the lights that guide us.
As we live our days, these are the ways we remember.

Siyahamba – South African Freedom Song

Written down by Andries Van Tonder

Siyahamb' ekuhanyen' kwenkhos.

Siyahamb' ekuhanyen' kwenkhos. (repeat)

We are marching in the light of God,

We are marching in the light of God (repeat)

An Interfaith Pastoral Letter

Embracing, Mourning and Thanksgiving: In Our Time of Fear and Anxiety

The Greater New Haven Interfaith Coalition

If all the lights in the world grew dim, it will not hurt you. For the light in your heart still shines bright.

-Muslim Sufi poet, Rumi

Our faith traditions proclaim the unity of all life and our mutual interdependence. We are friends, neighbors, spouses, siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and children who feel daily the stress imposed upon us all by the COVID-19 pandemic. We mourn the loss of loved ones, friends and neighbors and strangers alike due to this health crisis and we are coping with our fear of its continuing threat to life. This health crisis and the impact of racism and other forms of violence and social injustice has separated us from one another in many ways. Some of us feel that we are alone in meeting the challenges of living in our environment of anxiety and fear.

These are very anxious times. However, there is a unity amongst us that we must not forget even as we grieve the loss of loved ones, former ways of living and face the future.

As members of faith communities in Greater New Haven, we, the Greater New Haven Interfaith Coalition wish to affirm that we are a community of mutual care and compassion. During this holiday season, even amid our sorrows and concerns, we express our gratitude for one another and the many gifts of life.

We affirm that there is more that unites us than divides us. We recognize that reaching out to and standing with one another is an important way of creating light at a time when many people are feeling that they are alone in the darkness of our time. We, therefore, encourage members of our greater New Haven community to offer support to your neighbors and to remember those whom we have lost.