

Prayer stations

Peace be with you: a vigil to pray for peace

This resource is adapted from an hour long peace vigil we ran at the Sanctuary's centre to mark 11.11.14 and is designed to create space and creative inspiration for people to pray individually in response to current conflicts. It originally made use of some of the key features of the Sanctuary's unique space, but we have adapted it so that you can run it anywhere by using the items listed under each station or area.

A handout is provided on page 3 so that each person attending the vigil can be given a sheet to use individually and take round with them to the different areas they choose to engage with.

Before the event or service:

- Get together the items you need for each station and lay them out on the floor or on large tables.
- Decide whether you will conduct the vigil in silence or with background music – you might like to use a playlist of relevant worship songs. See <http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/outward-focused-song-index.pdf> for some ideas on this. Or, you might prefer to use a CD with instrumental or choral music.
- Print or photocopy enough copies of the hand out to have
- Get together any prayers, collections of prayers or other general stimulus you think people might find helpful in inspiring prayer for peace and lay this around the room separate from the stations themselves. You might like to use some of the Sanctuary's other peace resources, available at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-search
- For best effect, communicate in advance that the event is silent and that people should not speak when they arrive.

At the event:

- Give each person a copy of the handout when they arrive.
- (Optional) Play the music during the event.
- Either allow people to simply drift out in silence or create a definite end by stopping the music and/or closing in prayer.

For the Faith station you will need:

- Stones, quite a number blank and some with a nation written on each one that is experiencing conflict
- Marker pens that can write on stone (i.e. whiteboard pens)
- A large-ish cross
- Print outs of James 3:17-18 and Matthew 5:43-5
- A printed sign that reads:

Faith – praying for those who carry the burden of bringing and keeping peace

For the Hope station you will need:

- A large heart shape cut out of a world map, or with a world map within it
- Tealight candles in holders and a larger candle to light them from
- Printouts of Revelation 7:16-17, Matthew 5:4 and Matthew 11:28
- A printed sign that reads:

Hope – praying for those who suffer and mourn today**For the love station you will need:**

- Artificial flower petals (you can buy these in most craft shops – often in the bridal section)
- A large world map – as big as possible
- Bibles
- Several printouts of an up to date list of the current ongoing conflicts and their vital statistics. (You can find this at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ongoing_armed_conflicts)
- Several printouts of the story of *The Blossom-Maker* available at <http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/The+Blossom-Maker+by+Liz+Baddaley.pdf>
- Print outs of Isaiah 9:6, Zechariah 9:10 and John 14:27
- A printed sign that reads:

Love – praying for peace and beauty**For the room as a whole, you will need:**

- The additional peace prayer resources you have collected together
- (optional) pens and paper
- (optional) CD or playlist and the means to play it
- (optional) comfortable chairs, bean bags or cushions and soft lighting

Handout

Peace be with you: a vigil to pray for peace

Welcome to this vigil to pray for peace around the world and to remember those who are mourning today. This handout explains everything you need to know to participate in the vigil. Please note that although there may be background music playing, this vigil is being held in silence so please respect others by not talking during this time. A variety of reflective prayer prompts have been provided in the space – and are explained below – plus you will find additional resources and materials spread around the room to use if you would find it helpful. There's no set order to do anything, nor a set time to spend on any one thing. Please use this time exactly as you'd like to. Thank you for joining us for this special event.

Faith – praying for those who carry the burden of bringing and keeping peace

- Spend some time thinking about all the different individuals working for peace.
- Try to imagine what burdens they might carry – what would their worries and fears be? How would they keep hopeful and expectant of breakthrough? What pressures might they be put under to give up?
- Using the stones beside the cross, pick up the stones for individual countries currently experiencing conflict (or write the names of any countries on new rocks) – feel the weight and heaviness of the rock – and pray for the burdens of the peacemakers and peacekeepers to be lifted.
- When you are ready, place each rock at the foot of the cross, giving the burdens to Jesus, the only one who can lift them from the shoulders of those who seek peace.



Hope – praying for those who suffer and mourn today

- In every conflict, there is suffering in the moment and grief in the aftermath – and this pain remains long after the fighting has finished. Think about people today who are still suffering and still grieving, whether the conflict continues or whether peace was achieved years ago. Give thanks for those who gave their lives for others.
- What emotions do you feel when you consider the experience of those injured, traumatised or whose lives have been turned upside down by conflict? And what about the widows, the orphans and the foreigners forced to flee far from home?
- Light a candle – or as many as you'd like – to remember these individuals. Place each one on the heart map, praying as you do that the God of all Hope would bring light back into the lives of those who mourn.



Love – praying for peace and beauty

- Dotted around the world map are brief details of all current conflicts in the world today.
- As you consider these, read and reflect on the words of Isaiah 61:1-7 in one of the Bibles available – you might also find it helpful to read or read *The Blossom-Maker*.
- Choose one or more specific nations and pray for peace to come – as you do so, take a handful of blossom petals and place them on the country on the map as a symbol of your trust in Jesus, The ultimate Blossom-Maker, to bring beauty and joy to this nation in place of the ashes of death and destruction.

