

On behalf of Bishop-Elect Carl Wright and those whom he will serve, I welcome you to this Vigil for Peace and Reconciliation. Thank you for making the personal sacrifice of your time and energy in this offering of prayer. The materials in this book are offered as suggestions for prayer and to assist you in establishing a framework for your participation in the vigil. However, a vigil is not a specific pattern to be followed; it can be as individual as those participating in it. Use a portion of these prayers or all of them or perhaps none of them as may be most helpful to you. You are encouraged to also leave time in silent watching and waiting. Let God guide your words, your thoughts and your silence. Listen and be open to the working of God's spirit within you.

God's peace be with you,  
Rev. Allison Sandlin Liles,  
Executive Director,  
Episcopal Peace Fellowship

A Vigil for Peace and Reconciliation for the Consecration and Ordination of Carl Wright



*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. - John 14:27*

God of peace and mercy, we pray for the peace Jesus promised—in our hearts, in our nation, and in our world. In the meantime, we ask your blessing on those who find themselves standing in harm's way in our behalf and for all those chaplains who minister to them. Especially we pray for Carl as he takes up the mantle of servant leader to those chaplains and all the service members under their care. Grant him all that he needs in the days ahead to meet the challenges known and yet unknown. In Your Holy Name we ask this. AMEN.

*Submitted by Military Matters, St. Paul's Episcopal Church*

Lord, you created us to love you. You revealed your redeeming love to the world, incarnate in your Son, Jesus Christ. Your Son told his followers, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." (John 14:27) We pray for your peace to so transform us that we become signs of your love in the world. We pray that we find strength for our hearts in your peace. We pray that Your Holy Spirit sustains us in your love so that we might boldly bear witness to your peace and fearlessly call for peace in a world that often does not seek peace. *Amen.*

- From The Rev. Canon Leslie Nunez Steffensen (select)

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To the God of Peace,

We your faithful people gather from across many borders, many cultures, many backgrounds all united under a heartfelt desire to be ONE, even as you, Oh Christ, and the God of creation are ONE.

Our oneness compels us to seek understanding and wisdom from the other as we encounter differences in this marvelously diverse world you have blessed us with. Within the other we see reflections of ourselves and we see the image of the Creator. For those of us who have been called to the path of peacemaking in the civilian world, we must embrace those who have been called to pursue peacemaking where uniforms and commands direct efforts to maintain order and restore stability where there may be war and chaos.

We pray that within the spirit of Peace and Reconciliation of this time of vigil and prayer, the Bishop Suffragan of the Armed Forces and Federal Ministries may feel uplifted and strengthened to do the work God has called him to do in humility and openness. May the church see the partnership of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and the Office of the AF/FM as a sign that "unity overcomes estrangement" and that seeing the divine in each other is not only possible but is a mark of God's Kingdom.

AMEN.

- *Submitted by the Colorado Chapter  
of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship*

Almighty God of unchangeable power and eternal light, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself. We praise and bless you for your servant Carl Wright, whom you have lifted up to serve the Church and the world. Fill him with the power of the Spirit so he might preach and pastor all those in his fold. We thank you for the community of love, peace and reconciliation gathered together this weekend through prayers and presence, that it might sustain Carl in his new ministry from this day forward. May his life and witness be according to your will and grant that he may show the power of your love to all whom he serves, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

- *Submitted by Rev. Allison Sandlin Liles*

### **A Prayer for those in the Armed Services of our Country**

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and

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women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A Prayer for Social Justice**

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer in Times of Conflict**

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for Prisons and Correctional Institutions**

Lord Jesus, for our sake you were condemned as a criminal: Visit our jails and prisons with your pity and judgment. Remember all prisoners, and bring the guilty to repentance and amendment of life according to your will, and give them hope for their future. When any are held unjustly, bring them release; forgive us, and teach us to improve our justice. Remember those who work in these institutions; keep them humane and compassionate; and save them from becoming brutal or callous. And since what we do for those in prison, O Lord, we do for you, constrain us to improve their lot. All this we ask for your mercy's sake. *Amen.*

### **A collect for a Nation Under Attack**

by Rev. Francis C. Zanger

Almighty God, we ask that you look with loving-kindness on the people of our nation, as we struggle to live our lives in time of great uncertainty and fear. Grant that the goals of those who would terrorize and intimidate the people of our country may be thwarted, and that in these times of trouble all Americans, of every faith, race and ethnicity may be drawn yet more closely in bonds of shared amity, respect, and purpose, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A Prayer for a Will to Peace**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

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Almighty God, by whose grace we look for the day when nation shall not any more lift us sword against nation, nor people against people, and when mankind shall live without fear in security and peace, grant to us in this time of strife the will to labor for peace even while our sword is drawn to resist the oppressor. Let not the evil we oppose turn us from our purpose to achieve unity and concord among the nations of the earth, to your honor and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for Grace to Forgive**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

Merciful God, in whose dear Son we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins; give us such strong belief in this the only power that can abolish evil that we shall be enabled to forgive our enemies; and grant us grace not only to forgive but to accept forgiveness through Christ, the crucified. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer in Time of War**

From "Prayers at Sea" United States Naval Institute, 1956, 1962

O God, our help in ages past, our hope today and tomorrow, we approach you in deep humility at this hour of tragic crisis. Forgive us, if we have contributed to the cause of this war in which your children are engaged. Protect the children and the innocent. So fill our hearts with trust in you, that in peace and war we may commit our loved ones and ourselves to your unfailing care. Let not the powers of darkness and of terror keep us from doing our duty as free men. Help us to fight on until all strife and oppression cease and the peoples of this world are delivered from bondage and fear. Give us victory, O God, if it be your will, but above all give us the knowledge that we are fighting for values that are right and everlasting. *Amen.*

### **Prayers for Our Armed Forces**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

Heavenly Father, we commend to thy gracious care and keeping all the men and women in our Armed Forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with thy heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils that beset them; and help them to know that none can pluck out of thy hand those who put their trust in thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O Eternal God, we commend to thy fatherly care all those who are enlisted in the Armed Forces. In time of preparation grant that discipline and training may fit them worthily to serve our country, and in the day of strife guide and sustain them in upholding the cause of justice and freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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### **A Prayer for Steadfastness**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

O God, Who rulest the world from everlasting to everlasting: Speak to our hearts when courage fails, and we faint for fear; when our love grows cold, and there is distress of nations upon the earth. Keep us resolute and steadfast in the things that cannot be shaken, abounding in hope and knowing that our labor is not in vain in thee. Deepen our faith in thine eternal purpose; renew in us that love which never fails; and make us to lift up our eyes to behold, beyond the things which are seen and temporal, the things which are unseen and eternal. We ask all in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for Chaplains in the Armed Forces**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

Blessed Lord, who didst commission thy disciples to continue the work which the Father sent thee into the world to do, support, we beseech thee, with thy Holy Spirit, those who minister in the Armed Forces of our country. Give them grace that they may both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments. Strengthen them in their temptations and make them courageous in the perils of their calling, that they may glorify thee before all men; and do thou hold them ever in thy gracious keeping; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for the Army**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

O Lord God of Hosts, stretch forth, we pray thee, thine almighty arm to strengthen and protect the soldiers of our country. Support them in the day of battle, and in the times of rest and training keep them safe from all evil; endue them with courage and loyalty; and grant that in all things they may serve without reproach; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for the Navy**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

O eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea; Vouchsafe to take into thy almighty and most gracious protection our country's Navy, and all who serve therein. Preserve them from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy; that they may be a safeguard unto the United States of America, and a security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions; that the inhabitants of our land may in peace and quietness serve thee our God, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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### **A Prayer for the Air Force**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

O Lord God of hosts, who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; Watch over and protect, we pray thee, the airmen of our country as they fly upon their appointed tasks. Give them courage as they face the foe, and skill in the performance of their duty. Sustain them with thy Everlasting Arms. May thy hand lead them and thy right hand hold them up that they may return to the earth with a grateful sense of thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for the Marine Corps**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

O Eternal Father, we commend to thy protection and care the members of the Marine Corps. Guide and direct them in the defense of our country and in the maintenance of justice among nations. Protect them in the hour of danger. Grant that wherever they serve they may be loyal to their high traditions and that at all times they may put their trust in thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for the Coast Guard**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

O Lord, who of old didst still the raging of the sea, watch over, we beseech thee, the men of the Coast Guard as they sail upon their missions of helpfulness and succor. Grant them courage and skill and a safe return, and a grateful sense of thy mercy toward them; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **A Prayer for the Merchant Marine**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

Almighty God, who raiseth the wind and who maketh the storm a calm, we pray thee for thy blessing upon the seamen of the Merchant Marine, Grant that they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, may see thy works, O Lord, and thy wonders in the deep. Preserve them from all peril, both of body and of soul, both at sea and ashore; and give them a heart to praise thy holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **Prayers for World Peace**

From *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed; Kindle, we pray thee, in the hearts of all men the true love of peace, and guide with thy strong and

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peaceful wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquility thy kingdom may go forward, till the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O God, who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are far off and to them that are nigh; Grant that all men everywhere may seek after thee and find thee. Guide, we beseech thee, the Nations of the world into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the fruit of righteousness, that they may become the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, and no strength known but the strength of love; So guide and inspire, we pray thee, the work of all who seek thy kingdom, that the nations may find their security not in force of arms but in that perfect love which casteth out fear, and in that fellowship revealed to us by thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

### **A Prayer for Peace**

by Jack Knox, pastor of Salem (Oregon) Mennonite Church

Gracious Lord,  
we dream of a world free of poverty and oppression,  
and we yearn for a world free of vengeance and violence.  
we pray for your peace.

When our hearts ache for the victims of war and oppression,  
help us to remember that you healed people simply by touching them...,  
and give us faith in our ability to comfort and heal bodies and minds and spirits  
that have been broken by violence.

When the injustice of this world seems too much for us to handle,  
help us to remember that you fed five thousand people  
with only five loaves of bread and two fish...,  
and give us hope that what we have to offer will turn out to be enough, too.

When fear of the power and opinions of others  
tempts us not to speak up for the least among us,  
help us to remember that you dared to turn over the tables of money changers...,  
and give us the courage to risk following you without counting the cost.

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When we feel ourselves fill with anger at those who are violent and oppressive,  
help us remember that you prayed for those who killed you...,  
and give us compassion for our enemies, too.

When we tell ourselves that we have given all we can to bring peace to this world,  
help us to remember your sacrifice... ,  
and give us the miracle of losing a little more of ourselves  
in serving you and our neighbors.

Walk with us, Lord, as we answer your call to be peacemakers.  
Increase our compassion, our generosity and our hospitality for the least of your  
children.

Give us the courage, the patience, the serenity, the self-honesty  
and the gentleness of spirit that are needed in a world filled with turmoil and ter-  
ror. Amen.

### **A Prayer for World Peace**

By Sister Joan Chittister, Benedictine Sister of Erie

Great God, who has told us “Vengeance is mine,” save us from ourselves, save us  
from the vengeance in our hearts and the acid in our souls.

Save us from our desire to hurt as we have been hurt,  
to punish as we have been punished, to terrorize as we have been terrorized.

Give us the strength it takes to listen rather than to judge, to trust rather than to  
fear, to try again and again to make peace even when peace eludes us.

We ask, O God, for the grace to be our best selves.

We ask for the vision to be builders of the human community rather than its de-  
stroyers.

We ask for the humility as a people to understand the fears and hopes of other peo-  
ples.

We ask for the love it takes to bequeath to the children of the world to come more  
than the failures of our own making.

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We ask for the heart it takes to care for all the peoples of Afghanistan and Iraq, of Palestine and Israel as well as for ourselves.

Give us the depth of soul, O God, to constrain our might,  
to resist the temptations of power  
to refuse to attack the attackable,  
to understand that vengeance begets violence, and to bring peace—not war—wherever we go.

For You, O God, have been merciful to us.  
For You, O God, have been patient with us.  
For You, O God, have been gracious to us.

And so may we be merciful and patient and gracious and trusting with these others whom you also love.

This we ask through Jesus, the one without vengeance in his heart.  
This we ask forever and ever.  
*Amen.*

### **A Litany for Peace**

Holy and life-giving God: send your reconciling Spirit to visit us. Live and move and have being in every human heart. Do your work among your people—crumbling the barriers that divide us, stemming the violence that pervades our country and our world, bringing an end to the hatreds and the hostilities that break your loving purpose. Heal our brokenness, O God, that we may live in harmony as one people. In your holy name we pray. *Amen.*

Creating God: you made us in your own image; you made us for peace. And yet too often we choose to live in ways that destroy the very humanity you intend for us. Call forth in us that which is of you. Grant us the courage and perseverance to embody your peaceful ways in ourselves and in our relationships with one another. We pray in the name of your Son, who lived among us as the Prince of Peace. In your holy name we pray. *Amen.*

Mothering God: you gather the suffering in your loving embrace. Come and dwell with those who have lost loved ones to the violence of our world. Comfort them in every affliction. With tenderness, console them in the hours of their need. In your

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compassion, and by your mercy, heal their torn hearts and lives—and restore them to fullness of life.

In your holy name we pray. *Amen.*

Discerning God: you know our hearts, and from you no secrets are hidden. You know the impulse to anger that lies within us and the urge to strike out. Call us to recognize all within us that would break your people. Lead us away from anger towards a deeper love. Strengthen our resolve to live as your compassion, your peace, and your reconciling love in all that we say and in all that we do.

In your holy name we pray. *Amen.*

Loving God: you love every person that you have made and call us to do the same. Give us the wisdom and grace to be close to all who suffer: in body, mind, spirit or relationship. Give us the courage to be present to those who live in isolation; to comfort those whom no one comforts; to see those whose pain we would rather not see. Give us ministering hearts and healing hands. Turn our lives and the lives of our churches and communities to seek those who need to see your love in our eyes. In your holy name we pray. *Amen.*

### **A Litany in Favor of Peace**

We pray for nations and their leaders;  
for adults and young people and generations still to come;  
for our enemies and our allies and for ourselves.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

Help us imagine your vision of peace.

Give us courage to pursue it and grace to accomplish it.

May we strive for its fulfillment in our world and in our time.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

Enable Christians to believe that the cross of Jesus discredits violence,  
that the resurrection breaks its power.

May we rely on your Spirit of holiness to live new and different lives.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

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Help us to acknowledge and heal our wounds,  
to resolve buried grievances, to recognize that in the face of guilt, grace and forgiveness can abound. Make us passionate for reconciliation.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

Purge from us fearfulness and hardness of heart.

Replace rivalry with collaboration that people everywhere may enjoy justice and prosperity. Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

May we dismiss no human death as collateral damage.

May we recognize how our republic often acts as an empire.

May we lament how every weapon built represents theft from the poor.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

May we mourn the failures that surround every war.

Help us console the injured and the grieving. Enable us to build the best memorial to the dead by learning to live without war.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

Open our eyes that we may see enemies as people like ourselves,  
as people that you love.

May we recognize their brokenness and our own.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

Inspire us to build friendships across every boundary.

Show us how to welcome the stranger and accept the stranger's welcome.

Help us not to fear people made in your image.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

May we recognize and teach one another ways of reconciliation and justice.

May they enjoy a central place in the curriculum of our culture  
and in schools of every kind.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

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Deliver us from reliance on gods of metal. Abolish the arsenals. Redeploy the defense contractors. Eliminate the standing armies.

Turn military bases into parks and schools and hospitals.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

May planes drop food upon hungry populations.

May ships bring supplies for the devastated.

May the young and the strong learn to serve the weak and the disadvantaged.

May troops from diverse nations unite in projects more rewarding than war.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

May we make costly decisions to associate with the suffering and resist injustice in nonviolent ways.

May we shatter the insolence of aggressors and point them to a better life.

Fill our undefended hearts with warrior courage.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**

In the labor of conforming our lives and our society to your will,  
let us never surrender to despair.

And so we implore from you a continuing change of heart  
for ourselves and for one another.

Free us all from bondage to violence.

**Hear our prayer, O God of peace.**