

2007
Reunion
Worship
Resources

Share Christ's Peace:
Going Deeper

Introduction

“The phrase ‘the peace of Jesus Christ’ contains all of the promises, hopes, and blessings of the gospel as revealed by Christ and as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, his promised presence with us. In all of the places in our lives where we are afraid, anxious, discouraged, guilt-ridden, or alienated, Jesus Christ speaks ‘peace’ and opens the way to peace, not just for individuals, but for the whole of creation” (from “Share the Peace of Jesus Christ,” by Stephen M. Veazey, World Conference 2005 Sermon). These words from President Veazey’s 2005 World Conference address are as compelling as they are confounding. If Jesus speaks peace and opens ways to peace, why is peace a personal as well as communal struggle? While a resource can’t completely answer this question, it can facilitate the community’s search for such answers.

For many, peace is the absence of violence or perhaps a state of calm and the possibility of living in harmony with others. Understanding Jesus as the Prince of Peace may be helpful in expanding this definition. Peace is the attempt or objective of living in community that is faithful “to Christ’s mission to restore God’s peace to every dimension of creation that is alienated, misdirected, wounded, and lost” (from the reunion text). This may seem like an unobtainable goal, yet it is what we are called to do: to live out the expression of Christ’s peace in our daily lives. This call is a call to go deeper. It involves a great deal of self-exploration, paradigm shifting, and radical change.

It can be as radical as Paul’s experience with the Divine on the road to Damascus. The scriptures share that Saul was threatening to slaughter Jesus’ disciples. But on the road to Damascus, he had an encounter with the Divine. Saul asked who was speaking to him. The voice answered, “I am Jesus and you are persecuting me.” Saul was given further instructions and was blinded for three days. As Saul’s name was changed to Paul, he went on to become a missionary disciple and, ultimately, a martyr for the cause of Christ. Saul was transformed into Paul by Christ and did a great deal of self-exploration and paradigm shifting, making radical changes. The impress of living “Christ’s peace” was so strong for Paul that he could not deny the call. This is our challenge as well. How do we live out this mystery called Christ’s peace? It is indeed a call to go deeper. In Paul’s letter to the Ephesians he states, “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Ephesians 2:13–14).

It is a call to be faithful “to Christ’s mission to restore God’s peace to every dimension of creation that is alienated, misdirected, wounded, and lost.” Hopefully, these worship resources will encourage participants to explore the radical call to “share Christ’s peace.”

Share Christ's Peace: Going Deeper Worship Planning

Themes:

1. Going Deeper
2. Seek the Kingdom
3. Break Down Walls
4. A Willing Yes
5. Be Peace

This section of the resource provides assistance in planning worship activities for the theme "Share Christ's Peace." These materials include suggestions for the following:

- 1) An opening community worship
- 2) Theme-based worship services
- 3) A baptismal service
- 4) A commitment service
- 5) Sharing services and vignettes
- 6) Campfire resources

Each of these sections is self-contained and can be distributed to the person responsible for that part of the program. For gatherings that desire to include a Daily Prayer for Peace in the schedule, a page containing information on the form and purpose of the daily ten-minute Temple service and copies of the exact services being presented on the days of the gathering are available on the World Church Web page two weeks in advance. This can be found on the Internet at www.CofChrist.org/worship.

General Suggestions

The worship services are planned to be multigenerational. Children and young people are vital to our worship and opportunities to involve them in giving ministry during the services are encouraged. While there are challenges to including children in worship, there are also blessings. The presence of children in worship is an expression of the living out of scripture found in Matthew:

Then children were brought to Jesus so that he may lay his hands on them and pray. However, the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." And after laying his hands on them and praying for them, he departed.—Matthew 19:13–15 adapted

The worship service is an opportunity to bring children to Jesus Christ. Consider incorporating ideas from the education resources into the worship services. Children and adults who participate in the service should know exactly what they are to do, and rehearse if necessary.

Hymn selections have been included from *Hymns of the Saints (HS)*, *Sing for Peace (SP)*, *Sing a New Song (NS)*, and *By Request: Songs for the Community of Christ (R-n)*. Make

arrangements to have copies of these books available for the gathering. If necessary, ask congregations to loan copies.

At the beginning of each worship service, have about fifteen minutes of singing encompassing different genres of religious music. Select songs from the church hymnals and other Christian music that would appeal to all generations. When selecting music, make certain that words reflect current theological understandings. A diversity of instrumentation is advised. Many people in the mission (or congregations) play musical instruments. Encourage participants to bring those instruments with them, and schedule their use when possible. The use of overhead projection or other technologies to display the music can make it easy for all to participate. In the event the music is copied or projected, please make sure that the music has been used with permission. For additional styles of songs appropriate for the gathering music, the song titles in the box below are offered as suggestions. They are available in a variety of formats.

Permission must be obtained to reprint any songs, readings, or other copyrighted materials. This also includes copies for bulletins, transparencies, and other presentation instruments. Many songs may be legally reprinted or projected with a license from Christian Copyright Licensing Inc. (CCLI). This is a blanket copyright license that enables the holder to reproduce the works of thousands of copyright holders. Many jurisdictions of the church hold a CCLI license. For those who wish more information, CCLI may be contacted at 1-800-234-2446 or on the Web at www.ccli.com. For further questions concerning copyright, please contact Legal Services, 1-800-825-2806, extension 2220.

Additional Songs

Session 1

“Let the Walls Fall Down” by Bill Batstone, John Barbour, and Anne Barbour

“We Are Free” by Morris Chapman

“We’ve Come Here to Praise” by Chris Falson

Session 2

“Does Anybody Here Need Jesus?” by Milton Carroll

“Spirit Song” by John Wimber

Session 3

“Change My Heart, Oh God” by Eddie Espinosa

“Revive Us Again” by William P. MacKay and John J. Husband

“Christ in Us Be Glorified” by Morris Chapman

Session 4

“Be Bold, Be Strong” by Morris Chapman

“You Are My Song” by Denise Graves

Session 5

“Shine Down on Me” by Chris O’Brien, Maria Abraham, Margaret Davis,
Carrie Ann Petrillo

“I Will Not Be Shaken” by Rick Founds

“Let It Be Said of Us” by Steve Fry