

“For the sake of humanity”

**A multi-faith service
for those who are suffering in the Middle East**

Wednesday 13th August 2014



Hosted by the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture
in conjunction with the Canberra Interfaith Forum
and the ACT Council of Churches

Music to gather: GF Handel, JF Greiss and Robert Schumann

Welcome

Bishop Stephen Pickard

We light a candle
to welcome the light of God with us,
between us, beyond us.
It will awaken us to the darkness
that afflicts the world.
For it is time for all
to wake up to the light.



Call to Wake Up

Wake in this new day
we will all die soon
Let us live while we have the chance
while we have this day
To build and plot and devise
to create and make the world
Just this time for us
this time for us
This time the pharaohs must fall

Kevin Coval

Gathering Prayer

Margaret Roberts (ACC&C)

God the compassionate holy One,
whose will is for peace built on righteousness,
we pray and long for peace in the Middle East:
for Gaza and Israel, for Syria, Iraq
and for all places of violence and suffering.
Hear our prayer for an end to hostilities,
for comfort and help for all who suffer-
the children, old people, women and men,
the angry and the frightened, the confused and the desperate,
the grieving and the inconsolable;
for reconciliation and a lasting peace.
Hear our cry day and night. Amen.

Lament

Words: Chorus of Women, Glenda Coughley;

Music: Judith Clingan;

Dancer: Shasha Chen

Open the doors of the chambers (of your hearts)
Open your minds to our song
We sing for peace through the power of love
Hear the wisdom of women, hear our song

Weep for our sisters in danger
Weep for our brothers and children
Sound the cries of grief and despair
Sound the lament for the dead.

Reflection 1

Mr Harry Oppermann
(on behalf of the Canberra Interfaith Forum)

We gather in the name of the God of Peace
to remember those who have no peace,
whose daily bread is violence and suffering,
who do not know from one day to the next
if they shall live or die.

We gather in the Spirit
who is the breath of life for all
except it seems where breath is taken away;
from children, women and men
in Gaza, Israel, Syria, Iraq to name but a few.

We gather to remember the mothers and fathers grieving,
brothers and sisters torn apart
at the hands of violent men, who have forgotten who they
are.

Give light to those who sit in darkness
in the valley of the shadow of death
guide their feet into the way of peace.

We confess that we have not been agents of goodness and
grace
but have looked out for our own interests
rather than the interests of others.

We confess that in our desire for peace,
we often assume the postures of conflict
we have taken sides and set up ourselves as judges.

We have listened to one side of the story
and decided in its favour
without waiting for the voice we have not heard.

We have seen the conflicts in the world,
spurred on by an economy of scarcity
and have failed to live in the abundance of God's mercy.

Hear our cry on behalf of the children,
women and men of the Middle East
who are dying, suffering, persecuted, killed and murdered.

Raise up prophets of peace and compassion.
Strengthen the oppressed and terrified.

Bring persecutors to their rightful mind
that peace may be the new song
and the fire of love may burn again.



Prayer Dance (Taizé Chant)

Shasha Chen, Dancer

Within our darkest night,
You kindle the fire that never dies away

Reflection 4

Dr Natalie Mobini

A Recipe for Peace

Words and music by Glenda Coughley

During this song we will share bread as a sign of our common humanity.

Take grain from the earth and add water

Make by kneading to leaven with air

Bake in fire. Break and share.

Partake with your neighbour the blessing of bread

Refrain

May you never be hungry

May you never be thirsty

I wish you health and a happy home

My companion,* may peace be with you

Remember the making of bread like this

Remember the making of peace like this

Harmonies with friends and neighbours

and with strangers

Bridging the borders of discord and fear

Refrain

Humble this cooking of bread and peace

Human the circle from hearth to heart

In longing, in hope, from hand to hand

I give you the song of my dream and my prayer

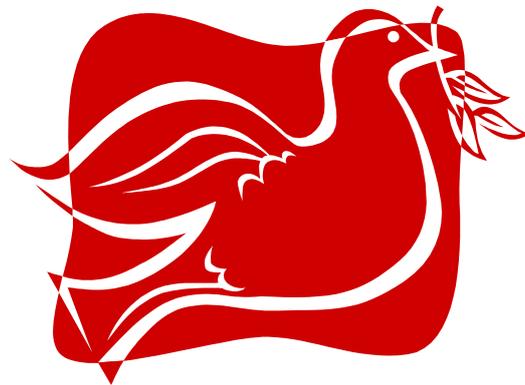
Refrain

*companion is from the Latin *com*, with and *panis*, bread.

Closing words

Bishop Stephen Pickard

Music to depart: *Song Without Words* No. 9 (Felix Mendelssohn)



We wish to thank those who have assisted in today's service:
Bishop Stephen Pickard, Executive Director,
Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture
Bishop George Browning
Mr Fethullah Erdogan, Bluestar Intercultural Centre
Mr Harry Oppermann representing the Canberra Interfaith Forum
Dr Natalie Mobini
Rev Ivan Roberts
Ms Margaret Roberts, ACC&C
Ms Lorraine Macknight, Pianist
The Chorus of Women
Ms Shasha Chen, Dancer

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