



Galaxies Evening Service 25 September 2011

Service by Pete Cowley



Welcome:

Tonight we are honouring the International Day for Peace which was on the 21st September and looking at "Practising Peace" and how we might do this.



Gathering together

Leader We gather here as a community of believers in Peace, Love and the Common Good to celebrate the International Day of Peace. We are reminded that we are all part of one global human family living together in a world that remains broken and divided. We join in prayer in the hope that the universal desire for peace may be realised.

People: Loving God, help us to recognize that you call each one of us to commit ourselves to work for peace in our world. Amen.



Reflection on peace

"Peace is not solely the absence of war. Nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called 'an enterprise of justice' (Isaiah 32:7). Peace results from that harmony built into human society by its divine founder, and actualised by people as they thirst after ever greater justice."

— *Guadium et Spes*, #78



Affirmation of peace (said all together)

We, the members of Galaxies, affirm that:

Non-violence is the basis of the message of Jesus,

Non-violence is intrinsic to right relationship with all creation, and

Non-violent systemic change requires innovative, creative responses to social problems and conflicts.

Therefore, we reject violence in its multiple forms.

We support actions and policies that;

Promote non-violent means of conflict resolution,

Disallow discrimination of any kind,

Generate an equitable economic system for all,

Foster a culture of solidarity and peace, and

Protect Earth and Life in all its diversity.

We oppose actions and policies that legitimise violent responses to conflicts, particularly;

War and terrorism,

Denial of human and civil rights,

Economic and military policies that worsen poverty and inequality, and

Degradation and destruction of natural resources and ecosystems.

We acknowledge that the non-violent way of Jesus challenges us to

Examine the quality of our interpersonal relationships,

Own the complexity inherent in our struggle to live without violence,

Embrace diversity, and

Espouse the common good.

Notices

If you have any notices to bring to our attention please share them now.

Contemporary reflection - Practising Peace



The most simple thing person can do is to practice peace at home and in the society and and in the dealings with people around them. Yet the most simple things in life seem to be the most complicated to practice when peace and violence are the two different sides of the human psyche. Some are drawn to the former and some sadly to the latter.

So ... what to do?

One of the most difficult things is not to change society—but to change yourself.
—Nelson Mandela

What is peace? Most often, we think of it as just an absence of war: a blank space defined by what isn't happening, rather than by what is. But as Nelson Mandela discovered, the practice of peace turns out to be the challenge of a lifetime. And it is anything but passive.

The Buddhist teachings tell us that peace in the world is only possible to the extent that we end the war in our own hearts—the war with who we really are, and with the way reality functions. This journey requires a deeper and more enduring bravery than the kind that propels soldiers on to the battlefield. We discover and cultivate this courage through the practice of meditation.

and

Happiness - practising peace

"Suppose you read about a pill that you could take once a day to reduce anxiety and increase your contentment. Would you take it? Suppose further that the pill has a great variety of side effects, all of them good: increased self-esteem, empathy, and trust; it even improves memory.

Suppose, finally, that the pill is all natural and costs nothing. Now would you take it? The pill exists. It is meditation." (Haidt)

Meditation and gaining inner peace really can help to reduce anxiety and increase happiness, but for some, often those who need it most, it can seem like hard work with a concept that is far removed from the realities of daily life.

For those embarking upon the journey of meditation, help is on hand. Courses on mindfulness, yoga classes, meditation retreats, manuals and inspirational literature are all readily available.

Start practising peace and your relationship with the world will change for the better.

Meditation

Soul food - Inner meditation - music to meditate by!

Song: Imagine by John Lennon

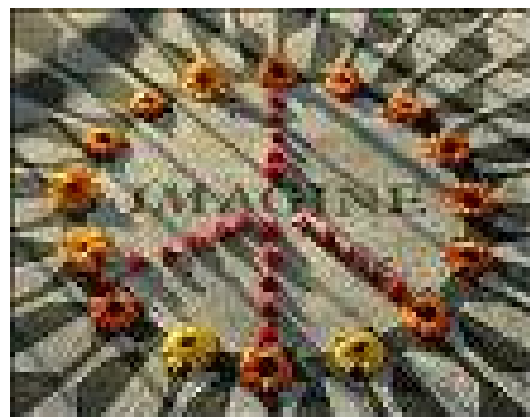
Imagine there's no Heaven , It's easy if you try
No hell below us , Above us only sky
Imagine all the people , Living for today

Imagine there's no countries, It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for, And no religion too
Imagine all the people, Living life in peace

You may say that I'm a dreamer, But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us, And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions, I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger, A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people, Sharing all the world

You may say that I'm a dreamer, But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us, And the world will live as one



Departure

**As we depart from this place
of light,**

love,

and peace

may we be a light to others

may we treat all we meet with loving-kindness and peacefulness

**may we warm others hearts with our care and commitment to
compassion, truth, justice and peace**

in all our dealings.