



# Coming to Life

## Worship Aids for the Living Peace Church

*Praying for transformation and courage*

*Undertaking thoughtful study of scriptures*

*Actively answering Christ's call to peace*

*Facilitating dialogue among differing opinions*

2004 — Issue One

### Prayer for Grace, Mercy, and Courage

God of all grace and mercy, whose love knows no limits or boundaries,  
thank you for welcoming us into your presence...

Fill our hearts, merciful God, with the graces of your Holy Spirit,  
with love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness,  
faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

Teach us to love those who hate us; to pray for those who spitefully use us;  
that we might be the children of your love.

When adversities strike give us the grace to be patient and in our prosperity  
keep us humble so that we might always be a witness for you.

Give us courage, O Lord, to stand up and be counted,  
to stand up for others who cannot stand up for themselves,  
and to stand up for ourselves when we feel we must.

— excerpt from a prayer by Nick Beam, pastor  
Pleasant Hill (OH) Church of the Brethren

### Call to Worship

*(from Isaiah 61 and Luke 4)*

One: What is your mission?  
All: To set the captives free, to bind up the  
bruised and to liberate the oppressed.  
One: What is your mission?  
All: To bring good news to the poor, and  
proclaim this as the year of God's favor.  
One: Who sends you into the world?  
All: The Spirit of the Lord.

— Paula Bowser, pastor  
Glade Valley (MD) Church of the Brethren

### Opening Prayer

Loving God,  
Teach us the ways of peace  
in a world gone astray.  
Show us the ways of love  
in a world that strikes back  
with hate and violence.  
Guide us down the path  
that leads to unity and reconciliation.  
In Christ's name we pray. AMEN.

— David Leiter, pastor  
Friendship (MD) Church of the Brethren

*In response to the 2003 Annual Conference resolution, "A Call for a Living Peace Church," this resource was developed by the Brethren Witness/Washington Office and On Earth Peace. We will produce 3-4 issues a year. We welcome original submissions as well as resource ideas from anyone in the church. Please send them in Word or WordPerfect format via e-mail to [bsayler\\_oepea@brethren.org](mailto:bsayler_oepea@brethren.org).*

### Litany of Lament and Hope (based on Luke 13:34)

- 1: *Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
the city that kills the prophets  
and stones those who are sent to it!*
- 2: There is violence and bloodshed  
all over the world:  
    In Israel  
    In Iraq  
    In Afghanistan  
    In Haiti
- 1: *How often I have desired  
to gather your children together  
as a hen gathers her brood  
under her wings.*
- 2: During this Decade to Overcome Violence,  
churches all over the world are uniting to seek  
the things that make for peace, which reveal  
God's love for the hurting world.
- 1: *Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
the city that kills the prophets  
and stones those who are sent to it!*
- 2: The rich of the earth continue to use more and  
more of the world's resources while more and  
more of the world's people lack for the basics  
they need to live  
    In Guatemala  
    In Eritrea  
    In Honduras  
    In Sierra Leone
- 1: *How often I have desired  
to gather your children together  
as a hen gathers her brood  
under her wings.*
- 2: The Church of the Brethren works with other  
church organizations to provide animals for  
food, stoves and cisterns to increase quality of  
life, medical supplies and resources to help  
sustain lives in difficult times.
- 1: *Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
the city that kills the prophets  
and stones those who are sent to it!*
- 2: Even in our powerful, prosperous nation, a  
nation of religious people, a nation of many  
who claim to follow the way of Jesus  
    There are homeless children  
    There are hungry people  
    People experience violence and hatred  
    There is a growing gap between  
        rich and poor  
    Our things takes over our lives  
        and the lives of our children  
    We turn from a trust in God to  
        a trust in material possessions  
    We never have enough
- 1: *How often I have desired  
to gather your children together  
as a hen gathers her brood  
under her wings.*
- 2: This congregation is an open community  
dedicated to the way of Christ.
- 1: We try to nurture children and people of all  
ages to experience and be transformed by  
God's love.
- 2: We seek to encourage one another in  
following the way of Jesus in all that we do  
and say.
- 1: We do our best to practice forgiveness when  
we fail or when others fail us, drawing our  
strength from God's love and forgiveness  
for us.
- 2: Stand firm and be encouraged to allow God's  
love to continually flow in and through you —  
even in the midst of brokenness, keep your  
heart turned toward God. Share the security  
and comfort of God's sheltering wing.

— Mary Jane Button-Harrison, pastor  
Ivester (IA) Church of the Brethren

**Psalm 33:8--22 Antiphon**

*Sing: Dona nobis pacem Domine*  
(from *Hymnal: A Worship Book* #294)

Let all the earth revere Our God, let all who live  
in the world tremble before you!  
You spoke, and everything came into being.  
You frustrate the designs of the nations,  
defeat the plans of the peoples.  
But Your own plan will stand firm forever,  
the designs of your heart from age to age.

*Sing: Dona nobis pacem Domine*

Happy is the nation whose God is Adonai!  
Happy the people whom You choose  
as your own!  
From the heavens you look forth, Adonai,  
and see all of humankind.  
From your dwelling place on high,  
You watch over all the inhabitants of the earth!  
You fashion the hearts of them all,  
and observe all their deeds.

*Sing: Dona nobis pacem Domine*

A ruler isn't saved by the size of an army.  
A warrior is not delivered by great strength.  
Trust in the war horse for your victory  
and you'll be disappointed —  
despite its great might, it cannot save.  
The eyes of Our God look on those who stand  
in reverence, on those who hope in God's  
steadfast love to rescue them from death,  
or to keep them alive during famine.

*Sing: Dona nobis pacem Domine*

Our souls wait for Our God,  
who is our help and shield.  
Our hearts are glad in God,  
because we trust in God's holy name.  
Let your steadfast love, O God, be upon us,  
as we place all our hope in you.

*Sing: Dona nobis pacem Domine*

— Anita Smith Buckwalter, pastor  
Lansing (MI) Church of the Brethren

**Ephesians 4:1--7, 11--16 Litany**

*Sing: All praise to our redeeming Lord* (vv. 1 & 2)  
(from *Hymnal: A Worship Book* #21)

*Leader:* I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beg  
you to lead a life worthy of the calling to  
which you have been called,

*Women:* with all humility and gentleness, with  
patience, bearing with one another in love,

*Men:* making every effort to maintain the unity  
of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

*ALL:* There is one body and one Spirit, just as you  
were called to the one hope of your calling,

*Women:* one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

*Men:* one God and Creator of all,

*ALL:* who is above all, and through all and in all.

*Sing: All praise to our redeeming Lord* (v. 3)

*Leader:* But each of us was given grace according  
to the measure of Christ's gift.

*Women:* The gifts that he gave were that some  
would be apostles,

*Men:* some prophets, some evangelists, some  
pastors and teachers,

*Women:* to equip the saints for the work of  
ministry,

*Men:* for building up the body of Christ,

*ALL:* until all of us come to the unity of the faith  
and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to  
maturity, to the measure of the full stature  
of Christ.

*Men:* We must no longer be children, tossed to  
and fro and blown about by every wind of  
doctrine, by people's trickery, by their  
craftiness in deceitful scheming.

*Women:* But speaking the truth in love, we must  
grow up in every into him who is the head,  
into Christ, from whom the whole body,

*ALL:* joined and knit together by every ligament  
with which it is equipped, as each part is  
working properly, promotes the body's  
growth in building itself up in love.

*Sing: All praise to our redeeming Lord* (vv. 4 & 5)

— Julie Hostetter, General Board Congregational Life  
Teams Staff Member, Roanoke, Virginia,  
prepared for the April 2004 Conflict Transformation  
for Congregational Leaders Workshop

## Coming to Life: Worship Aids for the Living Peace Church

### A Prayer for Times Like These

*(written to accompany discussions about conscientious objection)*

Loving God,  
In the not so distant past matters of war and peace  
have caused much division and pain in our churches.  
Please guide us through our discussions about the draft and conscientious objection.  
Help each of us to be prayerfully open to your calling in our lives.  
Remind us to be in continuous prayer for one another  
so that we can support and respect one another even when we do not agree.  
May our churches provide a rare sanctuary in our society  
where people seek to genuinely understand and love one another.  
Help us to create a place of safety for differences of opinion.  
Let this be a place where all can speak gently and truthfully  
without fear of judgment and hate.  
Teach us how to be united by your love  
even when we are not united in our opinions. Amen.

— Audrey Osborne Mazur, Black Rock (PA) Church of the Brethren

### Benedictions

Leave this worship hour  
and this place of worship  
with a commitment to help correct  
the injustices that exist in our world.  
Go in peace and bring peace  
to the rest of the world. AMEN.

— David Leiter, pastor  
Friendship (MD) Church of the Brethren

Go IN Peace and go WITH Peace,  
go knowing that God's hand is in yours,  
that wherever you go,  
God will be WITH you, BEFORE you,  
and BEHIND you to UPHOLD you  
Go in that PEACE ... AMEN

— Larry O'Neill, pastor  
Skippack (PA) Church of the Brethren

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*(To be read outside, facing the neighborhood)*

Look around, people of God, at the neighborhood.  
Open your eyes, people of God, to the community around you.  
Stay attuned, people of God, to the world around you.  
May our ministry in the years to come extend beyond the walls of this building,  
Offering God's peace and love to our neighborhood, our community, and our world.  
And all God's people said "Amen."

— Kelly Burk, pastor  
Richmond (IN) Church of the Brethren

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