



Intergenerational worship for Christmas

This worship resource is related to the Uniting Church SA promotional postcard for Christmas, 2011. The main theme is the peace of Christmas.



NOTES

MERRY CHRISTMAS

When we greet someone with the words 'Merry Christmas', we are wishing them (or some might say praying that they have) a happy, joyous, cheerful day and season. That's a good thing.

When the term 'Merry Christmas' was first used as a greeting, the term had a slightly different meaning: pleasant, agreeable and . . . peaceful!

So, in a way saying 'may your world be full of peace this Christmas' is not all that different from saying 'Merry Christmas, world!'

USING THIS RESOURCE

These notes have been prepared by the Uniting Young People team of the Uniting Church SA to help congregations plan Christmas worship involving children and families. You may make as many copies of the notes as needed for your worship planners and leaders.

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Read through all the material. Discuss it as a planning team. You may use any of the ideas that are appropriate in your situation or the entire sample service.

If you use the resource, we would appreciate your letting us know what you do. Send a brief email to children@sa.uca.org.au

You can find more all-age worship resources on our web site <http://myn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/all-age-worship.html>

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BIBLE BASIS

The Lectionary Readings for Christmas Eve introduce the peace theme.

In the Old Testament reading Isaiah 9:2–7, 'the people who walk in darkness' are waiting to see a great light — the coming of the Messiah, who will be the Prince Who Brings Peace that will never end.

The Epistle Titus 2:11–14, while it does not specifically mention the word peace, describes life in the kingdom of the king who sets us free from all evil.

The Gospel lesson, Luke 2:1–20, is the traditional account of Jesus' birth and contains the message of the angels to the shepherds announcing peace first with the words: 'Do not be afraid' and then with the song: 'May glory be given to God in the highest heaven! And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!'

Unless otherwise noted, Bible quotations in this resource are from the New International Readers Bible.

ALL-AGE WORSHIP

All-age (intergenerational) worship is, first and foremost, worship — an encounter between God and God's people: a dialogue in which God speaks and people respond, both in the worship service and in their lives.

Intentionally *intergenerational* worship

- allows this dialogue to take place through several of the senses, movement and activity
- focuses on a single theme and connects that theme with the lives of the worshippers. It reinforces the theme by exploring it in several different ways
- provides worshippers (young, old and in-between) with an experience and thoughts they can remember and talk about in their homes. It may provide resources to support that conversation
- encourages interaction and dialogue among people of the various generations represented in the worshiping community
- differs from worship that is planned by adults for adults, and differs from worship for children alone — planned either by adults or by children
- takes seriously the understanding that people of all ages worship together in the body of Christ. People of all ages can also plan worship, invite people to worship, and lead worship

All-age worship recognises and values the children present in worship and 'the child within' each adult.

WORSHIPERS

For some people who worship with you this may be the first time they hear, or the first time they really engage with, the great mystery of God coming to us as a baby at Christmas time — God's gift of peace to the world.

For many it will be a reminder of what they already know and of experiences they have had in previous Christmas worship times.

For some worshippers this may be the last time they hear the story.

At Christmas time people who seldom take part in Christian worship may join with your congregation. Some may come as guests of family or friends. Others may come in response to your advertising.

- Why do they come to church at Christmas time?
- What are they looking for?
- In what areas of life do they need God's peace?
- What do you have to offer them?
- How can you plan for all the worshippers?

Consider these questions — and your answers — before you begin planning a special worship service for Christmas time.

PLANNING

The ideal team for planning intergenerational worship consists of three people representing the youngest third, the middle third and the oldest third of your congregation — plus your pastor/minister/priest or lay ministry team.

The team may also draw on people who have special abilities in the areas of hospitality, music, drama, visual arts and technology.

Planning as an intergenerational team can be a valuable experience for all involved.

Suggested planning steps:

- begin with prayer, and trust God's Spirit to guide your planning
- consider the 'worshippers' questions above
- look through these notes to see how they can help in planning the kind of service you want to hold
- use these notes, your regular service format and other resources to develop a worship outline
- flesh out the outline, consider your own people and facilities
- work with worship leaders to work out details: who does what, when and how.

INVITATION AND ADVERTISING

Begin early to let the members of your congregation in on the excitement of what is being planned. Encourage them to catch the vision of blessing your community with a message of peace at Christmas time.

Guests may come in response to personal invitations from people in your congregation, and to advertising done in your community.



Use the 'Merry Christmas, World' cards prepared by the Communications Unit of the Uniting Church as the basis of your promotion.

Members of your congregation (including children) can personalise the cards and give them to family, friends and neighbours. Also consider:

- a notice/invitation in your local newspaper
- printed invitation notices in a shopping centre or in other gathering places
- a sign board outside your church.

Be sure to include the date, time and location of the service in all your promotional material.

The message of the postcard, is not simply a gimmick for getting people to come to church, it can be, in itself, a gift and message for anyone who sees it this Christmas.

You can use this resource to plan your service even if you do not use the postcard.

HOSPITALITY

When you invite guests to a worship service it is especially important to provide them with a warm welcome and a comfortable — peaceful — environment. This is the responsibility of all members of the congregation, but you may designate specific people to take on specific duties.

Your **HOSPITALITY TEAM** may include people of all ages, possibly family groups. Their responsibility will be planning for and ensuring the comfort of guests. This may involve:

- being aware of the safety features of the worship space, eg location of alternate exits, location of first aid equipment, identity of people with first aid training
- making the worship area as comfortable as possible — particularly in hot weather
- greeting people as they arrive (at the entrance to the property to direct them to parking spaces, or outside the building to direct them to the entrance, or at the door)
- helping people to get settled (possibly showing them to seats, introducing them to people sitting near them, telling them where to find

toilets and other facilities, giving them a worship leaflet)

- paying special attention to the very young, the very old and people with disabilities. Seat them where they will be able to see/hear, but not feel conspicuous. You may provide a quiet activity bag or play item for very young children
- keeping alert to needs of people during the service, and assisting as required
- providing fellowship food or activity after the service (with something special for children who may not want to stand around while adults have a cuppa).

If you intend to make follow-up contact with guests, the hospitality team may be responsible for obtaining guests' names, contact details, special needs, requests or other information.

WORSHIP SPACE & VISUALS

A clean, tidy and attractive worship area can help guests and regular worshippers feel that this is an interesting and inviting place to be.

Visual arts can enhance various aspects of the service by illustrating what is presented and discussed. So involve people with artistic talent and your technology team (if you project images electronically) in creating memorable visual impact that will enhance your presentation of the message of Christmas peace.

For this service you may want to decorate the worship space with

- the image from the postcard
- other world maps
- pictures of people of various ethnic groups and ages
- various symbols of peace
- the image of two people holding a star (from the postcard)
- yellow stars, like the one in the image, with the words 'Merry Christmas, world' or 'may your world be full of peace' or 'peace' verses from the Bible.
- Peace lilies — consider filling the sanctuary with pots of peace lilies and giving them as gifts after the service — with a blessing and a message about the significance of the flower.



You might organise a pre-service activity in which people are invited to write their peace prayers on stars to display in the worship space or to take home.

Any of these images can also be used as projection slides before, during or after the service.

MUSIC

Most of the worship music will be congregational singing. Invite the participation of all worshipers, but be aware that some people are not comfortable with congregational singing.

You may also include some 'performance' music by a choir, band, instrumental group or soloist.

You may use some recorded music, particularly as a way of creating an atmosphere of peace, eg 'Peace' by Richard Vella (Sonic Arts Ensemble recording ©2006 ABC).

Worshipers may hope to hear (and sing) old familiar carols at Christmas time. So be sure to include opportunities for some carol singing. The carols listed below specifically reflect the peace theme of this service.

Some worshipers may come from another culture/country. Consult with new Australians in your congregation to see if there is music from their tradition that can be incorporated into the service.

Consider ways of involving children too young to read or sing the words, eg

- show visuals along with words if you use PowerPoint, or include some illustrations in worship bulletins
- teach actions for some key words in the song and ask everyone to do the actions as they sing, or use some Auslan signs, which you can find at the Auslan sign bank: www.auslan.org.au
- teach one or two lines that are repeated so everyone can sing these lines
- give children a star to wave during a song.

SONG SUGGESTIONS

These Christmas songs are from *100 Favourite Christmas Carols* (Openbook Publishers), available from Australian Church Resources, www.acresources.com.au, phone: 8177 2113.

31 God rest you merry, people all/gentlemen

Note: It is generally assumed that this song is about merry, ie jovial, gentlemen. However the location of the comma (God rest ye merry, gentlemen) indicates a different meaning. The wish is that people continue (rest) in joy and peace.

#34 Hark the herald angels sing

#41 It came upon a midnight clear

#44 Joy to the world

#47 Little children can you tell

#54 Christmas blessing

#64 O little town of Bethlehem

#75 Silent night

Note: This favourite carol paints a word picture of the child 'sleeping in heavenly peace' — in the midst of the clamour and unsettledness of

Bethlehem during the Roman census, a situation that meant there was 'no room in the inn'

#83 The Christmas tree

#93 While shepherds watched

#100 We wish you a merry Christmas

Other 'peace' songs and hymns:

- Christ be our light (Bernadette Farrell) ATOK (*All Together OK*) 313
- Deep peace (Robin Mann) ATOK 400
- For unto us (unknown, based on Isaiah 9:6) various hymnals
- Glory, glory, glory (traditional: Pablo Sosa, Argentina) ATOK 317
- Grant peace we pray (Martin Luther) various hymnals
- I am the light of the world (Jim Strathdee; ATA (*All Together Again*) 128
- (I've got) peace like a river (traditional) ATN (*All together Now*) 70
- Let there be peace on earth. And let it begin with me (various)
- Lord of our life and God of our salvation (various hymnals)
- Make me a channel of your peace (Sebastian Temple, based on St Francis) ATN 95
- May the Lord bless you today (Sharny Russell-Schlencker) ATOK 408
- No longer strangers (John Yivisaker, based on Ephesians 2:13-22) ATA 144
- Peace (Annette Fechner) ATOK 406
- Peace, perfect peace — the old hymn by Edward Henry Bickersteth or the contemporary South African song by Frederick Hibbert, recorded by Lucky Dube, James Morrison and also Toots and the Maytals
- Shalom, my friend (Traditional) ATA 195
- Shelter (Geoff Bullock) ATOK 368
- Your love surrounds me (Robin Mann) LH 878

WORSHIP LEADERS

People of different ages can be part of the team that leads worship.

- **WORSHIP LEADER** — This may be the minister/priest/pastor or a lay person or two people sharing the role. In a secular setting this person might be considered the compere. The worship leader is responsible for connecting with the worshipers and leading them through the worship.
- **MUSICIANS (MUSIC TEAM)** may include a song leader, singers, and instrumentalists. The musicians lead the congregation in singing and may present one or more 'performance' items or mood-setting musical background for parts of the worship.
- **BIBLE READER/S** — This person (or a group of people) reads the text that comes directly

from the Bible. Although they may actually work from a printed script, it is a good idea for the reader to hold a large, open Bible or stand at a lectern with a large open Bible, to distinguish what they read from other spoken or read material.

- **PRAYER LEADER/S** — An individual or a group of people prepares and leads prayers at the end of the service.

There may also be **STORY TELLER/S**, a **PREACHER** and people in other leadership roles.

SERMON

In an all-age worship service the sermon should be an all-age sermon. This means it's short and simple.

If the sermon is for 'adults only', provide a theme-related activity for children to do during the sermon, either sitting with their families in the worship area or in a special children's area.

If children do a separate activity, allow a time for them to share what they have done with the older worshipers.

Most likely the sermon will address the absence of peace in the world and move from that to an understanding of Jesus as the bringer of peace.

This resource includes a number of starting points for a sermon on the theme 'May your world be full of peace this Christmas', including:

- Bible texts about peace
- Peace symbols
- Notes on the carol: 'I heard the bells on Christmas day'.

REHEARSAL

God, whom you worship at Christmas time, your Christmas guests and the regular congregation deserve a Christmas worship experience that is the best you can make it.

Planning and rehearsal will help worship leaders to have and demonstrate the peace they are talking about.

A complete walk-through will pinpoint any logistical problems, allow the worship leader/s to fine-tune instructions for the worshipers and ensure that the service itself runs smoothly.

Use rehearsal time as an opportunity to pray together and to remind participants of the awesome privilege and task they have in leading worship.

Discuss with the worship leaders what it means to be leading worshipers.

FOLLOWING ON FROM CHRISTMAS

People often visit churches at Christmas. Have you considered what your church may offer during January to invite visitors to return? Perhaps look at Summer Sundays.

Go to <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/all-age-worship.html> and click on Summer Sundays.



WHAT IS PEACE?

'Peace', like 'love', is one of those short, apparently simple words, which are extremely difficult to define. Each person's understanding of the world depends on their personal experience.

Peace is most often described as the absence of something: war, anger, tension, confusion, noise, suffering.

Macquarie Online Dictionary defines peace as:

1. freedom from war or hostilities.
2. an agreement between contending parties to abstain from further hostilities.
3. freedom from strife or dissention.
4. freedom from civil commotion; public order and security.
5. ease of mind or conscience.
6. a state of being tranquil or serene. A state conducive, due to, or characterised by tranquillity or calm.
7. quiet; stillness; silence.

All this seems pretty tame. Taken to its extreme it is warm, cuddly, sleepy — unproductive and uncreative. Boring, in fact.

God-given, God-shaped peace, on the other hand, is an active, powerful force, a state of being and a way of living.

Jesus farewell words — *I leave my peace with you. I give my peace to you. I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not be afraid.* (John 14:27) — give us a fresh understanding of peace as an untroubled and fearless heart.

God's peace is an untroubled and fearless heart — whatever the circumstances.

SHALOM

The Hebrew word *shalom* is translated as 'peace'.

Peace is only a part of *shalom*. *Shalom* also means completeness, wholeness, health, peace, welfare, safety, soundness, tranquillity, prosperity, perfectness, fullness, rest, harmony, the absence of agitation or discord. *Shalom* comes from the root verb meaning to be complete, perfect and full. In modern Hebrew the related word *shelem* means to pay for, and *shulam* means to be fully paid. (See *Strong's Concordance* 7965)

Jesus is called *Sar shalom*, 'Prince of Peace', (Isaiah 9:6). He is the one who brought peace when he paid fully for our sin.

In the Gospels, Jesus often uses the greeting *shalom aleichem* ("Peace be unto you"). The word *shalom* is a mighty blessing!

PEACE AND PIECES

'Peace' is a homophone (sound-alike) of the word 'piece'.

It's a linguistic irony that the Hebrew word *shalom* includes a concept of wholeness, unbrokenness, not separate pieces.

Young children generally hear, understand, and use the peace/piece sound first in phrases like: a piece of cake, or a piece of a game or puzzle. They may hear the phrase 'peace and quiet', and try to figure out what a piece of quiet is.

All this leads to some considerations for planning worship:

1. Young children in worship will not always understand the words the way they are intended by adult speakers.
2. Adult worshippers — particularly in a multi-generational, multi-ethnic situation — may not always understand words the way they are intended by other speakers.
3. People can worship God in situations where they do not understand all the words.
4. Worship planners need to communicate in ways other than words. Consider how you might convey the concept of peace in worship to people who do not know the word.





PEACE IN THE BIBLE

HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE!
(PSALM 133:1)

The God of the Bible is a God of peace:

- So Gideon built an altar to honour the Lord there. He called it The Lord Is Peace. (Judges 6:24)
- God is not a God of disorder. He is a God of peace. (1 Corinthians 14:33)

The Bible begins and ends with pictures of God's kingdom where peace reigns.

- Genesis 1 and 2 describe the creation in which God looked at everything he had made and he was very pleased. (1:31).
- In Revelation, John describes the Holy City — the new Jerusalem — where God himself will be with them, and he will be their God. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. (21:3–5).

Between these two images is an account of humans destroying the peace and then seeking it. And we see God's plan to restore peace through his Son, Jesus — the Prince who brings peace.

The word 'give' is highlighted in the following passages, emphasising that throughout the Bible, peace is seen as a gift from God, eg

- I will **give** you peace in the land. You will sleep, and no one will make you afraid. I will remove wild animals from the land. There will not be any war in your country. (Leviticus 26:6)
- The Lord **gives** strength to his people. The Lord blesses his people with peace. (Psalm 29:11)
- God is the God who **gives** peace. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament is full of cycles in which peace treaties are made and broken. eg

- Abraham gave Abimelech sheep and cattle. The two men made a peace treaty. (Genesis 21:27)
- There is a time to love. And there's a time to hate. There is a time for war. And there's a time for peace. (Ecclesiastes 3:8)

Blessings include peace, eg

- May the Lord look on you with favour and **give** you his peace. (Numbers 6:26)

'Peace' is used in greeting and farewell, eg

- She asked Adonijah, "Have you come in peace?" He answered, "Yes. I've come in peace." (1 Kings 2:13)
- "Go in peace," Elisha said. Naaman started out on his way. (2 Kings 5:19)

Peace is seen as God's reward, eg

- But those who are free of pride will be **given** the land. They will enjoy great peace. (Psalm 37:11)
- When the way you live pleases the Lord, he makes even your enemies live at peace with you. (Proverbs 16:7)
- Lord, you will **give** perfect peace to anyone who commits himself to be faithful to you. That's because he trusts in you. (Isaiah 26:3)

People are responsible for their own lack of peace, eg

- "There is no peace for those who are evil," says my God. (Isaiah 57:21)
- They don't know how to live at peace with others. What they do isn't fair. They lead twisted lives. No one who lives like that will enjoy peace and rest. (Isaiah 59:8)

In times of strife, God keeps alive hope in the promise of peace through his prophets, eg

- A child will be born to us. A son will be **given** to us. He will rule over us. And he will be called Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God. He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever and Prince Who Brings Peace. The authority of his rule will continue to grow. The peace he brings will never end.' (Isaiah 9:6,7)
- Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves and lions will eat together. And little children will lead them around. Cows will eat with bears. Their little ones will lie down together. And lions will eat straw like oxen. A baby will play near a hole where cobras live. A young child will put his hand into a nest where poisonous snakes live. None of those animals will harm or destroy anything or anyone on my holy mountain of Zion. (Isaiah 11:6–9)
- My people, you will leave Babylonia with joy. You will be led out of it in peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song as you go. And all of the trees in the fields will clap their hands. (Isaiah 55:12)
- I will make a covenant with them. It promises to **give** them peace. The covenant will last forever. I will make them my people. And I will increase their numbers. I will put my temple among them forever. (Ezekiel 37:26)
- He'll settle problems among strong nations everywhere. They will hammer their swords into plows. They'll hammer their spears into pruning tools. Nations will not go to war against one another. They won't even train to fight anymore.

Every man will have
his own vine and fig tree.
And no one will make them afraid.
That's what the Lord who rules over all has
promised. (Micah4:3,4)

NEW TESTAMENT

The angels spoke of peace when they
announced Jesus' birth:

- May glory be **given** to God in the highest
heaven! And may peace be **given** to those he
is pleased with on earth! (Luke 2:14)

Jesus spoke about peace, eg

- Blessed are those who make peace. They will
be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9)
- Leave your gift in front of the altar. First go and
make peace with your brother. Then come
back and offer your gift.
(Matthew 5:24)
- If that home welcomes you, give it your
blessing of peace. If it does not, don't bless it.
(Matthew 10:13 and Luke 10:5,6)
- He said to her, "Dear woman, your faith has
healed you. Go in peace. You are free from
your suffering." (Mark 5:34 and Luke 7:50)
- "Do you think I came to bring peace on earth?
No, I tell you. I have come to separate people.
(Luke 12:51, Matthew 10:34)
- He said, "I wish you had known today what
would bring you peace! But now it is hidden
from your eyes." (Luke 19:42)
- I leave my peace with you. I **give** my peace to
you. I do not **give** it to you as the world does.
Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not
be afraid. (John 14:27)
- "I have told you these things, so that you can
have peace because of me. In this world you
will have trouble. But cheer up! I have won the
battle over the world." (John 16:33)
- Again Jesus said, "May peace be with you! The
Father has sent me. So now I am sending you."
(John 20:21)

We have peace because of Jesus, eg

- We have been made right with God because
of our faith. Now we have peace with him
because of our Lord Jesus Christ.
(Romans 5:1)
- God was pleased to bring all things back to
himself because of what Christ has done. That
includes all things on earth and in heaven.
God made peace through Christ's blood,
through his death on the cross.
(Colossians 1:20)
- Christ himself is our peace. He has made Jews
and non-Jews into one group of people. He

has destroyed the hatred that was like a wall
between us. (Ephesians 2:14)

- Then God's peace will watch over your hearts
and your minds because you belong to Christ
Jesus. God's peace can never be completely
understood. (Philippians 4:7)

How to live in peace

- Try your best to live in peace with everyone. Try
to be holy. Without holiness no one will see the
Lord. (Hebrews 12:14)
- But there will be glory, honour and peace for
everyone who does good. That is meant first for
the Jews. It is also meant for the non-Jews.
(Romans 2:10)
- If possible, live in peace with everyone. Do that
as much as you can. (Romans 12:18)
- So let us do all we can to live in peace. And let
us work hard to build each other up. (Romans
14:19)
- Finally, brothers and sisters, good-bye. Try to be
perfect. Pay attention to what I'm saying.
Agree with one another. Live in peace. And
the God who **gives** love and peace will be
with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)
- Tell them not to speak evil things against
anyone. Remind them to live in peace. They
must consider the needs of others. They must
be kind and gentle toward all people.
(Titus 3:2)
- Finally, I want all of you to live together in
peace. Be understanding. Love one another
like members of the same family. Be kind and
tender. Don't be proud. (1 Peter 3:8)
- Turn away from evil, and do good. Look for
peace, and go after it. (1 Peter 3:11)

Peace comes through God's Spirit, eg

- The way a sinful person thinks leads to death.
But the mind controlled by the Spirit brings life
and peace. (Romans 8:6)
- But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy
and peace. It is being patient, kind and good.
It is being faithful. (Galatians 5:22)

New Testament blessings include:

- May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
give you grace and peace. (1 Corinthians 1:3;
Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2;
2 Thessalonians 1:2; Philemon 1:3)
- May the Lord who **gives** peace **give** you
peace at all times and in every way. May the
Lord be with all of you. (2 Thessalonians 3:16)
- May grace and peace **come to you from** the
One who is, and who was, and who will come.
(Revelation 1:4)

(quotations from New International Readers
Version, NIRV)



EVERYBODY'S TALKIN' ABOUT PEACE

- All we are saying is give peace a chance. **John Lennon**
- Behind all peace is ultimately the peaceful individual. **Irving Babbitt**
- But let us remember: peace is hard. Progress can be reversed. Prosperity comes slowly. Societies can split apart. And we have more work to do. **Barack Obama**
- Every kind of peaceful cooperation among men is primarily based on mutual trust and only secondarily on institutions such as courts of justice and police. **Albert Einstein**
- Hatred can be overcome only by love. **Mahatma Gandhi**
- He that would live in peace and at ease must not speak all he knows or all he sees. **Benjamin Franklin**
- I don't know whether war is an interlude during peace, or peace an interlude during war. **Georges Clemenceau**
- I dream of an Africa which is in peace with itself. **Nelson Mandela**
- I think it's naive to pray for world peace if we're not going to change the form in which we live. **Godfrey Reggio**
- I think that people want peace so much that one of these days government had better get out of their way and let them have it. **Dwight D. Eisenhower**
- If they want peace, nations should avoid the pin-pricks that precede cannon shots. **Napoleon Bonaparte**
- If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other. **Mother Teresa**
- If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies. **Moshe Dayan**
- If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another. **Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso** Imagine all the people living life in peace. You may say 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. **John Lennon**
- It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it. **Eleanor Roosevelt**
- Let us forgive each other — only then will we live in peace. **Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy**
- Nobody can bring you peace but yourself. **Ralph Waldo**
- Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. **Mohandas Gandhi**
- Non-violence leads to the highest ethics, which is the goal of all evolution. Until we stop harming all other living beings, we are still savages. **Thomas A. Edison**
- Peace and justice are two sides of the same coin. **Dwight D. Eisenhower**
- Peace begins with a smile. **Mother Teresa**
- Peace cannot be achieved through violence; it can only be attained through understanding. **Ralph Waldo Emerson**
- Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without. **Buddha**
- Peace if possible, truth at all costs. **Martin Luther**
- Peace is a journey of a thousand miles and it must be taken one step at a time. **Lyndon B. Johnson**
- Peace is costly but it is worth the expense. **African Proverb**
- Peace is its own reward. **Mohandas Gandhi**
- Peace is liberty in tranquillity. **Marcus Tullius Cicero**
- Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to cope with it. **Robert Fulghum**
- Peace is not an absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice. **Baruch Spinoza**
- Peace is not something you wish for; it's something you make, something you do, something you are, and something you give away. **Robert Fulghum**
- There is no way to peace; peace is the way. **A. Muste**
- We must build dikes of courage to hold back the flood of fear. . . That old law about 'an eye for an eye' leaves everybody blind. . . The time is always right to do the right thing. . . Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal. **Martin Luther King Jr**
- When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace. **Jimmi Hendrix**
- When you find peace within yourself, you become the kind of person who can live at peace with others. **Peace Prophet**



A SONG OF CHRISTMAS PEACE

I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807-1882, 1867)

UNPACKING THE SONG

Although it was written 150 years ago, this hymn expresses a very contemporary reflection on the theme of peace at Christmas.

Verse 1 NOSTALGIA: At Christmas time we still hear familiar Christmas music that's packed with messages of peace and goodwill.

Verse 2 HISTORY: We may still reflect on the historic significance of the music and the story behind the music.

Verse 3 DESPAIR: This is the crunch. It's been 2000+ years since angels first announced the birth of God's Son — the Prince of Peace — as a human being with their song of peace and goodwill. Hatred, fear, war and greed — not peace — still seem to be the dominant themes of our lives.

Christ and his church are the target of mocking today just as it was 150 years ago when Robert Green Ingersoll wrote: 'If Christ, in fact, said "I came not to bring peace but a sword," it is the only prophecy in the New Testament that has been literally fulfilled.'

Verse 4 FAITH, HOPE:

The music and the enduring message is not a man-made ideal, it is rooted in God the eternal, loving Father and giver of peace.

Verse 5: RESOLUTION: Like many of the Old Testament psalms, the hymn ends in joyful praise, reflecting the joy of verse one, made stronger through the journey through despair to faith and hope.

USING THE SONG

- Read the poem or present it as a formal recitation.
- A story-teller presents the poem informally as a children's story (modifying the language).
- A soloist or small group performs the song.
- Use bells in the service: chimes, bell choir, timpani key on an electronic keyboard or a church bell, if you have one.

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

- (1) I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
- (2) I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
- (3) And in despair I bowed my head:
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men."
- (4) Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men."
- (5) Till, ringing singing, on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

- Use bells to introduce the reading or singing of the song.
- Use the 'unpacking' notes as the starting point for a sermon based on the song.
- Sing the song. Before singing, teach children the line from the angels' song to the shepherds . . . 'peace on earth, good will to men'. Encourage children to sing the lines and perhaps wave their hands making a peace sign when the line is sung at the end of each verse.

- Show appropriate images while the song is performed or sung.

ORIGIN OF THE SONG

Congregations with members and acquaintances serving in the military will be particularly struck by the origin of the words.

Longfellow is said to have written the poem 'Christmas Bells' on Christmas day, 1864. It expressed his feelings at the end of a year in which his wife had died and his son Charles was severely wounded during the Battle of New Hope Church during the American Civil War.

The poem originally had two other verses referring specifically to the Civil War. It was set to music by organist John Baptiste Calkin.

SOME PEACE SYMBOLS

THE DOVE

The oldest and most common Christian symbol for peace is the dove. A dove appears in two Bible stories: Noah and the flood and Jesus' baptism. Early Christians drew parallels between baptism and the flood, comparing salvation through water in baptism to Noah's salvation through water. The dove has come to symbolise the peace that comes with deliverance and God's forgiveness.



Although this is more an internal peace, *La Colombe* (The Dove) a lithograph by Pablo Picasso was the emblem for the World Peace Congress in Paris 1949.

There are several versions of the story of a bird (presumably a dove) sitting peacefully on its nest in the midst of a violent storm.

"Peace in the Midst of the Storm" is a painting by Jack E. Dawson



THE RAINBOW

The rainbow is another peace symbol connected with Noah and the flood.

One interpretation suggests that: when men went off to fight they would take their bow (weapon) with them. When they returned home they would hang up their bow on the wall, indicating that it was a time of peace. After the flood, God 'hung up' his (rain)bow as the arch of peace — a symbol of the covenant between God and his people. The rainbow became a symbol of peace across the earth and the sky, and among all people.

An international peace flag using the colours of the rainbow was first used on a 1961 peace march in Italy.



THE OLIVE BRANCH



This symbol is also related to the story of Noah, when the dove sent out from the ark returned with an olive leaf, it indicated that the water had receded.

The olive branch has for thousands of years in many cultures been used as a sign of peace and goodwill. Olive trees took decades to bear fruit for harvest, and anyone who planted olive groves must be expecting a long and peaceful life.

A variation on the olive branch is the olive wreath. It was given as a prize to winners at the



ancient Olympic Games — a time when wars were suspended between competing states.

An olive wreath, symbolising peace, has been incorporated into the logo of the United Nations.

PEACE PIPE

Native Americans — the Dakotan and Algonquian peoples — smoked special pipes at the conclusion of peace treaties and adoption ceremonies. Smoking usually carried the guarantees of friendship



ANTI-WAR SYMBOLS



This internationally recognized symbol for peace was designed for the British nuclear disarmament movement by Gerald Holtom in 1958.

Holtom had originally considered using the Christian cross in the motif, but some church leaders were not happy about using the cross on a protest march. The symbol now incorporates semaphore signals for the letters 'N' and 'D' for Nuclear Disarmament.

The peace symbol was used during American civil rights marches.

The V-sign hand gesture was first used to represent victory during the Second World War. Later, it was adopted by the protest movement against the War in Vietnam as a call for peace.



PAPER CRANES



The paper crane is another symbol that has been changed from its original meaning to become a recognised symbol of peace.

A traditional symbol of luck in Japan, the folded paper crane was popularized as a peace symbol by the story of Sadako Sasaki (1943–1955), a girl who died as a result of the atomic bomb that exploded over Hiroshima in 1945. In her last days she started folding paper cranes, inspired by the Japanese saying that anyone who folded a thousand paper cranes was granted a wish. (*See the story Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr*)

THE PEACE LILY



The spathiphyllum plant is colloquially called the peace lily. The flower resembles a white flag, universally recognised as a flag of truce during battles. The cream or yellow

coloured spadix (spike) represents the flag pole while the white leaf-like bract that encloses it represents the flag.

Peace lilies are popular house plants. The flowers, which bloom almost all year round, have a pleasant smell and remove toxins from the air.

Spathiphyllum is also known as the Madonna Lily.

THE PEACE BELL



The Japanese Peace Bell was donated by Japan to the United Nations in 1954.

The metal in the bell itself was obtained from coins donated by delegates of 60 nations who were attending the 13th

General Conference of United Nations Associations in Paris, France in 1951. The coins were collected from the delegates by children.

Inscribed on one side of the bell are the Japanese characters that say: *Long live absolute world peace*

Copies of the peace bell are located in more than twenty cities around the world. The Australian replica is in Cowra NSW.

THE NOBEL PRIZE FOR PEACE



Nobel prizes were created by the will of Alfred Nobel, a Swedish chemist who invented dynamite. They are awarded in six different areas: Peace, Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Economics and Literature.

The Peace Prize is awarded to the person who 'shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.'

Three women, who share a commitment to women's rights in regions where oppression is common, shared the Nobel Peace Prize for 2011.

- Leymah Gbowee confronted armed forces in Liberia to demand that they stop using rape as a weapon.
- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became Africa's first woman to win a free presidential election.
- Tawakkul Karman began pushing for change in Yemen long before the Arab Spring.

TWO BIBLE IMAGES OF PEACE

THE GOOD SHEPHERD:



The familiar Old Testament Shepherd's Psalm (23rd) — The Lord is my shepherd . . . he leads me beside still waters . . . he restores my soul . . . his rod and staff comfort me — is a picture of peace. It is echoed in New Testament images of Jesus as

the good shepherd.

What could be more peaceful than to be cradled in the arms of such a shepherd, secure in the knowledge that nothing can snatch you out of his hands.

THE LION AND THE LAMB.

These two animals represent two conflicting character traits. They coexist harmoniously in Jesus, the Prince of Peace

Jesus was born as the Lion of Judah: the King, coming to wreak vengeance on his enemies. At the same time he was the gentle Lamb of God: born to die for his people.

In his vision, John is told to 'behold the Lion' and when he looks he sees the Lamb (Revelation 5:5,6). There's a similar comparison in Isaiah 40:10-11.

The popular image, in which a lamb lies down peacefully with a lion, is thought to come from the description of God's peaceable kingdom.



However in the actual text (Isaiah 11:1-9 and Isaiah 65:25) the lamb lies with a wolf, and the lion grazes peacefully. Lamb and wolf, lamb and lion — either way it is a powerful picture of a peace beyond our understanding.



A PRAYER FOR PEACE

This prayer presentation is inspired by the image on the Christmas postcard of two people holding a star.

The prayer has six parts, reflecting six areas of concern about peace.

1. between people and the natural world
2. among nations
3. in our neighbourhood/ community/nation
4. in our home/family
5. in our heart
6. between us and God

Two people present each prayer.

Each pair holds up a star (as in the image) as they pray.

Stars can be any size — large enough to be seen by the congregation; small enough to be managed by the people holding it.

You may cut stars from sturdy corrugated cardboard, paint them yellow/gold and write a message on them.

Alternatively, consider using yellow star-shaped foil balloons from a party shop.

PRAYER LEADERS may use their own words or the suggested wording.



FIRST PRAYER

Two people present the first star.

One of them speaks:

When I think of a world at peace, I

think of the created world — the environment and ecology and all that. I think of saving the forests and rivers and trees and dolphins and the ozone layer.

The other speaks:

We bring our prayer for peace between people and the natural world to God, the creator of the universe.

They place the star on or in front of the altar.



SECOND PRAYER

Two people present the second star.

One speaks:

When I think of a world at peace, I

think of peace among nations. I think of a United Nations that really works. I think of people of different nationalities and languages and cultures and religions talking

to one another, helping one another and trying to understand one another instead of fighting.

The other speaks:

We bring our prayer for peace between people of all nations to God, who loves all people.

They place the star on or in front of the altar.



THIRD PRAYER

Two people present the third star.

One speaks:

When I think of a world at peace, I

think of this country. I think of political parties working together for peaceful resolution to the many problems we have. But it's not just the politicians, I think of everyone in the country, our state, and our community working together and looking after one another.

The other speaks:

We bring our prayer for peace in neighbourhoods and communities in Australia to God, whose own kingdom is a kingdom of peace.

They place the star on or in front of the altar.



FOURTH PRAYER

Two people present the fourth star.

One of them speaks:

When I think of a world at peace, I

think of my home and my family. I think of love and respect; of listening and forgiving. I think of safety and acceptance.

The other speaks:

We bring our prayer for peace in our homes to God, who gives us families so we won't be alone.

They place the star on or in front of the altar.



FIFTH PRAYER

Two people present the fifth star.

One of them speaks:

When I think of a world at peace, I

think of my own heart and mind. I think of concentrating on my joys and blessings and worrying less about my needs and my wants and my rights, about slights and injuries done to me. I think about being content with what I have and who I am.

The other speaks:

We bring our prayer for personal peace of mind and heart to God, the giver of peace.

They place the star on or in front of the altar.



SIXTH PRAYER

Two people present the sixth star.

One of them speaks:

When I think of a world at peace I think of our relationship with God who wants peace in our hearts, in our homes, in our country and in the whole world. I think of how we have let God down, lived selfishly and brought about conflict and misunderstanding where God intended mutual care and peace.

The other speaks:

We bring our prayer for peace to God, trusting that — through his Son Jesus — he has repaired our relationship with him and has given us his peace.

They place the star on or in front of the altar.

CONCLUSION

SIXTH GROUP: Thank you, God, for giving us peace. Amen

FIFTH GROUP: Thank you, God, for giving us inner peace. Amen

FOURTH GROUP: Thank you, God, for giving us peace in our families. Amen

THIRD GROUP: Thank you, God, for giving us peace in our community and nation. Amen

SECOND GROUP: Thank you, God, for giving us peace among peoples and nations. Amen

FIRST GROUP: Thank you, God, for giving us peace with all of your creation. Amen

OPTIONAL EXTENSION

Invite worshipers to bring their individual peace stars place them at the altar.



THE CHRISTMAS STORY

In this plan, the story is read by at least two people: a narrator and a Bible reader (or several Bible readers).

The readers stand at two lecterns or music stands. There is a large Bible on the Bible reader's stand.

Section headings can be displayed on screen or on cardboard signs.

If possible show illustrations while the story is being read.

The narrator pauses after each question. You may invite people to consider the question briefly individually; or you may allow a bit more time for people to discuss the question in small groups.

The question may be added to the displayed slide or poster to help people focus on what they are to think about or discuss.

Bible readings are adapted from Isaiah 9; Luke 2; John 14 and Colossians 1.

PREQUEL — THE PROMISE

NARRATOR: There's a prequel or back story for the Christmas story. It happened many, many years earlier. God's people were in a mess. We won't go into details, but they had brought trouble on themselves.

Do you ever bring trouble on yourself? — PAUSE

NARRATOR: Anyway, God gave a man called Isaiah a promise to tell to his people. Here it is:

READER:

A child will be born to you.
A son will be given to you.
He will rule over you.
And he will be called
Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God.
He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever
and Prince Who Brings Peace.

The authority of his rule will continue to grow.
The peace he brings will never end.

NARRATOR: 'The peace he brings will never end!'
God's people waited year after year after year
for that Prince who brings peace and for his
peace that will never end.

CHAPTER 1 — THE POLITICAL SCENE

NARRATOR: Now God's people did not even have their own prince or a real king. They were part of the Roman Empire, ruled by the Caesar.

READER: In those days, Caesar Augustus made a law. It required that a list be made of everyone in the whole Roman world. It was the first time a list was made of the people while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be listed.

NARRATOR: Everyone did as they were told!

Do you always do what you are told? When do you disobey? — PAUSE

NARRATOR: So now this big census was happening; people were coming and going all over the country.

CHAPTER 2 — THE BIRTH OF A PRINCE

READER: So Joseph went also. He went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea. That is where Bethlehem, the town of David, was. Joseph went there because he belonged to the family line of David. He went there with Mary to be listed. Mary was engaged to him. She was expecting a baby.

While Joseph and Mary were there, the time came for the child to be born. She gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy. She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger. There was no room for them in the inn.

NARRATOR: No room in the inn — or the hotel, the motel, the guesthouse, the B&B. No room! Joseph and Mary must have felt alone and helpless.

Have you ever felt alone and helpless? What happened? — PAUSE

NARRATOR: The story leaves the little family there at the manger and moves outside Bethlehem.

CHAPTER 3 — THE ANGELS' ANNOUNCEMENT

READER: There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. It was night, and they were looking after their sheep. An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy. It is for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. Here is how you will know I am telling you the truth. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven also appeared. They were praising God. They said,

"May glory be given to God in the highest heaven!
And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!"

The angels left and went into heaven.

NARRATOR: That's a lovely parallel isn't it! God gives peace to people. We give glory to God.

How do you/could you give glory to God? — PAUSE

NARRATOR: Joseph and Mary obeyed when the Roman government told them to go to Bethlehem. Now God's angels have told the shepherds to go to Bethlehem.

CHAPTER PART 4 — THE SHEPHERDS' RESPONSE

READER: Then the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger. After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel had said about this child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

NARRATOR: 'All were amazed!'

What do you find amazing about this story? — PAUSE

NARRATOR: Mary, herself, must have been amazed.

CHAPTER 5 —MARY'S SECRET TREASURE

READER: But Mary kept all these things like a secret treasure in her heart. She thought about them over and over.

SEQUEL — THE PRINCE'S PEACE

NARRATOR: Mary's treasure of thoughts grew and grew as that baby grew to be a man.

The man Jesus was a wonderful adviser. He did things that only the Mighty God could do.

But a prince? A prince who brings peace? Mary's son was a carpenter and a teacher not a soldier or prince. And then he died.

Before he died, Jesus said to his friends:

READER: I leave my peace with you. I give my peace to you. I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not be afraid.

NARRATOR: Untroubled and fearless hearts — that was the peace her son — God's Son — gave people.

What do you think it means to have an untroubled and fearless heart? — PAUSE

NARRATOR: Only later did people begin to realise what had happened.

READER: God was pleased to bring all things back to himself because of what Jesus has done. That includes all things on earth and in heaven. God made peace through Jesus' death on the cross.

NARRATOR: And Jesus came back to life again, he lives and gives us his peace.

THE END — OR A NEW START



A SAMPLE WORSHIP PLAN

Suggested wording for some parts of the service are in *italic*

1. PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITY

STAR MAKING

As people arrive, the **HOSPITALITY TEAM** directs them to a craft table where there is a supply of stars cut from yellow card and a supply of textas. Invite people to write their personal Christmas greeting to the world, or a prayer for peace on the star and bring it with them into the worship service.

Alternatively, provide card, a star stencil or template and scissors so people can cut out their own stars. People who do not want to write prayers can simply write the word 'peace' on their star, perhaps one letter on each point.

2. ARRIVAL, BEFORE WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Beginning about 10 minutes before the advertised start of service, **MUSIC TEAM** leads the singing of a medley of favourite/familiar Christmas songs.

HOSPITALITY TEAM greets people as they arrive, helps them settle in the worship area, makes sure each person, young and old, has a star, and invites them to join in the carol singing.

3. SONG

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

As the end of the pre-service medley and the start of the worship service itself, the **MUSIC TEAM** leads the singing of 'We wish you a merry Christmas' — twice. If possible stir up the crowd like a good spruiker, encouraging everyone to stand, sing loudly and enthusiastically, interact with people around them.

4. WELCOME

WORSHIP LEADER: *We do wish you a merry Christmas. We believe that a truly merry, joyous and satisfying Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ — God's Son, the bringer of peace.*

We're glad to have you with us as we worship him and take this time to explore what it means that Jesus brings peace to our world.

5. SONG

SILENT NIGHT

TECH TEAM, if possible display the words of the song with background illustrations of babies sleeping.

WORSHIP LEADER: You may have heard the story of Jesus' birth in a song like this one.

MUSIC TEAM leads the congregation in singing a very soft, peaceful version of *Silent Night*.

6. THE CHRISTMAS STORY

WORSHIP LEADER: *That song is like a lullaby, isn't it — a quiet song a mother might sing to her baby.*

The Bible story of Jesus birth gives us a picture that is quite different from a silent, calm night.

Listen to the story:

STORY TELLER/S presents the account of Jesus birth from Luke 2:1-8.

- Use the Christmas Story script (p 15)
- Read directly from a contemporary translation of the Bible
- Read from a Children's Bible storybook that is true to the Bible narrative.

7. SONG

LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

WORSHIP LEADER: *It seems like everyone from children to old people; from beauty pageant contestants to presidents; from generals to nurses are talking about how they want world peace. In our next song, we'll be singing the same thing.*

Children, if you want world peace, you can hold up your peace stars whenever we sing the word 'peace'.

MUSIC TEAM leads the congregation in singing 'Let there be peace on earth'.

8. CONFESSION OF FAITH

WORSHIP LEADER: *That's a great song. But, you know, I have a problem with it. There are certainly things I can do to make my world more peaceful. But if I really want peace on earth, it can't just begin with me. It starts with God. It starts with God's love. God loves me (and the people I have trouble getting along with) so much that he sent his only Son to bring us peace — untroubled and fearless hearts. Peace on earth starts with Christmas. Merry Christmas, world!*

9. SONG

CHRISTMAS CAROL

MUSIC TEAM leads the congregation in singing a Christmas carol that retells the story of Jesus birth, eg 'It came upon a midnight clear' (verses 1,2,4)

10. TEACHING/SERMON

WHERE IS THE PEACE OF CHRISTMAS?

MINISTER/PASTOR/PRIEST talks about the assurance of God's peace in a world of unrest.

Consider organising the talk around:

- I heard the bells on Christmas day (p 10)
- OR
- one of the peace symbols (page 11)

Look at receiving God's peace and passing it on to others.

11. PASSING THE PEACE

WORSHIP LEADER: *When you came in, you made a peace star. I'd like you to take that star now and hold it over your heart.*

(Ushers provide extra stars, if anyone does not have one.)

Once we have received peace, we have it in our own hearts. But we can't just keep it hidden away there. We have to pass it on.

I'd like each of you to take your peace star and pass it on to someone else. When you do that, also tell that person something you may be able to do to actually pass on Jesus' peace to someone else, such as giving a smile, offering a handshake, asking for forgiveness.

While the congregation passes the peace, **MUSIC TEAM** quietly introduces the next song.

12. SONG

MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE

MUSIC TEAM leads the congregation in singing 'Make me a channel of your peace'.

Alternatively, sing 'Pass my love around' replacing the word 'love' in the song with 'peace'. You could ask the congregation to keep passing their peace stars around as you sing.

13. PRAYER

PRAYER LEADER: leads the congregation's prayer, using 'A prayer for peace' (page 13)

OR

prayer relating their own concerns to the theme of Christmas peace.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP LEADER makes any necessary brief announcements. Include

- suggestion that people take home their stars. They can display them as a reminder of this worship. The stars might even help them remind one another of God's gift of

peace when tensions arise.

If they have a Christmas tree, they might hang the stars on their tree.

- invitation to after-service activities or refreshments
- invitation to further activities and services of the congregation, including prayers for individuals after the service
- explanation of the way the offering will be used to help bring peace in the world.

15. OFFERING

The offering is collected in your usual manner.

PEACEFUL MUSIC

During the offering the **MUSIC TEAM** may perform a song of peace or the **TECH TEAM** may play recorded music.

16. FINAL SONG

JOY TO THE WORLD

TECH TEAM: Display the postcard map picture during the introduction and then the words of the song.

Note: If you have the technology to do so, film your congregation as they are singing with raised hands and show it in 'real time' as part of the display.

WORSHIP LEADER: *Merry Christmas, world! The Prince of Peace has come to rule the whole world with truth, grace and peace.*

Our screen shows 'the whole world' — people raising their arms to praise the Saviour who reigns. I invite you to join with them as we lift our arms and sing.

MUSIC TEAM leads the congregation in singing *Joy to the world*

V 1. Left arm up

V 2. Right arm up

V 3 Both arms up.

[People could hold up their stars.]

17. BENEDICTION

WORSHIP LEADER: *May the peace of Christmas be with you — in your hearts, your homes and your world, now and always. Amen.*

18. AFTER WORSHIP

Worshippers are invited to the hall where tea, coffee and fruit cordial are available along with star shaped biscuits, eg honey biscuits, shortbreads and sugar cookies.