

**Community of the Cross of Nails
at St Martin Coney Street, York**
Friday Prayers for Peace and Reconciliation
Friday 5th September 2025

Bible Reading: Isaiah 32:14-18:

The palace will be forsaken, the populous city deserted; the hill and the watchtower will become dens for ever, the joy of wild asses, a pasture for flocks; until a spirit from on high is poured out on us, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust for ever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Reflection

For many churches the beginning of September marks the start of the Season of Creation, ending on 4th October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi. The theme this year is Peace with Creation. The symbol is the Garden of Peace and our Bible passage is the text for this year.

The Season of Creation website explains this year's theme as follows:

"Our Biblical text for this year is Isaiah 32:14-18. The prophet Isaiah pictured the desolated Creation without peace because of the lack of justice and the broken relationship between God and humankind. This description of devastated cities and wastelands eloquently stresses the fact that human destructive behaviours have a negative impact on the Earth.

Our hope: Creation will find peace when justice is restored.

There is still hope and the expectation for a peaceful Earth.

To hope in a biblical context does not mean to stand still and quiet, but to act, pray, change, and reconcile with Creation and the Creator in unity, metanoia (repentance), and solidarity."

When looking at the state of our planet our thoughts may be ones of despair. Yet the created world is God's world, and so, as Christians, we are to be motivated instead by hope, hope in the restoration and healing of the natural environment on which the whole of humanity depends, and indeed on which peace and justice too depend. The call to us all is so well expressed in this year's prayer below.

(Kingsley Boulton)

Prayers

Season of Creation prayer 2025: Peace with Creation

Creator of all, we praise you for the gift of life and for the faith that unites us in care for our common home. We confess how estranged we have become — from one another, from your Creation, and from our truest selves. We acknowledge that our greed and destructive impulses have fractured our relationships with you, with others, and with the Earth. Fertile fields have become barren, forests lie desolate, oceans and rivers are polluted. Thriving communities have become places of suffering, and the earth cries out.

Beloved Christ, who spoke “Shalom” to frightened hearts, stir us to compassionate action. Inspire us to work for the end of conflict, and for the full restoration of broken relationships — with you, with the ecumenical community, with the human family, and with all Creation.

Prince of Peace, through your wounds, teach us to stand in solidarity with the woundedness of others, of creation, and of the world. Through your resurrection, make us people of hope — with a vision of swords turned into ploughshares and tears transformed into joy. May we come together as one family, to labour for your peace — a shalom where all your people may dwell in safety, and rest in quiet places. Amen.

A prayer for the Holy Land

O God of all justice and peace we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children for, to all of us, you are our Heavenly Father. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.
(*The Most Revd Hosam Naoum, Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem*)

A prayer for Ukraine

Holy God, we hold before you all who live close to war and conflict; and all who live close to the threat of war and violence. We remember especially at this time, people in Ukraine and Russia. We pray for nonviolence and peaceful resolutions of conflict. Give us hearts of hospitality and sanctuary, forgive us all our hostility and hatred. Bring all people to the humanity you give us, and to the reconciliation and healing for which you gave your life. Strengthen us all to work with you to build justice and peace, reconciliation and healing, in our hearts and homes, in our streets, in all communities, neighbourhoods and nations. Bless all who live lives for the peace and wellbeing of others, and make their service fruitful. In the name of Christ. Amen. (*The Revd Inderjit Bhogal, Honorary President, The Fellowship of Reconciliation*)

A prayer for peace throughout the world

Lord, you have taught us that the world is yours and those who dwell on it. Hear us therefore as we pray for the life of the world; that every nation may seek the way that leads to peace; that human rights and freedom may everywhere be respected; and that the earth's resources may be ungrudgingly shared among all people. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
(*A Christian's Prayer Book*)

A prayer for refugees

Almighty and merciful God, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own; look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger, homeless and hungry. Bless those who work to bring them relief; inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts; and guide the nations of the world towards that day when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (*Church of England prayers*)

A prayer for the Community of the Cross of Nails

Almighty God, you have committed to us the ministry of reconciliation of your Son, Jesus Christ; give us the confidence in your power to forgive, as your Son forgave us from the Cross. Enable us to be witnesses of your forgiveness at work and where we live. Unite us in a sacred fellowship to heal the hostilities we see, and give us the grace to love one another, rejoicing in this life together. Amen.

A prayer for all those affected by illness:

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle:

We pray this week for the peoples of Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal.

Community of the Cross of Nails Prayer Cycle:

We pray today for partners in:

Cuba:

in Santiago de Cuba: St Mary's Church.

Czech Republic:

in Prague: The Military Chaplaincy of the Czech Armed Forces.

Georgia:

in Tbilisi: The Peace Cathedral - Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia.

Germany:

in Bad Oeynhausen: The Evangelical Church Community;

in Berlin: Action Reconciliation Service for Peace.

We pray too for the partners in **Israel/Palestine**:
in Bethehem: Mar Ephrem School;
in Jerusalem: Musalaha;
St George the Martyr Cathedral;
St Mark's Church and Monastery; and
Tantur Ecumenical Institute;
in Ramallah: Arab Evangelical Episcopal School;
in Shefar'Am: International Peace Centre (House of Hope); and
St Paul's Episcopal Church.
We pray too for the partners in **Ukraine**:
in Odessa: St Paul's Congregation;
in **Russia**:
in Kaliningrad: the Evangelical Resurrection Church;
in Moscow: St Andrew's Anglican Church;
in St Petersburg: St Catherine's Lutheran Church;
and in **Belarus**:
in Minsk: the International Conference Centre IBB.
And we ask God's blessing on our own ministry of peace and reconciliation at St Martin.

Coventry Litany of Reconciliation

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
Father Forgive.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,
Father Forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,
Father Forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
Father Forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,
Father Forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,
Father Forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,
Father Forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**