

**Community of the Cross of Nails
at St Martin Coney Street, York**
Friday Prayers for Peace and Reconciliation
Friday 11th September 2026

Bible Reading: 2 Corinthians 5.17-21

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Reflection

Today marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of 9/11, the terrorist attack by al_Qaeda on three targets in the United States using hijacked planes on the morning of Tuesday 11th September 2001. This resulted in the loss of almost 3,000 innocent lives and the destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Very many more people have continued to suffer since as a result of injuries, trauma and bereavement. It was in many ways a salutary turning point as a reminder of the global threat of terror. The memorial that was subsequently erected on the site is a constant reminder of that tragic event and, one hopes, a help towards healing.

It is no exaggeration to say that this event truly shocked the world. I suspect many of us may remember what we were doing that day. In the UK this would have already been the afternoon. My own recollection is of what started as a normal working day. Someone in the office happened to have the BBC News on their computer and alerted the rest of us to what was happening. It all seemed very unreal, if not surreal. Surely this sort of thing only happens in films. Yet this was a very real event indeed. All of us could not help but be affected by it. I do not imagine much work was done in our office or in many other places that afternoon.

This event had many repercussions and consequences, but not only bad ones. For, as we have seen in the current pandemic, it brought out the best in people. Particularly in Manhattan many risked their own lives to help victims. Many others provided practical support and comfort.

Much in the forefront of this support was the nearby St Paul's Chapel, an eighteenth-century Episcopal (Anglican) church and a partner in the Community of the Cross of Nails. Yet help and support was given by people of many faiths and none.

A question we may well ask after such a dreadful event is where God is in all this. Another is whether any reconciliation is at all possible. The simple answer that God was there and that God worked through those who helped and supported the victims. Central to the Christian faith is the cross and we

believe that in his Son Jesus Christ God suffered the ultimate human pain and despair. We find it difficult if not impossible to understand suffering and yet we see something of the answer in Jesus. God in Jesus shared in our humanity, our vulnerability, our suffering. Yet through the cross God enabled salvation and true reconciliation, as St Paul states so clearly in our Bible reading.

This encourages us to seek reconciliation even with those who inflict pain and suffering on us. For Jesus told us to love our enemies. Yet how difficult, if not well nigh impossible, that so often is. It may not even appear to make any sense. Yet if our world is to achieve real peace then with God's help the effort must continue, for we believe that is truly God's will for the whole of humanity.

(Kingsley Boulton)

Prayers

A prayer for the Anniversary of 9/11

On this day of solemn remembrance: May we honour the lives that were lost in this tragic act. May we give thanks for those who served and saved, rendered aid and assistance. May we give comfort to those who live with loss. May we seek justice and peace where it is within our ability, and rely on you when the ability escapes us. On this day of solemn remembrance: May we build what has been torn down. May we mend what has been broken. May we live your love when hate seems to reign. May we bear witness to the cause of peace. Amen. *(The Revd Dr Derek Weber, United Methodist Church)*

A prayer for Iran and the Middle East

Ever-loving God, who hears us in our anguish and distress, and longs for us to be free. We pray for the people of Iran and the wider Middle East, at this time of fear and uncertainty. Be near to those who are anxious; bring comfort to all who are suffering. Guide those with the power to make decisions, and lead them in the ways of wisdom, compassion and moderation: that people of goodwill would seek harmony and reconciliation. Join us with our Christian brothers and sisters in all places, in praying for peace with justice, through him who is the prince of peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford)

A prayer for the Holy Land

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: In your mercy, provide for all those in Gaza and beyond who suffer from hunger and starvation, that they may be given both physical bread to nourish their bodies and heavenly bread to sustain their souls. By the power of your Spirit, bring a speedy end to this cruel war, the release of all captives, care for the sick and wounded, comfort for those who have lost loved-ones, and the opening of a pathway for a just and lasting peace here in the very homeland where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ministered during his earthly life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. *(The Most Revd Dr Hosam E. 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 Benin, Ivory Coast, Togo.

Community of the Cross of Nails Prayer Cycle:

We pray today for partners in **Germany**:

in Eisenach: the Evangelical-Lutheran Parish;

in Erfurt: the Evangelical former Augustinian Abbey;

in Essen: The City Centre Holy Cross Church;

in Esslingen: The Evangelical Church District;

in Frankfurt am Main: St Paul's Church and the Old Church of St Nicholas.

We pray too for the partners in **Israel/Palestine**:

in Bethlehem: 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.**