

Armistice Day Peace Service

(Draft)

Welcome to Country

As we commence our meditation we recognise the faith and land of the Aboriginal Peoples of this place. We recognise that the spiritual force among them made them custodians of peace and land in this place. With them we now sing Welcome to Country:

Welcome to Country

C. 2012 Norman Habel

Melody: Morning Has Broken

Welcome to country! Country is calling,
Calling from scrub and watering hole;
Sense now the sacred spirit of country,
Stirring the silence deep in your soul.

Country is calling! Know in your spirit,
Land is alive and blessed you at birth.
Celebrate now the song of your mother:
You are a precious child born of Earth.

Country is crying, crying in anguish,
Landscapes and lizards feeling the pain,
Forests destroyed and rivers polluted,
When will you care for country again?

Country is calling, stirring your dreaming,
Songs that our primal ancestors song.
Spinning through time and all of creation,
Dreaming returns with God's boomerang.

Country is calling! Cultivate peace now,
Heal all the wounds that bleed in the sand;
Reconciled true each brother and sister,
Come now and heal our mother, the land.

Opening Resolution

Following the lead of Charles Strong, we repeat the opening *Resolution* of peace made by the congregation of Charles Strong on Peace Sunday, immediately after Armistice Day, in 1918..

*We here assembled in the name of Religion,
rejoice together at the advent of Peace,
and express our earnest desire to cooperate
with all Christian Churches
and religious faiths throughout the world,
in working for the Abolition of War,
the reconstruction of Human Society
on the principles of Goodwill and Universal Love
as the foundation of durable Peace.*

Armistice Day Speech - *Charles Strong*

Reflections I *Lest we forget Times we regret*

Reflections by known figures and members of the present community on the Ways of War opposed by Strong. Please reflect on these quotes and respond if you feel moved to do so.

Throughout this half century the methods of warfare have steadily become more atrocious. Before the First World War people said to one another: Warfare belongs to the past. Armies will never meet again with frontal attack in battle. We have too much respect now for human life. But in fact it has happened otherwise. A greater barbarism than any the human race had known in the past has risen among the nations. (Archibald Baxter, NZ Pacifist in 1914) (Maureen)

Patriots always talk of dying for their country, but never of killing for their country. (Bertrand Russell) (Johnathan)

I deplore the ignorant unchristian handling of matters concerning the workers of Australia. Once more the church denies its Lord...its leaders support conscription and affirm war to be righteous. Then let them drop

their cassocks and get into uniform right smartly and go with the wealth their churches represent and do a bit of killing and dying. We women will look after the churches and keep the seats dusted and read for our toil-stained and burdened brethren when they return. (A letter in the Adelaide Daily Herald, Sept. 1917 by the grandmother of David McKirdy)

*I AM A WOMAN. For the honour of womankind, for the glory of Australia and for the encouragement of men to be true to the highest in them, I mean to record a vote of **WANT OF CONFIDENCE IN WAR** and **VOTE NO!!!!** (Eleanor Moore, founding member of WILPF) (Sue)*

Times we Regret

C. 2017 Norman Habel

Melody: Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken, peace has arisen,
Armistice cheers now ring in our ears;
Why do we praise God now war is over,
Young lives all wasted over the years?

Morning has broken, gunfire is ceasing,
Dead bodies splattered over the land;
Why do we thank God for all the fallen,
With all their mothers wringing their hands?

Morning has broken, soldiers returning,
Traumatic stress still crushing their mind;
Now, in their hearts, is God still their hero,
Focussing on the firing line?

Morning has broken, one minute silence,
Play the last post, say 'lest we forget'!
Should we not pray, please blot out the bloodshed,
Cover our shame for 'times we regret'?

Reflections II

Let us never cease To stand tall for Peace

Reflections by known figures and members of the present community on Pathways to Peace promoted by Charles Strong. Please reflect on these quotes and respond if you feel moved to do so.

“We are women from the right, the left, Jews and Arabs, from the cities and the periphery and we have decided that we will stop the next war”.

(Marilyn Smadja, one of the founders of a group called “Women Wage Peace”, established after the fifty day Gaza war of 2014). (Maureen)

Since declaring its commitment to peace in 1660, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has opposed all wars. Action has taken various forms and has included public protest, the relief of suffering, assisting enemy aliens, reconstruction and the removal of the causes of war through mediation, reconciliation, disarmament, building the institutions of peace, promoting social justice, and getting at the roots of conflict and violence in our personal behaviour. (Viji Solomon)

And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace!’ (Jesus in Luke 19.41-42) (David)

Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our being. If we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children. (Mahatma Gandhi) (Val)

Most of Caesars brought only bloodshed, destruction, and animosity to Jerusalem because they were not able to realize “what makes for peace”. No decree will deter us from working for a just peace in Jerusalem. We will continue to raise the next generation of creative leaders for Jerusalem and to grow hope all over Palestine. This is Christ’s legacy in this country and we are determined to keep it alive. (Rev. Mitri Raheb, Bethlehem) (Johnathan)

The Road to Peace

C. 2018 Norman Habel

Melody: The Lord's my Shepherd

The time has come to change our wars
And find new ways to peace,
To challenge what we did that led
To so-called victories.

The time has come as Jesus said
To love both friends and foes,
To answer hurt with words of hope
Instead of mighty blows.

The time has come to end the cry,
'We must retaliate'.
It's time to empathise instead
And pass the sharing plate.

The time has come to make Shalom
The core of common plans,
Reveal the human good we share
And shake each other's hands.

The time has come to find the God
Who permeates this Earth
With love of peace instead of war
And generates new birth.

Benediction