Nonviolent Guidelines for the Procession and Liturgy

We take this action in a spirit of openness and nonviolence. To create an atmosphere of confidence and security for *all* those involved - and to communicate a clear, strong message to the public and the police, we invite you to be nonviolent in word and deed throughout this action.

Please read and note

- Show respect for all people we encounter.
- Take care that you do not endanger yourself or others when crossing roads, and keeping pathways clear for those passing by.
- Engage only in the scenarios set out in the Liturgy booklet

Our liturgy and witness today is undertaken in respectful opposition to the MoD's preparations for the deployment of weapons of mass destruction. We have never sought permission from the police to engage in the act of prayer and resistance which has taken place here every year since 1982. The police know of this act of prayer and witness. They have warned us that the MOD is on high alert and that there will be armed police among their number.

Members of CCND and Pax Christi will give guidance and further warnings if required.

Organised by:

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Christian CND, 162 Holloway Road, London N7 8DQ
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Ash Wednesday

1 March 2017 Christian Witness and Resistance against nuclear war preparations



I plead for disarmament and for the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons; nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutual assured destruction are incapable of grounding an ethics of fraternity.

Pope Francis, World Peace Day January 2017

Please read this before the Liturgy begins. The sponsoring organisations have agreed to guidelines for this action for all taking part. Those willing to risk arrest today are known to the sponsoring organisations, have prepared themselves through prayer and discussion, and have fully accepted the Guidelines. See guidelines of back page

If you have not been part of this preparation, we ask you to respect the process for this witness and not involve yourself in any civil disobedience activity.

Welcome & introduction from Pax Christi

Call to worship

L: To keep Lent is to confront the principalities and powers first of all in prayer. With Jesus we face the dark side of ourselves - this is so susceptible to capture and control by the powers. If it happens that we keep vigil publicly at the gates of economic, military, political or religious authority, we do so as an act of repentance, acknowledging the solidarity of sin.

All: Call us, Lord Jesus, to seek your way of peace and proclaim it to the nations. A peace that seeks security through love, justice, cooperation and respect. A peace that has as its ultimate security our trust in and love of God.

Call to repentance

L: Rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, All: For the Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

L: Even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,

All: With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.

When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and rescues them from all their troubles. Amen.

Silence

Prayer said together

In this Lenten season, O God, we come before you, asking for courage to open our eyes.

We want to see ourselves as you see us: the empty and barren places, the half-hearted struggles, the faint stirrings of new life.

We come, trusting your grace, waiting for your illuminating word, longing for your healing light.

Do not let us be blind to your presence.

Shine upon us, O God, and make our paths clear,

For we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

(Marlene Kropf)

Reading: Matthew 6:1-6,16.18

Final prayer

L: O God, the heavens are yours and the earth is yours. All our life belongs to you

All: Make us your messengers of peace and justice

L: May your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

All: Make us your messengers of peace and justice

L: May all injustice, violence and oppression give way to justice, mercy and good will.

All: Make us your messengers of peace and justice

L: Teach us to use the many resources of the earth so that none may waste and none may want

All: Make us your messengers of peace and justice

L: We now offer one another and those us around a sign of peace as our last act of prayer.

What more you can do

- Share the experience of today with friends, family and your church community.
- Check out the briefing on the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty and take action, by contacting your local MP, through letters to local and national press, urging the UK Government to take full part in the negotiations taking place in New York between March and June. http://paxchristi.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Printednuclear-ban-A4_4PP.pdf
- Join CCND 7 March 2017 for their Embassies Walk.
- Join CCNDs prayer campaign for the success of the meetings in New York
- http://wp.christiancnd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/THY-KINGDOM-COME-A5.pdf
- Keep in touch with the organising groups to find out about more actions, meetings and campaigning opportunities.

When monies are allocated to the development of new weapons R/ When world leaders threaten to use nuclear weapons in war R/ When our investments, our pension funds, are used to build weapons R/ When we still our consciences rather than speak out R/ When we hear hateful speech and do not object R/ When voices of belligerence escalate and put us all at odds with one another R/

When our children and grandchildren to the 7th generation are put at risk of extinction R/

Silence: we hold out our hands towards the Ministry of Defence in a gesture of openness and supplication

L: We now offer one another and those around a sign of peace

Peace - putting love into action

Reading: The Sunday Gospel two weeks ago was Matthew 5:38-48. Here is Pope Francis's reflection on that Gospel:

This is one of those pages that expresses best the Christian "revolution" - Jesus shows the way of true justice through the law of love, which surmounts that of retaliation, namely, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." This ancient rule imposed inflicting on transgressors, punishments equivalent to the damages caused. Jesus does not ask His disciples to suffer evil, rather, He asks them to react, not with another evil, but with goodness. Only thus is the chain of evil broken: an evil leads to another evil, another evil leads to another evil ...

For Jesus the rejection of violence can also imply giving up a legitimate right; and He gives some examples: to give the other cheek, to give one's cloak or one's money, to accept other sacrifices. However, this renunciation does not mean that the demands of justice are ignored or contradicted; on the contrary, Christian love, which manifests itself in a special way in mercy, represents a higher realisation of justice. What Jesus wants to teach us is the clear distinction we must make between justice and retaliation...we are permitted to ask for justice; it is our duty to practice justice. Jesus does not wish to propose a new civil rule, but rather the commandment to love our neighbour, which also includes love of enemies:

Blessing of water

L. All God's creation is holy. This water is already holy, but we ask God our Father to bless it for its special use today.

All: Lord God Almighty, Creator of all life, we ask you to bless this water as we use it in faith. Forgive our sins and save us from the power of evil. Amen

Blessing ash & charcoal

Those who have prepared to mark the building come forward with charcoal. The ash and charcoal are blessed with holy water

L. Dear friends in Christ, let us ask God to bless this charcoal and ash, which we will use as a mark of our repentance.

All: Holy and immortal God, you do not desire the death of sinners, but rather that we should repent of our sins and live. Bless this charcoal and ash, that it may be for us a sign of repentance, and a mark of your salvation through Christ, who died for us and rose from the ashes of death to bring us eternal life. Amen

Act of Penitence

L: From the dust of the earth we were created.

All: To the dust we shall return

L: Through our sins, we have destroyed and squandered the resources of the earth.

All: May our repentance gather us into a new community, which cherishes the earth and all her people.

Representatives of the sponsoring groups use the ash to mark those present with a cross

Repent, and believe the Gospel. Response: Amen

During the ashing we sing

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice! Look to God, do not be afraid, lift up your voices, the Lord is near, lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

After the ashing

L: Direct our hearts to better things, O Lord; heal our sin and ignorance. Lord do not face us suddenly with death, but give us time to repent.

All: Turn to us with mercy, Lord; we have sinned against you and one another.

L: We remember peacemakers of our time who encourage and inspire us, who remind us that we must put love into action.

We remember those who gather today making their own Ash Wednesday witness: those from the Glasgow Catholic Worker in Faslane, Scotland and Pax Christi Liverpool, in Liverpool City Centre

Dismissal

All:

Loving God, inspired by your Holy Spirit, we go to the Ministry of Defence to worship, vigil, fast and pray. In undertaking this witness, we commit ourselves to act in a spirit of love and nonviolence, in the name of Christ. Amen.

IMPORTANT

We will walk in **silence** to Horseguards Avenue where we will cross into the lawn area for our procession, stopping twice for prayer and reflection. We will then process to the front of the MoD building for our final prayer stop. It is likely that the building will be marked during our procession and we will keep you informed as to what has happened to those marking.

The path of Lamentation, Repentance and Peace Follow the cross in silence.

not relent, will not leave a blessing as he passes, oblation and libation for the Lord your God?

All: Call us Lord Jesus to repent, to turn away from the culture of death and choose a culture of life. Give us the courage to speak and act against the logic of violence and militarism; nuclear weapons policies and the false peace they offer our world.

Prayer action

A sheet of sack-cloth is place in front on the MoD building Please come forward and add ash to the REPENT outline.

We sing: Choose Life, Choose Love - the Hour Is Late!

Choose life, choose love - the hour is late! Say 'yes' to Christ and 'no' to fate. Join hands with people of the faith, reach out in hope to all who live.

In seeking space and life for each, we need to practice what we preach, to turn into creative deeds the inner urges of our creeds.

With Christ-the-Least, renouncing power, we face the challenge of this hour, we rise against the death of earth, the end of life, the end of birth.

The hour is late! Choose life, choose love, with Christ into God's future move: life to the full, the earth a feast, through making, speaking, being peace!

Fred Kaan Words \odot 1989 Hope Publishing Company. Tune All people that on earth do dwell

Litany - with response: We repent and mourn and lift up our voices and our hands in resistance

We who are silent in the face of madness R/ When nuclear weapons are developed and deployed around the world R/ At a given point we will sing together 5 times Ubi Caritas, et Amor, Ubi Caritas, Deus ibi est.

We then move on the front entrance of the Ministry of Defence. As we arrive we will arrange ourselves to face the building - leaving space behind for people to pass without obstruction. The word REPENT is outlined in ash

Repentance. (Led by London Catholic Worker)

L: God be with us all today. By tradition on Ash Wednesday each year, we mark ourselves with a cross in ash, to signify our repentance of all that prevents us from following Christ on his way to the cross. The violence and fear, which provoked imperial forces to execute Jesus, still dominate our world today. We are here to repent of our sin and to call others into repentance and the love of God. We are called from the ends of the earth to be here.

Reading: Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction cannot be the basis for an ethics of sisterhood and brotherhood and peaceful coexistence among people and states... the desire for peace, security and stability is one of the deepest longings of the human heart. This desire can never be satisfied by military means alone, much less the possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. (Pope Francis)

Our Cross, placards and messages are held high as we stand in silence

Reading: Joel Chapter 2

"But now, now - it is the Lord who speaks - come back to me with all your heart, fasting, weeping, mourning".

Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn, turn to the Lord your God again, for he is all tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in graciousness, and ready to relent. Who knows if he will not turn again, will

Our cross is brought into the centre of our worship

Lamentation led by Christian CND

Prayer of Lament based on Psalm 130

Side 1. Out of the depths of despair I cry to you O Lord. Lord, hear my cry for help! Let your ears listen to the voice of my pleading.

Side 2. If you O Lord, should record out guilt, Who could escape condemnation? Bur there is forgiveness with you, so that you will be revered.

Side 1. I wait for the Lord with all my heart, And in God's word, I trust. My soul longs for the Lord More than those who watch eagerly for dawn.

Side 2. Hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is love unfailing and willingness to save.

God is the one who redeems all people for their sins.

Reading: A Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty - failure or opportunity?

Multilateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament have been deadlocked for two decades, as all nine nuclear-armed nations have invested heavily in upgrades to their nuclear forces. A majority of UN member states view the ban treaty approach as the most viable and promising pathway forward. This is **NOT** the view of our own Government.

In October 2016 The United Nations General Assembly approved a historic resolution to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. The resolution was adopted by a large majority, with 113 UN member states voting in favour, 35 voting against, including the United Kingdom and the United States and 13 abstaining. (ICAN)

Silence

Reading: Setsuko Thurlow, survivor from Hiroshima 1945

As we the 'survivors' examine the current reality of the world's efforts for nuclear disarmament we are dismayed and disturbed to see the lack of tangible progress toward the goal. Instead, we see the obvious lack of political will for nuclear disarmament by the nuclear weapons States to fulfill their legal obligation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and work to abolish nuclear weapons.

Although we hibakusha have spent our life energy to warn people about the hell that is nuclear war, in nearly 72 years there has been little progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.... It is our hope that this new movement to ban nuclear weapons will finally lead us to a nuclear weapon free world. The time has come for non-nuclear weapons states and civil society to initiate a nuclear weapons ban for the sake of humanity. You and I, together, we can.

Silence

Litany: Response: May we remember and mourn

Those who died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki . R/
Those who use their gifts to create weapons of mass destruction. R/

Those who have died of cancer and disease from exposure to nuclear tests. R/

Those who today suffer from these diseases and those not yet born R/

Those islands that were destroyed in nuclear weapons tests R/

Those who would sow fear by threatening to use nuclear weapons R/

Those who fund new generations of weaponry R/

Those who profit from the manufacture of nuclear weapons. R/

Prayer Action

We lament with those whose lives have been destroyed by war, nuclear war and nuclear war preparations. Communities around our world who cry out for justice and peace

Please come forward and tie a ribbon to our cross in memory of a place/people in need of peace. As we do this we will sing:

Hymn to the Victims

We sing of those whose lives are lost and broken who pay the price when reason's voice is stilled. Across the world their cries come sharply to us Imprisoned, tortured, starving bound and killed. We know like them, of evil's dark oppression we live like them, through hope which God instilled.

Where power and terror stand in domination, where greed dictates the value life can hold the young, the strong, who shape a better future, into the jails of tyranny are hurled Their faith refires the cause of liberation their tears unite the weak throughout the world.

Their struggle points the way of love and justice. Their battles quell what evil can arrange. Their anguish shows the depth of crucifixion Their strength reveals the power we can attain. God sides with them, the poor and the abandoned God lives in them the hope for peace and change.

(Words Vaughan Johns. Music Jean Sibeliu.)

Prayer around the cross - said together

The cross is the way of the lost.

The cross is the staff of the lame.

The cross is the guide of the blind.

The cross is the strength of the weak.

The cross is the hope of the hopeless.

The cross is the freedom of the slaves.

The cross is the water of the seeds.

The cross is the consolation of the bonded labourers.

The cross is the source of those who seek water.

The cross is the cloth of the naked.

The cross is the healing of the broken.

The cross is the peace of the church. (St. Yared, Ethiopia)

We follow the Cross and walk in silence.

Prayer action. We spread out along the fence beside the MoD building where we stand **single file** in silence, facing the building.