



Introduction

Each year the second full week in October is designated as a Week of Prayer for World Peace. This week usually leads into One World Week. A committee in Britain representing the major world faiths produces a collection of prayers as well as schools material to help adults and children pray for peace during this week. In the words of the committee's first chairman, Dr Edward Carpenter, former Dean of Westminster, 'the peace of the world needs to be prayed for by the faiths of the world'. Our desire for peace has never been greater following a century of more wars than ever before in history. What follows is an outline for collective worship that could be used during this special week.

Preparation

You will need to research the pattern for folding a paper origami crane and then make one large enough to show during the assembly. Maybe one class could make a set of these cranes in advance.

Development

1. Introduce some of the following words for peace in different languages. The words could be displayed on a screen or perhaps on posters prepared beforehand by a class.

All around the world there's one thing that those of all faiths long and pray for:

in Russian it is *Mir*
in Sanskrit/Hindi it is *Shanti*
in Hebrew it is *Shalom*
in Chinese it is *Wa*
in Swahili it is *Amani*
in French it is *Paix*
in Romanian it is *Pace* (pronounced Pachay)
in Arabic it is *Salaam*
in Swedish it is *Fried* (pronounced Fr-air-d)
in Welsh it is *Heddwch*
and in English it is **Peace**

You may be able to add further examples depending on the languages spoken in your school or group.

2. This week is special because people of different faiths are focusing on special prayers for peace. This first started in 1974 and each year since then a group made up of people from different religious traditions have put together a set of prayers for use in temples, churches, synagogues and mosques. They also organise a joint service, where all can come together and in their own words pray for peace in this world.



3. Everyone longs for peace, between the countries of the world as well as between neighbours in the same community. At this point refer to a topical example from the news. If possible, show an appropriate picture on a screen.

Peace making is hard work because it means we have to listen seriously to someone else's point of view and it can mean being prepared to change our way of thinking. It is no wonder that people of all cultures ask God for help to make peace.

4. Use the following story accompanied by an example or examples of origami peace cranes.

In Japan children write their prayers and hopes for peace on paper cranes, which they have made. This is the story behind this tradition:

Sadako was a young Japanese girl, badly affected by the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima at the end of World War 2. She was taken to hospital for treatment. The nurses encouraged her and the other children to accept the medicines by folding origami figures out of small square medicine wrappers. Sadako's favourite was the crane. An old Japanese legend stated that anyone who faithfully folded 1,000 cranes would have her wish fulfilled.

Sadako began folding cranes and her wish was of course that she would recover. When however she sensed that she was not going to get better from the effects of the radiation, she changed her wish and prayed instead for peace between the countries of the world. With every crane that she folded, she whispered 'I will write peace on your wings and you will fly all over the world' She had folded 664 cranes when sadly she died.

The children of Japan learned of Sadako's wish and they too began folding cranes and every year on Hiroshima day you can see thousands suspended from the tower in Hiroshima Peace Park.

5. Put an outline of one of Sadako's cranes on an acetate/ PowerPoint slide and project it onto a screen. Invite the children to suggest places and situations where they long to see peace. Write these down.
6. Introduce a time of reflection by playing the track by the Beatles 'Give peace a chance'. Here is a prayer for peace used by the United Nations:

Our globe is nothing but a little star in the great universe.

It is our duty to turn this globe into a planet
whose creatures are not tormented by wars,
nor tortured by hunger and fear,
nor torn apart in senseless divisions
according to race, colour or creed.

Give us courage and foresight to begin this work today,
so that adults and children may take pride
in being called human.

7. Finally there is a recognised international prayer for peace. It is written out below with some



suggested simple actions to accompany the words. These might help children to use and remember it.

Lead me'

from death to life (*hands crossed over body and then hands raised above the head*)

from falsehood to truth (*one hand close to the mouth, suggesting a malicious whisper, and then both hands with thumbs up next to the mouth suggesting the truth*)

from despair to hope (*one hand on the forehead in despair and then the same hand shading the eyes, looking out to the future in hope*)

from fear to trust (*two hands by the mouth expressing terror and then both hands open in front of the body expressing trust*)

from hate to love (*one hand raised as a fist and then two hands over the heart*)

from war to peace (*one hand shaped like a gun and then two hands linked by the thumbs, palms inward, creating a dove of peace*)

Let peace fill'

our heart (*hands still as the dove of peace near to the heart*)

our world (*hands as the dove of peace making a small circle away from the heart*)

our universe (*hands as a dove of peace making a much larger circle away from the body*)