

God in our midst: Prayer and reflection material

With each issue of Wellspring there will be some prayer and reflection material available for SPAs. This can be used individually, or you might want to link up with other SPAs to share what's come out of using the material. Each issue's material will be free-standing, but will also be part of a longer journey looking at our lives and ministry in relation to the life and work of Jesus.

This material will also be included in the SPA dedicated website.

SHALOM - PEACE - SHALOM - PEACE

"Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you' "

We too have seen the risen Lord and he stands among us and says '*Peace be with you*'. Maybe we find it hard to believe - maybe our pride prevents us from allowing his peace to fill our lives. We gather together in our usual places – our own upper rooms – and we wait expectantly. We wait for Him whom we call "*My Lord and God*"

We look for the Lord in the suburbs of our minds – in the city of our worries – we mend our nets on the pavements of London – in Woolwich, Kingston and Croydon – we are fishing as the disciples did – but why are we here? Why do we follow this man? And why

when we hear those words "Peace be with You" do we feel
a lifting of our inner being as instead of walking away
we walk towards the Light . . . ?

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy one is here.
Come, bow before Him now, with reverence and fear.
In Him no sin is found, we stand on Holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire, with splendour He is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place,
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace.
No work too hard for Him, in faith receive from Him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

So let us spend some time resting in his peace.

We know his promises are true

– let us reflect on all He has done within our lives.

Let us recognise his peace in the hard times, the bad times, the doubting times, the crossroads of our lives.

Let us look into the empty tomb and then into his face and declare:

“I have seen the risen Lord”

As we remember the past let us also give thanks for those who went before – for those who gave their lives that we have freedom to worship today. Let us remember those parts of the world where Christianity is despised as a weakness; where our brothers and sisters worship in secret; where *“peace”* is a word not known by a generation of children.

May the memory of two world wars

– strengthen our efforts for peace

May the memory of those who died

– inspire our service to the living

May the memory of past destruction

– move us to build for the future

Dear Father in heaven

Let us be peacemakers

More ready to call people friends than enemies

More ready to trust than to mistrust

More ready to love than to hate

More ready to respect than despise

More ready to serve than be served

More ready to absorb evil than to pass it on

Dear Father in heaven

Let us be more like Christ.

Loving God, you do not promise those who follow you

A life in which everything will go smoothly

You do not guarantee success or prosperity

Nor do you offer immunity from the trials and tribulations of this world.

Indeed true service may involve us in sacrifice and self-denial, *More* demands rather than *less*, greater and more testing challenges than we may ever have faced without you.

But what you *do* promises us is fulfilment in Christ.

Through Him you are able—

to satisfy our spiritual hunger and thirst,

to meet our deepest needs,

to give us inner peace and an enduring contentment
in each and every circumstance.

Such peace does not come overnight –

It matures gradually as day by day we learn to let go and put our trust in you.

Reach out then, and draw us ever closer to your side,

So that we may learn

the secret of being content with what we have.

Maureen Kyle – Chair, SPA Council