

Churches offer resources for Peacemaking Sunday - 19 September

Written by Administrator

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Churches are being encouraged to mark the United Nations' International Day of Peace on 19 September - Peacemaking Sunday - using ecumenical worship resources provided by the Baptist Union of Great Britain, The Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church.

The United Nations' International Day of Peace is celebrated on 21 September and provides an opportunity for individuals, communities and nations to focus on peace and peacemaking in the world and within their own lives.

The three denominations have compiled a selection of art, prayers, a sermon guide, meditation and a commissioned hymn designed to help congregations focus on peace this coming Sunday - 19 September. To download the resources, visit www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/peacemakingSunday/

Mrs Val Morrison, moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, says: "Peacemaking is a Christian vocation - something not to be taken lightly, but rather to be at the centre of our thinking, actions and prayers throughout the year. Peacemaking Sunday and the United Nations' Day of Peace highlight our need to pray for peace in the many areas of conflict across the globe, but also, in our own lives and relationships."

Mrs Morrison adds: "I commend these resources to all churches across the three denominations and hope the churches across the UK will make good use of them."

The denominations are encouraging churches to hold peace services, or incorporate a symbolic act of peace, within their service this Sunday. Areas of conflict, including the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan, will be a natural focus for these services.

The Revd Dr Martyn Atkins, general secretary for the Methodist Church, said: "Peace making involves building relationships in our communities. Peacemaking Sunday gives us the

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opportunity to reflect again on the challenge of how we might respond to Jesus' call to be peacemakers in our own context. Our prayers are with the negotiators of the peace talks between Israel and Palestine currently being brokered in America."

The Revd Graham Sparkes, head of faith and unity, Baptist Union of Great Britain, concludes: "Too often people of faith use their religion to promote fear, hatred and violence. These resources are a call to churches to affirm our fundamental commitment to seek peace in all our relationships, not least with those of different faiths. We urgently need to create a culture of peace that deepens understanding and mutual respect."