WORDS FOR WORSHIP IN A TIME OF WAR

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WORDS FOR WORSHIP
IN A TIME OF WAR

This liturgy may be used in small or large groups, and also for personal devotions. Parts of the text may be extracted and used on other occasions.

There are a number of prayers and Scripture passages, the reading of which can be shared among those attending. There is one occasion when it is suggested that part of a recent news report is read. There is no sermon or homily, but it is suggested that silence should follow each of the readings.

There are four hymns included. "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" and the Kyrie appear in several recently published GIA hymnals and a number of Protestant and non-denominational sources. "If the War Goes On" can be sung solo or by all (the music is included at the end of this liturgy). "A Woman's Care" may be sung to the tune ROCKINGHAM, commonly associated with "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." These hymns may be omitted or substituted, but the psalm text "May God draw near" should be retained and is effective as a shared reading.

"The Ukrainian Kyrie" (Lord/Christ, have mercy) is particularly poignant when sung and can be done so very easily before, during or after the liturgy. Sing it on each occasion at least three times: 1) Kyrie, eleison 2) Christe, eleison 3) Kyrie, eleison.

If a copy of any music for the songs is required, email the Wild Goose Resource Group:
wildgoose@wildgoose.scot

Depending on the meeting place, sitting in a circle for this liturgy is much preferable to sitting behind each other in pews or seats, especially if leadership is shared. If possible, have a small table in the center of the space with a lit candle, a cross and an open Bible. If you wish to include a symbolic action, place a map of Ukraine on the table and, after the second prayer ("Loving God, because you have the whole world in your hands"), the Kyrie could be sung repeatedly as candles are lit and placed on the map.

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WORDS FOR WORSHIP IN A TIME OF WAR

Opening Sentences

Of God we ask,
What is the time?

There is a time to be born
and a time to die.
There is a time to kill
and a time to heal.

What is the time?
There is a time to weep
and a time to laugh.
There is a time for mourning
and a time for dancing.

What is the time?
There is a time to tear
and a time to mend.
There is a time for silence
and a time for speech.

What is the time?
There is a time to love
and a time to hate.
There is a time for war
and a time for peace.

What is the time?

SILENCE IS KEPT

Leader: We are members of a family,
the human family
which, in the ancient land of Ukraine,
is torn by tension, suspicion, hatred,
hunger, killing and death.

We are troubled by cruelty and disaster
such as we have never known,
and we are unclear of the cause
and unsure of the remedy.

We believe that God accepts confusion
as well as concern,
and has never been deaf to the cries
of anger, fear and hopelessness
in the face of injustice.

We are the Body of Christ
in which if one part suffers,
the other parts pray to heal it
and help to bear it.

Song **COME NOW, O PRINCE OF PEACE** *from Korea*

Come now, O Prince of Peace,
make us one body;
come, O Lord Jesus,
reconcile your people.

Come now, O God of love,
make us one body;
come, O Lord Jesus,
reconcile your people.

Come now and set us free
O God, our Saviour;
come, O Lord Jesus,
reconcile all nations.

Come, Hope of unity,
make us one body;
come, O Lord Jesus,
reconcile all nations.

Prayer Let us pray.
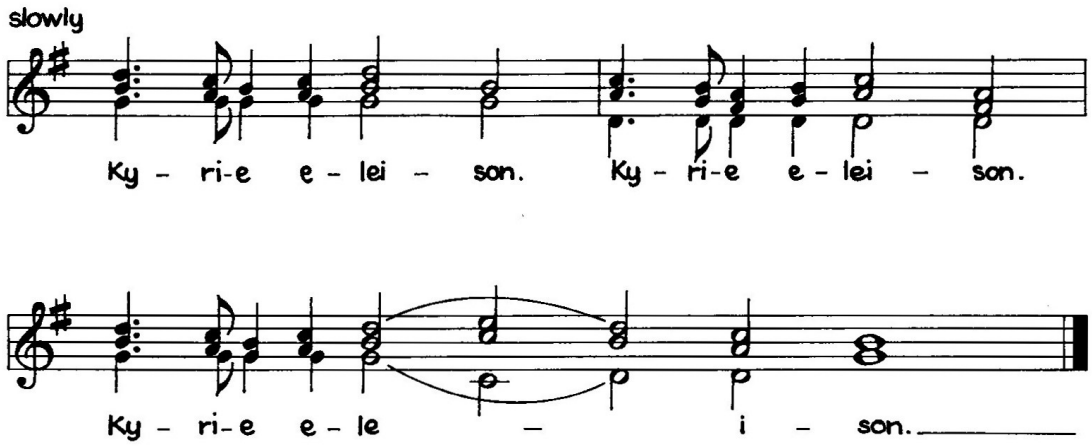
In you, our God,
is our hope and consolation.
Your love is beyond our deserving,
your wisdom is beyond our understanding,
your light is greater than our darkness.

We wish we could enter your presence
with songs of rejoicing;
but not here, not now.
Our hearts are heavy, our minds bewildered,
our uncertainty disturbs our faith.

Why?
and why?
and how long?
and what next?

... these are the questions we bring,
not looking for instant answers,
but hoping that we will be heard.

THE UKRAINIAN KYRIE



Gracious God,
quieten our personal anxieties,
so that we may better feel
for those whose land has been invaded
whosetowns and homes are ravaged,
and whose lives are under threat.
Quieten us,
so that we may listen for a word
from you.
Amen.

First Reading *from the letter of James*

What causes fighting and quarrels among you?
Is their origin found in the warring appetites in your bodies?

You want what you cannot have, so you murder;
you are envious and cannot fulfil your ambition.
So you quarrel and fight.

You do not get what you want
because you do not pray for it.
Or, if you do, your requests are not granted,
because you do not pray from the right motives.

SILENCE IS KEPT

Second Reading *from a recent news report, followed by silence*

Psalm 20 *sung or read*

This is a translation of a text the Czech people turned to when Russia invaded their nation in 1968. If read, divide the community into two sections A and B.

A May God draw near when the hour of trouble strikes,
may Jacob's God be your strength and shield;
out of the sanctuary, out of his home,
may God provide in your time of need.

B May God remember the sacrifice you make
and take delight in the gifts you bring;
may God respond to your heart's deep desire,
and grant fulfilment to all your plans.

A With every blessing our mouths will shout for joy
to celebrate what the Lord has done;
and ever after when God shows you favour,
in every triumph we'll trace his love.

B O let us know that the Lord is God indeed,
and grants success to his chosen ones.
From highest heaven, God answer our call
and bring us victory with your right hand.

A Some trust in weapons and some in skills of war,
but all we have is our faith in God.
They that are mighty shall stumble and fall
but we will rise and will overcome.

Third Reading *from the book of James*

A word to you who are rich.
Weep and wail over the miserable fate overtaking you:
your riches have rotted away;
your fine clothes are moth-eaten;
your silver and gold have corroded.

You have piled up wealth in an age that is near its close.
The wages you never paid to those who mowed your fields
are crying aloud against you;
and the outcry of the reapers has reached the ears
of the Lord of hosts.

You have condemned and murdered the innocent,
those who offer no resistance.

SILENCE IS KEPT

Song **IF THE WAR GOES ON**

...based on the experience of people who lived through both the civil war in Argentina and the Falklands war.

1.
If the war goes on
and the children die of hunger,
and the old men weep
for the young men are no more,
and the women learn
how to dance without a partner,
who will keep the score?

2.
If the war goes on
and the truth is taken hostage,
and new horrors lead
to the need to euphemise;
when the calls for peace
are declared unpatriotic,
who'll expose the lies?

3.
If the war goes on
and the daily bread is terror,
and the voiceless poor
take the road as refugees;
when a nation's pride
destines millions to be homeless,
who will heed their pleas?

4.
If the war goes on
and the rich increase their fortunes,
as the arms sales soar
and new weapons are displayed;
when a fertile field
turns to no-man's-land tomorrow,
who'll approve such trade?

5.
If the war goes on
will we close the doors to heaven;
if the war goes on
will we breach the gates of hell;
if the war goes on
will we ever be forgiven,
if the war goes on?

Fourth Reading *from the Gospel of Matthew*

Jesus said:
Always treat others as you would like them to treat you;
that is the law and the prophets.

Enter by the narrow gate.
Wide is the gate and broad the road
that leads to destruction,
and many enter that way.
But narrow is the gate and constricted is the road
that leads to life,
and those who find them are few.

Beware of false prophets
who come to you dressed up as sheep,
while underneath they are savage wolves.
You will recognise them by their fruit.

Can grapes be picked from thorns, or figs from thistles?
A good tree always produces healthy fruit,
and a bad tree bad fruit.

That is why I say
you will recognise the false prophets by their fruit.

SILENCE IS KEPT

Prayer Loving God,
because you have the whole world
in your hands,
cradle gently those who are rocked by fear,
shocked to a depth they have never known
and frightened to face tomorrow.

On the people of Ukraine:
their children, their old people,
their vulnerable adults,
their babies soon to be born,

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy.

On the people of Ukraine:
their defenders, their advocates,
those who care for the wounded,
who sit with the despairing,
who witness and report
on the savagery and destruction,
who bury the dead.

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy.

On the people of Ukraine:
their leaders
that they may continue to inspire,
in word and by example,
and continue to receive help and solidarity
from across the world.

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy.

On the people of Russia,
that they might learn the truth
kept from their hearing;
On the churches in Russia
that they might find
the vocabulary and courage
to speak truth to power,

On the soldiers of Russia
who do not believe
in the carnage they cause.

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy.

On the Russian president,
and those who affirm his policies,
we ask the judgement of heaven,
a radical conversion
and an end to their lies,
scheming and murder.

Lord hear us,
Lord graciously hear us.

And for our own nation
we ask for commitment to match conviction
so that the pain of the Ukrainian nation
be shared by us,
their weary people sheltered by us,
their peace assured by us.

Lord hear us,
Lord graciously hear us.
Amen.

Song **A WOMAN'S CARE** *based on words from Isaiah 49*

1.
When trouble strikes and fear takes root,
and dreams are dry and sense unsound,
when hope becomes a barren waste
then doubts like mountains soar around.

2.
Our wandering minds believe the worst
and ask, as faith and fervour fade,
'Has God now turned his back on us,
forsaking those he loved and made?'

3.
God says, 'See how a woman cares.
Can she forget the child she bore?
Even if she did, I shan't forget.
Though you feel lost, I love you more.

4.
'My dearest daughter, fondest son,
my weary folk in every land,
your souls are cradled in my heart,
your names are written on my hand.'

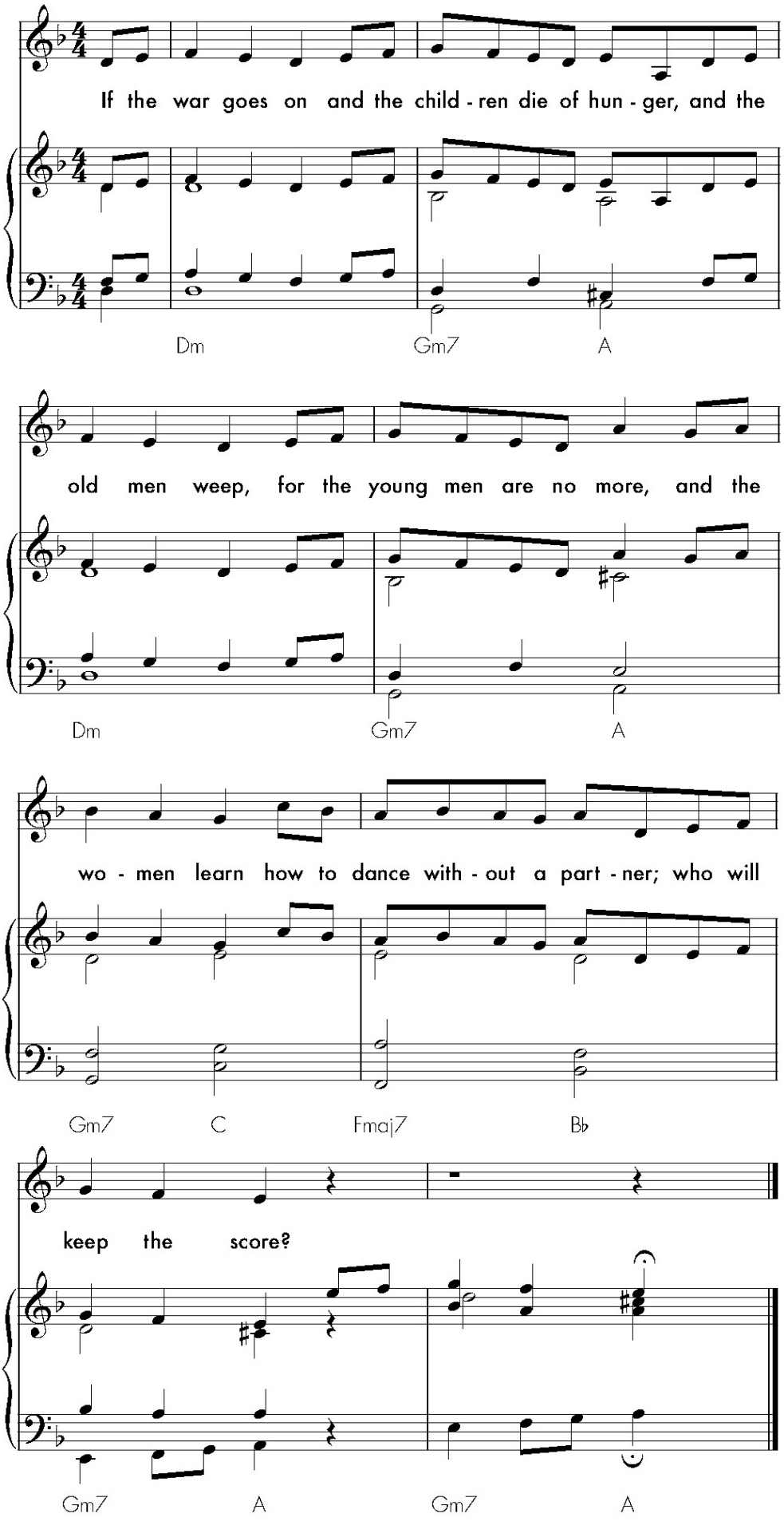
5.
Then praise the Lord through faith and fear,
in holy and in helpless place,
for height and depth and heaven and hell
can't separate us from God's grace.

Closing Prayer *a prayer of St Augustine*

Watch now, dear Lord,
with those who wake or watch or weep tonight;
and give your angels charge
over those who sleep.

Tend your wounded ones, O Christ;
rest your weary ones,
bless your dying ones,
soothe your suffering ones,
shield your joyous ones
and all for your love's sake.
Amen

IF THE WAR GOES ON



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Come Now, O Prince of Peace
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The Ukrainian Kyrie
Traditional Ukrainian

May God Draw Near
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If the War Goes On
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