

## Prayers for Justice & Equality

If, recognizing the interdependence of all life, we strive to build community,  
the strength we gather will be our salvation.

If you are black and I am white, *it will not matter.*

If you are female and I am male, *it will not matter.*

If you are older and I am younger, *it will not matter.*

If you are progressive and I am conservative, *it will not matter.*

If you are straight and I am gay, *it will not matter.*

If you are Christian and I am Jewish, *it will not matter.*

If we join spirits as brothers and sisters, the pain of our aloneness will be lessened, and *that does matter.* In this spirit, we build community and move toward restoration. Amen.

~ Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley

Let us pray, brother and sisters for those who have filled their pockets with stones, and whose fists are still clenched; for those who because they have not loved have not been loved, and bury their rocky selves across from the coast of affection.

Let us pray for those who ruin innocence with reckless velocity. Let us pray for those who get stuck in bitterness and throw punches that bruise.

Let us pray for those who will not be happy and will not become what they had hoped to be. Let us pray for him who flees from himself and loses himself in the sordid world where residue gravitates and is hurled into the fright of the streets.

Let us pray that we may line in one nation “with all and for the well-being of all” without mutually devaluing ourselves. Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for an infinite universal embrace. Amen.

~ Rafael Bordaó

O Lord,

Open my eyes that I may see the needs of others;  
Open my ears that I may hear their cries;  
Open my heart so that they need not be without succor.

Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich. Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to those places. And so open my eyes and my ears that I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee.

Amen.

~ Alan Paton

We are one, after all, you and I.  
Together we suffer,  
Together exist,  
And forever will recreate each other.

~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

We pray for the power to be gentle; the strength to be forgiving; the patience to be understanding; and the endurance to accept the consequences to holding to what we believe to be right.

May we put our trust in the power of good to overcome evil and the power of love to overcome hatred. We pray for the vision to see and the faith to believe in a world emancipated from violence, a new world where fear shall no longer lead men to commit injustice, nor selfishness make them bring suffering to others.

Help us to devote our whole life and thought and energy to the task of making peace, praying always for the inspiration and the power to fulfill the destiny for which we were created. Amen.

~ Adapted prayer from Week of Prayer for World Peace, 1978

May beings all live happily and safe  
And may their hearts rejoice within themselves.  
Whatever there may be with breath of life,  
Whether they be frail or very strong,  
Without exception, be they long or short  
Or middle-sized, or be they big or small,  
Or thick, or visible, or invisible,  
Or whether they dwell far or they dwell near,  
Those that are here, those seeking to exist –  
May beings all rejoice within themselves.  
Let no one bring about another's ruin  
And not despise in any way or place.  
Let them not wish each other any ill  
From provocation or from enmity.

~ The Buddha

Let there be everywhere  
Our voices, our eyes,  
Our thoughts, our love, our actions  
Breathing hope and victory.

~ Sonia Sanchez

When I think of peace, I think of [and pray for] a world where human beings are no longer brutalized on account of such accidents of birth as sex, race, religion, or nationality. For me, peace is a way of structuring human relations where daily acts of kindness and caring are tangibly rewarded. It is a way of thinking, feeling, and acting where our essential interconnection with one another is truly honored.

I pray for a world where we live in partnership rather than domination; where humans' "conquest of nature" is recognized as suicidal and sacrilegious; where power is no longer equated with the blade, but with the holy chalice – the ancient symbol of the power to give, nurture, and enhance life. And I not only pray, but actively work, for the day when it will be so.

~ Riane Eisler

We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap,  
Warranting endless competition among us,  
But as a deliberate act of God  
To make us a community of brothers and sisters  
Jointly involved in the quest for a composite answer  
To the varied problems of life.

~ Steven Biko

Oh God, whose vast light devours all differences and in whose majesty all prejudices tremble, we pray for an opening of our hearts to all our gay brothers and sisters. We ask you to break down the walls that divide us, that keep us estranged.

Give us compassion for the sufferings they have suffered, violations of the spirit through prejudice, discrimination, and judgment, a plague of illness and death; and may we honor them for the bountiful gifts they have brought us, gifts that expand and nourish our spirits.

We acknowledge the burden they have carried in being the living embodiment of the blending of the male and female energies, and give thanks for their living out of the message that human essence is not of the body but of the spirit, not of gender but of consciousness, not of prejudice but of great love.  
Amen.

~ Daphne Rose Kingma

O Lord, remember not only the men and women of good will, but also those of ill will. But do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted on us; remember the fruits we have bought, thanks to this suffering – our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all this, and when they come to judgment let all the fruits which we have borne be their forgiveness.

~ An unknown prisoner in Ravensbuck concentration camp