

PRAYER

11 to 17 October 2020

Churches' Week of Action on Food

This service of common prayer has been prepared by the World Council of Churches (WCC) for the Churches' Week of Action on Food which is part of the 'Food for Life Campaign'.

The theme for World Food Day 2020 is "Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together."

In the Ecumenical prayer cycle, this week, we pray for Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico.

Words of welcome

Opening Responses

Reader 1: Glory to you, our God! Glory to you.

Psalm 24

Reader 1: The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;

**All: For God has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.**

Reader 1: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in God's holy place?

**All: Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,
and do not swear deceitfully.**

Reader 1: They will receive blessing from the LORD,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

**All: Such is the company of those who seek the Lord,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

Reader 1: Lift up your heads, O gates!

**All: Be lifted up, O ancient doors!
That the Glorious Lord may come in.**



Huapango del pan

1. Que - re - mos re - cor - dar en es - te tiem - po de tan - tos o - dios, de de - si - gual -
 1. In times so full of pain, so deep - ly trou - bled by hat - red and in - jus - tice, fear and
 dad, a a - que - llos que deam - bu - lan por las ca - lles pi -
 dread, some wan - der end - less streets, a - lone and hun - gry; They
 dien - do só - lo u - na o - por - tu - ni - dad. 2. Que - re - mos ver tus ma - nos po - de
 look for life, a chance to earn their bread. 2. To you we pray in pro - test and in
 ro - sas con nues - tras ma - nos hoy en u - ni - dad por e - so te pe
 cri - sis, for you have al - ways sid - ed with the poor; u - nite our hands with
 de - mos pre - su - ro - sos, que en nues - tra tier - ra ya no fal - te
 yours, O God of jus - tice, that those in hun - ger live in want no
 mas. El pan de ca - da dí - a sus - ten - to de la vi - da que
 more. For dai - ly food brings jus - tice, brings dig - ni - ty and glad - ness, a
 tra - e sa - cie - dad y dig - ni - dad, el pan bien re - par - ti - do li - be - ra al o - pri
 guar - an - tee of peace in ev - ery creed. May we, O God now la - bour with love for ev - ery
 mi - do yes nues - tra ga - ran - tí - a de la paz.
 neigh - bour that all might have this day our dai - ly bread.

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[Link to the song](#)



Confession and renewal

Reader 2: O Lord, in our quest to grow more food, we are sacrificing the health and abundance of nature, people and the very life on earth. We are poisoning the soil and water. We are neglecting small - scale farmers and fisherfolk, who provide 75% of world's food, undermining their livelihoods, their knowledge, and their contributions, often in favour of industrial farming and fishing and big business interests. We have transformed seeds, plants, animals, land, and water - from being a blessing to be shared and sustained; into commodities that are traded and hoarded.

All: Lord have mercy (Kyrie Eleison) ["Kyrie" from Guatemala](#)

Reader 2: O Lord, in our quest to nourish humanity, we have produced an abundance of food. Yet a quarter of the world's people are experiencing moderate or severe levels of food insecurity. Ten months into the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 35 million people have suffered from the disease, and more than a million lives have been lost, access to food and livelihoods for people around the world has become increasingly difficult. We have not done enough to reduce the increasing inequity and hunger.

All: Lord have mercy (Kyrie Eleison)

Reader 2: O Lord, we are living in an unsustainable manner. The wealthier amongst us, consuming, even more, increasing inequity and injustice. We have contributed to the mass extinction of all mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles over the last 40 years. We have been part of the massive expansion of industrial agriculture which has drastically eliminated 3/4th of all biodiversity over the previous hundred years and currently contributing to a fourth of all the Greenhouse Gas emissions.

All: Lord have mercy (Kyrie Eleison)

Reader 3: O Lord, we are polluting our seas and water sources, with chemicals, excessive fertilisers, heavy metals and plastic. Our activities are leading to the warming of oceans, destroying aquatic life and precipitating stronger storms and more unpredictable weather. We are allowing the unrelenting exploitation of the oceans with industrial fishing and deep-sea mining and are sacrificing artisanal fisherfolk and coastal communities, who have lived in a sustainable and ecologically sound manner.

All: Lord have mercy (Kyrie Eleison)

Reader 3: Receive us, O Lord! We seek your forgiveness! Join us in this hour of pain and failure. We pray that by your grace and Holy Spirit, you will affirm in us the conviction that these situations do not have the last word, because our trust is entirely placed in you. Come, O God! Bless your people, pour out the grace of your Holy Spirit so that we may take courage and be able to continue to walk trusting and hoping in you.

All: Lord have mercy (Kyrie Eleison)

Silence

Reader 3: Blessed, are you now and forever!

All: Lord, grant us grace to be renewed by the Holy Spirit.
Lord, grant us to hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice.
Lord, grant us the humility to acknowledge the mistakes we make.
Lord, grant us the courage to make amends.
Lord, grant us the love to care for each other.
Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for creation.
Lord, grant us unity to act together and to bring about sustainable change.

Anonymous, Argentina

Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan,
Lord, bless the bread you have given,
y da pan a los que tien - en ham - bre
and give bread to all who are hun - gry, give
y ham - bre de jus - ti - cia a los que tien - en pan.
hun - ger for jus - tice to those with bread.
Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan.
Lord, bless the bread you have given.

Music annotation and Spanish transcription: Federico Pagura © 2002 World Council of Churches
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[Link for the music:](#)

Reader 4. Gospel Reading: Matthew 14: 8-21

Prompted by her mother (*Herodias*), she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." The king (*Herod*) was grieved, yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he commanded it to be given; he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. The head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, who brought it to her mother. His disciples came and took the body and buried it; then they went and told Jesus. Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion

for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was leftover of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Reflection

Intercession

Reader 5: O Lord! Today we come before you with complete trust, to intercede for the situations that affect us and rob us of the joy of life. The COVID-19 pandemic has been prolonged, and devastating; causing pain, mourning, sadness, hunger, despair, violence and depression. These physical, spiritual and emotional scars are affecting us in every way. We pray that you will give us your power to become facilitating agents to bring words of comfort and healing to every person in need.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers!

Reader 5: We pray for the livelihoods, the nourishment and daily sustenance for all, especially for those going hungry, during these difficult times. We pray for solidarity amongst the world's nations so that succour and assistance are extended to the most marginalised communities, within each society and those out of sight.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers!

Reader 6: O Lord, we pray for those who grow crops and produce food; for farmers, fisherfolk, workers, scientists, traders, and all involved with making food available, especially those who are marginalised and exploited. We pray for justice for the least, and the courage for all to act in solidarity with them.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers!

Reader 6: We pray for wisdom to care for the earth. Help us to live and cultivate, respecting and caring for all creation, in a sustainable manner. Let us nourish the soil, keeping the land and water clean, leaving it at the end our time, fit for future generations and all your creatures.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers!

Reader 7: We pray for discernment as consumers of food, to be mindful of what we eat, what we drink, where we source it from, and how we cultivate or rear it. Please help us to be aware, and vigilant regarding the profound impact of the choices we make, that will influence the environment, the society and our health.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers!

Reader 7: On this occasion, we unite our voices and join the cry of intercession for the people and churches of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras. Eternal God of life, we pray for your love and your grace to be bestowed on their service to people and their accompaniment of communities to live full and resilient lives.

All: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers!

The Lord's Prayer (in one's language)

Prayer of commitment

Reader 8: May we always be hungry for righteousness;

All: Overcoming injustices that bring about hunger!

Reader 8: May we always be hungry for peace;

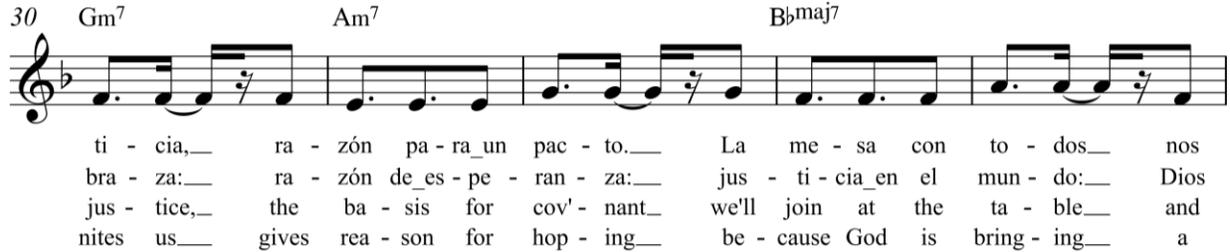
All: Overcoming insecurity, suffering and displacement!

Reader 8: May we always yearn to care for each other and the environment;

All: So that the earth will remain abundant for all creation!

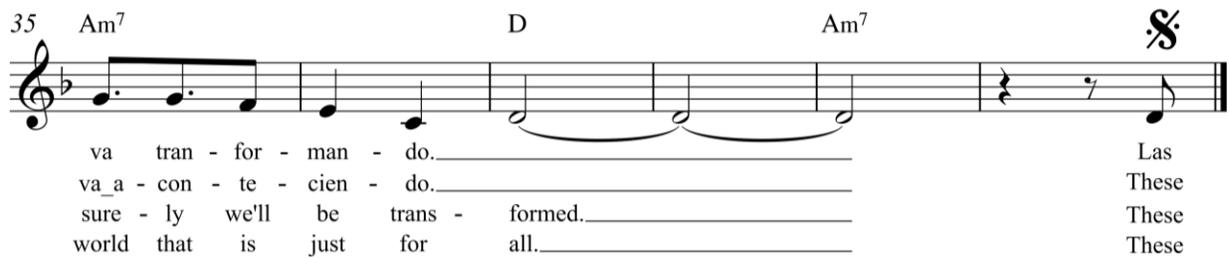
Amen.

30 Gm⁷ Am⁷ B♭maj⁷



ti - cia, ra - zón pa - ra un pac - to. La me - sa con to - dos nos
bra - za: ra - zón de es - pe - ran - za: jus - ti - cia en el mun - do: Dios
jus - tice, the ba - sis for cov' - nant we'll join at the ta - ble and
nites us gives rea - son for hop - ing be - cause God is bring - ing a

35 Am⁷ D Am⁷ §



va tran - for - man - do. Las
va a con - te - cien - do. These
sure - ly we'll be trans - formed. These
world that is just for all. These

[Link to the song](#)

Sharing the sign of Peace

Prayer prepared with contributions from:

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