



PRAY AND ACT FOR PEACE IN IRAQ



A prayer for a just peace

Christians across the United States are witnessing and praying around the clock for peace in Iraq. Mennonites are especially invited to pray on Wednesdays. Will you, your family, your Sunday school class, your congregation—join the unceasing prayer?

God, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace, we live with images of war dancing in our heads. Car bombs. Billowing smoke. Red spattered bodies. Tanks rolling down the streets. We live in a world of terror.

Your beloved Child, Jesus, came into a world of terrorism from the Roman empire. A stiff-necked, ruthless leader used the military as a way to ensure peace and Roman freedom. The streets ran red with the blood of innocents. Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus had to flee the violence as refugees into another country.

God, the world hasn't changed much in 2,000 years. Violence displays its claws. The streets are not safe. Rulers forget the folly of war. Refugees and immigrants flee their homes for security and hope. And yet, as you called those early disciples, you still call us to Christ's way of peace in a world of violence, to the way of justice amid a world of imbalanced scales.

We pray for peace. Not the kind of peace divorced from justice. Not the kind of peace that frees us from seeing the horrid costs of war. Not the kind of peace that allows us to shop and turn off the news and avoid the images of war. We pray for peace with justice, compassion with a social conscience, faith with toughness, love with tenacity, and bodies that stand up and speak out. Merciful God, hear our prayer.

Leo Hartshorn, Minister of Peace and Justice, Mennonite Mission Network and co-director of Drumming for Peace, is located in Lancaster, PA. He is praying for peace for Iraq not because public opinion has decreased due to seeing the impact of war through media, but because he follows the nonviolent way of Christ.