

ORDER OF SERVICE



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

1st March 2013

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me”



Prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of France

Represented by:

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St. Michael's Anglican Church, The English Speaking Community of Nuestra Señora de la Unidad Catholic Church, The International Bible Church and The United Community Church.

About World Day of Prayer 2013

About World Day of Prayer:

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer and action each year on the first Friday in March. Each year a different country serves as the writer of the World Day of Prayer worship service, interpreting the Bible in their own context, and lifting up issues of mission, justice and peace that are important to them. Offerings collected during the services are granted by WDP national committees to non-profit organizations that deal with the issues identified by the writer-country. The WDP motto is “Informed prayer, prayerful action.”

About the Worship Service:

The 2013 WDP service will begin at the first sunrise on 1st March 2013, in the pacific region, and following the earth’s orbit, will spread all around the world. In their service and bible studies, the women of the French WDP committee look for a Christian response to struggles concerning immigration and for ways to welcome “the stranger.” They reach into Jesus’ identification with “the least of these” in Matthew 25 and draw on customs of hospitality found in Leviticus to paint a picture of welcoming the stranger. Through visual interpretation and personal stories, participants begin to put themselves in the shoes of “the stranger,” remembering their own feelings of being on the outside – and the blessings of welcoming.

About the Art:

Ann-Lise Hammann Jeannot, whose work is based on the play of light and shadow, created the art for WDP 2013. In her piece for WDP 2013, the grey “stranger” is bathed in a light that travels “through space to encompass the stranger. Equally, the light shines forth from the group, symbolized by shapes or stones in the lower part of the painting. A circle is created, welcomes the character.”



About France:

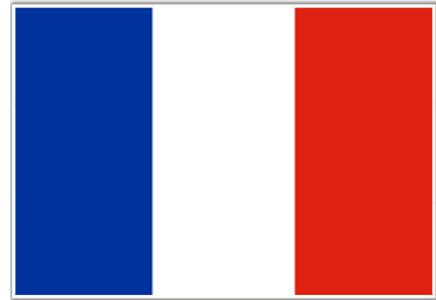
France, a country rich in history, covers 551,000 sq. kms, with a population of 63 million people. France’s temperate climate is due to its situation on the shores of the North Sea, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean. Other boundaries include the Rhine River, the Jura, the Alps and the Pyrenees Mountains. There are 9 overseas Departments and Territories.

Industry

Well known as a country of gastronomic delight, their culinary art has been recognised as part of the “intangible cultural heritage of humanity.” It has become diversified with the influx of different cultures. France has an abundance of grain and farming land, vineyards and cattle. The European Union’s “Common Agricultural Policy,” which sets a higher price, helps support them. Industry focuses on high technology wares in automotive, aeronautics, chemicals and Information Technology. Internationally renowned luxury industries thrive – haute couture, perfume and leather ware.

Historically

France has a chequered background. For four centuries, the Kings of France, aligned with the Roman Empire and the aristocracy, recruited foreign scholars and artists. They were responsible for much of what is revered in France today in arts and architecture and music. Meanwhile most of the people were peasants – downtrodden, heavily taxed and impoverished. They became rebellious, leading to the French revolution in 1789. This radically changed aristocratic and clergy privileges. While Napoleon Bonaparte reinstated religious peace and set up efficient administration, the country was not at peace. Bonaparte was defeated, kings again ruled then by the end of the 19th century, France reverted to a Republic. Two world wars again disrupted the country. France today is a member of the European Union.



Government

Today parliament rules with the President elected by universal suffrage for a term of 5 years. Some powers of sovereignty have passed to the European Union. Any child born in France or with one French parent is offered French Nationality. Another 100,000 are granted French nationality each year.

The French youth born into immigrant families and living in deprived suburban developments, face major issues finding work. Stricter laws mean screened immigration on the basis of economic needs. The health system in France is ranked by the WHO as among the best in the world. Education is free in state schools. Children can start school at 3, but must attend school between 6 and 16 years. Graduates are accepted into universities; other “Grandes Ecoles” are selective. Private schools run under contract with the state and there are fee-paying universities.

Religion

France is referred to as “the eldest daughter of the Church.” A great many cathedrals and monasteries were built in the course of the Middle Ages. There were religious persecutions in the 17th century. The Revolution granted religious freedom. There are no official religious statistics, banned since 1945. Any figure available is drawn from opinion polls and surveys. The following estimations have been made: 62% Roman Catholic, 2% Protestant, 1% Jews, 6% Muslims, 1% Buddhists and 27% non-religious. Christians are challenged to witness in a deeply de-Christianised society.



Women

In 1944 women obtained the right to vote. In the sixties many took to study and higher education to enter professions. Very rarely do they get to decision making positions. Wages are around 23-25% less than for males in similar positions. Professional development is limited by the number of children they have as there is insufficient childcare facilities. Home care is available and is supervised by Social services. Contraception has been liberalised. Only about 8% of women report domestic violence if the perpetrator is close to them. Foreign women, who are victims of racism and sexism, find it difficult to exercise their rights. They may be victims of prostitution networks, domestic slavery or exploitation in the workplace. They must accept underground economy jobs, which prevents them from having access to social and employment benefits. France, as the “land of gender equality” is a long way off.

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"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"

ORDER OF SERVICE

WELCOME

Invite all those with speaking roles or other roles in the service, such as ushers, to process at the beginning of the service. The Guide and the six women wearing red, yellow and orange process to the front and stand there while others take their seats.

Guide: Bonjour, bonjour, bonjour.
We are happy to welcome you in the name of our sisters from France who have prepared this worship service for us all. We would like to tell you about them and about where they come from. They represent the diversity of backgrounds and nationalities that make up the country of France.

Each woman waits for the Guide to call her name, then comes forward and speaks. As the women are speaking, the woman in grey walks hesitantly from the back of the church and approaches the women who are talking. She stands at a distance, watching, a bit afraid, unsure. After the six women have spoken, they turn to the woman in grey and approach her with an inquiring hello.

Odile: **wearing a garnet red scarf**
I am the present chairperson of the French WDP Committee and I live in Paris.

- Jeanne:** **wearing a vermilion red scarf**
I am a doctor from Cameroon. I became a French citizen through marriage. I live in Lyon where I work as a general practitioner.
- Greta:** **wearing an orange scarf**
I am German, single, and a teacher in the south of France.
- Marguerite:** **wearing an apricot coloured scarf**
I was born in the eastern part of France. I now live in Brest, clear across France in Bretagne. I am a homemaker and mother of four.
- Cécile:** **wearing an ochre yellow scarf**
I work with my husband on our farm in the center of France.
- Geneviève:** **wearing a lemon yellow scarf**
I am married to an Englishman and have just retired from my job in a shop.
- Stranger:** **wearing a grey scarf**
God calls us. God calls us his children. And we know that we are but "*strangers and foreigners on the earth.*"
- Guide:** God calls us. Let us listen and be open to the word of Jesus Christ: "*I was a stranger and you welcomed me.*" Throughout the world let us unite our prayers.

OPENING HYMN

Please stand.

Make me a channel of your peace

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love.
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Chorus: Oh, Master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Chorus:

Make me a channel of your peace
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving to all men that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Chorus:

PRAYER OF PRAISE

Odile: Praise to you, O Lord. You created us in your image and we are all different. Thank you for this diversity; for all the languages and dialects. Thank you for the cultures and traditions that have emerged within our places of origin.

All: Laudate Dominum, Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes, alleluia, alleluia!

Jeanette: Praise to you, O Lord. Each one of us is unique in your eyes. We celebrate these differences and rejoice that we are called to be sisters and brothers. You guide us on the path to solidarity whatever our origins, languages, appearance and personality. Thank you for your grace that welcomes us all as your children.

All: Laudate Dominum, Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes, alleluia, alleluia!

Greta: May praise, honour and glory be given unto you Lord, for the bounty that you have granted us. Amen.

All: Laudate Dominum, Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes, alleluia, alleluia!

Guide: We turn to the Book of Leviticus and listen to God's instructions that we are not to exploit strangers. We will also listen to women who ask us to see what happens when we are not faithful to God's call to holiness.

Please be seated.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

(Leviticus 19:1-2, 33-37)

Reader: The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien.’”

Irena: My name is Irena and I am from Ukraine. I answered an offer for a job in France, lured by the hope for a better life. But when I arrived here, my identification documents were taken from me. My very own Ukrainian people had conned me, and without a job, money or documents, I found myself totally dependent on a prostitution network.

Reader: “The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. You shall not cheat in measuring length, weight, or quantity. You shall have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin.”

Joyce: My name is Joyce. I was born in France and grew up here. My parents had come to France before my birth to escape war in Congo. Today, I am looking for a job and, in spite of my French diplomas; I can’t find one because when people read my name and see my picture they do not think I could be truly French.

Reader: “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. You shall keep all my statutes and all my ordinances, and observe them: I am the LORD.”

PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

Cécile: Forgive us Lord for each time we forget your commandments. Forgive us for each time we did not rightly welcome the one turning to us for refuge. Forgive us for our words which hurt others and our attitudes which humiliate them. Forgive us for our cowardice and our indifference.

All: Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Geneviève: We find assurance of God's pardon in these words from the Book of Revelation. *"See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."*

All: Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Vera: My name is Vera and I am Brazilian. I have been in France for five years. My life is very tiring because I do domestic work for several families, but I manage to make a living. I love France and I feel fully integrated. I have many French friends who readily help me with my paperwork and other red tape. We have many advantages living here: medical coverage, the opportunity to take classes in French, access to the library and job opportunities. My 20-year-old son left Brazil last year to join me in France, and he found a construction job. He is courageous and feels good in France.

Marie-Léone: My name is Marie-Léone. I lived in Rwanda until the genocide when my father, brother, aunt and uncle were killed. Some of them didn't even get buried. Running away from the horrors of war in my country, I was welcomed in France. Smothered by so much suffering and horror, I found sisters in Christ who consoled, helped and guided me. I was granted political asylum and was able to study. I now have a job and am the happy spouse of an honest and kind Frenchman. I praise the Lord for guiding me to Christian sisters and brothers who opened their homes and their hearts to me. Thanks and glory be to God.

Françoise: My name is Françoise. My family has lived in France for many generations. As a hospital nurse, I want to witness to the way foreign children are welcomed when they come to France for major surgery. They come because of heart malformations or tropical diseases that are not treated easily in their own countries. In France, they receive full coverage and are hosted by families who take care of them while they recover before returning to their countries.

Guide: Let us pray:
Today Lord we have everything to learn from Your Word. Free us from all ready-made explanations which prevent us from hearing Your Call. Grant us to receive Your Word as if we are discovering it for the first time. Through Your Spirit, may Your Word become Good News for our lives.

All: Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

(Matthew 25:31–40)

Reader: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand,”

King: “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.”

Reader: Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them,

King: “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

HYMN

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear,
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear,
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
we have already come.
T'was Grace that brought us safe thus far,
and Grace will lead us home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
as long as life endures.

When we've been here ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
then when we've first begun.

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

ACTIVITY

Each person receives a piece of ribbon about 50 centimeters long (some are warm colours like those in the painting and some are grey). Turn to the person sitting beside you, and discuss the following questions:

- Are we a welcoming community?
- Do we accept strangers wholeheartedly, no matter what their circumstances might be or do we simply tolerate them?

After this exchange tie your ribbons together. Now you turn to the person on the other side and repeat the process.

When everyone has finished you will lift the long chain of ribbons that now connects everyone.

Stranger: Our experiences of being a stranger and then being welcomed empower us to build connections and create a community where all are welcomed.

OFFERING

In making an offering, you are making a personal connection between prayer and action. In gathering the offerings, women provide a visible sign of their ecumenical collaboration.

Money collected from this offering will help continue to preparation of WDP resources, and will also be given as grants to organisations that work with women and children on issues relevant to this year's theme at home and abroad.

HYMN

From Heaven You came

From Heaven You came, helpless babe,
Entered our world, your glory veiled;
Not to be served but to serve,
And give your life that we might live.

This is our God the servant king,
He calls us now to follow Him,
To bring our lives, as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant king.

There in the garden of tears,
My heavy load, he chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours' he said.

This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow him,
To bring our lives, as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Please stand.

Guide: Let us pray, O Lord our God, open our hearts, and guide our prayer through the light of your Spirit. In communion with the universal Church, help us to pray for the welcome that we extend to our neighbour. Let us sing with all our hearts and minds.

All: He is Lord, He is Lord; He is risen from the dead and he is Lord. Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Odile: We pray for our youth who, through their cultural involvement and exchanges, build bridges between our different nations. We pray that we will be communities that support and encourage them to grow to their full potential.

All: He is King, He is King; He will draw all nations to him, he is King. And the time shall be, when the world shall sing that Jesus Christ is King.

Jeanne: We pray for our multicultural families who bring richness into our relationships because of their diversity and their spirit of openness and discovery. We pray for families where one or both parents are of foreign origin and who recognize their difference and create a shared life. We pray with them as they integrate their religious and cultural values.

All: He is love, He is love; He has shown us by his life that he is love. All his people sing, with one voice of joy that Jesus Christ is Love.

Greta: We pray for young women who dare to cross borders to study or work drawn by the promise of a job and a better life. We entrust to you in gratitude those who have succeeded. We pray with alarm and concern for those who are caught in the dangerous trap of human trafficking. O Lord our God, help us to reach out to them and so that they can be free and live in dignity.

All: He is life, He is life; He has died to set us free and he is life. And he calls us all, to live evermore for Jesus Christ is life.

Marguerite: We pray for the courage to face the reasons why people are driven from their homes: war, natural disaster, the damage caused by climate change, a failed economy. We pray that we will be serious about identifying causes and steadfast in finding solutions. We pray that we will be responsible and generous in caring for one another.

All: He is Lord, He is Lord; He is risen from the dead and he is Lord. Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Cécile: We pray for our churches, church movements and denominational organisations. We pray that they will be places of welcome for all people, irrespective of where the people come from. We place in your hands each and every one of us. Grant us to be welcoming and attentive to the needs of our neighbour.

Guide: O Lord our God, our refuge and strength, grant us what we ask of you in trust. Let us stand and join hands.
[pause]

Let us pray as Jesus has taught us...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
As we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever, Amen.

SENDING AND BLESSING

Clergy: Sisters and brothers, *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."* May the way we look upon one another help others to exist. May our smile bring warmth. May our words help to sustain life. May our presence become a support. May God our Father grant strength to our testimony. May Jesus Christ direct our deeds and may the Spirit guide our thoughts.
Jesus tells us, *"Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."*
May the blessing of God three times holy be with us so that his peace may reign in a world of increased solidarity. Such is the promise of the world to come.

All: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

The Day you gave us Lord is ended

The day you gave us Lord is ended,
The darkness falls at your behest:
To You our morning hymns ascended,
Your praise shall sanctify our rest

We thank you that your church unsleeping,
While earth rolls onward into light,
Through all the world her watch is keeping,
And rest not now by day or night.

Across each continent and island
As dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the strain of prayer away.

The sun that bids us rest is waking
Our friends beneath the western sky,
And hour by hour fresh lips are making,
Your wondrous doings heard on high.

Keep Up the Momentum

World Day of Prayer 2014

Prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Egypt

Theme: Streams in the Desert

When we gather together on 7th March, 2014, the women of Egypt will engage us in conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1–42), identifying and encouraging streams of living water in their lives and urging us to do the same.