

Prayers for Peace, Hope and Justice

All you need is love. A quote that could easily be attributed to Jesus, but in this case, they are words written and sung by John Lennon- someone who also dared us to imagine a world with no countries, nothing to kill or die for, no heaven or hell, no possessions. A beautiful vision, and wisdom to understand that having walls and borders, and belief systems that categorised us as being in or being out, or has haves or have-nots, would result in the violent, exclusionary and unjust world we find ourselves living in today. And he seemed to understand with enviable simplicity, that for us to have life in all its fullness, all we need is love.

I look at the barbed wire surrounding the Candle of Peace, Hope and Justice, the barbed wire representing all that is evil, corrupt and unjust, all the mess in our world, and I wonder if that barbed wire could ever exist if all we chose was love. I dare us to imagine the wire melting away, leaving the flaming radiance of peace, hope and justice to reign.

Instead of a more traditional prayer, I've chosen to read a poem that gives a glimpse into this way of love. Hear it from a world, and a personal, perspective.

When brokenness leads to the breaking down of others, choose love.

When bitterness and resentment threatens to eat away at our souls, choose love.

When betrayal results in seeking revenge, choose love.

When revenge becomes more important than forgiveness, choose love.

When unworthiness causes us to lash out, choose love.

When cowardice keeps us silent in the face of injustice, choose love.

When greed stops us from sharing, choose love.

When power gives rise to oppression, choose love.

When superiority culminates in violence against another race, religion or nation, choose love.

When lies feed a false reality, choose love.

When hypocrisy leads to cynicism and unbelief, choose love.

When the enemy can no longer be seen as sacred and beloved, choose love.

When darkness becomes all-consuming, choose love.

When fear casts out love, choose love.

By choosing love, we choose wholeness. We choose healing. We choose forgiveness.
We choose gentleness. We choose courage. We choose mercy. We choose compassion.
We choose humility. We choose truth. We choose faithfulness. We choose peace.
We choose hope. We choose justice. We choose the light of the world.
We choose Jesus.

Lord God, in and by your grace, may we always choose love. Amen.