# Korea Peace Appeal: A Call to Prayer and Action

## Words of Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

## Scripture Words

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
 from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
 who made heaven and earth.
They will not let your foot be moved;
 the Lord who keeps you will not slumber.
(Psalm 121:1‒4)

## Opening Hymn

MV 129 To the High and Kindly Hills

## Call to Worship

We gather
**to pray for peace.**We gather
**to work for peace.**We gather
**to act for peace.**We gather
**to embody peace.**We gather
**to learn from the source of our peace,
 comfort and strength.**We gather
**to worship the God of Peace.**

## Opening Prayer

God of life, God of Peace
We bring before you the people in Korea, from Unggi in the Northeast to Seogwipo on Jeju Island in the South. You know them by name. You know of their suffering over centuries, their longing for freedom and for self-determination. You know their journey since 1950 when the war began―a war that has not ended.

We gather in solidarity with your people on the Korean Peninsula and we pray for peace and justice, for an end of the threats of nuclear weapons and all kinds of military actions, for the right of self-determination for the people in Korea, and for a future of hope.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,
We bring before you the people in Korea, from Unggi in the Northeast to Seogwipo on Jeju Island in the South. You know them by name. You know of their hurts because of all the injustices and divisions they have been facing. Families divided, not knowing of one another’s joys and pains. Prejudices are bearing bitter fruits of fear of the others.

We gather in solidarity with your people on the Korean Peninsula and pray for an end of this division, for ways to get to know one another and to recognize the brother, the sister, for reconciliation and for healing.

Holy Spirit, source of new beginnings,
We bring before you the people in Korea, from Unggi in the Northeast to Seogwipo on Jeju Island in the South. You know them by name in their longing for life in abundance and in restored relationships. And you know of the suffering of the earth because of the military presence and the exploitation of natural resources.

We gather in solidarity with your people on the Korean Peninsula and we pray for healing, not only of the souls but also of the nature and for new ways of living in harmony with one another and with mother earth.
Triune God, God of mercy, justice, and peace, receive our prayers and guide our actions.
Amen.

*―Prayer adapted from Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, World Methodist Council, Geneva Secretary*

## The War Is Not Over

[Voices from The United Church of Canada](https://youtu.be/xBJNlcIInsI) (video)

## Scripture

Isaiah 11:1‒9

## Reflection

By the Right Rev. Eun-Kyung Kim

(*This reflection is available as a* [*video*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9LFWeBkYLg) *in Korean with English subtitles.* *For a Korean translation of the following text please e-mail* *worship@united-church.ca**.*)

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

As Canada joins the signature campaign for peace and unification on the Korea Peninsula, aimed at collecting 100 million signatures, on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK), I am deeply grateful for your encouraging accompaniment. I pray that the Lord’s comfort and grace will be with The United Church of Canada and all its members amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Ephesians 2:14, “He is our peace, who made the two one, and in his flesh broke down the middle wall of enmity.”

As a woman of Korea, the only divided country on the planet, which still bears the deep wounds of the Korean War, I join with all who seek peace. The news of the war in Ukraine, the suffering of children, women, and refugees is seen as our suffering, not as the distant reality of another country.

More than 70 years have passed since the Armistice Agreement in Korea. These years have deeply shaped the political, economic, cultural, and art landscape of Korea. Jesus loved the world, but to the end. He suffered under the weight of the cross. Jesus tore down the dividing wall so we could be one.

As a female pastor of the Korean church, which carries the divided country as a cross, I seek Jesus’ words and follow those in spite of contradictions and conflicts in the world for unity in diversity. I believe that the Korean Peninsula will be a place of healing and restoration full of life and peace.

The PROK has been carrying out various activities in order to promote peaceful reunification, such as: Monday Prayer Meetings for peaceful reunification, the End of War Declaration Campaign, and close collaboration with civil society organizations. Special efforts are focusing on education and training for peaceful reunification for the next generation.

The current situation in South Korea, as I am preparing this message, is that the Korean people face the result of the 20th presidential elections. Transitions happening now diminish our hope to move forward to peaceful unification.

The recent international situation seems to be returning to the Cold War era. There are also reports of stronger collaboration between US‒Japan and China‒Russia. The Korean Peninsula is under pressure from the real threat of war.

But even in the midst of deepest darkness, I believe that the sun will shine, as we rely on the words of Jesus Christ, who has come as the Prince of Peace. The direction of our peace movement will not be swayed and determined by the powers of the nations of the world.

“Declaring that our future lies with you,” Psalm 31:15.

We must trust in Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, as the provider of life and history, and go forward in faith. To walk with us and act with us is to believe that the Lord is carrying out the work of salvation according to his will and purpose. He came into the world for peace. He came to give life, abundantly.

For the faithful, the peace movement is about believing in God's work of salvation and confidence in Jesus Christ, who has overcome the world, even when the nations are in turmoil and there is darkness that cannot be predicted in the whirlwind of war. We give thanks that The United Church of Canada is with us on the way.

“Blessed are those who work for peace. They will be called children of God,” Matthew 5:9

Amen.

Some further questions for reflection:

1. What is the role of the peace movement when there is conflict between states?
2. As part of the peace movement, how do we live out (express) our witness for peace?
3. I often use the expression “seek peace in everyday life.” How does seeking peace each day look like for you?

## Prayer Response

Gracious God,
In school, we learn that we should get along well with our friends.
When will the day come when the South and
North Korean friends will get along well with each other?

Merciful Lord,
We are told by adults that the drought is severe in North Korea.
It would be great if we could help whenever they need help,
but we cannot help.

Almighty God,
Why do we need to get permission from some other country when we want to help each other?
Please help South Korea and North Korea be the kind of good friends that,
whenever it is difficult for either of us or whenever we are hungry, we can help each other.
I pray that we Koreans in the South and the North learn to live well together in harmony.
Lord, help us now!
In Jesus’ name, we pray.

―Hyun Woong Choi/Seoul Gangwol Elementary School, Seoul, South Korea (World Council of Churches)

## Musical Response

VU 34 O-So-So (Come Now, O God of Peace)

## Litany and Prayer for an End to War

In 1989, filled with the Holy Spirit, Moon IkHwan1 walked across the DMZ2 from South to North to visit not only his family but also top officials in the Democratic People’s Republic.
**The tanks and guns were silent. The guards were struck dumb!**As we meet virtually today, can we take that journey with him? Can we believe in something that conventional wisdom tells us is impossible, as impossible as IkHwan’s trek was?
**Let’s take this same trek with the wings of our mind, flying on the wind of God’s love over the silent, breathless earth!**One small peninsula of God’s green and mountainous earth has been divided by the powers and principalities for over 70 years, separating families, friends, cultures, and even language. The Cold War persists in that ancient land, and yet fountains of joy spring up among the people.
**How can we hope for peace when three generations have been taught to snarl at each other across the man-made border?**We hope because Jesus taught us to do just that. And not only to hope but also to actively seek a formal end to war.
**“Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you,” Jesus taught us, and today, we dare to knock on the doors of the powers and ask for a formal peace!**“For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible,” Jesus tells us, and our faith is in that vision of light that IkHwan glimpsed, and those songs of hope that IkHwan sang, as he did the impossible and crossed the DMZ.
**We turn to the God who establishes no borders, who countenances no war, in God’s first language: silence…**

(Silent prayer)

O Most Holy, who gives us the vision of peace, we are on this earth to live out the radical and risky teachings of Jesus, at whatever cost to our comfort. Jesus teaches that if we say to this mountain “Be taken up and thrown into the sea” and not doubt in our heart, it will come to pass.
**We have seen impossible things come to pass in our lifetimes, the tearing down of walls, the upholding of rights, the end of genocide.**
We say to the pens of the powers-that-be in Korea, “Be taken up and sign the end of the 70-year-long war.”
**We say to a land far too long divided: “Nothing is impossible with God!”**Show us now how to be unafraid and how to stand on your astonishing promises for the healing of this planet of pain
**so that from Paektu Mountain in the North to Halla Mountain in the South, Moon IkHwan’s vision of the flag of justice waving above the entire Korean peninsula will come to pass! AMEN!**

1. Rev. Moon IkHwan (1918‒1994), Presbyterian minister and symbol of Korean reunification and democratization.

2. Demilitarized Zone or buffer between North and South Korea near the 38th parallel north, established 1953.

―By YoonOk Shin and Kurt Katsmar. For this prayer in Korean please e-mail *worship@united-church.ca*.

## Hymn

VU 698 With the Wings of Our Mind (Ttugoun Maum)

## Call to Action

A live invitation to [sign the petition](https://en.endthekoreanwar.net).

## Benediction/Commissioning

Together,
 **may we pray for peace
 may we work for peace
 may we act for peace**
wherever the han of war persists.
Together,
 **may we act for justice
 may we act for love
 may we act for peace**wherever you call us to be.
May we go emboldened by the God of Peace,
empowered by the Risen Christ, and
embraced by the Holy Spirit.

May we go to seek and work for peace.
Amen.

## Postlude/Sung Blessing

Our Hope Is Reunification by Ahn Byong Won