



Christian Conference of Asia

LITURGY

2012 Asia Sunday



"We come to God from our fragmented lives and divided communities,
and pray for our reconciliation and wholeness."

Photo of the CCA General Assembly in 2010, by Vuluk Lai Chao-Tsai, Taiwan.

MAKE US RECONCILERS, O GOD!

FOREWORD

31 October 2011

Greetings of peace!

Please find enclosed the Liturgy for the 2012 Asia Sunday. We are sending you this ahead of time with a sincere hope that you will kindly integrate the celebration of Asia Sunday in the agenda and especially in the 2012 lectionary of your church as a member of CCA.

Traditionally, Asia Sunday is celebrated every year a week before Pentecost to commemorate the birth of CCA. This is an opportunity for us to specifically connect, remember and pray for each other as a fellowship of Asian churches through CCA. For 2012, the celebration of Asia Sunday falls on May 20, 2012, but local congregations are free to choose any other date as is suitable to their schedule.

The theme of the 2012 Asia Sunday is in the spirit of prayer, "Make us reconcilers, O God!" In the midst of many conflicts and divisions in our world today, including in the life of our family, church and community, we are called to seriously undertake the ministry of reconciliation. It requires our humility to go beyond our prejudices and accept each other as creation of God.

CCA seeks your collaboration to kindly translate this liturgy into the language of the congregations, to adjust it into your context as you find it necessary, and to circulate it as widely as possible. We appeal to you that in this occasion a special offering is collected to support the CCA Emergency Fund. This Fund enables us to immediately send our token of solidarity to CCA members in the area affected by emergency situation such as natural disaster. Details of the CCA Emergency Fund can be found at the end of this liturgy.

If you have any inquiry, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your kind attention and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,


Henriette Hutabarat Lebang
General Secretary

ASIA SUNDAY,

celebrated on the Sunday before Pentecost, commemorates the founding of the Christian Conference of Asia and calls upon member churches and councils as well as ecumenical partners around the world to pray for one another. In 2012, Asia Sunday falls on 20 May but churches are free to choose another appropriate date if necessary.

Preparation

Have some symbols of division, estrangement, alienation, enmity at the worship center.

We Gather in God's Presence

Call to Worship

Leader: In Asia, we call ourselves to worship by the ringing of the bell, the gong, or by a call to prayer.

Ring the bell, gong, or other instrument...

Leader: In Asia, we prepare ourselves for worship with the lighting of the candle, the incense, or the lamp.

Light the candle, incense or lamp...

Leader: In Asia, we come together to worship God, bringing concerns from our individual lives, communities, the region and the world.

A youth group may do a short dance or mime showing urgent issues or concerns in Asia today – e.g. poverty, injustice, hunger, sickness, war, ecological destruction, etc..

Song *In the Lands of Asia* [Sound the Bamboo #263]

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

263 **In the Lands of Asia**

(♩ = 88)



1. In the lands of A - sia, peo-ple are op - pressed;
 2. *In the lands of A - sia, tears fall on dry fa - ces;
 3. *In the lands of A - sia, fear and ter - ror reign

man - y cry for jus - tice, beg-ging for some sol - ace.
 chil-dren, men and wo - men, hun-gry, dy - ing, hope - less.
 peo-ple long for true peace in the light of your face.

Refrain (Faster ♩ = 100)



O God, let your mis - sion fill your chil - dren's vi - sion,
 to heal the suf - fering and help the strug - gling.

* alternative words for st. 2: " In the global village "
 st. 3: " Everywhere around us "

Words: Salvador T. Martinez, Philippines
 Music: *MARTINEZ*; Salvador T. Martinez, Philippines

Exodus 6:6-7; Psalm 80:4-7

Invocation (all)

Gracious and loving God, we come to you out of habit and also because of our need. You are the source of our lives, our refuge in times of trouble, our strength in times of difficulties. Be present with us in this time of worship. Surround us with your Holy Spirit – to convict us with your truth, enlighten us with your wisdom, and fill us with your strength. Amen.

We Hear the Word of God

Scripture Readings

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal to us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

[2 Corinthians 5:17-20]

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility... [vs. 14-16] Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household. [v. 19]

[Ephesians 2:14-16; 19]

Drama on the Story of Zacchaeus

Let the youth group dramatize the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), highlighting the different levels of reconciliation they can draw from the story.

Sermon

Reconciliation: God's Gift, Our Task

1. Reconciliation is a gift from God – it is God who reconciled the world to Godself in Christ. In the story of Zacchaeus, Christ invited himself to Zacchaeus' home: "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." Reconciliation is a gift from and act of God.
2. Reconciliation, as a gift, has to be received. To receive a gift requires action. Zacchaeus received the gift – he even longed for it, that he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree.
3. Reconciliation is also a task, which requires action and change. It involves admission of a wrong that has been done which caused alienation, estrangement, separation, brokenness, enmity. It involves asking for forgiveness (on the part of one who did the wrong) or offering/granting of forgiveness (on the part of the wronged). Either way does not come easy. In human terms, forgiveness is an unnatural act. It is a divine act. But without forgiveness the chain of *ungrace* will continue. Only with forgiveness comes the possibility of reconciliation. In the case of Zacchaeus, reconciliation came as a gift from Christ and also as a task of Zacchaeus. The task included reparation – making amends or setting things right, e.g. giving half of his possessions to the poor and paying back four times the amount cheated of others.
4. There are several levels of reconciliation – to oneself, to one's God, to one's neighbor or community, to the world. Very often they are interrelated. One is able to reach out to another and be reconciled because one has already been reconciled to oneself and to God.
5. Do you know of similar stories in your cultures, other religions, or in contemporary experience?

In Buddhism, one story is that of Angulimala, a name which means 'garland of fingers'. According to Buddhist tradition, Angulimala had killed 999 persons and had collected all their fingers in a necklace around his neck. In searching for his one thousandth victim, he met the Buddha and realized what he had been doing was wrong. The Buddha forgave him and Angulimala eventually attained complete enlightenment and became one of the Buddha's closest disciples. [This story was shared by Ms. Saifon "Por" Boonchoom at a Wednesday prayer meeting of CCA staff in September 2011.]

Another story is of Milarepa, an 11th century Tibetan saint, who in his earlier life had also killed so many people. When he realized what he was doing was wrong, he changed his ways and turned toward spiritual practice. Like Angulimala, he too attained complete enlightenment and became one of Buddhism's most important teachers.

The sermon may end with a challenge to the congregation to make efforts at becoming agents of reconciliation – at home, in the workplace, in church, in the wider community, with God's creation.

We Lift Our Prayers to God

Pastoral Prayer

[The pastor or elder leads a guided prayer, including confession of sins and lifting up various concerns of the congregation, the wider community, Asia and the world. Make special mention of countries or communities whose people are still suffering from issues or realities that call for reconciliation...]

Or

Intercessory Prayer

Leader: Dear God, we come to you from our fragmented lives and divided communities, for you are the source of our reconciliation and wholeness. Help us to be at peace with ourselves by remembering your gift of reconciliation through Christ Jesus.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Dear God, we pray for communities caught up in violence in Kandhamal, India, whose houses and worship places were razed to the ground. May they find hope for the future as they continue trusting in your love and mercy.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to bring peace where neighbor is set against neighbor, and where people regard each other as enemies.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to stand with the Okinawan people in Japan and those in Kangjeong Village in the Jeju Island, South Korea, as they face the construction of new bases in their islands, who have suffered for many years in the aftermath of wars, and whose livelihood and culture have been lost to alienating industrial development.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to bring justice where the weak and helpless are beaten by the mighty, and where people look down on others as lower to them in status.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us defend people who are being arrested, detained or even killed as they actively work for peace, justice and human dignity in the Philippines, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, West Papua in Indonesia and other countries in Asia.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to bring freedom where children are forced to fight, where women are trafficked as sex objects or cheap labor, where people are discriminated due to disease, disability or other orientations in life.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to advocate and defend the rights of farmers losing their lands to mining companies that place profits over people and their right to their land and access to productive resources.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to bring care and connectedness to your creation where greed and abuse have caused a lot of destruction.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to bring humility where people depend upon their strength and beliefs rather than depending on you.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.

Leader: Help us to acknowledge our divisions and bless our willingness to reconcile to each other to become one body in Christ and as credible instruments of reconciliation in the world.

People: Make us reconcilers, O God, as you have reconciled us to you.
[Feel free to add more depending on your own context...]

The Lord's Prayer (in different languages of the congregation)

Song: Hear our prayer, O God
Hear our prayer, O God
Incline Thine ear to us and grant us thy peace.

We Respond to God's Word

Call to Offering

Offering of Gifts, Tithes and Pledges

In addition to regular offerings, CCA member churches are invited to make a special Asia Sunday offering that will go towards the Emergency Fund of the Christian Conference of Asia.

While the special song or music is being sung or played and as the offering is being made, a group of people representing the different generations may re-arrange the symbols of division, estrangement, enmity at the worship center – to create something symbolic of peace, reconciliation and wholeness.

Prayer for the Offering

We Go Forth to Serve God

Song of Dedication or Commitment

God Calls Us All

Luna L Dingayan

Pearl Dingayan



1. God calls us all to pro - phe-sy to the peo-ple of our time Call them
2. God calls us all to re - con-cile and to live in u - ni - ty, Let us
3. God calls us all to heal and love and to res - tore bro - ken lives. Let us



to re-pent and to change their ways and to walk in righteousness. Though our voice of pro - phe - cy ignored and we may learn to love and to pray for those we re-gard as e - ne - mies. Let us all up - root the roots that make for a break the walls of hosti - li - ties that di -vide communi - ties. Let us build commu-ni-ties of peace where God's



live in pain or die. God our hope of ge - nuine peace and life un-to us al - ways a - bide. con - flict to e - xist. Let our lives be changed and be re-newed by the grace of God of peace. love and jus - tice reign. Let us come and ce - le - brate our life and God's love that makes us whole.

Prayer of Dedication

Leader: O God, make us your instrument of peace and reconciliation.

Women: Where there is hatred, may we bring love.
Where there is wrong, may we bring pardon.
Where there is discord, may we bring harmony.

Men: To those cut off from what they believe
To those who are tortured,
And to those awaiting execution
May we be instruments of your justice and your freedom.

Women: Where there is despair may we bring hope
Where there is darkness may we bring light
Where there is sadness, may we bring joy

Men: Where there is pain and suffering
Where there is oppression and inhumanity
May we bring your loving presence

All: Fill us with your spirit of peace
Help us to hunger and thirst for justice
So that we may give ourselves in service to those who need us
And deliver them from evil. Amen.

Benediction

Prepared by: Dr. Hope ANTONE and Mr. Carlos OCAMPO
Layout and design: Dr. Liza B. LAMIS

THE CCA EMERGENCY FUND

In contexts where churches, councils and communities at-large in Asia become victims due to recurring earthquakes, volcanic eruption, floods, tsunami, etc., CCA deems it important to build an Emergency Fund, keep it on reserve and use it at the right time.

As mandated by the 13th CCA Assembly in April 2010 in Kuala Lumpur, the CCA Emergency Fund was created to enable CCA to:

- Organize immediate visits to see firsthand the damages caused and find out how to assist churches and councils in responding to the emergency situation. The initial visit provides CCA with information to inform the CCA family about the situation so that they can be in solidarity with the affected people and the churches in the countries where the tragedy has taken place.
- Facilitate visits of accompaniment, at times by a small team consisting of members from the CCA family. The visits aim to assist churches to work out their own relief and rehabilitation work in collaboration with Action by Churches Together (ACT) International or other major donors.

CCA's role is purely accompaniment where it equips and empowers the local churches to be in mission and to respond effectively to the need of the times. The implementors are the local churches and the national councils.

We thus appeal to you to contribute to the CCA Emergency Fund, by sending your contributions to:

Account name : Christian Conference of Asia
Bank : Hang Seng Bank
Branch : Hankow Road (4 Hankow Road Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR, China)
Account No. : 295-4-709594
Account Type : Multi-Currencies Account
Swift Code : HASEHKHH