

COMMUNITY DAYS OF



PRAYER TOOLKIT

Disagreeing in Good Faith

The May 1 National Day of Prayer is another opportunity to lift up the words and actions of peace throughout our local communities of faith. The call for **peace, unity, and compassion** is fundamental to our beliefs. As people of faith, we are called to pray and be **active agents of peace in a divided world**. This multi-faith toolkit offers faith and lay leaders ideas and resources to reach this goal. It includes reflections, prayer points, promotional strategies, event planning tips, and actionable resources to help us promote peace, unity, and compassion for all communities.

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***Faith Forward Democracy** is a multifaith, nonpartisan network of faith leaders united by a concern for our increasingly divided country and the impact those divisions have on our communities, families, and democracy. Faith leaders share a common commitment to the highest values of peace and love, irrespective of political position. Faith leaders have the power to bridge differences and inspire positive change. The **Faith Forward Democracy Network** is a part of the **Georgia Democracy Resilience Network**, which is supported by **The Carter Center**.*

Goal and Call to Action:

Our goal is to **mobilize faith communities for peace, unity, and compassion** around the **National Day of Prayer** through **multi-faith days of prayer and activity**.

*On or around the **National Day of Prayer on May 1**, we ask you and your community to lift-up and promote our common commitment to the norms of peace, love, and justice.*

We are all children of a higher power, required to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to leave the world a better and more peaceful place than how we found it.

I. **Faith Foundation: Why Faith Leaders Must Be Peacemakers**

The call for **peace, unity, and compassion** is deeply rooted in many faiths. As people of faith, we are called to pray and be **active agents of peace in a divided world**.

Our Role in Healing Divides:

Places of worship are uniquely positioned to **stand in the gap**, model humility, and **be the bridge** that connects communities, political ideologies, and generations. We can commit to learning the tools and words of peace.

II. **Messaging for the Community Days of Prayer: Calling Faith Communities to Action**

As we prepare to engage our faith communities, our messaging should be **consistent, grounded in our faith principles, and action-oriented**.

KEY MESSAGE:

“On these Days of Community Prayer, let us not only pray for peace. Let us also commit to being peacemakers. In a time of deep division, we are called to lead by example, showing the world what it means to listen with love, speak with grace, and work for reconciliation.”

KEY THEMES TO EMPHASIZE:

- **Prayer as a Starting Point, Not the End** – While prayer is powerful, we are called to actively live out the peace we pray for.
 - **Bridging the Divide** – Faith leaders and laity are called to be bridge-builders in our families, churches, and communities.
 - **Diplomacy in Action** – Faith leaders should be the first to model civility, respectful dialogue, and find a path to de-escalate tensions.
 - **Disagree in Good Faith** – Listening to someone with an open heart does not mean agreeing with them. To disagree well, we have to understand well.
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III. Action Steps: How to Engage Your Faith Community

To move beyond just talking about peace, below are **concrete ways that faith** communities and believers can engage around the Community Days of Prayer:

1. Organize a Unified Prayer Gathering

- Invite **leaders from different denominations** to pray together publicly.
- Host a **prayer breakfast** with elected officials and community leaders.
- Encourage a **joint prayer time** between historically divided groups, like churches of different racial or political backgrounds.

2. Equip Leaders to Preach and Act on Peace & Diplomacy

- Research **prayer outlines** focusing on key peacemaking figures within your tradition.
- Research new approaches and resources that **fit your community's specific needs**, including prayer, bridge-building, and other group activities.
- Challenge faith communities and family members to **commit to daily acts of reconciliation** in their communities.
- Research and schedule **trainings for yourself and your congregation** in holding difficult conversations and understanding polarization. This is a great way to protect your community from future division.

3. Encourage Personal and Community Acts of Bridge-Building

- Host **listening circles** where people with different perspectives share their experiences.
- Challenge small groups to **reach out to someone they disagree with politically or theologically** and pray together.
- Encourage **acts of service**, such as feeding the homeless, visiting nursing homes, or working on a community project together.

4. Mobilize a Social Media Campaign

- Provide a **shareable graphic & hashtag**, like #DisagreeingInGoodFaith.
- Share **testimonies of unity and reconciliation** — how prayer has helped restore broken relationships.
- Record **short video prayers** from diverse faith leaders and post them throughout the day.

A CALL TO ACTION: Use a **short, compelling** slogan that encapsulates our mission. Below are a few options:

- **“Pray to Be the Bridge.”** (#PrayToBeTheBridge)
- **“Leading in Prayer, Living in Peace.”** (#PrayLivePeace)
- **“Blessed are the Peacemakers”**
(#BlessedAreThePeacemakers)
- **“Disagreeing in Good Faith”** (#DisagreeingInGoodFaith)

IV. Conclusion: Faith as a Force for Unity

These Community Days of Prayer are meant to be more than an event. They're a **call to action**. Faith leaders must take the lead in **praying for peace but also practicing peace**. Through active reflection and purposeful acts of bridge-building and unity, we can show the world that **love transcends all divisions**. **While we do not agree on matters of faith or politics, we are united by our common humanity and commitment to the good of all.**

Resources

I. Mobilizing for the National Day of Prayer

Now that we've established a strategic approach to using prayer as a tool for **unity and bridge-building**, the next step is **outreach** —

connecting with the right voices who can amplify this message and encourage participation.

1. Identify Key Partners & Supporters

We need to reach out to people that we trust to discuss what we can do. These are our key partners. Also, we can reach **leaders who have influence in their spheres** and can encourage others to use the **Community Days of Prayer** as a moment of reflection and bridge-building.

Consider:

- **Public Servants and Elected Officials** – Those who can set an example of humility, bipartisanship, and unity. Ask for a proclamation focusing on healing divides. *(see draft below)*
- **Faith Leaders** – Encouraging our places of worship and faith-based organizations to emphasize **seeking unity** in their prayers.
- **Podcasters, Writers, & Media Influencers** – Those who can spread the message to a broader audience.
- **Business Leaders & Community Organizers** – Encouraging prayer gatherings in workplaces, civic groups, and neighborhood events with a focus on healing our communities.

2. How to Ask for Their Support

When reaching out, the message should be **clear, compelling, and action-driven**:

- *“Would you be willing to support and promote the Community Days of Prayer / National Day of Prayer by encouraging your community to use this moment for personal reflection, growth, and bridge-building? This is a unique opportunity to promote unity and healing across our differences and to seek healing beyond prayer”*

Ways they can help:

- Speak about this theme in congregations, newsletters, or meetings.
- Host or encourage a **small group prayer gathering** focused on unity.

- Share content on **social media** promoting civility and bridge-building.
 - Organize events focused on understanding polarization and the dynamics of division.
 - Engage with mental health resources.
 - Reach out to community violence prevention resources.
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3. Actionable Outreach Plan

- **Email & Personal Invitations** – Draft a message to send to faith leaders, elected officials, and influencers.
- **Personal Calls & Follow-Ups** – A conversation is often more effective than an email.
- **Leverage Media & Podcasts** – Reach out to faith-based podcasts or local radio stations for a quick segment on the power of prayer in building unity. Ask them to send short videos of what being a peacemaker looks like to them.
- **Social Media Toolkit** – Provide graphics, sample captions, and hashtags to make it easier for people to spread the message.

By strategically **engaging leaders**, we can **mobilize a movement** where prayer isn't just a personal practice but a catalyst for **peace, civility, and unity** across communities.

II. **SAMPLE: Proclamation for the National Day of Prayer**

Approach local government leaders to ask that they issue a proclamation:

Whereas, our community recognizes the power of prayer as a source that brings us together, transcending boundaries and creating a foundation for mutual respect and understanding;

Whereas, we acknowledge the existence of divisions among us — social, political, economic, and cultural — that challenge our unity and collective strength;

Whereas, the National Day of Prayer provides an opportunity for individuals of all faiths and backgrounds to come together in prayer and reflection within their communities, promoting healing and reconciliation;

Whereas, this special day calls upon us to embrace our differences and seek ways to forge connections and understanding among all community members;

Whereas, it is essential to acknowledge the role of interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural activities in strengthening our community's fabric by promoting inclusivity and tolerance;

Whereas, we recognize the need for ongoing efforts to promote peace, unity, and reconciliation, and to heal the wounds of division through empathy, compassion, and open dialogue;

Now, Therefore, I, [Name of the Issuing Official], [Title], on behalf of [Name of City/State], do hereby proclaim [Date] as a **Civic Day of Prayer** / honor this May 1 **National Day of Prayer** in [City/State] and urge all citizens to observe this day by:

1. Participating in community prayer events and activities designed to promote healing and unity.
2. Reflecting on how each of us, as individuals and as a collective, can contribute to bridging the divides that separate us.
3. Engaging in acts of kindness and understanding that foster an environment of reconciliation and peace.
4. Supporting initiatives and programs that encourage dialogue and partnership among different groups within our community.
5. Praying for our leaders and all those who influence public opinion, that they may be guided by wisdom, compassion, and a commitment to justice and peace.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of [City/State] to be affixed this [Day] day of [Month], [Year].

III. **SAMPLE: Community Days of Prayer: A Prayer Guide for Unity and Peace in Our Community**

Introduction. As we gather in prayer, let us seek the wisdom and peace needed to heal our divisions and guide our hearts toward unity. This guide serves to direct our prayers towards unity among believers, bridge-building within our communities, and overcoming political and identity-based polarization that separates us.

Prayer for Unity in the Faith Community

“With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Prayer: We pray for a spirit of humility and gentleness among us. Help us to be patient and bear with one another in love. Strengthen our community to be united, and let peace be the bond that holds us together. Guide our churches, synagogues, mosques, and all places of worship to reflect unity in all actions and words.

Prayer for Bridge-Building Across Divides:

“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. And over all these virtues put love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

Prayer: In a world divided by conflict and misunderstanding, teach us to forgive freely. Help us to bear with each other, putting aside grievances to embrace love, the bond of perfect unity. Encourage us to reach across the divides, fostering understanding and reconciliation where there is discord. May our actions reflect love and bring glory as we build bridges in our communities and beyond.

Prayer for Overcoming Political Polarization:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

Prayer: We lift up our leaders and all who hold political authority. We pray for the spirit of peace to influence their hearts and minds. Instill in them, and in us, a commitment to be peacemakers. Help us engage in respectful dialogue that bridges gaps rather than deepens them. Empower us to work together for the common good, transcending political boundaries for greater glory.

Closing Prayer: As we conclude our prayers today, we hold on to promises for peace, unity, and reconciliation. May the seeds of peace we plant today grow into a harvest of righteousness. We pray for love to overflow in our hearts, and that we might be catalysts for unity in our communities and beyond.

Conclusion: Let this prayer guide be a resource for all who seek to make a difference through faith and prayer. Share it with your congregation, and may it inspire each of us to become diligent stewards of peace and unity in our daily lives.

In preparation for the National Day of Prayer, and at any time, reflect and pray on the themes listed — focusing on how each can be practiced personally and applied externally.

Themes may include:

Peace, Respect, Kindness, Leadership, Compassion, Forgiveness, Acceptance, Humility, Patience, Love, Healing, Trust, Mercy, Faith, Justice, Hope, Perseverance, Gratitude, Reverence, Fellowship, Courage, Reflection.

V. **SAMPLE: Prayer for Our Nation**

(Audience Response in Bold)

Loving and Gracious God,

*We give you thanks for this, our cherished nation, that you have entrusted to our care for our children and for generations to come. **Guide us in your truth and ways.***

*We live in a time of disharmony and are troubled by our growing divides. **Protect our country and unify us.***

*Remind us that no matter our beliefs or views, we are all made in your image. **Help us to love one another as you love us.***

*Help us remember your call to peace. **Make us and our places of worship agents of reconciliation and healing.***

*Give us the heart to find common ground and, where we cannot, to disagree peacefully and well. **Help us reject division and seek harmony.***

*Give us the capacity to listen to those with differing views so we may better understand them. **Help us build bridges of respect with our neighbors.***

*Unite us in a commitment to our shared democratic norms and let us reject violence in all forms. **Let our leaders guide us with love, integrity, and wisdom for the betterment of all.***

These things we ask in the name of all that is holy and good.

VI. Resource Links

A wide variety of resources for sermon ideas, trainings about division, and other tools can be found at: <https://georgiadrn.org/resources/>

Multi-faith video clips for us on social media, taken from the February 2024 and October 2024 Services of Prayer for Our Nation in Georgia can be found at:

<https://georgiadrn.org/sop-february/>

<https://georgiadrn.org/sop-october/>