2015 Together with the Churches of the World: Commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Korea's liberation and division

## Sunday Prayer Worship for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula

Theme: The Footsteps to Reconciliation

Date: Sunday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Council of Churches in Korea Reconciliation and Unification Committee

## Theme/Lectionary

The Footsteps to Reconciliation/Genesis 33: 1-12; Matthew 5:21-24

#### Goals

- 1. To pray, with all the churches of the world, for the reconciliation and healing of the divided Korean peninsula
- 2. To overcome the South/North antagonism and conflict by opening an interaction between North and South
- 3. To foster an environment which will see peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula by concluding a Peace Treaty
- 4. To create a spirit of cooperation and solidarity among the churches of the world who pray for peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula as well as for peace in the global village

## **Background**

- 1. 70 years ago, with the end of the Second World War in 1945, the people of this nation were blessed with the happiness of liberation. And yet, right after liberation, Korea experienced division by outside forces, so that for 70 years, our people have continued living in the pain and sadness of division. Over the years the two political systems were established that have become solidified as examples of 'Communism' and 'Capitalism'. In 1950-1953, supported by their corresponding Cold War allies, North and South were the victims of a devastating civil war.
- 2. Ending the Korean War merely with a temporary cease-fire agreement, and therefore technically 'at war', the Korean peninsula has continued to experience armed skirmishes and lives constantly with increased military drills and hostile rhetoric. This has led to anxiety in the lives of the citizens of North and South and the utilizing of Korean resources in military defensiveness rather than social good. The deployment of the American military technology THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), Guideline for US/Japan Defense Cooperation, the Anthrax case... the Korean peninsula has become the arena of military competition among the super powers.
- 3. It is necessary that South and North end this state and accomplish a permanent peace. North and South must begin to see that their differences are not punishment but blessing. Differences should be celebrated as a source of blessing and prosperity, not of hatred and discrimination.
- 4. At the WCC Busan Assembly of 2013, a resolution was passed that the churches of the world will annually observe each Sunday prior to August 15<sup>th</sup> as a "Sunday of Prayer for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula."
- 5. As has happened since 1988, both the NCCK of the South and the Korean Christian Federation of the North worked together to prepare the Joint Community Prayer for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula, and the Reconciliation and Reunification Committee of the NCCK drafted this ceremony in the hopes that each church of WCC could apply it in reference to their own situation.

## 2015 Sunday Prayer Worship for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula

Liturgist\_ Presider

Invitation to Worship ......Liturgist (Please Stand)

Liturgist: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

### Congregation: And also with you.

Liturgist: The God who created the heavens and the earth, the mountains and rivers, the fields and valleys; the God who set the boundaries of the universe long before nations created arbitrary borders, has come before us to this place. Let us worship our God with humility and reverence.

Congregation: Amen.



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Liturgist: God, who blesses our differences and calls us to peace and reunification! May the will of God be accomplished on this earth, your justice established, and may this divided Korean peninsula become one!

Congregation: God of the Holy Trinity, please be with us.

Sounding of the Gong (3 strikes to signify the presence of the Triune God – a bell may be substituted)

(Please be seated)

(Divide the congregation into groups 1 & 2 [such as dividing down the middle so that one side is Group 1 and the other is Group 2], to represent the division of the Korean peninsula; end with all speaking in one voice for the Proclamation of Forgiveness, representing a unified Korean peninsula)

Liturgist: God of grace, have mercy on us. We have failed to follow your commandment of reconciliation. We have replaced your vision and desire for shalom with exclusive ideologies and competing systems that cannot sufficiently preserve either life or land. We find it difficult to admit our imperfections and ask for forgiveness from you. We find it even more difficult to ask for forgiveness from our neighbors, our sisters and brothers. Yet you say that we must be reconciled with each other before we can truly worship you. We all must affirm that we need God's grace equally. Let us confess our sins against God and against each other.

Group 1: We confess to you, our sisters and brothers, that we have sought our own interests over and above your liberty and well-being. We confess to God that we have placed our own national interests above our faith in God as Lord of all nations. God, have mercy on us. Brothers and sisters, have mercy on us.

Group 2: We confess to you, our brothers and sisters, that we have maintained a false image of you. We have used this image to more easily dehumanize and attack you. We have made our victory over you into an idol that we worship more earnestly than God. God, have mercy on us. Sisters and brothers, have mercy on us.

Liturgist: God, hear our prayers. Amen



Friends, believe the Good News. God exhibits a grace far beyond our capacity for sin. We have repented, and God has granted forgiveness. Let us follow God's example and respond with grace to each other as well. Amen

Hymn of Praise ...... Unto Hearts in deep Night Pining ..... All Together



## The Word

Today's Prayer ·····	Leader
Scripture ······	Leader

Word of the Old Testament ····· "Genesis 33:1-12"

- 1. Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants.
- 2. He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear.
- 3. He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.
- 4. But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.
- 5. Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant."
- 6. Then the female servants and their children approached and bowed down.
- 7. Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.
- 8. Esau asked, "What's the meaning of all these flocks and herds I met?" "To find favor in your eyes, my lord," Jacob said.
- 9. But Esau said, "I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself."
- 10. "No, please!" said Jacob. "If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably.
- 11. Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need." And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.
- 12. Then Esau said, "Let us be on our way; I'll accompany you."

(Please stand)

## Word of the Gospel ..... "Matthew 5:21-24"

- 21. "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'
- 22. But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,'\* is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.
- 23. "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you,
- 24. leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

(Please be seated)

Sermon ······ "The Footsteps to Reconciliation" ····· Presider

## Thanksgiving and Response

Joint Prayer for the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula ...... All Together

Lord who oversees our history!

This year, we face the 70th anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japan. On the day when we passed beyond the bitter persecution of the Japanese colonial era, our people sang a song of liberation. The song from our deep hearts flowed down like a stream of tears from everywhere South/North, North/South, Pyongyang/Seoul and Seoul/Pyongyang. Today, the roar of that day echoes through our hearts, however, we have been living with as much hatred as in the Japanese colonial era with our hostile divided state. Oh Lord have mercy on us!

### Lord of Comfort!

It's been 70 years since we were divided. Although the Jews, who were taken captive to Babylon, returned to their home freely as prophesied; we are living without embracing the hope of Reunification that we had expected would come soon. Now all land routes, railroads and seaways are blocked despite having traveled them more freely under Japanese colonial era. We live in nothing but an unfree situation in which bugs, animals, seeds, and the fruit of trees also are confined in South and North / North and South. Oh Lord, let the liberation of that day live in our hearts again. Let us prepare our song in a chorus of reunification from all over the world.

#### Lord of Peace!

Like the unchanging sky and land, strong nations surrounding this land have been continually pressuring us, the same as it had ever been, for 70 years. We, sometimes, expected them to

come in the role of a mediator of peace, however, militarily and economically they have considered their own advantage first. Recently a military alliance between the US and Japan has been strengthened, and an alliance between China and Russia has stabilized. They fan the flame of crisis by perpetually competing in an arms race by promoting exclusive military cooperation agreements. The way that our people can survive by ourselves is to hold exchanges, to communicate with each other, and to be reconciled, cooperating together; however, we are foolishly reinforcing our dividing wall even more. Oh Lord, change our minds and help us to repent of our sin.

## Lord of Mercy!

Waiting for 70 years, we hope the complete peace of the Lord will be manifest in this world. We eagerly wish that our history of conflict and fighting which has been recurring for 70 years will soon be over. Brother and sister shared one same blood; our people, who traditionally wore the white garments, expect to recover our high dignity through beautiful union and peaceful reunification in East Asia and the world. We are dreaming that news of reconciliation will ripple through the East Sea and South Sea all around us, and that the news of peace be a great wind gusting out to Eurasia passing over Mt. Baekdu and to the Pacific Ocean passing over Jeju Island. Oh Lord, please fulfill our hopes without fail.

#### Lord who makes one!

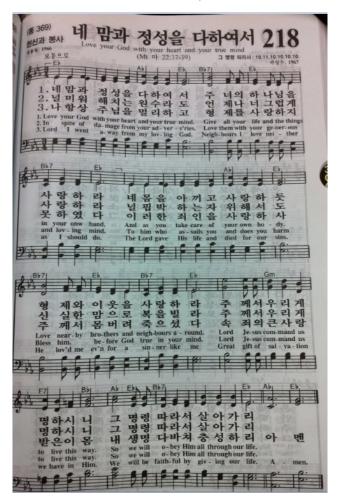
At This moment when South and North / North and South are praying for reunification with one heart, make us into apostles of peace. Just like Jesus' disciples, who became messengers of reconciliation after overcoming all fear, let all of us who were called as Christians be able to fulfill the duties of "the ministry of reconciliation".

We pray in Jesus name, the one who achieved victory over death on the Cross, was resurrected, and gave us eternal life. Amen.

# August 15, 2015 National Council of Churches in Korea Korean Christian Federation Central Committee Intercessory Prayer Presider

- 1. For bringing about a Peace Treaty on the Korean peninsula and for an ending to the military exercises carried out in both South and North...
- 2. For dismantling all the systems that disrupt exchange and cooperation between peoples...
- 3. For the peace of all countries embroiled in conflict (Syria and Iraq, Palestine, Ukraine, etc.), and for the migrants seeking freedom and safety, and finding so often only rejection.

Offering Hymn ········· You Shall Love God, Your Lord ······ All Together



Offering Prayer ······Leader

**Eucharist** 

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Presider: We invite all of those who wish to seek the first step toward reconciliation, to join the

journey of peace, to resemble Jesus as he became the way, the truth and the life in human flesh

by embracing the cross through His love for all people.

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Presider: We praise God with our whole heart and mind.

► Prayer for Communion

Presider: Oh Lord, who became one with the joy of peace, as we stand together participating in

your body and blood; we want to live into God's world of life, peace, and justice. Grant us your

grace in this communion; let our life not be an affront in the eyes of God. Let us embrace the

heart of Jesus by rejecting the vain desires, hatred, and conflict which continue growing inside us.

Let us follow the way of peace with joy.

Together: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your

glory. Hosanna in the highest.

▶ The Sacrament

Presider: On the night he was betrayed, Jesus took bread and gave thanks. He broke the bread

and gave it to his disciples, and said, "This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of

me." After he took the cup and gave thanks, he said to his disciples, "This cup is the new

covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of

me. Drink this cup and share it with everyone."

Congregation: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

▶ Prayer for the Presence of the Holy Spirit

Presider: Holy Spirit God, please consecrate this table by pouring yourself out onto the bread

and wine that is prepared. Also be present in us so that this bread and wine may be for us the

eternal food for life, and when we drink and eat this, please grant us the ability to change the

world by receiving the body of Christ.

Congregation: Maranatha! Lord, come quickly so that it may be done.

► The Lord's Prayer: in your own languages

Distribution

[Please nod your head lightly to express thanks for the bread and wine symbolizing the body

and blood of the Lord before receiving bread and wine.]

Presider: (While breaking the bread) This is the body of Christ.

Congregation: (While they nod) Amen

Co-presider: (Raising the cup) This is the blood of Christ.

Congregation: (While they nod) Amen

▶ Passing of the Peace

Greet each other saying, "The joy of liberation be with you."

► Thanksgiving Prayer after Communion

Oh Lord, who unites us with the joy of liberation, thank you for filling us with life and joy, and

for reconciling our divided selves through this communion. The fellowship you have given us

becomes our hope and promise while still we suffer from deep division between sister to sister,

brother to brother, and neighbor to neighbor.

Lord, give us your Holy Spirit to overflow with the joy of reconciliation amongst our divided

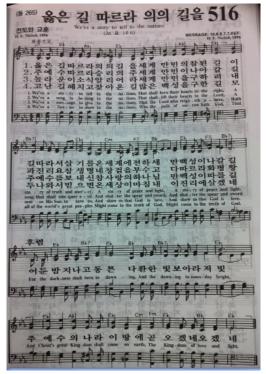
selves, and help us make our nation to overflow with your will; in Jesus Christ, who unites us with

the joy of liberation.

## Sending to the World

(Please stand)

Closing Hymn ······ We've a Story to Tell to the Nations ····· All Together



Benediction ······Presider

## Concluding note from NCCK to our partners:

If you have used this service, we thank you. Please send a brief note to christiecatherine4@gmail.com so that we will have a record. In addition, if you would like to give any suggestions for improvement, NCCK would very much like to hear them.