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### A Prayer for Peace

Carlton R. Young



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This text was included under the title "For Universal Peace" at page 4, no. 2, in Hymns of Intercession for All Mankind, 1758. John Wesley included it in A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists, 1780, at no. 430, in the section "For Believers Interceding for the World" and was retained in the Collection with Supplement, 1831. The hymn first appeared in United States Methodist hymnals at no. 142, in A Collection of Hymns for The Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1821, was retained in reprints of that hymnal until at least 1835, but did not again appear in official hymnals until its inclusion at no. 449, in The United Methodist Hymnal, 1989. The hymn, composed in the de ades of war and rumors of war, may reflect public accounts of fierce pattles, for example, of the killing field of Culloden that took place in April, 1745. The second stanza includes Satanic images from the dept as of Sheol, drawn from Revelation 9:11: "They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit," his name in Hebrew is Abaddon [Destruction], and in Greek he is called Apollyon [Destroyer].

Victor R. Gold and William L. Holladay comment that the images also express the violent death and destruction of the defilers of God in Jeremiah 7:30-34. The most gruesome of Israel's aberrations was the sacrifice of childr (1-(19:5; 32:35)) on the burning platform (Topeth, 2 Kings 23:10), an illicit place of worship in the Valley of Hinnom where children were sacrificed as burnt offerings to the god Baal. Strictly forbidden by God (Lev. 18:21), it will eventually be recognized as murder (Metzger and Murphy, 1991, p. 974). The poet's vast repertory of scriptural metaphor and detail is demonstrated in his reference to Topheth, the sacred place that Jeremiah states will become the burying ground, i.e., the "valley of Slaughter."

The descending/ascending triads, and the canon depict war as a reoccurring event, generation after generation. The second stanza treble voices reflect the vulnerability of women and children who bear the most burden in any war. The congregational stanza reminds us we all participate in war, whose chief aim is to kill and destroy, conversely we can pray/choose not to kill and destroy, "take the murderer from our hearts." Stanza four is a call for the nations in unity to establish the kingdom of peace and perfect love. –C.Y.

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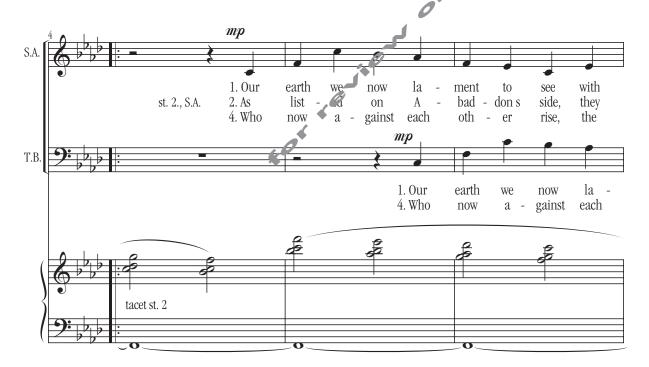
### A Prayer for Peace

Charles Wesley, 1758\*

Carlton R. Young



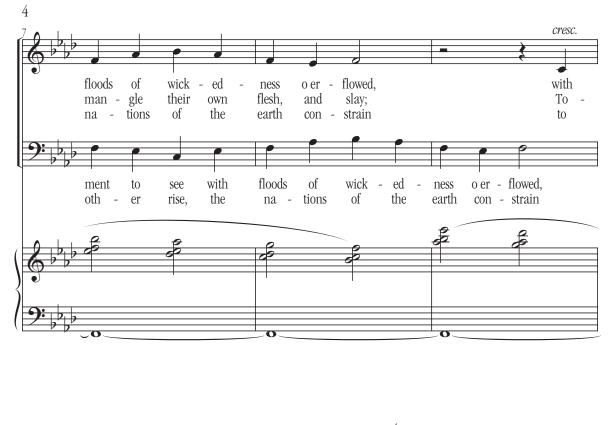
Repeat these three measures as stanza 3 is read. When reading is 1 hished, complete the three measures and continue to stanza 4.

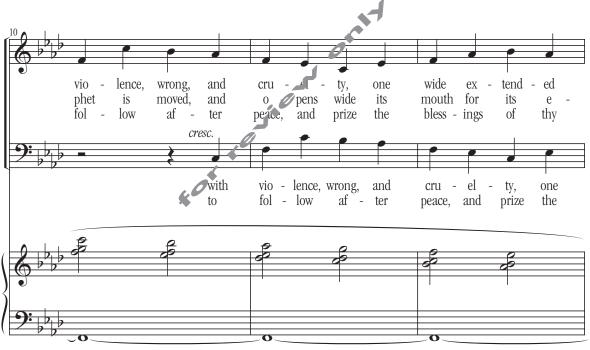


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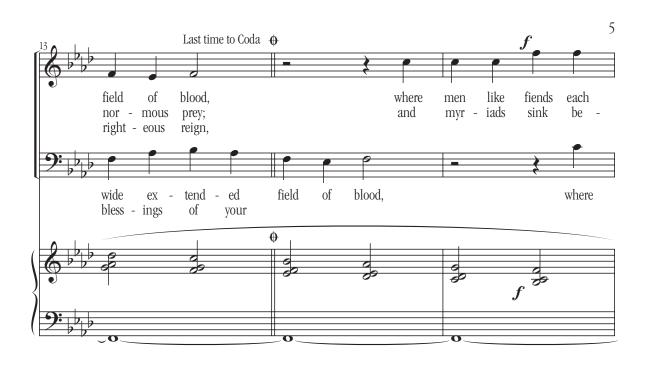
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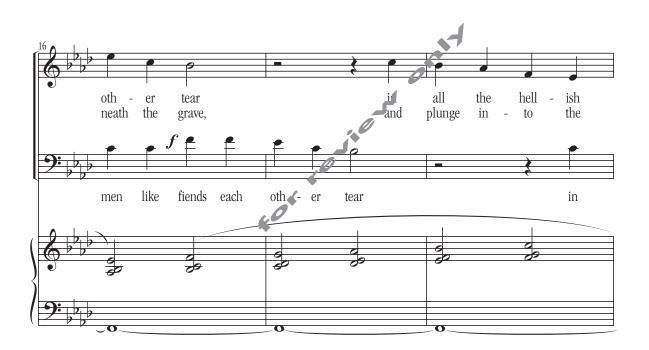
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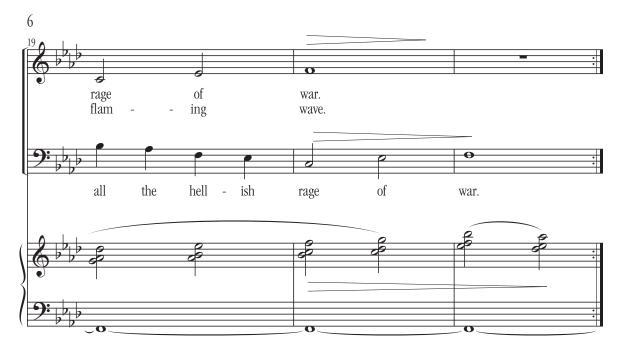
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Stanza 3: Read very slowly as organ plays measures 1-3, See instructions on page 3.

Choir: O might the universal Friend the havoc of his creatures see! All: O might the universal Friend The havoc of his creatures see! Choir: Bid our unnatural discord end, declare us reconciled in thee! All: Bid our unnatural discord end declare us reconciled in thee! Choir: Write kindness on our inward parts and chase the murderer from our hearts! Write kindness on our inward parts All: and chase the murderer from our hearts!



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Our earth we now lament to see with floods of wickedness overflowed, with violence, wrong, and cruelty, one wide extended field of blood, where men like fiends each other tear, in all the hellish rage of war.

As listed on Abaddon's side, they mangle their own flesh, and slay: Tophet is moved, and opens wide its mouth for its enormous prey; and myriads sink beneath the grave, and plunge into the flaming wave.

O might the universal Friend the havoc of his creatures see! Bid our unnatural discord end; declare us reconciled in thee! Write kindness on our inward parts, and chase the murderer from our hearts!

Who now against each other rise, the nations of the earth, constrain to follow after peace, and prize the blessings of thy righteous reign, the jeys of unity to prove, the paradise of perfect love!

-Charles Wesley, 1758.

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