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Mayor's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast 2004

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Interfaith Prayer Book compiled and assembled by,

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*Seventh Annual
Mayor's Interfaith Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast*



Prayers from Faith Communities in the City

*In this world,
beauty and truth can still be found
and the first place to start looking
is in my own self.*

*When I start healing my own heart,
I heal the world...*

*Cathedral Hill Hotel
San Francisco
November 23, 2004*

Seventh Annual Mayor's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast

HEALING A TROUBLED WORLD...

Tuesday, November 23, 2004, 7 a.m.

Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco

Words of Welcome	Rev. James DeLange Chair, San Francisco Interfaith Council
Opening Prayer	Arefa Vohra Islamic Society of San Francisco
Music	San Francisco Girls Chorus
Buffet Breakfast	
Prayers	Fr. Stephen Meriwether Chancellor, Archdiocese of SF and Pastor, Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church
	Sister Chandru Desai Brahma Kumaris Meditation Center
	Rev. Kyle Lovett Pastor, St. John's United Church of Christ
	Dr. Aurelius Walker True Hope Church of God in Christ
	Rabbi Lawrence Raphael Congregation Sherith Israel
	Rev. Hiroshi Abiko Buddhist Church of San Francisco
	Rev. Frances Tornquist Canon Pastor, Grace Cathedral (Episcopal)
Address	Honorable Gavin Newsom, Mayor City and County of San Francisco
Closing Remarks	Rev. James DeLange
Closing Prayer	Rev. Mauricio Chacon Mission Presbyterian Church

SPECIAL THANKS

Brahma Kumaris, Artwork on cover

Alma Lorraine Angeles, Flowers

San Francisco Girls Chorus

SFIC Planning Committee:

Rev. Jim DeLange, SFIC

Rita R. Semel, Congregation Emanu-El

Pat Berberich, St. Dominic's Catholic Church

Arefa Vohra, Islamic Society of San Francisco

SFIC Introductory Statement

spoken before each monthly meeting:

This is an interfaith community. Whatever our individual belief may be, it can be freely expressed here with no apologies. If we are invited to offer a prayer in this setting, it should be offered according to the tradition with which we identify. If we are invited to speak on a subject from the perspective of our tradition, we are free to do so without fear of offending those who come from another tradition. We come together as people of faith to learn from each other that we might better understand the multiplicity of faith traditions in our city and in our world.

'Each generation has its path; each a vision of its own.

Yet each is linked to all; their origin and goal are one.

Our mothers and fathers kindled light:

*To lead us to the day of shining hope,
with mercy our companion along the way.*

A life unmarred by hate and war;

A time of steadfast love, our journey's end!

Homage to the faithful who came before us;

And blessed the light that is ours to kindle!

Honor to the generations of Israel, our people!

All honor to those who illumine our paths!

בָּרְנוּ לַחַיִּים, מֶלֶךְ חַפֵּץ בַּחַיִּים, וְכַתְּבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר
חַיִּים, לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים. מֶלֶךְ עוֹר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ
עָוֹן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, מִן אַבְרָהָם.

*Submitted by: Rita R. Semel, Congregation Emanu-El
From the book: Gates of Repentance*

Dear God,

It is easy for us to come to you today, reveling in the abundance of the world, the gifts of community and worship and prayer.

But it is not always easy.

There are days when it's dark and cold and we feel huddled and lonely...

When we can't find the green pastures and still waters you promised...

When the world is stormy and cruel...

When people die and wars rage and hatred divides...

What about the world that is still broken?

God, there is no pain in our hearts or in our planet that you do not know. Your very breath colors the wind and blows with comfort and compassion.

There is no place that cannot be touched by your resurrection presence. Send your healing love into this world.

Bring refreshment to the weary, confidence to the discouraged, and comfort to the hurting. Invigorate us, inspire us, enable us to translate our celebrations into service; our hopes into hopeful actions; inner peace into peacemaking; holiday singing into constant caring.

Fill us anew with your Spirit, send us forth as true and faithful disciples, abounding in the hope of new life and the joy of full healing. Give us your blessing, O God of all creation.

Amen

The Rev. Keenan Colton Kelsey
Noe Valley Ministry Presbyterian Church

Prayer For Total Freedom

May the author
of the universe enable all men
to reach an understanding
of their spiritual nature.

May awareness and
understanding of life expand,
so that all may come to know
the author of the universe.

And may others also
reach this understanding
which brings Total Freedom.

At this time, we think of those
whose liberty is threatened;
of those who have suffered
imprisonment for their beliefs;
of those who are enslaved
or martyred, and for all those
who are brutalized, trapped
or attacked.

We pray that human rights
will be preserved
so that all people may believe
and worship freely,
so that freedom
will once again
be seen in our land.

Freedom from war,
and poverty, and want;
freedom to be;
freedom to do
and freedom to have.

Freedom to use and
understand man's potential-
a potential that is God-given
and Godlike.

And freedom to achieve
that understanding
and awareness that is
Total Freedom.

May God let it be so.

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Submitted by: Timothy Baxter, Church of Scientology

"Our God, our Creator, our Sustainer and our Maintainer, who possesses Love, Compassion and Mercy bring peace to your people by showing us how to love our enemies. Do not lay on us a burden greater than our capacity to bear. Open our hearts and minds, so that all humanity, strives to develop your attributes that You ingrained in us when you made us in your image. Teach us how to Love and Care, for each other in times of pain, suffering and illness. Give us courage to embrace our enemies, forgive them, and help us to reconcile with them. Let patience, perseverance and prayer be our means of reaching your highest ideals.

Our Lord, forgive all those who have erred intentionally or unintentionally. Give us the wisdom and compassion to undo the damage that we have done to our fellow human beings and to our mother earth that sustains all humanity. Create in us a sense of family – of and sisterhood and brotherhood with those people whom we have never met or known. Let not the unknown to us be the cause of distrust or injustice to anyone.

Educate us in the highest ideals of justice, where we can uphold each other's rights and stand up for justice, even if we are to be witnesses against ourselves, our children and against our parents. Let not nationalism of one nation be the cause of injustice to any nation. Give us the courage, to stand up for righteousness, with the people, who are rich and powerful who possess a compassionate and loving heart to work for the poor, the destitute, the hungry and the homeless of not only this country but of any people living in any part of this world. Give us family values and a sense of responsibility to fight the crimes and drug abuse that is rampaging our youths and neighborhoods.

Give spiritual guidance and blessings to our elected officials – in the city of San Francisco. Bless this country and its people who live as, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and people of other faiths and no faiths. Our Lord, show us how to work for the common good of all humanity and give us the wisdom - to maintain peace and tranquility for the people of this great city and this great nation. Amen.

In God We Trust

*Iftekhar A. Hai & Souleiman Ghali
UMA Interfaith Alliance &
Islamic Society of San Francisco*

Prayer For Youth & Children

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; and give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

為青年和兒童禱告

上帝我們的天父，親眼看見主的兒女們在這混亂不安的世界中成長：求主使他們得見主的道路，比世界的道路能給他們更豐富的生命，跟從主更甚於追求自私的目標。求主幫助他們，不將失敗看作他們價值的衡量，而是重新開始的機會。賜他們力量持守他們對主的信心，保守他們，在主的造化中喜樂而富有朝氣；又求主賜我們安詳的力量和忍耐的智慧，我們就能撫養兒女，使他們愛慕一切至聖美善的事，效法我們救主耶穌基督的榜樣。這都是靠著我們的主耶穌基督。阿們。

This Prayer is submitted by The Chinese Christian Union of San Francisco

A PRAYER FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

O God of our creation, we come to you in humble prayer, asking for your help.

We ask for your help to end the violence in a part of your world where many believe your truth was revealed. It is a place that is sacred to us as it is to the people who now live there. As we ask this, we acknowledge our own violent past. Our European forebearers in the name of national pride routinely mounted wars - killing innocent people, destroying homes and property. Our Asian and African forebearers brought war, famine and destruction upon people over many generations. Our American forebearers removed whole nations of Native Peoples and enslaved Africans solely on the basis of their color. Our nation still bears the scars of civil war, reconstruction, and segregation. Our own generation has participated in the wholesale destruction of peoples and lands in the name of protecting our borders from communism and terrorism.

But you, O God, have always raised up individuals who have shown us a better way. Thanks to these peacemakers, much of Europe is at peace; war and famine no longer plague China, Japan and the sub-continent of Asia. The terrible sword of justice has not always been served, but your people are alive and their children live in peace.

Grant, O God, to the people of Israel and Palestine, peace. Raise up from among Arab and Jew and among us, men and women who will be peacemakers. Strengthen their resolve to see fulfilled in our time, all hopes for peace so long deferred. Keep them on the stony, long, and lonely road that leads to peace.

Fill their hearts with courage that they not give in to bitterness and self-pity. May they think for peace, struggle for peace, suffer for peace. So may we all run and not grow weary, walk and not faint, until that day when by thy grace faith and hope will be outdistanced by sight and possession, and peace will be all in all in this wonderful, terrible, beautiful world. Amen.

Rev. James DeLange
St. Francis Lutheran Church (retired)
Chair, San Francisco Interfaith Council

The World Peace Prayer

Lead me from Death to Life
Lead me from Despair to Hope, from Fear to Trust
Lead me from Hate to Love, from War to Peace
Let peace fill our Hearts, our World, our Universe

Prayers written by Macrina Wiederkehr **(from "Soul Weavings")**

It seems to me Lord, that we search much too desperately for answers. You are the Great Questioner. Keep our questions alive, that we may always be seekers rather than settlers. Guard us well from the sin of settling in with our answers hugged to our breasts. Make of us a wondering, far-sighted, questioning, restless people. And give us the feet of pilgrims on this journey unfinished.

O God, help me to believe the truth about myself...no matter how beautiful it is!

Submitted by: Lois Peacock, Zion Lutheran Church

Infinite Gratitude

Dear Tenchi Kane No Kami, the Principle Parent of the Universe.
We would like to express our infinite gratitude to you for the limitless
blessings we receive for all the functions of the earth and universe.

We acknowledge the ways of nature and realize
Your unconditional love and compassion.

We thank you for the bright sun that provides us warmth and light.
We thank you for Mother Earth's unity within our universe
That allows and sustains all life equally, as one family under the sun.

With the great support from our parents and ancestors,
we are allowed to partake in the miracle of life itself.

We express our infinite gratitude for all our physical functions.
We especially appreciate the great workings of our heart,
which continues to beat even when we are unaware and deeply asleep.
We also appreciate our arms and legs, which allow us to move about freely,
while working together with all the other parts of our body.

Yet, even though we have received so many blessings and favors
from the great universe, we may still be taking things for granted.
In the past, and present, we may have caused troubles for others unknowingly.
Please forgive us and purify our body, mind and spirit so that we can embrace
a life of new hope and have good dreams for our future world.

We respect all spiritual leaders, faith traditions and different cultures in the
world.

Let us draw on their great wisdom, and universal understanding,
so that we may build a truly peaceful world.

Let us go beyond our borders with a heart of patience, humbleness and deep
compassion

so that we can accomplish our important tasks for our future generations.

With a grateful heart, let us express "Thank you, Arigato gozaimasu"
To the blessings we have received, to all people and to our own mind, spirit and
body
now and always.

By Rev. Masato Kawahatsu
Senior Minister of Konko Church of San Francisco

Bahá'í Prayer for Humanity

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the
same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same
household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and
all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have
gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined
through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost
shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each
and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the
Ocean of Thy Mercy.

O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make
the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family
and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in
perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.

O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.

Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.

O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the
fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of
Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word,
and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and
Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all
mankind

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 100
Submitted by Charleen Maghzi

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