

Gatherings in Conflict or Crisis

This is a draft of materials prepared for the interreligious events section of the forthcoming edition of the Book of Common Worship (WJKP, 2018).

The following suggestions are offered to assist in planning an interreligious or community gathering in a time of conflict or crisis. These ideas might also be adapted for ecumenical services.

An interreligious gathering of in a time of conflict or crisis might include some of these elements:

- a greeting from one or more of the planners or leaders for the event (particularly from a representative of the group hosting the gathering), relating events that have taken place and explaining the reason for the gathering
- a call to prayer, opening song, symbol of presence, or practice of gathering from one or more of the groups participating in the event
- the reading of sacred or significant texts from each of the traditions represented, related to themes of justice, reconciliation, or peace
- a brief reflection, dialogue, or discussion related to the event that has taken place or other important themes of the day
- a time of silence or other open space, allowing for prayer or meditation by all participants
- musical selections (vocal or instrumental) related to justice, reconciliation, peace, or other appropriate themes
- the collection of material goods or financial contributions to benefit a mutually agreed-upon organization
- prayers or appropriate symbolic actions (such as the lighting of candles) from one or more of the participating groups
- blessings or other closing words from one or more of the leaders of the event
- an opportunity for those gathered to greet one another with gestures of peace and goodwill
- a presentation on an issue of common concern, a time for sharing information, an open forum for discussion, or an opportunity for collective action