

Congregational Song in Times of Tragedy

Compiled by Rev. Anita Thompson, First Baptist Church of Ahoakie, 6/15/16

1. To a Place of Celebration

A hymn after the mass killings in Orlando

To a place of celebration filled with laughter, dancing, joy,
Came such violent devastation — one man's efforts to destroy.
God, we grieve for loved ones taken; we lament, "What can we do?"
Now, we're feeling lost and shaken; heal our nation! Make us new!

Weapons kill — and so does silence; hear our prayer as we confess:
We have given in to violence, we have bowed to hopelessness.
God, we've lost our sense of vision of a world where there will be
Plowshares made from violent weapons, justice in society.

Give our leaders strength for action, give them minds to mend our flaws,
Give them courage and compassion, and the will to change our laws.
May we work for legislation that will curb guns' awful toll.
God, renew our dedication to a world that's just and whole.

Give us love to change our vision; give us love to cast out fear.
Give us love to speak with wisdom — love to work for justice here.
Give us love to welcome difference — love no hatred can destroy.
Only love can stop the violence; only love will bring back joy.

Biblical References: Isaiah 4:2; 1 John 4:18; James 3:1-12; Micah 6:8; Matthew 25:35

Tune: Thomas John Williams, 1890 ("Why Do Nations Rage Together") ([MIDI](#))

Alternate tune: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, 1844; attributed to Benjamin Franklin White ("God Whose Giving Knows No Ending") ([MIDI](#))

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EBENEZER 8.7.8.7 D ("Why Do Nations Rage Together")

2. God of Mercy, You Have Shown Us

God of mercy, You have shown us ways of living that are good:
Work for justice, treasure kindness, humbly journey with the Lord.
Yet Your people here are grieving, hurt by weapons that destroy.
Help us turn to You, believing in Your way that brings us joy.

God, we pray for those who suffer when this world seems so unfair;
May your church be quick to offer loving comfort, gentle care.
And we pray: Amid the violence, may we speak your truth, O Lord!
Give us strength to break the silence, saying, "This can be no more!"

Biblical References: Micah 6:8; Luke 1:79; Romans 12:15; 1 John 4:16-21; Matthew 5:9
Tune: *The Sacred Harp*, 1844; attributed to Benjamin Franklin White ("God Whose Giving Knows No Ending") ([MIDI](#))

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BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D ("God Whose Giving Knows No Ending")

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3. Peace of Our Praying

Peace of our praying, song of our singing,
Truth of our telling, Love of all loves,
Health of our healing, gift of our giving,
Life of our living, Light of all lights.

Peace of our praying, Christ of our crying,
Strength of our striving, heart of our heart,
Bread of our breaking, wine of our waiting,
Blood of our boasting, death of all death.

Peace of our praying, faith of forgiving,
Way of our walking, King of all kings,
Breath of our breathing, courage of caring,
Hope of our hoping, Life of all life.

Words: Terry W. York (Baylor University)

Music: C. David Bolin

Meter: 55.54 D

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Anita's Source: Worship & Song, @2011 by Abingdon Press (United Methodist); #3022

4. Let Our Earth Be Peaceful

Let our earth be peaceful, let our hearts be hopeful,
Let our hands be gentle for the love of God.

Let our ways be mindful, mending what is hurtful,
Doing what is needful for the love of God.
Let our lives be fruitful, beautiful and playful,
Every day be thankful for the love of God.

Words: Shirley Erena Murray

Music: Carlton R. Young

Meter: 66.65

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Anita's Source: Worship & Song, @2011 by Abingdon Press (United Methodist); #3159

5. In Christ Alone

In Christ alone my hope is found;
He is my light, my strength, my song.
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease.
My Comforter, my all in all,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save,
Till on that cross, as Jesus died,
The love of God was magnified,
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain.
Then bursting forth in glorious day,
Up from the grave He rose again.
And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine,
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me.
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no human plan
Can ever pluck me from His hand,
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Words & Music: Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

Meter: LMD

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Anita's Source: Celebrating Grace Hymnal, #569

6. In Deepest Night

In deepest night, in darkest days,
When harps are hung, no songs we raise,
When silence must suffice as praise,
Yet sounding in us quietly
There is the song of God.

When friend was lost, when love deceived,
Dear Jesus wept, God was bereaved;
So with us in our grief God grieves,
And round about us mournfully
There are the tears of God.

When through the waters winds our path,
Around us pain, around us death:
Deep calls to deep, a saving breath,
And found beside us faithfully
There is the love of God.

Words: Susan Palo Cherwien

Music: David Schwoebel

Tune: ROSE MARY

Meter: 8.8.8.8.6

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Anita's Source: Celebrating Grace Hymnal #70

7. O Day of Peace

O day of peace that dimly shines through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
Guide us to justice, truth and love, delivered from our selfish schemes.

May swords of hate fall from our hands, our hearts from envy find release,
Till by God's grace our warring world shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the fierce devour the small;
As beast and cattle calmly grace, a little child shall lead them all.

Then enemies shall learn to love, all creatures find their true accord;
The hope of peace shall be fulfilled, for all the earth will know the Lord.

Words: Carl P. Daw, Jr.

Tune: GIFT OF LOVE

Meter: Im

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Anita's Source: Upper Room Worship Book, #140

8. We Lay Our Broken World

We lay our broken world in sorrow at Your feet,
Haunted by hunger, war, and fear, oppressed by pow'r and hate.
Here human life seems less than profit, might, and pride,
Though to unite us all in You, You lived and loved and died.

We bring our broken towns our neighbors hurt and bruised;
You show us how old pain and wounds for new life can be used.
We bring our broken loves, friends parted, fam'lies torn;
Then in Your life and death we see that love must be re-born.

We bring our broken selves, confused and closed and tired;
Then through Your gift of healing grace new purpose is inspired.
O Spirit, on us breathe, with life and strength anew;
Find in us love, and hope, and trust, and lift us up to You.

Words: Anna Briggs

Tune: GIFT OF LOVE

Meter: 6.6.8.6 D

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Anita's Source: Upper Room Worship Book, #156

9. I Will Come to You in the Silence

I will come to you in the silence,
I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear My voice, I claim you as My choice.
Be still, and know I am near

Refrain:

Do not be afraid, I am with you.

I have called you each by name.

Come and follow Me, I will bring you home;

I love you and you are mine.

I am strength for all the despairing
Healing for the ones who dwell in shame
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free
And all will know My name

I am hope for all who are hopeless,
I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light.
Come and rest in Me.

I am strength for all the despairing,
Healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free,
And all will know My name.

I am the Word that leads all to freedom,
I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name, embracing all your pain.
Stand up, now walk, and live.

Words: David Haas
Tune: YOU ARE MINE
Meter: Irregular with Refrain
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Anita's Source: Upper Room Worship Book, #158

10. Go to the World!

Go to the world! Go into all the earth;
Go preach the cross where Christ renews life's worth,
Baptizing as the sign of our rebirth. Alleluia.

Go to the world! Go into every place;
Go live the word of God's redeeming grace;
Go seek God's presence in each time and space. Alleluia.

Go to the world! Go struggle, bless, and pray;
The nights of tears give way to joyful day.
As servant Church, you follow Christ's own way. Alleluia.

Go to the World! Go as the ones I send,
For I am with you till the age shall end,
When all the host of glory cry, "Amen." Alleluia

Words: Sylvia Dunstan
Music: Charles Villiers Stanford
Tune: ENGELBERG
Meter: 10.10.10 w/Alleluia
Copyright: 1991 GIA Publications.
Anita's Source: Upper Room Worship Book, #294

11. Healer of Our Every Ill

Refrain:

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
Give us peace beyond our fear and hope beyond our sorrow.

You who know our fears and sadness,
Grace us with Your peace and gladness.
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts.

In the pain and joy beholding,
How Your grace is still unfolding.
Give us all Your vision, God of love.

Give us strength to love each other,
Every sister, every brother.
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide.

You who know each thought and feeling,
Teach us all your way of healing.
Spirit of compassion, fill each heart.

Words & Music: Marty Haugen

Tune: HEALER

Meter: Irregular

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Anita's Source: Upper Room Worship Book, #205

12. O Praise the Gracious Power

O praise the gracious power that tumbles walls of fear
And gathers in one house of faith all strangers far and near:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

O praise persistent truth that opens fisted minds,
And eases from their anxious clutch the prejudice that blinds:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

O praise inclusive love, encircling every race,
Oblivious to gender, wealth, to social rank or place:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

O praise the word of faith that claims us as God's own,
A living temple built on Christ, our Rock and Cornerstone:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

O praise the tide of grace that laps at every shore
With visions of a world at peace, no longer bled by war:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

O praise the power, the truth, the love, the Word, the tide;
Yet more than these, O praise their source: praise Christ, the crucified:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

O praise the living Christ with faith's bright songful voice!
Announce the gospel to the world, and with these words rejoice:
We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

Words: Thomas H. Troeger
Music: Carol Doran
Tune: ENGELBERG
Meter: SM w/refrain
Copyright: 1994 Oxford University Press
Anita's Source: Upper Room Worship Book, #35

13. God, We Have Heard It

God, we have heard it, sounding in the silence:
News of the children lost to this world's violence.
Children of promise! Then without a warning,
Loved ones are mourning.

Jesus, You came to bear our human sorrow;
You came to give us hope for each tomorrow.
You are our life, Lord God's own love revealing.
We need Your healing!

Heal us from giving weapons any glory;
Help us, O Prince of Peace, to hear Your story;
Help us resist the evil all around here;
May love abound here!

By your own Spirit, give Your church a clear voice;
In this world's violence, help us make a new choice.
Help us to witness to the joy Your peace brings,
Until your world sings!

Tune: Johann Crüger (or Crueger), 1640 ("Ah, Holy Jesus") ([MIDI](#))

HERZLIEBSTER JESU 11.11.11.5 ("Ah, Holy Jesus")

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