

SONGS TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD

PEACEMAKING, GLOBAL AWARENESS, & ACTION

*Text and/or Music for all songs written and recorded by
Linda K. Williams*

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SECULAR versions recorded, songs 1-9; religious lyrics for most are available upon request

1. Seeds of Peace (2:13)
2. Can't You Just Picture It?---World Peace! (2:05)
3. My Little Apple Tree: A Song of Hope (1:21)
4. Live in Peace (2:23)
5. The Time for Peace Has Come (3:07)
6. Open Hands, Hearts, and Minds (3:00)
7. Think Globally (1:47)
8. Face to Face, Side by Side (2:51)
9. Fight for Humanity (4:19)

RELIGIOUS versions recorded, songs 10-16; secular lyrics for most are available upon request

10. Pay 'Em Back With a Blessing (4:40)
11. I Believe in Peace (1:49)
12. Universal Peace Prayer (2:00)
13. Work and Pray for Peace (3:40)
14. From Heart to World (3:45)
15. Unity, Not Uniformity (1:40)
16. Isn't There a Better Way, Mommy, Daddy? (2:35)

♪1. SEEDS OF PEACE ♪

CHORUS

We are sowing the seeds of peace
each time we show love and caring;
each word and deed that we choose through the day
can leave seeds of peace as we go on our way.

(1)

We'll sow seeds of self-esteem and respect---
we can't love our neighbor without them---
extending that caring to others around,
as ripples of peace spread with love that we send.

CHORUS

We are sowing the seeds of peace
each time we show love and caring;
each word and deed that we choose through the day
can leave seeds of peace as we go on our way.

(2)

We'll work together for better ways
than gangs and drugs and violence.
Our efforts will help bring a great new day
when families and cities are healthy and safe!

CHORUS

We are sowing the seeds of peace
each time we show love and caring;
each word and deed that we choose through the day
can leave seeds of peace as we go on our way.

ADDITIONAL/ALTERNATE CHORUS

We are sowing the seeds of peace,
peace in ourselves and with others;
our seeds will take root, and blossom and grow
to help heal this world we're all sharing.

Tune is a traditional Irish folksong, "The Gypsy Laddie"
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♪2. CAN'T YOU JUST PICTURE IT?---WORLD PEACE! ♪

CHORUS

World peace...I'm singing about
Peace for our planet!
We need peace for all people!
Yes, peace and justice for all!

1.

Can't you just picture it?---World peace!
Can't you just see it?---Peace for our planet!
Can't you just imagine it?---Peace for all people!
---Yes, peace and justice for all!

(CHORUS)

2.

Yes, I can just picture it---World peace!
I see it clearly in my mind---Peace for our planet!
Let me tell you 'bout my picture of peace for all people!
---Yes, peace and justice for all!

3.

I can see people hand in hand---World peace!
People talking out their problems---Peace for our planet!
Helping each other---Peace for all people!
---Yes, peace and justice for all!

(CHORUS)

4.

What's in your picture of world peace?
How do you see peace for our planet?
What's your vision look like of peace for all people?
---Yes, peace and justice for all!

5. (instrumental music/ humming on tape; singers add own lines)

_____ ---World peace!
_____ ---Peace for our planet!
_____ ---Peace for all people!

---Yes, peace and justice for all!

(Repeat verses 4 and 5 as desired for additional contributions from singers; eliciting ideas before singing is helpful.)

CHORUS

World peace...I'm singing about
Peace for our planet!
We need peace for all people!
Yes, peace and justice for all,
 peace and justice for all,
 peace and justice for all!

♪ 3. MY LITTLE APPLE TREE ♫
(A SONG OF HOPE)

Words by Martin Luther

English:

Even if I knew
that tomorrow the world were supposed to end,
I would plant, anyway,
my little apple tree today.

German:

Und wenn ich auch wüßte
daß morgen die Welt unterginge,
so würde ich doch heute
mein Apfelbäumlein pflanzen.

Repeat English:

Even if I knew
that tomorrow the world were supposed to end,
I would plant, anyway,
my little apple tree today.

MUSIC:

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♫ 4. *LIVE IN PEACE* ♫

- (1) Live in peace, live in peace, let's live in peace!
Live in peace, live in peace, let's live in peace!**
- (2) We were meant to live in peace. We were meant to live in peace.
We were meant to live in peace. We were meant to live in peace.**
- (3) Let's celebrate our oneness; let's celebrate our oneness!
Let's celebrate our oneness; let's celebrate our oneness!**
- (4) Beat swords into plowshares; beat swords into plowshares!
Beat swords into plowshares; beat swords into plowshares!**
- (5) Let's love our enemies, love our enemies,
love our enemies, love our enemies!**
- (6) May we be instruments of God's peace, may we be instruments of God's peace!
May we be instruments of God's peace, may we be instruments of God's peace!**

Text: Copyright 1992 by Linda K. Williams
Music: Liberian folk song "Banuwa"

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♪5. THE TIME FOR PEACE HAS COME ♪

1

**The time for peace has come, for healing at last.
Let former foes find common ground, put time-worn hatred past!
So many precious lives, forever stilled---
Now let all hearts and minds with harmony be now and always filled!**

We were meant to live in peace.

2

**The time for peace has come, to open our eyes,
and see our true kinship with all of humankind---
to celebrate all that which makes us one,
and magnify the good which lies in each one's heart;
true vict'ry will then be won!**

We were meant to live in peace.

3

**May strength and courage abundant be given to all
who work for reason and understanding; may all heed the call
to cherish each life, and live in sympathy,
to plan for a bright future with confidence, for every race and creed.**

We were meant to live in peace.

**Lyrics copyright 1996 by Linda K. Williams
Music by Johannes Brahms: "The White Dove"**

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6. OPEN HANDS, MINDS, and HEARTS

1

Oh, I can't shake hands with a closed fist;
no, I can't shake hands with a closed fist!
It takes an open hand, and an open mind, and an open heart
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

CHOOSE HOW TO FILL THE BLANKS

* all kinds of people
* everybody at _____(school name)
* everybody in our...

family
class
school
city
country
world

2

Oh, I can't learn much with a closed mind;
no, I can't learn much with a closed mind!
It takes an open hand, and an open mind, and an open heart
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

3

Oh, I can't love much with a closed heart;
no, I can't love much with a closed heart!
It takes an open hand, and an open mind, and an open heart
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

4

So I'll open up my hand and help peace grow,
Yes, I'll open up my hand and help peace grow!
It takes an open hand, and an open mind, and an open heart
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

5

And I'll open up my mind and help peace grow,
Yes, I'll open up my mind and help peace grow!
It takes an open hand, and an open mind, and an open heart
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

6

And I'll open up my heart and help peace grow,
Yes, I'll open up my heart and help peace grow!
It takes an open hand, and an open mind, and an open heart
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

7

Let's all open up our hands and help peace grow,
Let's all open up our hands and help peace grow!
It takes our open hands, and our open minds, and our open hearts
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

8

Let's all open up our minds and help peace grow,
Let's all open up our minds and help peace grow!
It takes our open hands, and our open minds, and our open hearts
for * _____ to get along together in peace!

9

Let's all open up our hearts and help peace grow,
Let's all open up our hearts and help peace grow!
It takes our open hands, and our open minds, and our open hearts
for * _____ to get along together in peace...let's get along in peace!!

7. THINK GLOBALLY

(1)

There's a great big world out there;
We've got to show that we care. (repeat)

(2)

So we'll think globally
and act out our caring thoughts. (repeat, omitting the "So we'll" on the repetition)

(3)

No one can do everything,
But each one can do something! (repeat)

(4)

Each one of us must do our part
to help this world that we all share. (repeat)

ZIPPER PORTION

(A)

What are you going to do
to make our world a better place? (repeat)

(B)

I'm going to * _____
to make our world a better place! (repeat)

(C)

That will surely help
to make our world a better place! (repeat)

PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS:

* the "Zipper Portion" can be repeated as desired to include additional ideas from singers.
Elicit possibilities ahead of time, and, if possible, have them written where singers can see them.

* Each verse can be done 4 times through, in the following manner:

1st, sing with first melody on tape (perhaps with half of group)

2nd, repeat first melody in a call-and-response fashion, or with other half of group

3rd, sing with second melody on tape

4th, repeat with second melody

* Numerous percussion instruments and/or body percussion would be very effective.
I hear this with steel drums; Jamaican/ calypso beat.

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♪ 8. FACE TO FACE, SIDE BY SIDE ♪

CHORUS

First face to face, now side by side,
In peace we can abide,
For together we'll stand,
and we'll work hand in hand
and we'll bring about the birth of a new day.

First face to face, now side by side,
Yes, in peace we must abide,
So together we'll stand,
and we'll work hand in hand
and we'll bring about the birth of a new day.

(1)

And that new day will have a foundation
of human rights, the whole world around;
for true peace will only come when there's dignity and justice
for each member of our human family.

CHORUS

(2)

We've been on opposite sides for a while now,
But we're finally waking up to the truth
That our differences, many though they still may be,
are far fewer than the common goals we share.

CHORUS

(3)

Instead of fighting over what makes us different,
We must fight together for our world;
Land and air, and the seas, all the animals and trees---
they need our protection and care.

CHORUS (with optional added ending, if desired:)

Yes, we'll bring about the birth
we'll bring about the birth
we'll bring about the birth of a new day!

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♪9. FIGHT FOR HUMANITY ♪

Intro:

Well, there's been a lot of suffering and pain
Caused by wars over the years.
Now, don't you think this world would be a much better place
if we fought together for the good of all?

We could use all our energy and resources, too
to fight against the problems of our world.
So, declare war on people? No, I've got a better plan;
give a listen, then join on in.

(1)

Let's all declare war against hunger!
Let's fight with all our might for food a-plenty for all.

REFRAIN:

Give us wisdom, not a gun, and let's fight till the war is won.
Together let's work and fight for humanity.

(2)

Let's all declare war against poverty!
Let's fight with all our might for abundance for all. REFRAIN

(3)

Let's all declare war against drug abuse!
Let's fight with all our might for healthy bodies and minds. REFRAIN

(4)

Let's all declare war against ignorance!
Let's fight with all our might for education for all. REFRAIN

(5)

Let's all declare war against injustice!
Let's fight with all our might for rights and freedom for all. REFRAIN

(6)

Let's all declare war against prejudice!
Let's fight with all our might for truth and dignity for all. REFRAIN

(7)

Let's all declare war against diseases!
Let's fight with all our might for health and energy for all. REFRAIN

(8)

Let's all declare war against homelessness!
Let's fight with all our might for homes and shelter for all. REFRAIN

(9)

Let's all declare war against war! (Yes, against war!)
Let's fight with all our might for peace and safety for all. REFRAIN

Yes, together let's work and fight for humanity.

IF DESIRED, HAVE SINGERS CREATE THEIR OWN VERSES:

Let's all declare war against _____!
Let's fight with all our might for _____ for all.

REFRAIN:

Give us wisdom, not a gun, and let's fight till the war is won.
Together let's work and fight for humanity.

♪ 10. PAY 'EM BACK WITH A BLESSING! ♪

CHORUS:

I'll pay 'em back with a blessing---do the unexpected!
Pay 'em back with a blessing---catch 'em by surprise!
I'll return good for evil---do the unexpected!
Return good for evil---catch 'em by surprise!
I'll be creative with conflict---do the unexpected!
Be creative with conflict---catch 'em by surprise!
I'll tap into the connection of their humanity,
tap into the connection of their humanity.

(1)

When I'm met with violence, or verbal abuse,
There are so many alternatives I can choose;
I could "fight fire with fire" but we'd both get "burned"
Or do something positive---even "off the wall"---for my turn!

(2)

Sometimes a direct approach is just what I need;
then my conflict management skills serve me well, I see.
But other times we need something very different, indeed.
So my "bag of tricks" gotta hold more ideas than these...

CHORUS

(3)

When someone's coming at me with putdowns or worse,
I've got to keep my cool---think fast on my feet!
When they're pushing my buttons, really in my face,
I'll rise above the level of the negativity!

(4)

So when anger or aggression is what's comin' down,
I'll take the initiative to transform the scene;
I'll be creative, not violent---use my brains, not my brawn.
More "Transforming Initiatives"---that's what our world needs!

(5)

Like, when someone flips me off, I can blow 'em a kiss!
When I'm face to angry stranger's face, I can give 'em my name, and ask for theirs.
When it's violence I am met with, I'll bring forth my best
to connect with the best in my brother---and say a quick prayer!

FINAL CHORUS:

So let's... (REPEAT CHORUS, AND END BY REPEATING THE FINAL 2 LINES):
tap into the connection of their humanity,
tap into the connection!

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Many thanks to Rev. Glenn Smiley and the Church of the Brethren Peace Camp (4-93) participants for inspiration and examples, to Rev. Gene Wenger who used the phrase "Pay 'em back with a blessing" in a sermon (I Peter 3: 9 (Amplified) "Never return evil for evil, or insult for insult---scolding, tongue-lashing, berating; but on the contrary blessing---praying for their welfare, happiness and protection, and truly pitying and loving them."), and to Ken White for introducing me to the term "transforming initiative," from the book Justice Creates Peace by Jürgen Moltmann, in "Love of the Enemy: Transforming Initiatives" (p. 26).

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♪ 11. I BELIEVE IN PEACE ♫

The Witness Commission of the Church of the Brethren's Atlantic Northeast District reflected on the question, "As Brethren, how do we respond to a violence-prone world?" The words of the following song are those of the commission's statement, written by Rev. Mark Herr, who has graciously granted permission to use his words.

CHORUS:

I believe in peace.
And because I believe in peace,
I choose to do the things that make for peace:
Oh yes, I believe in peace!

I'll practice loving-kindness toward all people . . .
live harmlessly as part of all creation . . .
speak on behalf of peace when others are speaking out of fear and hate . . .

CHORUS:

I believe in peace.
And because I believe in peace,
I choose to do the things that make for peace:
Oh yes, I believe in peace!

I'll say 'no' to violence
as a way of settling differences between people. . . .
Through these choices, I choose to let peace on earth begin with me.

CHORUS:

I believe in peace.
And because I believe in peace,
I choose to do the things that make for peace:
Oh yes, I believe in peace!
Yes, I believe in peace!

With God's help, may my actions ever follow my words!

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I BELIEVE IN PEACE (this version not recorded)

CREDITS FOR VERSE 1: The Family Pledge of Nonviolence by the Parenting for Peace and Justice Network, Families Against Violence Network. The song could certainly be sung just with Chorus and Verse 1 (then repeat the Chorus).

CREDITS FOR CHORUS AND VERSES 2 AND 3: The Witness Commission of the Church of the Brethren's Atlantic Northeast District reflected on the question, "As Brethren, how do we respond to a violence-prone world?" The words of the following song are those of the commission's statement, written by Rev. Mark Herr, who has graciously granted permission to use his words.

CHORUS:

I believe in peace.
And because I believe in peace,
I choose to do the things that make for peace:
Oh yes, I believe in peace!

Verse 1 I'll respect myself, and others, too;
I'll communicate better, listen, and forgive;
I'll respect nature, play creatively, and be courageous!

CHORUS:

Verse 2 I'll practice loving-kindness toward all people . . .
live harmlessly as part of all creation . . .
speak on behalf of peace when others are speaking out of fear and hate.

CHORUS

Verse 3 I'll say 'no' to violence
as a way of settling differences between people. . . .
Through these choices, I choose to let peace on earth begin with me.

CHORUS:

I believe in peace.
And because I believe in peace,
I choose to do the things that make for peace:
Oh yes, I believe in peace!
Yes, I believe in peace!

With God's help, may my actions ever follow my words!

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♪ 12. UNIVERSAL PEACE PRAYER ♪

Lead me from hate to love,

Lead me from war to peace;

Let peace fill our hearts,

our world,

our universe.

(repeat with varied harmonies)

Text: slight modifications made to the Universal Peace Prayer, author unknown

Music: © 1996 by Linda K. Williams

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♫ 13. WORK AND PRAY FOR PEACE ♫

We will work for peace, for peace. We will work for peace, for peace.

We will pray for peace. We will pray for peace, for peace.

We will live in peace. We will live in peace, in peace.

Text: © 1996 by Linda K. Williams

Music: Dona Nobis Pacem

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♪ 14. FROM HEART TO WORLD ♪

When there's God's love in the heart,
there will be beauty in the character.
When there is beauty in the character,
there will be harmony in the home.
When there is harmony in the home,
there will be order in the nation.
When there is order in the nation,
there will be peace in the world.

* Sing once, melody only
* Second time through, add one harmony voice
* Third time, full harmony, crescendo and ritard at end

Text: Chinese proverb (modifications by Linda K. Williams)
Music: © 1996 by Linda K. Williams

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15. UNITY, NOT UNIFORMITY

(1)

**We hold in love and fellowship
our brothers and sisters with whom we agree---
and, though it's a challenge, we'll also love
and respect those with whom we disagree!**

(2)

**We will respect diversity,
and won't let it divide us.
We can agree to disagree
with God's grace and love to guide us.**

(3)

**With unity, not uniformity,
we'll seek the mind of Christ,
and pray we'll see how best to show
God's will and love in our lives.**

Words © 1995 by Linda K. Williams

Tune: "Blest be the Tie that Binds" (from Hans G. Nägeli, 1773-1836)

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♫ 16. *ISN'T THERE A BETTER WAY?* ♫

VERSE 1

(CHILD:)

At home, church, and school I learned that the rule is
"Talking, not fighting";
I've seen that it works; yes, that's what it takes
in our small world to get along.

Then I hear on the news that leaders of countries are
fighting, not talking---
that bombs are flying---people dying;
I can't help but ask you---"Why?"

VERSE 2

Oh, isn't there a better way,
Mommy, Daddy?
Why haven't they learned a better way yet
for countries to get along?

Why don't they talk it over?
Why don't they work it out?
People killing people can't be the answer--
It feels so wrong!

VERSE 3

(PARENT:)

Yes, Jesus came to show us God's better way,
my son, my daughter,
We've got to love our enemies, pray for them as well,
overcoming evil with God's love.

(CHILD:)

Then why don't they use the better way,
Mommy, Daddy?
Why don't they use the better way,
so people don't die too young?

VERSE 5

(PARENT:)

We've got to let our leaders know that we know there's
a much better way to solve problems;
We've got to send them letters, call them on the phone,
sign petitions, and take it to the streets!

And when you're old enough to vote, make sure that your vote
speaks for you, as well;
Put people in power who use the better way
So that your children won't have to say...

FINAL CHORUS

"Oh, isn't there a better way,
Mommy, Daddy?
Why haven't they learned a better way yet
for countries to get along?"

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Dedicated with prayer to all whose lives are endangered, military and civilian alike---
and to all children everywhere. January, 1991

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