



Christian Conference of Asia  
Chiang Mai

## Asia Sunday 2013



Photo credit: Internet sources

**God of Life  
Lead us to  
Justice and Peace**

# Asia Sunday 2013

**Theme: God of Life, Lead us to Justice and Peace**

## **Invitation to Celebrate Asia Sunday 2013**

To: CCA Member Churches and Councils  
Ecumenical Partners  
Member of Officers, General Committee and Program Area Committees

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings of Peace,

Traditionally, Asia Sunday is celebrated every year a week before Pentecost to commemorate the birth of CCA. This is an opportunity for us to specially connect, remember and pray for each other as a fellowship of Asian churches linked through CCA in spiritual solidarity. For 2013, the celebration of Asia Sunday falls on May 12, 2013, but local congregations are free to choose any other date suitable to their schedule.

The theme of the 2013 Asia Sunday is *"God of life, lead us to justice and peace."* Through this theme, the Asian churches are welcoming the WCC Assembly to be held in Asia region, namely in Busan, South Korea from October 30 to November 8, 2013. We join the churches around the world to pray to God, the author of life, to lead us all to justice and peace. Today many Asian people and communities around the world are crying for justice and peace out of their experiences of injustice in various aspects of their lives, while the horrors of wars, conflicts, and the culture of vengeance continue to create a senseless cycle of violence, trauma, and grief.

We have observed the growing tensions and escalating conflicts in Asian and global societies which lead to social disintegration. Violence against women, children and marginalized communities has become a daily reality. The threat of nuclear power is inevitable. In many places, people of Asia are also bearing the brunt of dreadful ecological disasters that displace people and increase the incidences of illnesses and other social maladies. In the midst of these signs of death, churches in Asia are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ who said: *"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* (Jn.10:10) In the midst of these mounting challenges, the followers of

Christ are called to participate in God's life giving ministry based on God's justice and peace to the whole creation.

CCA seeks your collaboration to kindly translate this liturgy into the language of the congregations, to adapt it to your context as you find it necessary, and to circulate it as widely as possible. We appeal to you that on this occasion a special offering is collected to support the CCA Emergency Fund. This Fund enables us to immediately send our token of solidarity to CCA members in the areas affected by emergency situations such as natural disasters. Details of the CCA Emergency fund can be found at the end of this liturgy.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your kind attention and cooperation.

May the God of Life guide us through this Lent season, leading to Easter and Pentecost.

Sincerely yours,



Henriette Hutabarat Lebang  
General Secretary

Chiang Mai  
15 February 2013

## ASIA SUNDAY LITURGY 2013

Celebrated on the Sunday before Pentecost, Asia Sunday commemorates the founding of the Christian Conference of Asia and calls upon member churches and councils as well as ecumenical partners around the world to pray for one another. In 2013, Asia Sunday falls on May 12<sup>th</sup>, but churches are free to choose a date suitable to their schedules.

### ORDER of WORSHIP

#### Gathering of the People

*(May be accompanied with music, followed by a moment of silence for preparation)*

#### Call to Worship<sup>1</sup>

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

People: **Yet we find that people walk in darkness,  
Live in conditions which deny life,  
Work for those who squeeze life out of them,  
Support systems and structures which are dead!**

Leader: Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection and the life.*" (John 11:25) "*I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.*" (John 10:10)  
Let us praise and worship the Lord of Life.

People: **Amen**

Hymn of Praise: *"Sing the Lord New Song"* *Sound the Bamboo (SB) # 100*

#### Communal Reading of Psalm 36:5-9

Leader: Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,

People: **Your faithfulness to the clouds.**

Leader: Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,

People: **Your judgements are like the great deep;  
You save humans and animals alike, O Lord.**

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<sup>1</sup>Satish C. Gyan, "*Worship and Liturgy in New Key*" (*the Christian Conference of Asia: 2004*)

Leader: How precious is your steadfast love, O God!  
People: **All people may take refuge in the shadows of your wings.**

Leader: They feast on the abundance of your house,  
People: **And you give them drink from the river of your delights.**

Leader: For with you is the fountain of life;  
People: **In your light we see light.**

**Confession:**

Most holy and merciful God,  
We confess to you and to one another  
that we have sinned against you  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our  
whole heart and mind and strength.  
We have not fully loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We have not always had in us the mind of Christ.  
You alone know how often we have grieved you  
by wasting your gifts, by wandering from your ways.  
Forgive us, we pray you, most merciful God;  
and free us from our sin.  
Renew in us the grace and strength of your Holy Spirit  
for the sake of Jesus Christ your Son our Savior. Amen.

**Affirmation of Faith<sup>2</sup>**

*(All Together)*

We believe in God who created this beautiful world in which death and  
destruction,  
sickness, pain and suffering cannot, and must not, have the last word.

God therefore created you and me  
To care for this earth, to uplift each other's life,  
To serve one another in love  
as God has shown us in Christ.

God calls us now to heal the world and its people,  
To ease every pain and anguish,  
By reaching out in loving service  
To those broken by calamities and strife,  
And thus restore them to wholeness.

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<sup>2</sup>From the Opening Liturgy of Pre-Assembly Mission Event, 2012 CWME - WCC

God sends the Holy Spirit upon us,  
To strengthen us in our work,  
That gentleness and tender care may flow from us  
And be transformed into life-giving power,  
the hope of wholeness for those in need.

**Hymn of Faith:** *"Come Now, O Prince of Peace"*

SB# 241

**Scripture Reading:**

**Isaiah 32:9-20 and Roman 8:1-11**

**Sermon:** *".. To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6)*

**Call to offering: 2 Corinthian 9:7-8, 12**

*(To be accompanied by choir or music. In addition to regular offering, you are invited to make a special Asia Sunday offering that will go towards the Emergency Fund of the Christian Conference of Asia.)*

**Prayer for the Offering**

**Prayers for the people of Asia:**

**Voice 1: For Aotearoa-New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh and Bhutan**

God of relief and restoration, we continue to pray for the people who were affected by the earthquake in Christchurch. May you bless the efforts of the churches in **Aotearoa, New Zealand** to accompany them in rebuilding their lives and livelihood. We also pray that the greed of the rich be wiped out and the widening disparity between the have and the have-nots be reduced. We pray for the unemployed and the needy, that through your mercy they will receive what they seek for and more!

Precious Lord, empower your church in **Australia** to be welcoming and inclusive, so that they become good neighbors who welcome strangers and the needy in society. We pray that you will grant your wisdom and compassion to the leadership, both secular and religious, to address the issues of migration and migrants, so that justice and peace may prevail. We remember the people in Queensland who have recently been affected by floods. Be with them and be their refuge, O God of life.

Lord we pray for the people of **Bangladesh** who suffer due to poverty, floods, health problems and political instability. Lord, in your wisdom guide the leaders of the nation to serve the people with your truth and justice. Grant churches with courage to witness your love especially in times of fear and uncertainty.

We pray for the people of **Bhutan**. May you guide the leaders of the nation to lead the people in truth and peace. Bless the church in Bhutan with courage and perseverance;

and in your mercy give heed to their prayers to have a place for fellowship and to establish a Himalaya seminary to train ministers for the churches to serve you Lord.

**Response: O Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Voice 2: For Cambodia, Hong Kong, India and Indonesia**

Lord, we remember the people of *Cambodia* as they rebuild their country. Help the churches to be committed to improve Christian unity so that they may become channels of peace and harmony.

We pray for the people of *Hong Kong*. Grant your wisdom to the Leaders so that Hong Kong society will uphold freedom, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. Bless the ministry of the churches in Hong Kong so that Christians will continue to strive for social justice.

We pray that your wisdom may guide the leaders of *India* to consider life and safety of the people more precious than weapons and nuclear power. We pray that you will lead the people from poverty, illiteracy and corruption, to a life of fullness for all. May you grant the churches a spirit of unity so that they may witness your justice and peace in their daily life.

We pray for the churches in *Indonesia*, may you strengthen and grant them courage to witness the love, justice and peace of Christ through their ministry in and with the community. We pray for the rights of minorities and the protection of religious freedom for all people. We specially remember the people of Papua, may your truth and justice prevail in the life of the community.

**Response: O Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Voice 3: For Iran, Japan, Korea, and Laos and Singapore**

Lord God, we remember the people of *Iran* especially in the wake of political unrest and the threat to the minorities. We pray for the safety and well-being of the people especially the children. Empower the churches to be witnesses to your love and truth, and to speak strongly for justice and peace.

God of love, be with your people who have lost their families and belongings in the great tsunami and whose lives are endangered by the nuclear fallout. Be with the churches in *Japan* as they work together with people of goodwill to assist the communities to rebuild their life.

God, have mercy on the *South and North Korean* people who have been separated for the last sixty years. Bless them that they may be united and together rebuild the nation in which your justice and peace will prevail. We pray that their pre-occupation with weapons of mass destruction will not destroy peace and the 'comity of nations'. We pray

for the churches in South Korea as they prepare to host the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 2013. Grant them the spirit of unity to work together for your glory, O God.

We pray that the people of *Laos* will love and cherish their country and be good stewards of what you Lord has blessed them with. We pray for peace and harmony among people of different faiths. Grant unity and fellowship among Christians, so that they will be true witnesses to your infinite love and abundant mercy.

We pray for the people of *Singapore*, may your and justice and peace be manifest in love and respect for each other. May your courage and wisdom guide the church to proclaim your love and peace to all.

**Response: O Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Voice 4: For Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan**

Lord, while we thank you for your many blessings on the people of *Malaysia*, we know that there many who suffer silently. We pray for those voiceless victims of oppression, abuse and violence, and for the discriminated and deprived migrant communities. Grant your wisdom to the Leaders of the nation and may you strengthen the churches to seek justice for all.

Lord we thank you as the country of *Myanmar* opens up to development and progress. Grant, O Lord that people breathe in the fresh air of freedom, growth and change. Bless the leaders of the nations, so that they treat all citizens equally especially the ethnic and minority groups. We pray specially for the refugees, for safe passage to return to their homeland when the conditions permit them to do so.

Lord, we fervently pray that you will lead *Nepal* to stability and peace; from violence and human rights abuse to peace and justice. Grant your power and love to the churches to be in unity in witnessing your loving presence in the community.

We pray for the people of *Pakistan*. May you guide the leaders of the nation with your wisdom especially in addressing the problems of violence and terrorism that create fear in the lives of people. Bless the church with your peace and truth to witness your love in the life of the communities.

**Response: O Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Voice 5: For Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Timor Leste**

Lord, we place in your hands and merciful care the people of *the Philippines* who have suffered losses in the severe storms and natural disasters. Lord, be their refuge and their strength. God of justice, guide them in all their efforts to bring peace among those who

are in conflict and give them courage to stand firm against violations of human rights, extra-judicial killing and other atrocities. May you be for them a safe haven in storms and a refuge in their trials and tribulations.

God, we pray for healing and reconciliation in the lives of people of ***Sri Lanka*** who have been torn by war and conflict for many years. Help your churches to accompany the oppressed and the victimized, share in their lamentations and sufferings, and bring peace and healing to their painful memories. God of life, we pray that you will bless them with your bountiful mercies so that they can start a new life, and dare to dream of a future that will heal the bitterness of the past. May they turn to you with hope and rejoice in your gift of life.

We pray for the people in ***Taiwan*** in their struggle for their identity and dignity. We pray for the unity of the churches in Taiwan in proclaiming your justice and peace in this land.

Lord, bring your peace and reconciliation to ***Thailand***, as the people are divided and restless because of differences in their political views and understanding. May you strengthen the church in this country to proclaim your justice and peace for all.

We pray for the churches in ***Timor Leste***. Strengthen them and empower them to participate in nation-building. God of life, may you in your abundant and gracious mercy, grant that the people enjoy your gift of the fullness of life for all.

**Response: O Lord, hear our prayer. Amen**

**All: "The Lord's Prayer"**

**Hymn of Commitment: "The Rice of Life"**

*SB #190*

**Benediction**

**Leader: Send us out dear Jesus into your world,  
With your concern,  
With your compassion,  
With your love**

**People: So that all the people everywhere may know your name, sing your  
praise, and share in the joy of your kingdom.  
Amen, Amen, Amen.**

*Asia Sunday Liturgy Team  
Christian Conference of Asia*

## THE CCA EMERGENCY FUND

In contexts where churches, councils and communities in Asia become victims of natural and other calamities like earthquakes, volcanic eruption, floods, tsunami, war and epidemics, it is of utmost importance that humanitarian aid reaches them as early as possible. The CCA maintains a reserve emergency fund to respond to such contingencies and appeals to member churches and councils to contribute to this fund generously.

As mandated by the 13<sup>th</sup> CCA ASSEMBLY in Kuala Lumpur during April 2010, the CCA Emergency Fund was created to enable CCA to:

- Organize immediate visits in solidarity and to find out how to assist churches and councils in responding to the emergency situation. The initial visit provides CCA with information to inform the CCA family about the circumstances, so that they can contribute, pray and comfort the affected people and the churches in the countries where the event has taken place.
- Facilitate visits of accompaniment, at times by a small team consisting of members from the CCA family. The visits aim to assist churches to work out their own relief and rehabilitation work in collaboration with Action by Churches Together (ACT) International or other major donors.

CCA's role is purely accompaniment where it equips and empowers the local churches to be in mission and to respond effectively to the needs of the times. The implementers are the local churches and the national councils.

We thus appeal to you to contribute to the CCA Emergency Fund, by sending your contributions to:

Account name: Christian Conference of Asia  
Bank: Hang Seng Bank  
Branch: Hankow Road  
(# 4, Hankow Road Branch, Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR, China)  
Account No.: 295-4-709594  
Account Type: Multi-Currencies Account  
Swift Code: HASEHKHH

Rev. Dr. Henriette Hutabarat Lebang  
15<sup>th</sup> February 2013

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