

Holocaust Memorial Day 2022

One Day

A resource for churches



Produced by
The Council of Christians and Jews



Cover image: Mary Kessel, 'Notes from Belsen Camp, 1945' with permission from the Imperial War Museum, London. © IWM

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What is Holocaust Memorial Day?

The 27th of January is the day for everyone to remember the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, and the millions of people killed under Nazi persecution, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

The 27th of January marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp.

In the UK, thousands of local events and activities take place every year – each one an opportunity for people to reflect on those whose lives were changed beyond recognition, and to challenge prejudice, discrimination, and hatred in our own society today. On HMD, we all have a role to play to ensure that we learn the lessons of the past, to create a safer, better future.

In 2022, the theme for HMD is ‘One Day’. This resource draws on this theme in the prayers, readings, and reflections.

How to use this resource

This resource is produced by the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) with the support of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT). It is designed for use by Christians in a worship setting on Holocaust Memorial Day or a Sunday close to Holocaust Memorial Day. It is not a complete service liturgy, but it includes a suggested liturgy for an act of commemoration within Christian worship. Commentaries are provided on the readings set for Sunday 23 January 2022, referencing the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2022: ‘One Day’.

The resource can be adapted as necessary for your own context however, it is hoped that it will provide inspiration and guidance so that church communities can remember the Holocaust, Nazi persecution, and subsequent genocides as a fundamental part of their Christian witness and discipleship.

Foreword

It is terribly difficult for us to imagine that a civilised and advanced nation could devolve into the atrocities that Nazi Germany did during the Second World War. But it is not the first time this has happened in human history and, if we do not face the reality of its potential within us, it will not be the last. Jewish teachings tell us that we can master these more primal elements, but never eradicate them.

There are many reasons why humanity must always remember the Holocaust. Faith communities in particular do well to mark and remember it because it reaffirms for us just how precious and meaningful our religious teachings and moral practices are for our lives. One of the chief teachings that both Jews and Christians share is that *all* human beings are created in God's image (Gen. 1:2) and that the breath of God becomes the soul of man (Gen. 2:7). The divinity and sanctity of every human life is at the heart of our religious worlds.

CCJ has been a stronghold and guide in the post-war and modern era for our shared religious values. And as we remember the victims of the Holocaust we also remember the special Gentiles whose spiritual and moral core outshined the darkness, as they saved the lives of their Jewish neighbours, countrymen, and fellow human beings — even in the face of mortal danger. It is a further reminder to us all that cultivating our spiritual and religious lives in prayer, study and moral refinement, is to nourish and enhance the divine spirit—the breath of God, in each and every one of us. In this attention and cultivation, we rein in the darker inclinations that lie latent within the human being and choose to govern our hearts with God's spirit and word.

I do hope that this resource will be a useful aid to your church or community group in marking this important day.

Rabbi Joseph Dweck

Senior Rabbi of the S&P Sephardi Community of the United Kingdom

Foreword

It is a privilege to be invited to write a forward for the Holocaust Memorial Day resources for 2022.

I am writing this introduction in the week that marks 80 years since one of the worst massacres of World War Two. At least 34,000 Jews were rounded up and killed by the Nazis at the ravine of Babyn Yar, in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv in just two days. Forgetting the terror of those women, men and children and their communities, or minimizing the magnitude of the atrocity of the massacre and failing to learn from it, and be transformed by it, is to add to the suffering of the Jewish people. When considering the power of memorial I have found it helpful to read the writing of some Jewish contemporary writers who are asking in the light of the Black Lives Matters movement, following the deaths of George Floyd and Breanna Taylor, whether the traditional phrase commonly used following the death of a person, “may her /his/their memory be a blessing” is always sufficient. What about an alternative phrase, “May her memory, his memory, their memory, be a revolution”? Rachel Stomel has commented that in the context of domestic violence there may be nothing blessed about the way some lives were, or are, ripped away from us. Holocaust memorial calls for identifying and confronting the deep-seated conditions that gave rise to extermination on such a scale, deliberately dismantling them, and then generating active justice in their stead. Remembrance should not be only an interior reflexive, passive process. To remember the past effectively involves working to create and embed lasting change in us in the present. Holocaust memorial should be a public witness that leads to a commitment to vigilance in order that hatred and the development of ideologies which reduce the sacredness of human beings to less than that, are challenged and opposed. So in advocating for, acting and living in solidarity with our Jewish siblings you are invited to pray using the prayers and liturgies within this resource on at least one day of prayer and reflection on issues related to the Holocaust. As preachers and worship leaders we can encourage and inspire others to remember the Holocaust, to resist evil and hate in our communities and nation, and to work for peace with justice.

Rev'd Helen Cameron,

Moderator-elect, Free Churches Group, and President-elect, Churches Together in England.

28th September 2021

Introduction

It is hoped that this resource will be a helpful aid to observing Holocaust Memorial Day 2022 in your own church context. The theme of ‘One Day’ immediately makes me think of hope; that one day, genocide will be no more, and the peace of God will prevail. Indeed, this is something which Revd Dr Tollington draws attention to in her Scripture reflection in this resource. However, hope is a complex emotion to speak of in relation to the Holocaust, as for many victims the extent of the trauma rendered it hopeless. This is picked up powerfully in the poetry of Elie Wiesel.

The cover image for this resource is an artwork by Mary Kessell entitled ‘Notes from Belsen Camp, 1945’ which draws out some of the complexities of hope and the Holocaust. In her work, Kessell documented life in Belsen, four months after its liberation. In her diary she observes people beginning to live again, laughing and singing. In Kessell’s snapshot of one day in the camp, there is certainly hope, and undoubtedly the intense relief of survival. Yet, there is also the memory of the trauma of the Holocaust. We see a paralysed figure in the group, alongside people whose faces are blurred into obscurity. In the centre, an out-stretched arm reaches to the sky, crying for help, perhaps, for her fellow survivors.

Even though the Holocaust is now a memory, we must still cry out, like the figure in the centre of this image. We must reach out to remember the victims who were killed in the Holocaust and genocides. In doing so, we must give voice to their memory. And we must seek the same solidarity that we see here – a crying out from the midst of the crowd, speaking for those who cannot speak. This is vital work, in the context of growing antisemitism, the continuing prevalence of Holocaust denial, genocide, and religious persecution.

In light of this, we encourage you to observe ‘One Day of Prayer’ on 27th January; to reach out to God, bringing before Him the memory of the victims of genocide, and praying that one day this is no more. You can use the prayer which is included in this resource for that purpose. In addition, in this resource you will find materials which can be used in a liturgy of remembrance, written by contributors from across the UK and from a variety of Christian denominations. There are poems, an exposition on the Scripture readings for the Sunday preceding HMD (Sunday 23rd January), prayers, a litany written by members of CCJ’s Yad Vashem Alumni Group, and finally a reflection on one day in the life of Jane Haining; a Scottish Righteous Among the Nations. CCJ are extremely grateful to all the writers who have contributed to this resource, who are named in the acknowledgements section.

James Roberts

Christian Programme Manager, CCJ

Opening words

God of mercy,
on this day, this one day, we come into your presence
in darkness and in light
aware of what has happened in days past,
in darkness and in light
conscious of what people experience today
in darkness and in light
trusting that you will guide your world in every day to come
in darkness and in light.

Prayer of confession

Gracious God,
on this one day,
we call to mind other days,
days of action and inaction,
days of injury and loss.

We are conscious of the darkest days and years,
when so many lives were cut short by hatred;
suffering which continues today.
We recognise the ways we have faltered in faith,
thinking less of others because they look different, sound different,
feel in ways we will not imagine.

We confess these and all our sins this day.
May God who is rich in mercy,
forgive us today
and inspire us to live fully in every day to come,
in friendship and solidarity with all people and the whole of creation.
In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Psalm 19

¹The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

²Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.

³There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;

⁴yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,

⁵which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

⁶Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hid from its heat.

⁷The law of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul;

the decrees of the Lord are sure,
making wise the simple;

⁸the precepts of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;

the commandment of the Lord is clear,
enlightening the eyes;

⁹the fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever;

the ordinances of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.

¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey,
and drippings of the honeycomb.

¹¹Moreover by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

¹²But who can detect their errors?
Clear me from hidden faults.

¹³Keep back your servant also from the insolent;
do not let them have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Poetry

Never Shall I Forget, Elie Wiesel

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, that turned my life into one long night seven times sealed.
Never shall I forget that smoke.
Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky.
Never shall I forget those flames that consumed my faith for ever.
Never shall I forget the nocturnal silence that deprived me for all eternity of the desire to live.
Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes.
Never shall I forget those things, even were I condemned to live as long as God Himself.
Never.

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/resource/never-shall-i-forget-by-elie-wiesel/>

Terezin, Michael Flack

That bit of filth in dirty walls,
And all around barbed wire,
And thirty-thousand souls who sleep
Who once will wake
And once will see
Their own blood spilled.

I was once a little child,
Three years ago.
That child who longed for other worlds.

But now I am no more a child
For I have learned to hate.
I am a grown-up person now,
I have known fear.

Bloody words and a dead day then,
That's something different than boogie men!

But anyway, I still believe I only sleep today,
That I'll wake up, a child again,
and start to laugh and play.
I'll go back to childhood sweet like a briar rose,
Like a bell which wakes us from a dream,
Like a mother with an ailing child
Loves him with aching woman's love.
How tragic then, is youth which lives
With enemies, with gallows ropes,
How tragic, then, for children on your lap
To say: this for the good, that for the bad.

Somewhere, far away out there, childhood sweetly sleeps,
Along that path among the trees,
There o'er that house
Which was once my pride and joy.
There my mother gave me birth into this world
So I could weep...

In the flame of candles by my bed, I sleep
And once perhaps I'll understand
That I was such a little thing,
As little as this song.

These thirty-thousand souls who sleep
Among the trees will wake,
Open an eye
And because they see
A lot

They'll fall asleep again....

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/resource/terezin-by-michael-flack/>

Scriptural Reflection

Based on Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 and Luke 4:14-21

The compiler of Nehemiah 8 seems to have conflated two separate readings of the book of the law (8:1-3 and 8:5-8) into a single occasion taking place on the first day of the seventh month (Tishri in the Jewish calendar), which is Rosh Hashanah, akin to New Year's day. The text (v.9) also brings together two characters, Ezra the priest and Nehemiah the governor, who may not have been active at the same time as each other. As readers our focus is being directed to one specific day, a day holy to the Lord, a day that should be one of joyful celebration, when priest, politician and people are all confronted by the challenges contained within the word of God.

The text indicates that the people wept in response to the reading of the law – due to a sense of inadequacy perhaps. Or maybe as an act of repentance, as they recognized their failure to keep the covenant commands, once their implication had been made clear by skilled interpreters. But this isn't the response that God requires, they are told. Instead be joyful, celebrate a feast, in thanksgiving to God for all your blessings and for the strength that God gives you – and, by the way, share your feast with those who have nothing prepared, or nothing with which they could feast.

Be joyful in the Lord and share your joy with others – not in denial of your own failure, shortcomings, or sense of inadequacy towards God; but in hope of the new future that is possible when God's people recommit to walking in God's ways. One specific day on which the whole community focused on God, reflected with grief on events of the past; but were told to move forward joyfully and with hope. That seems to be an appropriate message for Holocaust Memorial Day, for Jews and Christians alike, whereby our remembering of past genocides doesn't leave us wallowing in sorrow, grief or shame but spurs us forward into another year; and into positive action that can bring joy and hope to us and into the empty lives of others.

Luke 4:14-21 is similarly about one specific day in the story of Jesus when the reading of God's word (Isaiah 61:1-2a) in the synagogue and his application of those words to himself had a radical effect on his audience. That one day marked the start of Jesus' ministry but sadly also the beginning of what would gradually divide us. However, those words from Isaiah continue to be good news for all God's people, offering hope in the face of injustice or oppression; and assuring us that this year (as every year) is the year of the Lord's favour.

Holocaust Memorial Day is one specific day when we can determine to heal divisions and to walk together joyfully into the future with God, guided by God's word, with a shared commitment to build a world of peace and joy in which the fear of genocide is no more.

Revd Dr Janet E Tollington

Prayers of Intercession

We remember this day all those who have suffered and been murdered as a result of genocide, hatred and abuse. May we honour their pain, hold them in our hearts and take action for a better future so that one day there will be no more genocide, no more war, no more hatred and division among us.

*May the words of our mouth and the desires of our hearts **find favour in your sight O Lord***

We remember, this day, our Christian community. May we be enriched by its diversity, united in its faith, and pained by its failures. On this day especially, we repent of our failures to eliminate antisemitism and prejudice within our communities. Help us to be faithful to our mission to witness to a life of love, mercy and service in our world, combatting antisemitism, intolerance, and hatred in all its forms. Help us be good neighbours to the Jewish community and indeed to people of all faiths.

*May the words of our mouth and the desires of our hearts **find favour in your sight O Lord***

We recognise and rejoice in our common humanity that unites us with our brothers and sisters past, present and to come. May we be ever mindful of the precious gift of life and be aware of the great dignity of our vocation to be life-givers, helping the human family further in its journey into fullness of life in Christ.

*May the words of our mouth and the desires of our hearts **find favour in your sight O Lord***

We recognise and rejoice in this earth that gives us life and sustenance. We acknowledge our interconnectedness with all living things and our dependence on the natural world around us. May we appreciate the mystery of life and learn to treat the earth on which we walk with reverence and respect.

*May the words of our mouth and the desires of our hearts **find favour in your sight O Lord***

Let us for a moment, feel the suffering and pain that we humans have and still inflict on one another, the abuse and disrespect that we have for the natural world. Let us feel too the goodness and energy of all those who are working for its healing and the overcoming of divisions between people. Let us send out our own loving energy and healing to them as we pray:

'May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you his peace'. Amen.

Litany

One day, may our hearts be open to the suffering of others.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day, may our nations strive for unity, not division.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day, may truth triumph over lies.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day, may we celebrate our common humanity, made in the image of God.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day, may there be joyful celebration of our differences.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day may our shared stories, of suffering and pain, of light and life; be held together with the threads of our neighbours, our neighbours who are not like us, but who bring difference and challenge to us.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day, may I see the needs of others and put them before my own.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

One day, may our darkest moments be swaddled by your light.

May your Kingdom come, O Lord.

Help us to live, this day, in the light and truth of Your love, bringing your Kingdom to earth. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Participants are invited to pray the Lord's Prayer together in whatever version is most suitable.

A short time of silence is observed.

Closing Prayer

As we go from this house of prayer into a world of challenge and change

We remember the pain of the past.

As we obey God's commandments and follow Christ's way,

We recognise life's need for love.

As we seek the truth and glimpse God in all people and all places,

We go, to make the world a home for everyone.

Amen.

Benediction

May we go in peace,

Holding the memory of others in our hearts,

Firm in the knowledge of the grace, hope and love of God.

Amen.

‘One Day of Prayer’

To mark Holocaust Memorial Day, and to reflect the theme of ‘one day’, CCJ are encouraging people to observe ‘one day of prayer’ on 27th January 2022; to dedicate space during the day to approach God in prayer, privately or corporately, to remember the victims of genocides around the world.

To help dedicate some time during the day to prayer, CCJ have produced the following words. These can be said at home, during a service, or shared with congregants to reflect upon. However you might pray, we hope you may be able to dedicate some time on 27th January to prayerfully remember the victims of the Holocaust, and to petition God for an end to such human atrocities.

The ‘One Day’ Prayer

Eternal God, you hold all of our days in your hands.

On this day, we come before you to remember the victims of the Holocaust.

We lament the loss of the six million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust, the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution, and victims of other genocides.

May our minds be clear and attentive to their memory and our hearts be moved to bear witness to their lives.

Today, help us to remember and recognise the sanctity of each human life, that all people are made in Your image.

One day, we pray that genocide and hatred will be no more, and that love will triumph over evil.

In our prayers and in our actions, help us to show this love in the world today.
Amen.

12th May 1944:

One Day, Jane Haining

Mary Miller

Jane Haining (1897-1944) was a Scottish woman living and working in Hungary during World War II. She is recognised as one of the Righteous Among the Nations for her solidarity with her Jewish students.



Jane Haining, the Matron of the Girls' Home at the Scottish Mission School in Budapest, was arrested by the Gestapo on 24th April 1944 on a series of trumped-up charges. She was kept briefly in Földtáncs Prison, the City Jail.

At 5 am on 12th May, dawn came late through the narrow window of the cell where the women lay trying to sleep. Crash! Bang and a jangle of keys as the heavy door swung open and at once the women were wide awake, anxiety forcing them bolt upright.

"Haining!" shouted the two guards. "Hurry up, you're leaving!"

Jane and Frances, who had been sleeping side by side, for a moment stared wildly at each other – confusion, terror, hope. Then Jane and a few others stumbled to their feet. "Your clothes – your things!" A frantic search began, women pulling together the few garments that were known as Jane's. A scene flashed through Jane's mind of two nights before when she had made the women dress up in all the clothes they had and put on a fashion show, which she compered in faultless German until they all rocked with laughter. But there weren't many clothes left. "I gave my better things to Szuszi for court today – I've only this. Oh – the ham!" Remembering, Jane grabbed the piece of ham that Louis and Szofi had managed to hand in for her yesterday. It had so preciousely evoked the Mission, the School, the beloved girls for whom she cared. She tried to pull off a small piece and leave the rest with her cellmates but Frances pushed it back at her. "No, Jane, no – you might need it."

"Hurry up, hurry up," shouted the guards. "Where is she going?" demanded one of the other women. "Ha!" sneered the guard, "She's going where she'll be happy, because she loves Jews so much."

"She's going somewhere better", the women comforted each other, "they know she's not like us". In the jumble of Jane's mind a flash of hope, instantly followed by a wave of shame that she should even contemplate special treatment. It was all too quick – no time to think – a guard, still shouting was dragging at her arm. No

time to sit with Frances and read the Psalms, which had become their daily comfort. No time to pray, except “Oh God, oh God, be with me, be with the women and keep them safe.”

They dragged her out; the door was slammed and locked. Devastated, Frances stared around the cell – then leapt into action. ‘Jane! Jane! You left your hairbrush, you were drying it at the window...’ No response from beyond the massive door. No return.

Jane breathed the air on the short drive from the prison to the railway yard. She looked around; she saw the sky. Then, “Dear God, these look like cattle trucks.” The shoved her in; and the train pulled out, for Auschwitz (where, of course, she would not need her hairbrush).

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The Imperial War Museum for permission to use the cover image.

The closing prayer has been reproduced from CCJ's HMD Resource in 2019.

Further Resources

For more information about CCJ, our work and other resources, please see www.ccj.org.uk.

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust: www.hmd.org.uk/resources

Yad Vashem: www.yadvashem.org

Whatever you are planning for Holocaust Memorial Day, please let us know at cjrelations@ccj.org.uk and/or share your event with HMDT directly on their interactive map: <https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/activities-form/>

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