

Pursuing Peace

a liturgy for misunderstandings

I've read books about this people.
I've studied some of their language,
and I have close friends among them.
Yet, I am confused, again.

How did I misinterpret this situation? What am I missing?

Now, they're offended, and I am too. Their silence or bluntness reveals the fracture.

Wonderful Counselor, how I need your mediation. Intervene where experience, language, and cross-cultural knowledge fail. Reconciler, restore what has been disrupted in this relationship with my student, co-worker, or _____.

I confess my part in this breakdown of communication and acknowledge that I still have much to learn about this place and these dear people. Make me a learner. Someone who is ready to follow the lead of others instead of presenting my ways as best.

One who came not to be served, but to serve: Show me how to lovingly serve this person before me, even in my woundedness and confusion. May my response in this offense demonstrate Your love and longing to fix what is broken, for I don't want my actions to be a resounding gong or clanging cymbal that does not fulfill Your will.

Quiet me.

Help me to be quick to listen and slow to speak, slow to be angry, or to defend my perspective. As much as it depends on me, may I seek to be at peace with the image bearer before me. Grant me Your wisdom to know how to pursue peace with them, in this culture, where I am a guest.

I yield.

Spirit of Truth, reveal the heart of this conflict and dismantle the schemes that are at work behind the scenes, for we do not wrestle with flesh and blood.

Abba, You forgive my many failings and have lavished your unmerited grace on me. In Your strength I too forgive, and entrust this situation to You.

Amen