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Pray with Sri Lanka on Sunday, January 14, 2018

BY [ANDY JEPSON](#) ON JANUARY 08, 2018

Lectionary Selection: John 1:43-51

Prayers for Sri Lanka:

God of all people and of all hope, we give thanks that you created us to be love, hope and peace for and with each other.

You trust us all with mighty work in a world of mighty needs.

Were we to trust only ourselves, we would fail. We would invite the future we fear most – war and injustice, destruction of resource, possibility and beauty, slaughter of God-created life for our amusement. When we place our faith in you and your presence in us and each other, we become hands, heads, eyes, ears and the possibilities you created us to be.

Open our senses and thoughts to the wonders of being human and of being in this world, our home. Give us courage to dare to be our best when we fear what others will think or say. Inspire our imagination to dare to live a vision of a world when we will all celebrate each other's gifts and possibilities.

Fill us with a peace that resists angry words, cruel jokes, threats of punishment and pain, violence as entertainment ... and grant us a sense of justice that seeks not to punish, but to calm, to educate, to understand gentleness as strength.

May these be our weapons against war, hatred, prejudice, our protection against the violence of ignorance and fear. May you be the shield and armor that leads us all to respond with love and hope.

As Jesus taught and lived, so may we. Amen

Mission Stewardship Moment from Sri Lanka:

Different cultures are different, and their people are different. That's healthy unless we react to different ways of meeting life's challenges with judgement rather than courtesy. Courteous curiosity may open a



conversation that opens eyes to understanding in a world that needs it.

Tamil Christians are a small minority in Sri Lanka. Most are materially poor and poorly regarded by the majority population. Late last century Tamils began a civil war to establish a Sri Lankan homeland in response to years of discrimination. The war ended less than 10 years ago, and Tamil people and culture will bear the war's scars for many years. We value the chance to live among them, to share their lives and customs and to begin to understand how they see the world, and why. It's an education about different cultures' operating assumptions!

One assumption is about schedules. In Sri Lanka time is not a concern. Things happen when the time is 'right', and a clock doesn't decide that. Worship starts when the 'right' number has arrived. "Casual" time figures in giving notice of meetings and events very close to the intended date, and people understand that 'on time' means 'later'. Plans are often last-minute and preparation may be cut short by time marching on.

I suspect that centuries of village life shaped this practice. People knew when ceremonies, celebrations or meetings were coming and what part they would play. Things happened as people expected them to happen, and planning was a minor matter, not the process that modern life makes it.

Different attitudes toward planning and time work in a world of villages, but that world is shrinking as big business and politics homogenize people's possibilities and their chances of survival. If people must struggle to accept unfamiliar priorities and international standards, too many may remain in the lower economic classes.

The use of English or other non-native languages for business endangers the survival of diverse cultures. If native peoples around the world lose their God-given languages, their history and culture are lost, and their gifts to our shared world eventually disappear. Our shared world cannot afford that loss.

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Andy Jepson)

Global Ministries Mission Coworker in Sri Lanka:

Andy Jepson serves as a long-term volunteer with the Church of the American Ceylon Mission. Her appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples' Mission Fund, Our Churches Wider Mission, and your special gifts.

More information on Sri Lanka:

http://www.globalministries.org/sri_lanka



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Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka (“Shree Lawn-ka”) is an island nation south of India in the Indian Ocean. Its diverse landscapes range from rainforest and arid plains to highlands and sandy beaches. Christians are a small minority (about eight percent) of the total population of Sri Lanka, but our partners are involved in national reconciliation in this ethnically and religiously divided nation. In the midst of civil war, our partners in the church in Sri Lanka seek to provide community development, interfaith dialogue, and relief and rehabilitation to those affected by the violence.

Pray for: Global Ministries partners and projects, as we follow the lead of our Sri Lankan partners in caring for those who are most in need. Christian leaders as they participate in attempts to bring reconciliation and healing to a nation divided by religious differences.

Population (2014 est) – 21,866,445

Area – 40,770 mi

Capital – Colombo

Ethnic Background

Sinhalese – 73.8%

Sri Lankan Moors – 7.2%

Indian Tamil – 4.6%

Sri Lankan Tamil – 3.9%

Other – 0.5%

Unspecified – 10%

Exports – textiles and apparel, tea and spices; rubber manufactures; precious stones; coconut products, fish

Imports – petroleum, textiles, machinery and transportation equipment, building materials, mineral products, foodstuffs

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 73 years, F 80 years

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 9.02 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 8.8%