O God, the Things That Make for Peace

O God, the things that make for peace
Seem hidden, distant, out of reach.
Our world is violent, bent on war;
Lord, show us peace worth struggling for.

Your peace begins when we embrace
Your Son-- your wondrous gift of grace.
For peace with others surely starts
When we find peace within our hearts.

Yet peace is not a quiet thing,
An inward gift to which we cling.
For Jesus blessed the ones who share
Your peace and justice everywhere.

We thank you that your love extends
Beyond the circle of our friends.
You teach us: Give the stranger bread
And see that enemies are fed.

We long to live your way, O Lord,
To see relationships restored;
May we, in all we say and do,
Seek peace and therefore honor you.

Biblical texts: Luke 19:37-44; Philippians 4:4-7; Romans 5:15; Matthew 5:38-44; Hebrews 13:1-3;
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This hymn is based on a new, free Presbyterian Bible study: The Things that Make for Peace: An Adult Study http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/seasonofpeace/biblestudy/

This 5-week adult study is designed for small or large groups to be used during the Season of Peace or any time of the year. It focuses on the inner and outer path to peace as foundational to faithful discipleship. Each session has a “dig deeper” section for study through the week.
Session 1: Recognizing Peace The introduction is a study of Luke 19:37-44 and Ephesians 1:18. It explores the differences between peace as the world often defines it, and peace as Jesus teaches and models it.

Session 2: Finding Peace “So that you may live deep within your heart” How do we find peace in our hearts? How do we deepen our personal spiritual practice as a peacemaker? Using Philippians 4:4-7 and Romans 5:15, this session explores how we might ground ourselves in the practice of peace.

Session 3: Practicing Peace “So that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.” What does it mean to “turn the other cheek”? What is the difference between being a doormat and choosing non-violence? In this study, we explore Matthew 5:38-44 as a foundation for active non-violence.

Session 4: Extending Peace “So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them” How does the Bible teach us to live with neighbors who are different? This session will focus on hospitality as peacemaking in light of Hebrews 13:1-3 and Romans 12:13-21.

Session 5: Living Peace “So that you can do what others claim cannot be done.” Peace within, peace with God and peace with others all require forgiveness and a life which seeks to restore relationships. This study will focus on 2 Chronicles 6:13-40, Matthew 5:23-24 and Romans 12:18.