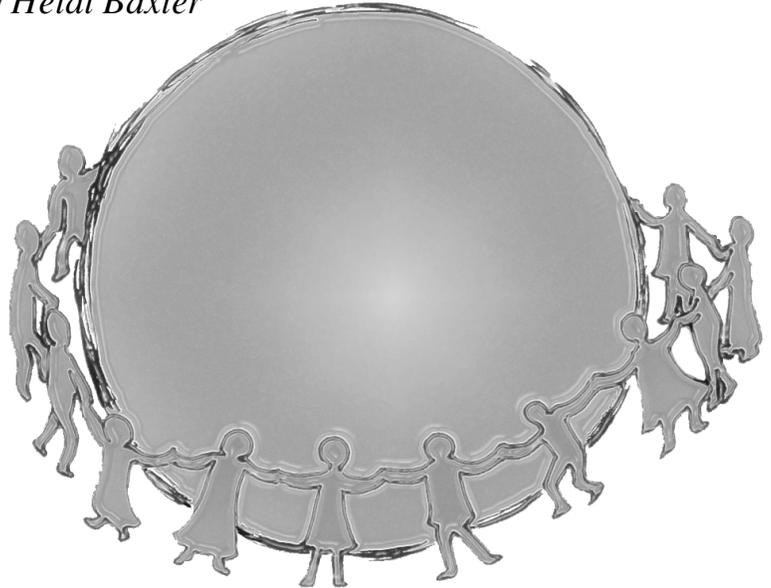


A Prayer for Shalom

by Heidi Baxter



God of Our Ancestors –

Abraham *and* Sarah,
Isaac *and* Rebekah,
Jacob *and* Leah *and* Rachel—

Bring us shalom. Let us not forget those who hurt by turning plowshares into swords and pruning hooks into spears. Let us not forget those who are trampled and left hungry. Help us remember those we overlook and tend to push aside. Help us be aware of when we ignore others' needs....Bring us shalom.

Bring us shalom. Show us how to honor those with whom we disagree. Teach us what it means to live in true community. Increase our awareness of the subtleties of discrimination. Make us attentive to how hurtful our words can be. Help us remember that apathy is just as harmful as inaction....Bring us shalom.

Bring us shalom. Help us remember the women and children who faithfully followed your call: Rahab, the child king Josiah, Michal, Jephthah's daughter, the young shepherd David, Jael, the young boy Samuel, and Sisera's mother...waiting for her fallen son to return....Bring us shalom.

Create in us shalom. Let us live in Christ who welcomes us all, not just the good-looking, popular, or wealthy. May we learn that in Christ we transcend swords and spears, plowshares and pruning hooks. Bring us to abide in you; not just with you. Create with us shalom. Health, wholeness, salvation, justice, peace – shalom and amen.

—Heidi Baxter, at this writing, was a senior at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kansas with plans to graduate the next spring with a Master of Divinity degree. Art is by Sharon Rollins. The prayer appeared as part of "Peace Soup," the youth page of *Baptist Peacemaker*, Volume 23 Number 3, Fall 2003.