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Faith groups pray for healing, peace

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RACINE — People of all faiths prayed for physical peace and spiritual healing for the city all day long Sunday.

A dozen churches prayed for citywide peace throughout the day at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 614 Main St., as part of the second annual Racine Interfaith Coalition "Wave of Peacefulness-Meditation."

The 12-hour event set aside time for different faith groups to unite and pray for the city, said co-organizer John Stutt, who is also a local attorney.

The coalition holds prayer vigils at crime scenes after a shooting or a homicide to promote nonviolence. The event, Stutt said, was to create a culture of peace.

It was a community outreach to support peace and also express a commission of peace, said Christy Zykowski, 39, of Racine, a clinic manager who is a member of the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection.

Stepping away from physical violence, the day also was a chance to pray for internal and spiritual peace as well, Sacred Heart Catholic Church members said.

The small group prayed for healing over those who are victims of physical violence, those who are suffering from mental and emotional pain or even those who have lost their jobs and face financial uncertainty.

In Racine, there is a lot of anger and frustration over the economy, said Phillip Wamboldt, 53, of Mount Pleasant, who is currently unemployed.

The daylong event was a good opportunity to focus and pray to God, they said.

We pray that we will be used as instruments of peace, said his wife, Diana, 44, who is a schoolteacher.

"We pray because we can rely on Him," she said. "We have to have God here by our sides."

Nikki Rosati, 61, of Franksville, said her faith helped her through tough times after she was laid off in the beginning of the year from her job of 36 years.

"I was pretty devastated," she said, though since then she's rediscovered old hobbies like sewing and painting. "But you have to keep in mind the many blessings in your life."