



Material for each day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,

January 18th-25th 2025

This material is adapted and abridged from the resource provided by Churches together in Britain and Ireland this year.

At the heart of our reflections is the question posed by Jesus to Martha: 'Do you believe this?' (*John11:26*).

The texts provided for personal or communal prayer for each of the eight days includes two scripture readings and a psalm. The biblical texts for each day highlight in turn key statements of the Nicene Creed.

Day 1: The fatherhood and motherhood of God who rules the universe.

Day 2: Creation as God's work.

Day 3: The Incarnation of the Son.

Day 4: The Paschal Mystery: Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

Day 5: The Holy Spirit, breath of God.

Day 6: The Church: Community of believers.

Day 7: Baptism into the Death and Resurrection of the Lord.

Day 8: Waiting for the Kingdom.

Day 1. The fatherhood and motherhood of God who rules the universe

Scripture Readings; Isaiah 63:15-17 Psalm 139:1-3, 13, 23-24, 1 Corinthians 8:5-6

Reflection

What is all this?
What is 'is' at all?
You know, as we can only guess.
Enflame us, ultimate I Am, with the wonder of being
when our understanding must bow to
your beyond.

Prayer

We bless you, O Lord, Father of lights: from you descends every good thing and every perfect gift.
You have made the world and all that it contains, you are the Lord of heaven and earth.

You created all the peoples that dwell on the earth. For them you established the order of time and the boundaries of their space. In the heart of human beings, you have placed the depth of eternity. Rebirth in us the unity that our selfishness has fractured in your Church and in the one world around us.

God of all consolation, call us to follow you and make firm for us the work of our hands.

We praise you through Jesus Christ, your only-begotten Son, in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Day 2. Creation as God's work

Scripture Readings Genesis; 1:1-5, Psalm 148:1-14, Romans 8:19-23

Reflection

As we dare to love life we must know pain, as love means knowing loss.
As you, our God, who has known lost love
and faith bought by frailty,
give us the strength to dare to love each other
beyond the agony of rejection.

Prayer

We praise you and give you thanks, God of steadfast love, for the great signs of your favour and your mercy for the whole creation.

You have made all things: you declared them to be good, and you love all that brings life.

We proclaim, O Lord, your glory seen in the immense starry vastness of the universe and in the smallest seed of life.

We give thanks for the works of your hands and the creation of all people. Blessed are you for the air that gives us life.

Blessed are you for the earth that nourishes us.

Blessed are you for the water that quenches our thirst.

Blessed are you for the fire that warms us.

Lord God, Father of lights, strengthen our hearts in expectation and hope as we work for unity and together seek the harmony of all creation.

Let us be burning lamps, until the day of the coming of your Son in glory, with all his saints in the everlasting kingdom.

Blessed are you, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

AMEN

Day 3. The Incarnation of the Son

Scripture Readings; Jeremiah 33:14-16 Psalm 72:12-14 John 1:1-14

Reflection

Am I a gong? Do I clang like a cymbal? Do I argue, break relationship? Accuse? Judge?

Am I wise, straight speaking and know all things? Do I give away everything? Do I fast almost to death?

Do I do all things but fail to love?

Know, dear one, wherever you place yourself, above or below, you are found, loved, rejoiced in and protected beyond imagination.

It is in weakness you are powerful. Allow servanthood to display your best self. We inhabit a world of overwhelming 'Me, me, I.'

Through our Saviour's supernatural love made flesh, become an agent of change, by delighting in loving. Such love primes you for subversion.

"Love is the most radically subversive activism of all, the only thing that ever changed anyone," Ann Voskamp

Prayer

Word of God, teach us how to love.

May we allow you to share our life in all things.

Lord God, our Father, draw our eyes to you so that together as your people, we may walk from darkness embracing the light of your face revealed to us in Jesus, your beloved Son, our brother and Saviour, who lives alongside You, at your right hand now and for eternity.

AMEN

Day 4. The Paschal Mystery: Incarnation, Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus

Scripture Readings; Philippians 2:8-9 Exodus 3:1-6 Isaiah 9:6-7

Reflection

Rains fall, but do not soak- Peace descends- Beauty unfolds-

An opening, a scent, a perfect hymn of praise sung without words.

Presence deepens, emotion wells, and tears meld with thankfulness. To be known, allowed to be.

Enfolding ripples of warmth, flow in never-ending languor. The presence of the numinous, captured within and without a simple human.

What promise awaits when flesh departs to be emancipated into spirit?

Spirit and Spirit Three shall dance a reel outside time, into all things new.

Prayer

Risen Jesus,

Help me to grasp the good news that you have taken the sting out of death, and given us all glorious hope.

Take my fears and worries and let me fully embrace the truth.

Living as a witness to others.

Speaking words of faith, hope and love.

AMEN

Day 5. Holy Spirit, breath of God

Scripture Readings; John 20:19-23 Ezekiel 37:9-14 Psalm 104:24-34

Reflection

Swirl of dust moving along the face of the ground, untameable presence hovering above the water, flicker of flame and wisp of smoke.

There, there you are.

Breathing, dancing, tending, challenging, bristling with energy.

By your breath, your dreams for the world are made into flesh and bone, animated by your love, we can be fire dancers, peace breathers and bone shakers.

Prayer

God, Giver of Life, Light of the World, Breath of Heaven, the one God three times holy – Blessed are you past, present and future.

We confess our common faith in you.

Let us rejoice in the Spirit, who renews the face of the earth and draws us towards unity.

Forgive us when our breath is distasteful.

Enflame us with your Pentecost fire, to speak the truth of the gospel that brings freedom and life. Awaken our prayers and give them flesh as we work with you, to make well and full, the whole of creation.

AMEN

Day 6. The Church: Community of believers

Scripture Readings; Isaiah 2:2-4, Psalm 133, Ephesians 4:1-6

Reflection

Her branches draped over me create the shade of peace.

I recount stories of halcyon days as I effortlessly drift towards slumber.

Leaning against your stoic mass, eyes half shut I notice mottled light through the leaves permeating the corners of my soul, illuminating dreams once dead.

I awaken to the opening of her blossom, radiant and rich with the scent of hope blown by the wind, whipped up and bustling through streets long devoid of expectation and vision.

Prayer

God of our journeyings, Christ of our shorelines, Spirit of endless horizons, beckon us towards unity. Challenge us to step out of our upper rooms and safe spaces, to be bringers of light and peace. Imbue us with the light of your love, reconciling us to ourselves, to each other and to you when we confront the scandal of division.

Graft peace, love and compassion into our mission and discipleship.

Bind with peace any broken limb that we might go into the world and live the way of Jesus for the sake of all creation.

AMEN

Day 7. Baptism into the Death and Resurrection of the Lord

Scripture Readings; Micah 7:18-19, Psalm 51:1, 10, 12 Matthew 28:16-20

Reflection

Christ has buried your past in the tomb with him so that you can rise in God's womb of love to new life— begin again – rise ever more in Divine Yes to you.

God is taking care of your future.

It is an eternal one.

It has already begun.

You are soaked in it, Christian, dripping with it.

Prayer

With gratitude beyond all possible language we praise you, O Lord, and glorify your name.

For having called us to the trusting of faith in baptism, for the communion we share in the New Covenant, for the unity we already enjoy and your presence in the holy Church: we praise you, O Lord, and glorify your name.

For the witness of persecuted Christians, for the suffering of their martyrdom, for their participation in Christ's passion: we praise you, O Lord, and glorify your name.

For all servants of communion, for those who pray and work for the reconciliation of churches, for those who lay down their lives in the service of unity we praise you, O Lord, and glorify your name. Hasten the day, we beg you, of the full mutual recognition of our churches, the communion you desire, and for which your Son prayed.

We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Day 8. Waiting for the Kingdom

Scripture Readings; Revelation 21:1-4, Psalm 85:8,10-12, Luke 12:35-40

Reflection

What joy is there in hope?

What joy is there in unity?

We are hungry on the road, and in God we are nourished.

When shall we be satisfied? Only when we feed our sisters and brothers.

Reaching out to humanity, welcoming the stranger.

Touching creation as we watch and wait.

For a time when righteousness and peace kiss.

Keep your lamps burning, keep watch. For there is joy in unity, there is joy in hope.

In this hope we sing 'alleluia'.

Prayer

God of hope, you promise that the poor in spirit will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Bring new life to those who trust in you.

Christ, you know the pain of division, yet in sadness you teach us the way of consolation.

Help us to remember that you are the joy that cannot be removed.

Jesus, you cast down the powerful, promising to clothe the peacemakers with a glorious robe, calling them the Children of God.

Make us bearers of your peace.

Christ of mercy and compassion, you forgave the thief who died with you on a cross.

Remember us all when you return to claim your kingdom.

AMEN

In Southbourne

Here in Southbourne you will remember that our churches have a covenant with each other, believing that the Holy Spirit is leading us into greater unity, and that God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, is calling us to a greater sharing in our common mission to the world.

As we see God moving within our community and when we experience change, let us pray for encouragement and enthusiasm as we seek to advance his kingdom together as members of the Body of Christ in this place.

Amen

A full version of the document on which this leaflet is based can be found here;

ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer weekofprayer.org

