

2018 WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

CANADIAN RESOURCES

ANNOTATED WORSHIP SERVICE



Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power (Ex 15:6)

If your local planning committee elects to use the generic order of service, either in hard copy, or printed from the online PDF, it will be necessary to announce hymns and other locally chosen parts of the service. If you would like to include hymns and other music in the printed order of service, or to customize elements of the service for your local context, you can find the service booklet as a Word document, available at weekofprayer.ca. After you have finalized the content, the most effective printing method is to save the customized Word document as a PDF, and “print as booklet” from Acrobat.

Suggestions on how to prepare your space for worship, leadership roles, and other aspects of the service can be found in Tips for Preparing the Worship Service resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

If you wish to include activities for children in the Worship Service, suggestions can be found in the Children’s Resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

GATHERING

The service is divided into seven sections, identified by headers in small caps. If your local planning committee would prefer to emphasise the structural unity of the service, you may wish to omit these headers.

Gathering / processional / opening song

During the singing of the opening song, those leading the celebration enter, led by a participant carrying a Bible. This Bible is placed in a place of honour in the centre of the worship space. The Scripture readings during the service should be proclaimed from it.

Words of Welcome

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Dear friends in Christ,
as we gather for this service of prayer for unity,
we thank God for our Christian heritage,
and for his liberating and saving action
in human history.

If your local churches use gender-inclusive language, you are invited to adjust the text of the service accordingly. This could be discussed in your planning meetings (e.g., “and for **God’s** liberating and saving action...”)

The resources for this year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the churches of the Caribbean. The history of Christianity in that region contains a paradox. On one hand, the Bible was used by colonizers as justification for the subjugation of the original inhabitants of these lands, along with others who were transported from Africa, India and China. Many people suffered extermination, were put in chains and enslaved, and were subjected to unjust labour conditions. On the other hand, the Bible became a source of consolation and liberation for many who suffered at the hands of the colonizers.

Today, the Bible continues to be a source of consolation and liberation, inspiring the Christians of the Caribbean to address the conditions that currently undermine human dignity and quality of life. As the iron chains of enslavement fall from our hands, a new human bond of love and communion emerges in the human family, expressing the unity prayed for by our Christian communities.

Hymn and music suggestions can be found in the Hymn Suggestions resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The response to the invocation may be sung.

Leader: With the Christians of the Caribbean,
let us call upon the Holy Spirit to set our hearts on fire
as we pray for the unity of the Church.

Unite your servants in the bond of unity.

All: **Come, Holy Spirit!** ←

Leader: Teach us to pray.

All: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

Leader: Liberate us from the slavery of sin.

All: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

Leader: Help us in our weakness.

All: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

Leader: Restore us as your children.

All: **Come, Holy Spirit!**

Song of praise ←

Song suggestions can be found in the Hymn Suggestions resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

Music for sung responses and Kyrie can be found in the Hymn Suggestions resource, available at weekofprayer.ca. You could also choose to use a similar response, like a Taizé chant with a related text.

The chains used in the service should be substantial enough to make a visual impact - most hardware stores should offer a selection. See Tips for Preparing the Worship Service, available at weekofprayer.ca.

PRAYERS OF RECONCILIATION

Leader: We have not received a spirit of slavery
to fall back into fear.

Let us call upon the mercy of God,
confident in the saving power of God's Right Hand.

*Three members of the assembly come forward, each carrying a chain.
After each petition and response, one of the chains is allowed to fall to
the ground. The Kyrie response may be sung.*

Leader: From structures that undermine human dignity
and enforce new forms of enslavement, deliver us, O God.
Kyrie eleison.

All: **Kyrie eleison.** ←

Leader: From decisions and deeds that impose poverty,
marginalisation or discrimination
on our brothers and sisters, deliver us, O God.
Kyrie eleison.

All: **Kyrie eleison.**

Leader: From the fear and suspicion
that separate us from each other
and place limits on hope and healing,
deliver us, O God.
Kyrie eleison.

All: **Kyrie eleison.**

Leader: The Lord is our strength and our might,
and has become our salvation.
May God, who has redeemed us,
lead us into the abode of holiness.

All: **Amen.**

The Caribbean Christians suggest that you use a Bible that is significant for your communities, or visually striking, as a visual symbol of God's liberating grace. This Bible should be given a place of honour in the centre of worship space, and all Scripture readings during the service should be proclaimed from it.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

Leader: Redeem us, O God, from human oppression,

All: **that we may keep your precepts.**

Leader: Make your face shine upon your servants,

All: **and teach us your statutes. (cf. Ps 119: 134-135)**

Reading: Exodus 15:1-21

At the conclusion of the reading:

Reader: Listen and you will be set free.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

The psalm may be sung or said.

Psalm 118: 5-7, 13-24 ←

**Refrain: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!**

Out of my distress I called on the Lord;
the Lord answered me and set me in a broad place.

With the Lord on my side I do not fear.

What can mortals do to me?

The Lord is on my side to help me;

I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. **Refrain**

I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,
but the Lord helped me.

The Lord is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:

Refrain

Local planning committees are invited to find their own music if they wish the psalm to be sung, and adjust the text of the psalm accordingly.

The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;
the right hand of the Lord is exalted;
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.
I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the Lord. **Refrain**

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it. **Refrain**

I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. **Refrain**

Reading: Romans 8:12-27

At the conclusion of the reading:

Reader: Listen and you will be set free.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Suggestions for sung Alleluias
can be found in the Hymn
Suggestions resource, available
at weekofprayer.ca.

*A suitable Alleluia acclamation may be sung before and after the
proclamation of the Gospel.*

Reading: Mark 5:21-43

At the conclusion of the reading:

Reader: Listen and you will be set free.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Homily / Reflection

You are invited to use the
Canadian Preaching Resource,
available at weekofprayer.ca, in
preparing your homily /
reflection.

Song: The right hand of God

The right hand of God

Patrick Preseed

Noel Dexter: Jamaica

1. The right hand of God is writ-ing in our land,
2. The right hand of God is point-ing in our land,
3. The right hand of God is strik-ing in our land,
4. The right hand of God is lift-ing in our land.

writ - ing with pow - er and with love: Our
point - ing the way we must go: so
strik - ing out at en - vy, hate and greed; Our
lift - ing the fal - len one by one; Each

con-flicts and our fears, our tri-umphs and our
cloud-ed is the way, so eas-i-ly we
self-ish-ness and lust, our pride and deeds un-
one is known by name, and res-cued now from

tears are re - cord - ed by the right hand of God.
stray, but we're guid - ed by the right hand of God.
just are de - stroyed by the right hand of God.
shame by the lift - ing of the right hand of God.

© 1981 Caribbean Conference of Churches, P.O. Box 616, Bridgetown, Barbados, W.I. All rights reserved.

5. The right hand of God is healing in our land,
healing broken bodies, minds and souls;
so wondrous is its touch,
with love that means so much,
when we're healed by the right hand of God.
6. The right hand of God is planting in our land,
planting seeds of freedom, hope and love;
in these many-peopled lands,
let his children all join hands,
and be one with the right hand of God.

Creed or other Affirmation of Faith

You are invited to use a Creed or another Affirmation of Faith that is appropriate for your community.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader: With thanks for our liberation from slavery to sin,
let us place our needs before the Lord,
asking him to shatter the chains that enslave us
and to join us instead with bonds of love and communion.

Each intercession is read by a different reader. As they finish, the readers each join hands or link arms with members of the assembly, thus creating a human chain.

Reader 1 God of the Exodus, you led your people
through the waters of the Red Sea and redeemed them.
Be with us now and free us from all forms of slavery
and from everything that obscures human dignity.

All: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader 2 God of abundance,
in your goodness you provide for all our needs.
Be with us now, help us to rise above selfishness and greed
and give us the courage to be agents of justice in the world.

All: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader 3 God of love, you created us in your image
and have redeemed us in Christ.
Be with us now, empower us to love our neighbour
and to welcome the stranger.

All: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader 4 God of peace, you remain faithful to your covenant with us
even when we wander from you,
and in Christ you have reconciled us to yourself.
Be with us now and put a new spirit and a new heart within us
that we may reject violence
and instead be servants of your peace.

All: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader 5 God of glory, you are all-powerful,
yet in Jesus you chose to make your home in a human family,
and in the waters of baptism have adopted us as your children.

The most effective way to create this chain will depend on the layout of the worship space and the position of the worshippers. For suggestions, please see Tips for Preparing the Worship Service resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

Be with us now and help us to remain faithful to our family commitments and our communal responsibilities, and to strengthen the bonds of communion with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

All: **Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.**

Reader 6 God, One in Three Persons, in Christ you have made us one with you and with one another. Be with us now and by the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit, free us from the self-centredness, arrogance and fear that prevent us from striving towards the full visible unity of your Church.

All: **Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Let us join our hands, bound not by chains but by the love of Christ that has been poured into our hearts, and pray to the Father in the words that Jesus taught us.

The Lord's Prayer may be sung or said: Our Father....

After the Lord's Prayer, still holding hands, the assembly may sing a familiar song that celebrates their unity.

After the song, the Sign of Peace may be exchanged.

COMMISSIONING / SENDING FORTH

Leader: Redeemed by the Right Hand of God, and united in the One Body of Christ, let us go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: **The Spirit of the Lord is upon us,
because the Lord has anointed us
to bring good news to the poor.
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.
Amen! Alleluia!**

Closing song / recessional hymn

Music suggestions for the Lord's Prayer can be found in the Hymn Suggestions resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

Hymn and music suggestions can be found in the Hymn Suggestions resource, available at weekofprayer.ca.

Your planning committee is invited to choose a song that would be familiar to, and appropriate for, your communities.