

2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

TIPS FOR PREPARING THE ECUMENICAL WORSHIP SERVICE

Before you begin...a suggestion

The Canadian Writing Team always encourages worship organizers to begin their planning with a review of the background information provided by those who crafted the international materials. This year we felt that this review would be particularly helpful, as the service itself does not include many cultural references, and the rationale for the chosen Scriptures may be difficult to discern without additional historical, cultural and sociopolitical knowledge. Enrich your understanding of the Indonesian Christian context by reading the *Introduction to the Theme* and the *Ecumenical Situation in Indonesia* sections of the international 2019 WPCU resource (available at www.weekofprayer.ca).

Contents of the Service

This year's worship service includes (*elements which involve / could involve music are in italics*):

Call to Worship: A call and response between the leader and the congregation.

Gathering / Processional Hymn: Some suggestions can be found in the *2019 Hymn Suggestions* resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca.

Introductory Words: A brief welcome address that introduces the 2019 theme.

Hymn of Praise: Some suggestions can be found in the *2019 Hymn Suggestions* resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca.

Prayer of Repentance: A dialogue introduced by the leader, then led by 3 readers in turn (at least one ordained and one layperson), with congregational response (either spoken or sung).

Hymn / Song / Meditative Music (prior to the Proclamation of the Word of God): Some suggestions can be found in the *2019 Hymn Suggestions* resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca.

Proclamation of the Word of God: Includes the reading of passages from Deuteronomy, Romans and Luke, along with a responsorial Psalm (with the option for spoken or sung congregational response).

Sermon / Reflection: For ideas, see *2019 Preaching Resource*, available on www.weekofprayer.ca.

Commitment to Justice, Mercy and Unity: A dialogue involving the leader, two readers and the congregation, which culminates in a symbolic action – an invitation for all present to write a personal commitment on two separate cards (one to keep, and one to be collected and brought forward as an

offering). A hymn or music may be included while the cards are written (some suggestions can be found in the *2019 Hymn Suggestions* resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca).

Offering: One copy of each participant's personal commitment card will be collected and brought forward.

Sharing Peace

Nicene Creed or other Affirmation of Faith: The Christians of Indonesia who crafted the service specified the use of the Nicene Creed; as you consider your local context and the needs of your worshipping community, you may elect to substitute this with another affirmation of faith or omit this element.

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer: A litany involving the leader and up to 4 additional intercessors with congregational responses, followed by the Lord's Prayer (the contemporary version is suggested by the Indonesian worship design team, but you may substitute another version as appropriate or encourage those gathered to pray it in the language of their choice).

Recessional / Closing Hymn or Song: Some suggestions can be found in the *2019 Hymn Suggestions* resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca.

Dismissal / Blessing: Participants are advised that they will receive the commitment card of another worshipper as they depart, with the encouragement to pray for that person / commitment.

We have also provided resources for **Children's Time**. You may wish to include it in the worship service if appropriate and where appropriate, or dedicate a separate time. See *2019 Children's Time* resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca.

Materials Needed for the Service

- 1) Commitment Cards:** You will require sufficient supplies of some form of commitment card. You will need to give each worshipper two cards – one to keep and one to send forward at the Offering. Small, commercially produced, generic index cards could be used; for those who are more creative, customized cards could be printed on card stock (something heavier than plain paper is recommended, since participants are intended to take one card home and include it in their devotions).
- 2) Pens / Markers:** Since it is likely that few participants will have writing instruments of their own to use, you will want to have available a generous supply of pens / markers they can borrow to complete their commitment cards.
- 3) Worship Space:** You might wish to have an artifact reflecting Indonesian culture. For instance, you might want to collect the commitment cards into a basket with an Indonesian motif. Or you might create vibrantly coloured cards, or have vibrantly coloured textiles (perhaps yellow or gold and red – Indonesian colours) decorating your worship space.

Worship Leaders Needed for Service

Leaders are needed for the following elements of the service:

Call to Worship: (1)

Introductory Words: (1)

Prayer of Repentance: (1) leader plus (3) readers in turn (NB: at least one ordained and one layperson)

Proclamation of the Word of God: up to (3) readers, plus (1) leader for the responsorial Psalm (with the option for spoken or sung congregational response)

Sermon / Reflection: (1)

Commitment to Justice, Mercy and Unity: (1) leader, plus (2) readers

Offering: (1) person to welcome participants and distribute cards before service, then collect cards; additional support as required, depending on your attendance

Nicene Creed or other Affirmation of Faith: (1)

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer: (1) leader plus up to (4) additional intercessors

Dismissal / Blessing: (1)

Depending on the number of churches involved in the worship service, and the number of people willing to take on leadership roles, we suggest you could involve anywhere from 6-22 (!) leaders. The maximum number is calculated based on assigning a different person to each possible leadership role. For continuity and smoother flow of worship, it may be best to select only one person to fulfill all the parts described as 'leader', and a group of 4 others, representing the various communities involved in the worship service, who could serve as readers / intercessors throughout.

If you have a large number of participants, it is strongly recommended that you have someone coordinating the movements in the service, and that you rehearse before the service.

For more helpful tips, see 2019 Annotated Worship Service resource, available on www.weekofprayer.ca