

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020

Unusual kindness



Caredigrwydd anghyffredin / Cineáltas neamhghnách

18-25 January

www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer



The 2020 theme: Unusual kindness

What dates should we use?

Traditionally the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed from 18th to 25th January (the days between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul). However, some groups observe it at other times of the year, for example around Pentecost which is also a symbolic date for the unity of the Church. You are free to make your own decision, taking local factors into account. To allow for use at any time in the year, the material for the days uses the notation 1-8.

How do we use the resources?

Order – or download – material for an ecumenical act of worship, which you can use either on the Sunday or on a weekday or midweek evening. The printed pamphlet contains the service outline along with Bible readings, reflections and prayers for the eight days for use at home, in church or in a group. These resources are also available in a bilingual Welsh/English version and as a large print version, and there is also a publicity poster.

To order, send in the form on the back of this leaflet by post, or order by phone or online. If you are organising the Week of Prayer service you may decide to buy multiple copies: enough pamphlets for those who attend the service plus additional ones for those who may pray the ‘eight days’ at home or as part of a group during the Week of Prayer. Alternatively, the order of service is in the centre of the pamphlet so those pages can be pulled out and photocopied. These resources and additional ones are also available online.

Resources on our website

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020 resources will also be available to download from the CTBI website from September 2019, along with a PowerPoint and other additional material. Find it all at www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

Can the material be adapted for local use?

Yes – very much so. You can access the materials in electronic form, which can be adapted and edited, from www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer. Please acknowledge the source of material as Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020 resources. Material from previous years is also available.

Are there other ways of observing the Week of Prayer?

We hope that local churches will be creative in the ways they mark the Week of Prayer and we are always pleased to hear of what is tried and works well. Sometimes a pilgrimage around the churches is organised – on each of the eight days in a different church, following the daily Bible readings. This permits each church to

worship in its own style and offer hospitality to others. Some people organise daily prayers in their place of work. Church schools may put on services or events.

What is the reason for this year's theme?

The materials for the 2020 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the Christian churches in Malta and Gozo (Christians Together in Malta). On 10th February many Christians in Malta celebrate the Feast of the Shipwreck of St Paul, marking and giving thanks for the arrival of Christian faith on these islands. The reading from the Acts of the Apostles used for the feast is the text chosen for this year's Week of Prayer.

Hospitality is a much needed virtue in our search for Christian unity. It calls us to a greater generosity to those in need. The people who showed unusual kindness to Paul and his companions did not yet know Christ, and yet it is through their unusual kindness that a divided people were drawn closer together. Our own Christian unity will be discovered not only through showing hospitality to one another, but also through loving encounters with those who do not share our language, culture or faith.

In such tempestuous journeys and chance encounters, God's will for his Church and all people comes to fulfilment. As Paul will proclaim in Rome, this salvation of God has been sent to all peoples (see Acts 28:28).

Who is responsible for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

International material is developed each year by the International Committee for the Week of Prayer composed of members of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. This is used as a basis for our national resources, developed by writers from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales on behalf of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

What are the aims of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?

- To pray as Christ prayed 'That they may be one'.
- To pray for the unity of all Christian people as we share in Christ's ministry.

The Week of Prayer offers opportunities to meet and pray with fellow Christians of different denominations in your locality. Often new local initiatives emerge out of such meeting and praying together.

Is there all-age material for the Week of Prayer?

All-age material will be made available on the CTBI website, provided by ROOTS for Churches, the worship and learning resource (www.rootsontheweb.com).

How do we advertise the Week of Prayer locally?

You can add local details to the A3 size posters, available to order or from the website.

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