

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2013

Worship structure

for a non-liturgical Ecumenical Act of Worship

What does God require of us?

(Based on Micah 6: 6-8)





Introduction

The British and Irish resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2013 are based on the international material compiled this year by the Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI), along with the All India Catholic University Federation and the National Council of Churches in India. In reflecting on the significance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity they decided that in a context of great injustice to Dalits in India and in the Church, the search for visible unity cannot be disassociated from the dismantling of casteism and the contribution to unity by the poorest of the poor. Casteism results in the Dalits being socially marginalized, politically under-represented, economically exploited and culturally subjugated. Almost 80% of Indian Christians have a Dalit background.

During the Week of Prayer, Christians all over the world will explore in ecumenical fellowship what it means to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:6-8). This theme is developed over the eight days by the metaphor of walking. For Dalit communities, the walk towards liberation is inseparable from the walk towards unity. So our walk with Dalits this week, and with all who yearn for justice, is an integral part of the prayer for Christian unity. Christians in India should reject caste divisions, just as Christians worldwide should not accept the divisions among them: "Is Christ divided?" (1 Corinthians 1:13). As we gather to pray for the unity which Christ wills for his Church, we are called to break down such walls of divisions among and between us.

Study resources are available on the website www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer or in the printed booklet, as is the main worship service. The service outline below is offered as an alternative for those groups that prefer a less liturgical approach.

Gathering

The slow beating of a single drum, example a Dalit Drum, or some other similar simple music, during which:

The worship leaders may enter
Candles may be lit
Lights may be turned on

Leading into a **Gathering Song**

Read Micah 6: 6-8

Opening prayer

Praise

Poem, by Rabindranath Tagore, or a **psalm** may be read.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action

All: Into that heaven of freedom, let my country awake.

Worship continues with song, dance, drama, etc.

Word

Bible reading: Luke 24, 13-35

Hymn: This or another appropriate hymn or song can be sung. Singing solo may be considered. Suggested tune: Aberystwyth

Walk up on the wounded side
where the injured and the lame
find their sorrows like a tide;
no one cares to know their name.

Dare to tell me then your tale
of your burdens and your woe:
face to face with hurt this real,
minor stresses might just go.

Do not fear, the wounded side:
where pretension cannot be;
broken souls are open wide,
and you have a chance to see:
 difference you presumed is fake,
 you share all the needs you find
 and to give rather than take
 is love of the healing kind.

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Reflection / address

Reflection question / activity

Response

Stations:

Justice - Think of something you shouldn't have done, but you have done, an injustice you have committed. (Have Bible verses – e.g. Pauline words about the tongue.)

Kindness - Think of something you should have done, that you haven't, a kindness to someone else. (Have Bible verses.)

Humility – A commitment to make those two things right. Pin your confession to the cross and kneel before it.

(An alternative would be a time for testimonies about justice, kindness and humility.)

Moment of prayerful reflection (confession)

Prayer for unity

Affirmation: Galatians 3:28

Prayer of commitment

Dismissal

The people are sent out - to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.