

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2013

THEME: What does God require of us? (based on Micah 6:6-8)

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISERS**Which dates?**

The traditional period for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is **18-25 January**. Those dates were proposed for the first observance of the 'Church Unity Octave' in 1908 to cover the days between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul and they therefore have a symbolic significance. In the northern hemisphere this tradition has continued, although in the southern hemisphere churches often find other days to celebrate the week of prayer, for example around Pentecost which is also a symbolic date for the unity of the church.

You are, however, welcome to use the material at any time which is suitable for your local community or throughout the year to express the degree of communion which the churches have already reached, and to pray together for that full unity which is Christ's will.

Background

International material developed each year by the International Committee for the Week of Prayer is used as a basis for our national resources by writers from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales on behalf of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. The British and Irish resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2013 are based on international material from India where the compilers 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 of the poorest of the poor.

Using the Week of Prayer material

The British and Irish churches' writers group has put together materials suitable for use in our four nations, but you are welcome to further edit or adapt them for use in your local situation. Ideally any such adaptation should take place ecumenically. Please acknowledge the source as Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity resources.

- For churches and Christian communities which observe the week of prayer together through a single common service, the order for an ecumenical worship service is provided. A more informal non-liturgical ecumenical worship outline is offered this year as an alternative option.
- Churches and Christian communities may also incorporate material from the week of prayer into their own services. Prayers and items from the ecumenical worship services, the 'eight days' and the additional material can be used as appropriate. Please acknowledge the source.
- Communities which observe the week of prayer in their worship for each day during the week may draw material for these services from the 'eight days'.
- Discussion groups are encouraged to use the 'eight days' material for bible study, reflection, prayer and possible ecumenical action.
- Those who wish to study and pray privately may also find the material helpful, being mindful that they are in communion with others praying all around the world for the greater visible unity of Christ's church. The Commentaries on the Bible readings for the 8 Days may be particularly helpful this year for personal reflection.

The main ecumenical worship service and reflections for the eight days are available to buy as a printed booklet, as are a large print version, a bilingual Welsh/English version, and a publicity poster, from orders@norwichbooksandmusic.co.uk or online from <http://www.chbookshop.co.uk>

These are also available as free downloads from www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer along with a variety of additional resources in English, Welsh and Irish.