

Resources for
THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
and throughout the year

Has Christ been divided?
(1 Cor 1:1-17)

Jointly prepared and published by
The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches

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IN MEMORIAM

PROF. RALPH DEL COLLE (1954–2012)

Professor Ralph Del Colle, a Roman Catholic systematic theologian, Associate Professor of Theology at Marquette University (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA), died on 29 July 2012. From 1998, he was a member of the Pentecostal/Catholic International Dialogue, and took part in the Informal Conversations with the Seventh-Day Adventists (2001-2002) as well as in the official delegation attending the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare in 1998. A dedicated spirit and a joyful approach always marked his contribution to the meetings of the dialogue. Professor Del Colle never turned away from any issue, and he combined a lively and perceptive sensitivity with a dedication to the service of the truth. Throughout his career, he generously offered his expertise in the firm conviction that unity is God's will and the irrevocable path for all Christians.

PROF. MARGARET O'GARA (1947–2012)

Dr Margaret O'Gara, Professor of Theology at the University of St Michael's College, Toronto, died on 16 August 2012 after two years of illness. A Roman Catholic who specialized in Church teaching authority and ecumenical dialogue, she was active in ecumenical work for over 35 years, and was appointed to numerous ecumenical dialogue commissions. Dr O'Gara served on the Disciples of Christ/Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue (1983), the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue (1994), and the Evangelical/Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada (2008). In addition, she also served for 18 years on the Anglican/Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada (1976-1993) and for 12 years on the Lutheran/Roman Catholic International Commission for Unity (1995-2006). She also served as President of the Catholic Theological Society of America and of the North American Academy of Ecumenists.

With gratitude, the International Committee commends these great ecumenists to our heavenly Father's eternal love.

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TO THOSE ORGANIZING THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The search for unity: throughout the year

The traditional period in the northern hemisphere for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is 18-25 January. Those dates were proposed in 1908 by Paul Wattson to cover the days between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul, and therefore have a symbolic significance. In the southern hemisphere where January is a vacation time churches often find other days to celebrate the week of prayer, for example around Pentecost (suggested by the Faith and Order movement in 1926), which is also a symbolic date for the unity of the Church.

Mindful of the need for flexibility, we invite you to use this material throughout the whole 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.

Adapting the text

This material is offered with the understanding that, whenever possible, it will be adapted for use in local situations. Account should be taken of local liturgical and devotional practice, and of the whole social and cultural context. Such adaptation should ideally take place ecumenically. In some places ecumenical structures are already set up for adapting the material; in other places, we hope that the need to adapt it will be a stimulus to creating such structures.

Using the Week of Prayer material

- For churches and Christian communities which observe the week of prayer together through a single common service, an order for an ecumenical worship service is provided.
- Churches and Christian communities may also incorporate material from the week of prayer into their own services. Prayers from the ecumenical worship service, the 'eight days', and the selection of additional prayers can be used as appropriate in their own setting.
- 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'.
- Those wishing to do bible studies on the week of prayer theme can use as a basis the biblical texts and reflections given in the eight days. Each day the discussions can lead to a closing period of intercessory prayer.

- Those who wish to pray privately may find the material helpful for focusing their prayer intentions. They can be mindful that they are in communion with others praying all around the world for the greater visible unity of Christ's Church.

BIBLICAL TEXT FOR 2014

1 Corinthians 1:1-17

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind — just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you — so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you should be in agreement and that there should be no divisions among you, but that you should be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas', or 'I belong to Christ.' Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME FOR THE YEAR 2014

1. Canadians live in a country that is marked by diversity in language, culture, and even climate, and we also embody diversity in our expressions of Christian faith. Living with this diversity, but being faithful to Christ's desire for the unity of his disciples, has led us to a reflection on Paul's provocative question in 1 Corinthians: "Has Christ been Divided?" In faith we respond, "No!" yet our church communities continue to embody scandalous divisions. 1 Corinthians also points us to a way in which we can value and receive the gifts of others even now in the midst of our divisions, and that is an encouragement to us in our work for unity

2. Canada is known for its natural splendour: its mountains, forests, lakes and rivers, seas of wheat and three ocean shorelines. Our land stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the U.S. border to the north pole. This is a land rich in agriculture and natural resources. Canada is also a land of diverse peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis,¹ and many people who came to settle here from around the world. We have two official languages, French and English, yet many Canadians celebrate the cultural and linguistic heritage from their ancestral homelands. Our social and political divisions frequently hinge upon linguistic, cultural, and regional distinctions, yet we are learning to understand how these national identities contribute to a healthy Canadian diversity. Within this multicultural milieu, many Christians have brought their particular ways of worship and ministry. Paul's letter addresses us within our diversity and invites us to recognize that as church in our particular places we are not to be isolated or to act over against each other, but rather to recognize our interconnectedness with all who call on the name of the Lord.

3. In the Scripture passage chosen for our reflection this year, Paul begins his letters to the Corinthians with a powerful opening. Like an overture to an opera or the opening movement to a symphony, this passage touches on themes that certainly prepare us for what is to come in these letters. There are three movements in this text. All three lay a solid but challenging foundation for our reflections as Christians living and working together in churches and society today.

4. In the first movement (1:1-3), Paul, along with his fellow Christian Sosthenes – as a small but authentic community of two – addresses another larger and very active community, the Corinthian Christians. He addresses the Corinthians as the

¹ First Nations is a term used in Canada to acknowledge the presence of the indigenous peoples before the arrival of Europeans. The indigenous people in the Arctic call themselves Inuit. Métis is a term used to refer to people of both indigenous and French ancestry.

“Church of God,” not just as a local chapter, but as a full expression of the Church in their part of the world. Paul reminds them that they are a “called” people: “called to be saints,” not isolated and on their own, but “together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.” This last expression could also be translated as “both in their place and in ours.” So, they are authentically God’s Church but very much connected to everyone else who calls on the Lord, both in their confession and their place. Then Paul, as in all his letters, extends his usual and powerful greeting of God’s grace and peace. In Paul’s language, “grace” indicates God’s goodness and gifts to us in Christ, and is meant to draw out our gratitude to God and our graciousness to others. His “peace” for us in all its fullness and mutuality is communion (*koinonia*) in God.

5. *Where do you see God’s grace and peace in your local church, in your larger community, and in your country? How can you move beyond a preoccupation with your immediate community and attend to the community of all Christians and the world?*

6. While Paul is about to call the Corinthian community to task, he begins the next movement in our text (1:4-9) by giving thanks for “the grace of God that has been given” to the Corinthians “in Christ Jesus.” This is not just a formality, but a genuine rejoicing in the gifts God has bestowed on this community. He proceeds to build them up: “For in every way you have been enriched in him..., so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift.” They are assured that they will be strengthened to the end, and that “God is faithful.” God calls us into the fellowship (*koinonia*) of his Son with all its social and spiritual implications for our churches and peoples.

7. As Canadian Christians we are mindful that we have not always been ready to rejoice in the gifts of God present in other Christian communities. Reading Paul’s text in an ecumenical spirit, we become more conscious of being invited to rejoice sincerely in how God has blessed other Christians and other peoples. Those who first brought the Christian faith to Canada were often dismissive of the gifts and insights of the indigenous peoples, and failed to see the blessings God bestowed through them.

We have much to be grateful for in the diversity of peoples and expressions of faith in our country. Although our history has many examples of how we have not lived in mutual respect for and support of each other, we know that our country was built upon co-operation and seeking ways for peace at home and in the world. Our enjoyment of the blessings of the natural world as God-given gifts are too often taken for granted and we struggle to balance prosperity and the stewardship of these physical blessings. We struggle too to enact the values we all say we hold as Canadians. As Christians and as churches, we feel called to a receptive gratitude

towards the gifts of God in the other, and to embody thankfulness and caring for the whole country and the world.

8. What do you give thanks for in your church, in your community and in your country? How have you experienced the spiritual and/or material gifts of God among other Christians or others of your community?

9. In the third movement (1:10-17), Paul addresses hard words to the Corinthians because of the ways that they have distorted the Christian gospel and broken the unity of the community: “I belong to Paul, I belong to Apollos, I belong to Cephas.” Even those who claimed Christ as their leader were not applauded by Paul, for they used the name of Christ to separate themselves from others in the Christian community. We cannot invoke Christ’s name to build walls around us, because his name creates fellowship and unity, not divisions. “Has Christ been divided?” Paul does not object to forming communities around strong leadership, but the community is to find its fundamental identity in Christ: “Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?” Chloe’s people have seen this development among them and have brought it to light.

10. Into this state of division comes Paul’s appeal to come together and “be united in the same mind and the same purpose.” He exhorts his readers and those in Corinth “to be in agreement.” Does Paul think they should all worship and do things in the same way? We think not. These verses are not a call to leave aside the leadership of Paul, Apollos, or Cephas. Rooted in Christ, we are called to give thanks for the gifts of God that others outside our group bring to the common mission of the Church. Honouring the gifts of God in others draws us closer in faith and mission, and leads us towards that unity for which Christ prayed, with respect for authentic diversity in worship and life

11. Paul highlights two central elements of Christian discipleship in which we are fundamentally bound to Christ: baptism and the cross of Christ. We were not baptized into Paul and he was not crucified for us; our unity is in Christ and our life and salvation come from him. At the same time, we all participate in one group or another, and our local churches nurture us in faith and help us to walk as disciples of Jesus. The conclusion of the matter, both for Paul and for us, is not only our sense of belonging to a particular church. Rather, our purpose is the proclamation of the good news, the very gospel to which we have responded in faith and joy. Now we must share this message with the world. Paul’s conclusion challenges us to ask ourselves if we have good news in Christ for each other, or if we carry division even in the name of Christ, thus, in Paul’s words, emptying the Cross of its power

12. As Canadian Christians, we have a strong history of co-operation and mutual support. Our history includes examples of common efforts, shared ministries, and

even the union of several churches. Where organic unity of churches has not been possible, we have often achieved common agreements and shared ministries that witness to our growing unity in Christ. Our churches have acted together on issues related to poverty and social justice, and together many of our churches are beginning to take responsibility for our un-Christ-like attitudes towards indigenous peoples in our country. And yet, despite these encouraging movements towards the unity that Christ desires for us, we maintain the divisions and disunity that distort our proclamation of the gospel.

13. We also hear of Chloe's people. It is under Chloe's leadership that this group identifies and names the conflicts and divisions in the Corinthian church. We continue to need such witnesses, both women and men, from all of our churches, and their ministry of reconciliation and unity. Giving voice to such witness will draw us closer to realizing Paul's vision of a community having "the same purpose and mind in Christ."

14. How will you and your church discern the same purpose and mind in Christ with other churches? How will your appreciation and experience of the different approaches and forms of worship among the churches in your community or country bear fruit in efforts towards visible Christian unity? What common mission will you share with other Christians to help make the world a better place for others?

15. To conclude, when we consider the many blessings and gifts of God made manifest in our country and peoples, we begin to recognize that we must treat one another, and the very land from which we derive our living, with dignity and respect. This recognition has called us to confession and repentance, and to the seeking of new and sustainable ways of living on the earth. It has raised our consciousness about how God has blessed us all, and that no one group can decide how to use the country's resources without hearing and including the voices of our fellow Canadians.

THE PREPARATION OF THE MATERIAL FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2014

The initial work on the theme for this year's week of prayer material was prepared by a group of representatives from different parts of Canada, brought together at the invitation of the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism.

We particularly wish to thank:

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We are also grateful to Bishop Donald Bolen of Saskatoon for initiating the preparatory group, and to all those who assisted the work of the International Committee.

The texts proposed here were finalized during a meeting of the International Committee nominated by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, and the Pontifical Council for Promoting of Christian Unity. The Committee met with the Canadian representatives in September 2012 at the Villa Saint Martin, a Jesuit retreat centre at Pierrefonds, on the northwest of the island of Montreal. We are particularly grateful to the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism for generously hosting the meeting, and for arranging a visit to the Oratoire Saint Joseph in Montreal. We also wish to express thanks to the Faculty of McGill University, Montreal, for organizing an ecumenical symposium during our stay in Canada.

ECUMENICAL WORSHIP SERVICE

Introduction to the Worship Service

Has Christ been divided?

(1 Cor 1:1-17)

As we gather for worship during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we respond to God's call to us and we seek to be renewed and to build up our mutual relationship in Christ through song, word and gesture. This celebration may also serve as an invitation to explore or recall the eight days of reflection, which are linked textually to 1 Corinthians 1:1-17. We recognize Paul's provocative question: "Has Christ been divided?" as a joyful challenge to prayer and to self-examination as persons and as Christian communities. This biblical text and worship outline is an opportunity to consider that challenge anew in your context.

Here are some of the distinctive features of this year's service that may require some advance preparation:

The **Gathering of the community** includes an invitation to pray while turning to face different directions, in the tradition of some of the indigenous people of Canada. You will need to be aware of where the compass points lie for the worshipping congregation, so that they can turn clockwise as the prayer unfolds. They will need to return to the front of the worship space for the "upward" and "downward" directions, as noted. You may need to alter the prayers to reflect your own geographical context.

The “**Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts**” is a way of responding to Paul’s concern that the Corinthians have divided into factions, and his challenge: “Has Christ been divided?” We cannot live in the solitudes of our individual Christian communities and assume that we have unity. We must be willing and able to receive each other’s gifts. This is a step beyond naming a gift we have to give. It asks us to consider others, and to see in them charisms that enrich the whole body of Christ. The “Exchange” is explained in detail below. It requires some advance planning. We suggest the following:

1. Invite representatives of the different churches in your local area to reflect together on what “gift” all *receive* from each. The goal is to identify together one gift from each community that the others can agree to “receive.”
2. Ideally, you will also obtain a symbolic representation of each gift to be brought forward during the “Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts” .
3. As the gifts are brought forward they are announced using this or a similar form of words: “From the _____ church, we gratefully receive the gift of _____ represented here by _____”.

This “Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts” can of course be adapted as befits each local situation.

The **Intercessory Prayers** lift up the “Eight Millennium Goals” of the United Nations. We encourage you to print these prayers for the worshipping congregation so that they can see the specific goals embedded in the prayers.

You may wish to note for worshippers that the eight responses in the **Commitment to Unity** match the themes of the resource materials for the “eight days of prayer for unity” included in this package.

Those who sing “pray twice”. We have offered some suitable **hymns and sacred songs** from the repertoire of Canadian hymn writers and composers, commissioned especially for this 2014 Week of Prayer. These can be found at www.ecumenism.net/music/. We hope you will strive to include as much music as you can in this time of ecumenical worship!

L: Leader(s)
C: Congregation

Order of Service

I. We Gather in Hope and Unity

Processional Hymn

The worship leaders and others may enter in procession.

Gathering of the Community

L: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:3).

L: This worship service was prepared in Canada. The word, “Canada,” in the language of some of the country’s first people, the Iroquois,² means “village”. As members of the household of God Christians around the world indeed inhabit one “village.” When Christians worship, they link themselves to this vast global village, so full of beauty, of struggle and of hope. Dear friends, we welcome you to join together in prayer through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

L: Loving God, you call all of us: from our homes and from our offices, from our mines and from our factories, from our fields and from our shops, from our fishing boats and from our herds, from our schools and from our hospitals, from our prisons and from our detention centres, to be one in fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Make us one in Christ.

L: The indigenous peoples of Canada honour an ancient ritual of praying while facing in different directions. With them, let us unite in prayer, facing each of the directions as indicated:

² Pronounced: ear-uh-kwa.

Facing East

L: From the East, the direction of the rising sun, we receive peace and light and wisdom and knowledge.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing South

L: From the South comes warmth, guidance, and the beginning and the end of life.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing West

L: From the West comes the rain, purifying waters, to sustain all living things.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing North

L: From the North comes the cold and mighty wind and the white snows, giving us strength and endurance.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Turning towards the front, and facing upward

L: From the heavens we receive darkness and light and the air of your breath.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Facing downward

L: From the earth we come and to the earth we will return.

C: We are grateful, O God, for your good creation, our earthly home.

L: May we walk good paths, blessed God, living on this earth as brothers and sisters should; rejoicing in one another's blessing, sympathizing in one another's sorrows, and together with you, in the name of Jesus, and with the Spirit's awakening breath, renewing the face of the earth.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise

Prayers of Repentance

L: Inspired by Paul's appeal to the community of Corinth, let us confess our sins.

L: Gracious God, through our union with Christ Jesus you have made us rich in speech and in knowledge of every kind. In our pride, we attribute these gifts to ourselves and do not recognize their true source. Forgive us, Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy or Kyrie eleison (*may be sung*).

L: Gracious God, in Christ we are not lacking in any spiritual gift. Yet, often we are too timid or too self-absorbed to share the marvels of this life-giving message with those around us. Forgive us, Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Gracious God, you call us to fellowship in your Son, Jesus Christ. For our lack of enthusiasm to be united in one mind and one purpose; for too readily allowing divisions and quarrels to persist among us, forgive us, Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Gracious God, you remain faithful even while seeing our weakness. Forgive our sins of mediocrity and our too easy acceptance of divisions among us. By the grace of your Holy Spirit, rekindle our zeal to take concrete steps to honour our covenant of unity with you, with one another, and with all of creation.

C: Amen.

II. We Listen for the Word of God

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 57:14-19; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 1:1-17; Mark 9:33-41

Homily

III. We Respond in Faith and Unity

Affirmation of Faith

(The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Apostles' Creed or another affirmation of faith may be used.)

Hymn of Faith and Commitment

Ecumenical Exchange of Spiritual Gifts

Those preparing the service have gathered beforehand to reflect on the various gifts of the churches in the community. Either local gifts or gifts of their wider tradition may be selected. Representatives of the different churches bring objects representing the gifts that their tradition brings to the whole Christian community.

The gifts are brought forward and then placed on a table. A leader may announce the gifts using this or a similar format:

L: From the _____ church, we gratefully receive the gift of _____ represented here by _____.

C: We are grateful for these gifts, O God.

Collect

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, “Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you”. Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly city, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever. Amen.

Intercessory Prayers

Together, Canadian churches have embraced the United Nations’ “Eight Millennium Goals.” The following prayers lift up these goals.

L: We pray for all people who suffer day to day in *poverty and hunger*. Their precarious state often causes divisions; may Christ’s love restore justice and peace. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for all those striving for *universal education*. May their thirst for knowledge build bridges between our churches and restore respect in our differences. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those striving for *equal dignity and rights of man and woman*. May the image of God be honoured in all women and men. We remember especially the need for equal access to jobs, goods and services. As we become one in Christ Jesus, may we fully receive the gifts of both men and women. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for the young who are sick and those who seek to improve *child health*. As we take care of children, may we welcome Jesus himself. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for women who bear children, and for their *maternal health*. May we take care of these mothers who carry new life and whose love for their children reminds us of God’s uniting love for us. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those who “*combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases*”. May we hear the voices of those denied a life of dignity, and work to create a world in which all people are respected and cared for, and where no one is excluded. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for all who suffer the consequences of the poor stewardship of creation, and for all endangered species. Guide us to “*environmental sustainability*” so we can be reconciled with creation. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those who practice international solidarity and *global partnership*. As we favour a fair trade of goods and we cancel debt in the poorest countries, may we also strive for justice. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: As we strive to realize these goals, may we discern your voice, O Lord, and journey together towards the Kingdom for which you prayed. And so we pray:

The Lord’s Prayer (*said or sung*)

Sign of Peace

L: When the French came to Canada in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they found a land rich in resources, and were helped by its first Peoples. Their sense of gratitude led to the ship that brought the founder of Québec City being named “*Don de Dieu*”, which means “Gift of God”.

In many of the Eucharistic rites used in Canada, people are invited to holy communion with the words “The Gifts of God for the People of God.” The unity for which we pray is restored ecclesial communion with one another, and will be marked by receiving the Eucharistic gifts together. Yet even on the journey to visible unity, we give and receive other gifts from one another, gifts of God for the people of God.

In the French-speaking Province of Québec today, the expression *don de Dieu*--“gift of God”--has a fresh vitality in the Christian community and in popular culture. It recalls a sense of gratitude for the gifts of God which comes from a time when their ancestors were able to share in thanksgiving with the First Nations of Canada. As a sign of our peace and a way to recognise the gifts we receive from one another, let us say to each other with French-Canadians, “*Don de Dieu*” .

The worshippers greet one another with an embrace, bow, or handshake as they say:

C: “Don de Dieu”

Offering Hymn (*a collection may be taken during this hymn*)

IV. We Go Forth Into the World

Commitment to Unity

L: Paul challenged the Christians in Corinth to know in their hearts and to show in their actions that Christ has not been divided. He challenges us, too, to realise more fully the unity we already have in Christ.

With all those in every place who call on the Lord Jesus Christ,

C: Together, we are called to be saints.

L: Graced by God in every way,

C: Together, we give thanks for one another.

L: Rich in the many blessings God has given us through our union in Christ,

C: Together, we are not lacking in any spiritual gift.

L: Sure in the God who strengthens us for love and service,

C: Together, we affirm that God is faithful.

L: Embraced by Jesus Christ,

C: Together, we are called into fellowship.

L: United in the same mind and the same purpose,

C: Together, we seek to be in agreement.

L: Overcoming our quarrels about the one who was crucified for us,

C: Together, we belong to Christ.

L: Has Christ, then, been divided?

C: No! Together, we go into the world to proclaim his good news!

Sending Hymn

Blessing and Sending Forth

The blessing may be bestowed by several worship leaders in the form below or in another form.

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: May the love of the Lord Jesus draw you to himself,
may the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his service,
may the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your spirit,
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen

L: Go in peace,
to love and to be loved,
to welcome and to belong
to serve and to be nourished.

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude

BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS FOR THE ‘EIGHT DAYS’

DAY 1 Together... we are called to be saints

Exodus 19: 3-8	You shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation
Psalms 95: 1-7	We are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand
1 Peter 2: 9-10	Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people
Matthew 12: 46-50	Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother

Three Points for Reflection

Together, we who call upon the name of the Lord are called to be saints “sanctified in Christ Jesus” (1 Cor 1:2). In Exodus, this gathering together of God's people is described as a treasured possession, a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.

In 1 Peter, our membership in this communion of saints is understood to come as a result of God calling us together as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, God's own people. With this calling comes a shared mandate to proclaim the mighty acts of God that drew us out of darkness and into God's light.

Furthermore, we discover in Matthew that as a communion of saints, our oneness in Jesus is to extend beyond our family, clan, or class as together we pray for unity and seek to do the will of God.

Questions

- What does the term “communion of saints” mean for you or for your church tradition?
- In what ways does our calling to be a “holy nation” compel us to go beyond our local Christian setting?

Prayer

Merciful God, together with all those who call on the name of the Lord, in our brokenness we hear your call to be saints. Yet you have made us a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. By the power of your Holy Spirit, draw us together in the communion of saints and strengthen us to do your will and to proclaim the mighty acts of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

DAY 2

Together... we give thanks for God's grace in one another

Deuteronomy 26:1-11	The Lord brought us out of Egypt
Psalms 100	Give thanks to God, bless God's name
Philippians 1:3-11	I thank God every time I remember you
John 1:1-18	Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

Three points for reflection

Gratitude, in Deuteronomy, is a way of living life with a deep awareness of God's presence within us and around us. It is the ability to recognize God's grace active and alive in one another and in all people everywhere and to give God thanks. The joy that flows from this grace is so great that it embraces even "the aliens who reside among you".

Gratitude, in the ecumenical context, means being able to rejoice in the gifts of God's grace present in other Christian communities, an attitude that opens the door to ecumenical sharing of gifts and to learning from one another.

All of life is a gift from God: from the moment of creation to the moment God became flesh in the life and work of Jesus, to this moment in which we are living. Let us thank God for the gifts of grace and truth given in Jesus Christ, and manifest in one another and our churches.

Questions

- What are the gifts of God's grace that we already experience from other church traditions in our own communities?
- In what ways might Christians of different traditions better receive and share the varied gifts that God has given to each of us?

Prayer

Most loving and gracious God, we give thanks for the gifts of your grace that we experience in our own tradition and in the traditions of other churches. By the grace of your Holy Spirit, may our gratitude continue to grow as we encounter one another and experience your gift of unity in new ways. This we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DAY 3

Together... we are not lacking in any spiritual gifts

Job 28:20-28

Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom

Psalms 145:10-21

You open your hand, satisfying the desire
of every living thing

Ephesians 4:7-13

Each of us was given grace according
to the measure of Christ's gift

Mark 8:14-21

Why are you talking about having no bread?

Three Points for Reflection

Job realizes that even though all has been taken away from him, the fear of the Lord remains – that is wisdom. As brothers and sisters in Christ, even though we are impoverished by our divisions, we have all been graced with an abundance of diverse gifts, both spiritual and material to build up his body.

Yet, despite God's promises and Jesus' generous life and love, we, like the disciples in Mark, sometimes forget our true wealth: we divide, we hoard; we speak and act as if we have "no bread".

Christ has not been divided: together we have gifts enough to share with one another and "with every living thing".

Questions

- In what ways have we forgotten the abundance of God's gifts, proclaiming instead "we have no bread"?
- In what ways can we better share the spiritual and material gifts entrusted to us to share with others?

Prayer

Faithful, open-handed God, we bless you that you have given us all the spiritual gifts we need to come to the measure of the full stature of Christ : for wisdom, for gifts of service and for bread. Help us to be signs of your abundance, gathered in unity to bring the gifts of your everlasting kingdom to every place of pain and lack. Filled with the Spirit, we pray in the name of the One whose gift was the bread of his life broken for us, now and forever. Amen.

DAY 4

Together... we affirm that God is faithful

Lamentations 3:19-26	The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases
Psalms 57:7-11	God's faithfulness extends to the clouds
Hebrews 10:19-25	He who has promised is faithful
Luke 1:67-75	He has looked favourably on his people

Three points for reflection

The eternal unity of Father, Son and Spirit draws us closer into the love of God, and calls us to participate in God's work in the world which is love, mercy and justice. Mercy and justice are not divided in God, but rather are joined together in the steadfast love manifested in God's covenant with us and with all of creation.

The new father Zechariah testifies to God's manifestation of mercy in keeping his promises to Abraham and his descendents. God is faithful to his holy covenant.

As we continue to pray for the unity of the church, we must not neglect to meet together and encourage one another, spurring each other on towards love and good deeds, saying: "God is faithful."

Questions

- In what ways have you discerned God's faithfulness in your life and the life of your community in the past year?
- In what ways does God's faithfulness inspire us to pursue the goal of Christian unity?

Prayer

Faithful God, we give thanks for your steadfast love and your devotedness that extends to the clouds. As we wait in joyful hope, working and praying together for the full visible unity of your church, fill us with confidence in your promises. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the power of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DAY 5 Together... we are called into fellowship

Isaiah 43:1-7	I will be with you
Psalm 133	How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!
1 John 1:3-7	We have fellowship with one another”
John 15:12-17	I have called you friends”

Three points for reflection

We are called into fellowship with God the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. As we draw closer to the Triune God, we are drawn closer to one another in Christian unity.

Christ has initiated a change in our relationship, calling us friends instead of servants. In response to this relationship of love, we are called out of relationships of power and domination into friendship and love of one another.

Called by Jesus, we witness to the gospel both to those who have not yet heard it and to those who have. This proclamation contains a call into fellowship with God, and establishes fellowship among those who respond.

Questions

- In what ways do you experience the call into fellowship with God?
- In what ways is God calling you into fellowship with others within your church and beyond?

Prayer

Father of love, you have called us into the fellowship of your Son and appointed us to bear fruit in our witness to the gospel. By the grace of your Spirit, enable us to love one another and to dwell together in unity so that our joy may be complete. Amen.

DAY 6

Together... we seek to be in agreement

Judges 4:1-9

Psalm 34:1-14

1 Corinthians 1:10-15

Luke 22:24-30

If you go with me, I will go

Seek peace, and pursue it

Be united in the same mind and the same purpose

A dispute also arose among them

Three points for reflection

The disunity described in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13 reflects a distortion of the gospel, undermining the integrity of the message of Christ. To acknowledge conflict and division, as Chloe's people did, is the first step to establishing unity.

Women like Deborah and Chloe raise a prophetic voice among God's people in times of conflict and division, confronting us with the need to be reconciled. Such prophetic voices may enable people to gather in renewed unity for action.

As we strive to be united in the same mind and the same purpose, we are called to seek the Lord and his peace as the psalmist wrote.

Questions

- Can you remember an occasion when the prophetic naming of a painful church disagreement was the beginning of a renewed struggle towards greater unity?
- What issues still cause divisions among us as an ecumenical body? What paths do you see towards greater unity?

Prayer

Loving God, you give us prophetic witnesses in times of conflict and division. When we seek you, Lord, send us your Holy Spirit to make us artisans of reconciliation, united in the same mind and the same purpose. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

DAY 7

Together... we belong to Christ

Isaiah 19:19-25

God will send them a saviour

Psalms 139:1-12

Where can I go from your spirit?

1 Corinthians 12:12-26

If one member suffers... If one member is honoured...

Mark 9:38-41

Whoever is not against us is for us

Three points for reflection

Isaiah envisioned a day when Egyptians and Assyrians would worship together with Israel as God's people. Christian unity belongs to the design of God for the unity of all humanity, and indeed of the cosmos itself. We pray for the day when we will worship together in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship.

We are blessed by the gifts of various church traditions. Recognising those gifts in each other impels us towards visible unity.

Our baptism unites us as one body in Christ. While we value our particular churches, Paul reminds us that all who call on the name of the Lord are with us in Christ for we all belong to the one body. There is no other to whom we can say, "I have no need of you" (1 Cor 12:21).

Questions

- What are the signs of "belonging to Christ"?
- In what ways can the phrase "I belong to Christ" be used to divide Christians rather than unite them?

Prayer

We give you thanks, O God, that you bless each and every member of the body of Christ with the gifts of your Spirit. Help us to be supportive of one another, to be respectful of our differences, and to work for the unity of all throughout the world who call upon Jesus as Lord. Amen.

DAY 8

Together... we proclaim the gospel

Isaiah 61:1-4

The spirit of the Lord God has sent me
to bring good news

Psalms 145:1-7

One generation shall laud your works to another

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

For I handed on to you what I in turn had received

Luke 4:14-21

Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing

Three points for reflection

Together we proclaim anew the good news prophesied in Isaiah, fulfilled in our Lord Jesus, preached by the Apostle Paul, and received by the Church. Facing honestly the differences we have and the labels of denomination we embrace, we must never lose sight of the common mandate we have in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul is sent “to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power” (1 Cor 1:17). The path to unity is to be found in the power of the cross.

The Gospel we proclaim is made tangible and relevant to us as we bear witness to the work of Jesus Christ in our own lives and the life of the Christian community.

Questions

- In what ways is the “gospel” you have received bound up with its cultural and historic transmission ?
- Has that been an obstacle to unity?
- How would our fuller unity in Christ make us better witnesses to the gospel we have received?

Prayer

Gracious God, you sent your son Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit to redeem your people. Unite us in our diversity, that we might affirm and proclaim together the good news of the life, death and resurrection of Christ for a world in need of his gospel. Amen.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014 are available on the website “Ecumenism in Canada” at the following address:

<http://ecumenism.net/music/>

The files listed there have been submitted in response to an open call to Canadian composers to submit music on the theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014 (Has Christ Been Divided? 1 Cor 1:1-17) or on the general theme of prayer for Christian unity.

Please download any or all of these pieces and use them in your prayer for Christian unity.

THE ECUMENICAL CONTEXT IN CANADA³

Among the many factors that influence Canadian religious experience is the sheer size of our country. Canada is the second largest country in the world, 40% of which is in the Arctic, north of 60° latitude. Stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the United States to the North Pole, Canada has ten provinces and three territories. We are surrounded by three oceans: the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic. Our only land border is with the United States and it has experienced almost 200 years of peace. Canada is a confederation of former British colonies, with a parliamentary form of government in a federal system of ten provinces and three territories. The union of the former colonial territories and independence from Britain occurred peacefully, and Canada remains a strong proponent of international engagement and cooperation. The vast distances between our cities have promoted both self-reliance and formation of distinct identities in the regions, but can also engender feelings of alienation or resentment.

Canada is known for its natural splendour: its mountains, forests, lakes and rivers, seas of wheat and three ocean shorelines. This is a land rich in agriculture and

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natural resources. Canada is also a land of diverse peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis,⁴ and many people who came to settle here from around the world. We have two official languages, French and English, yet many Canadians also celebrate the cultural and linguistic heritages of their ancestral homelands.

Jacques Cartier, the earliest French explorer to navigate the waters of the St. Lawrence River, was the first European to hear the indigenous people use the word “Canada,” which means “village.” The first settlers from France were mainly Roman Catholic but there were also a good number of Protestants, mainly Huguenot merchants. The religious tensions in France were not felt in New France with groups such as the Jesuits readily cooperating with Protestants. But sadly, the early period of collaboration gave way to discrimination and eventually only Catholics were officially admitted as settlers to New France. The original name of Montréal, “Ville Marie,” proclaimed these Catholic foundations.

In the mid-18th century, New France was ceded to Great Britain and the mainly Catholic French-Canadian families became subjects of the Anglican king of England. At a time when Britain still had laws discriminating against Catholics, religious freedom was granted in Canada by the Crown along with linguistic, educational, and cultural freedoms. Nevertheless, there were alternating periods of tolerance and of hardship under this regime. Until the 1950s, Catholic bishops oversaw most of the social institutions in the French communities. Meanwhile, the country grew and integrated waves of immigrants in the succeeding years. English, Scottish and Irish settlers began arriving at the end of the 18th century. Subsequent waves of immigration through the 19th century from Western and Eastern Europe have been joined more recently by large numbers of Latin American, African, Middle Eastern, and Asian peoples. In the 20th century, people from all parts of the world have come to Canada as immigrants and refugees, including significant numbers of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox from Eastern Europe and the Middle East whose Christian traditions enriched the Canadian landscape. Today, Canadian Christians worship in hundreds of languages and dialects and preserve distinctive elements of their cultures within a rich cultural and religious mosaic. Members of other religions have also settled in Canada, including Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Baha'i. Canadian cities rank among the most multicultural and multi-religious in the world. Earlier government policies promoting assimilation have been replaced by official multiculturalism since the 1970s. The country has been enriched by the contributions of citizens from diverse ethnic origins and we rejoice

⁴ First Nations is a term used in Canada to acknowledge the presence of the indigenous peoples before the arrival of Europeans. The indigenous people in the Arctic call themselves Inuit. Métis is a term used to refer to people of both indigenous and French ancestry.

at their visible presence in the political, educational, health, arts, communications, business, and religious arenas.

For over a hundred and fifty years, some of the Christian denominations of Canada worked with the federal government to operate Indian Residential Schools, which took aboriginal children, often against the will of their parents, to be taught and assimilated into European culture. These schools, which sought to eradicate indigenous language and culture, were often sites of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. The largest churches in Canada – Roman Catholic, United, Anglican, and Presbyterian – were complicit and have recently apologized in a variety of ways. These churches now work closely together with aboriginal people in the search for justice, healing, truth, and reconciliation, most recently through a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission⁵, which is part of an overall holistic and comprehensive response to the Indian Residential School legacy.

From our earliest frontier experiences, Canadian churches have developed an instinct for cooperation in pastoral ministry. As early as the 1880s, Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist missions in Western Canada cooperated in allocating responsibility for mission. These led to union churches, which formed part of the impetus for the founding of the United Church of Canada in 1925, the world's first modern ecumenical church union. Proponents of this union saw it as a way to provide unified Christian leadership in the project of nation-building. Today, cooperation in ministry takes many other forms. Spiritual care ministry is shared through ecumenical chaplaincies in prisons, hospitals, universities, and the military. Most formal theological education across the country occurs in ecumenical schools or consortia. Other forms of cooperation have developed in congregational ministry, such as Ecumenical Shared Ministries where two or more denominations share buildings, clergy, or programs and engage in weekly common worship.

Twenty-four denominations come together in the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), one of the broadest and most inclusive church councils in the world, encompassing Anglican, Catholic, Reformed, Evangelical, Free Church, and Eastern and Oriental Orthodox traditions. The CCC, which uses a consensus model of decision-making, was founded in 1944 and its current denominational membership represents 85% of the Christians in Canada. It is of substantive note that the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is a full member of the CCC as are six Evangelical denominations. The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) brings together denominations, para-church ministries, and local congregations

⁵ See <http://trc.ca> for further information on the Indian Residential Schools and the settlement agreement.

across the Evangelical and Pentecostal spectrum. A number of churches are members or observers in both the CCC and the EFC. These two bodies have been working more closely together in recent years.

Many Canadian churches are engaged in bilateral and multilateral relationships both at national and local levels. The most significant organic union has been the coming together of numerous Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist churches in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada, but many other forms of fellowship and communion have developed, including the Anglican-Lutheran *Waterloo Declaration* on full communion in 2001. The Canadian theological dialogues have contributed to local study and reflection and have shared their insights in the international dialogues.

One of the many innovative aspects of Canadian ecumenism is the formation of more than fifty inter-church coalitions for social justice beginning in the 1960s. Project Ploughshares, the Women's Interchurch Council of Canada, KAIROS-Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, the Canadian Churches' Forum on Global Ministries, and others have assisted the churches and government in research and engagement with complex social issues.

The Canadian Centre for Ecumenism was founded by Fr. Irénée Beaubien in Montréal in 1963 in a very vibrant French and English milieu. It offers national resources such as *Ecumenism* magazine which is published in French and English editions and sent to subscribers in forty countries. The Centre's ongoing sensitivity to social movements is demonstrated in the new Green Church program which helps churches of all denominations to become better stewards of creation.

The calling of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s positively impacted the growth of ecumenism in Canada. Canadian ecumenical insight and experience are evident in the 1962 pastoral letter of Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger, archbishop of Montréal, titled *Chrétiens désunis (Disunited Christians)*. Léger did not call for the conversion of Protestants to Catholicism, but invited Catholics to pray for unity, particularly through the revival and conversion of the Catholic Church itself. In words that anticipated the Second Vatican Council, the cardinal acknowledged that "the concern for unity is becoming the main focus of contemporary Christianity" and that this important movement was "born under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit." In this reflection on the mystery of the unity and disunity of Christians, he stressed that all validly baptized persons "are inserted into Christ and become one body with him." He also noted that in light of the express will of Christ, disunity is "a scandal" and "evil." Thus, the cardinal urged his flock to pray for unity and to enter into dialogue with their fellow Christians, recognizing that the responsibilities for disunity are shared on both sides.

Having heard of the discrete monthly meetings between Protestant pastors and Catholic priests organized in Montréal by Fr. Beaubien beginning in 1958, the World Council of Churches chose to hold the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order in that city in 1963. This gathering of over 450 theologians from many different denominations and countries, warmly welcomed by a mainly Catholic population, constituted a major ecumenical happening. An evening of Christian fellowship held during the conference at the Université de Montréal brought together 1,500 Christians. At Expo 67, the World's Fair held in Montréal, Canada's main churches and the Vatican put aside the practice of separate kiosks to come together in one common "Christian Pavilion." In the history of World's Fairs, this was the first time an ecumenical pavilion had been erected.

Other ecumenical groups emerged after the Second Vatican Council and in the decades that followed: the Atlantic Ecumenical Council (1966), the Quebec Ecumenical Network (1982), and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism (1984) are of particular note. The Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, founded in Saskatoon by Fr. Bernard de Margerie, is sponsored by seven denominations and has a focus on ecumenical education and formation, as well as serving as a national resource for Ecumenical Shared Ministries. Across the country, local ecumenism is promoted by ministerial groups in rural communities and urban neighbourhoods as well as by numerous councils of churches. Several ecumenical initiatives flourish throughout the country: shared celebrations of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, common formation in theological faculties, activities for peace and social justice, publications, etc. As an integral part of Church life in Canada, interchurch families live the challenges and blessings of the work for Christian unity and frequently provide leadership in ecumenical ministries.

A highlight of recent ecumenical life has been the growing involvement of Evangelical churches and pastors in local ecumenical gatherings, in ecumenical worship and dialogue, and in community ministries. Following upon a period of internal Evangelical rapprochement, we now see opportunities for new dialogue partnerships between the historic mainline Protestant churches, Evangelicals and Pentecostals, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, and Roman Catholics. Evangelicals in Canada are reaching out to other local churches seeking dialogue, opportunities to worship together, and cooperation in witness to our cities. Churches are facing a common reality in which they no longer have the social influence that they once enjoyed, and for many historic churches membership rolls are dramatically declining.

Differences within the Christian community over the priority or need to evangelize people of other living faiths have continued to be factors inhibiting cooperation. Nevertheless, Christian cooperation in inter-religious dialogue has increased in recent years and is frequently undertaken collaboratively between churches.

Has Christ been divided in Canada? It can certainly be said that there are divisions among Christians in Canada. The Christian community is divided over the role of women in both church and society as well as over ethical issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage. Many of these divisions cut across denominational lines. However, in the face of new social issues some religious communities have begun to engage with their neighbours in new and positive ways. Indeed, Canadian history has seen periods of tension and rivalry, of life lived in ignorance and indifference to each other. Through it all, we have learned to take into consideration the values of others in order to live peaceably together. We continue to be divided by doctrine, polity, and practice, and to maintain our own religious solitudes, yet our pilgrimage towards unity continues under God's guidance.

The aspirations expressed in this prayer from the 1967 Canadian Centennial celebrations still reflect the modern Canadian character:

“Let us pray and live for a world where people of all nations will be united in thought, word and deed; help us to be transparently honest, pure, and loving in our relations with others in our world and every world. Let us pray for harmony and self-fulfilment for every soul in this nation and every nation; help us to work and live so that hunger, poverty, ignorance, and disease will disappear and thy kingdom will come indeed. Amen.”

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Themes 1968-2014

In 1968, materials jointly prepared by the WCC Faith and Order Commission and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity were first used.

- 1968 To the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:14)
Pour la louange de sa gloire

- 1969 Called to freedom (Galatians 5:13)
Appelés à la liberté
(Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy)

- 1970 We are fellow workers for God (1 Corinthians 3:9)
Nous sommes les coopérateurs de Dieu
(Preparatory meeting held at the Monastery of Niederaltaich,
Federal Republic of Germany)

- 1971 ...and the communion of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:13)
...et la communion du Saint-Esprit
- 1972 I give you a new commandment (John 13:34)
Je vous donne un commandement nouveau
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1973 Lord, teach us to pray (Luke 11:1)
Seigneur, apprends-nous à prier
(Preparatory meeting held at the Abbey of Montserrat, Spain)
- 1974 That every tongue confess: Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:1-13)
Que tous confessent : Jésus-Christ est Seigneur
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1975 God's purpose: all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-10)
La volonté du Père : Tout réunir sous un seul chef, le Christ
(Material from an Australian group. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1976 We shall be like him (1 John 3:2) or, Called to become what we are
Appelés à devenir ce que nous sommes
(Material from Caribbean Conference of Churches.
Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy)
- 1977 Enduring together in hope (Romans 5:1-5)
L'espérance ne déçoit pas
(Material from Lebanon, in the midst of a civil war.
Preparatory meeting held in Geneva)
- 1978 No longer strangers (Ephesians 2:13-22)
Vous n'êtes plus des étrangers
(Material from an ecumenical team in Manchester, England)
- 1979 Serve one another to the glory of God (1 Peter 4:7-11)
Soyez au service les uns des autres pour la gloire de Dieu
(Material from Argentina - preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1980 Your kingdom come (Matthew 6:10)
Que ton règne vienne!
(Material from an ecumenical group in Berlin, German Democratic Republic -preparatory meeting held in Milan)

- 1981 One Spirit - many gifts - one body (1 Corinthians 12:3b-13)
Un seul esprit - des dons divers - un seul corps
(Material from Graymoor Fathers, USA – preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1982 May all find their home in you, O Lord (Psalm 84)
Que tous trouvent leur demeure en Toi, Seigneur
(Material from Kenya - preparatory meeting held in Milan, Italy)
- 1983 Jesus Christ - the Life of the World (1 John 1:1-4)
Jesus Christ - La Vie du Monde
(Material from an ecumenical group in Ireland - preparatory meeting held in Céligny (Bossey), Switzerland)
- 1984 Called to be one through the cross of our Lord (1 Cor 2:2 and Col 1:20)
Appelés à l'unité par la croix de notre Seigneur
(Preparatory meeting held in Venice, Italy)
- 1985 From death to life with Christ (Ephesians 2:4-7)
De la mort à la vie avec le Christ
(Material from Jamaica - preparatory meeting held in Grandchamp, Switzerland)
- 1986 You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:6-8)
Vous serez mes témoins
(Material from Yugoslavia (Slovenia), preparatory meeting held in Yugoslavia)
- 1987 United in Christ - a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17-6:4a)
Unis dans le Christ - une nouvelle création
(Material from England, preparatory meeting held in Taizé, France)
- 1988 The love of God casts out fear (1 John 4:18)
L'Amour de Dieu bannit la Crainte
(Material from Italy - preparatory meeting held in Pinerolo, Italy)
- 1989 Building community: one body in Christ (Romans 12:5-6a)
Bâtir la communauté : Un seul corps en Christ
(Material from Canada - preparatory meeting held in Whaley Bridge, England)
- 1990 That they all may be one...That the world may believe (John 17)
Que tous soient un...Afin que le monde croie
(Material from Spain - preparatory meeting held in Madrid, Spain)

- 1991 Praise the Lord, all you nations! (Psalm 117 and Romans 15:5-13)
Nations, louez toutes le Seigneur
(Material from Germany - preparatory meeting held in Rotenburg an der Fulda, Federal Republic of Germany)
- 1992 I am with you always... Go, therefore (Matthew 28:16-20)
Je suis avec vous... allez donc
(Material from Belgium - preparatory meeting held in Bruges, Belgium)
- 1993 Bearing the fruit of the Spirit for Christian unity (Galatians 5:22-23)
Pour l'unité : laisser mûrir en nous les fruits de l'Esprit
(Material from Zaire - preparatory meeting held near Zurich, Switzerland)
- 1994 The household of God: called to be one in heart and mind (Acts 4:23-37)
La maison de Dieu : Appelés à être un dans le cœur et dans l'esprit
(Material from Ireland - preparatory meeting held in Dublin, Republic of Ireland)
- 1995 Koinonia: communion in God and with one another (John 15:1-17)
La koinonia : communion en Dieu et les uns avec les autres
(Material from Faith and Order, preparatory meeting held in Bristol, England)
- 1996 Behold, I stand at the door and knock (Revelation 3:14-22)
Je me tiens à la porte et je frappe
(Preparatory material from Portugal, meeting held in Lisbon, Portugal)
- 1997 We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God
(2 Corinthians 5:20)
Au nom du Christ, laissez-vous réconcilier avec Dieu
(Material from Nordic Ecumenical Council, preparatory meeting held in Stockholm, Sweden)
- 1998 The Spirit helps us in our weakness (Romans 8:14-27)
L'Esprit aussi vient en aide à notre faiblesse
(Preparatory material from France, meeting held in Paris, France)

- 1999 He will dwell with them as their God, they will be his peoples
(Revelation 21:1-7)
Dieu demeurera avec eux. Ils seront ses peuples
et lui sera le Dieu qui est avec eux
(Preparatory material from Malaysia, meeting held in Monastery of Bose,
Italy)
- 2000 Blessed be God who has blessed us in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14)
Béni soit Dieu, qui nous a bénis en Christ
(Preparatory material from the Middle East Council of Churches, meeting
held La Verna, Italy)
- 2001 I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life (John 14:1-6)
Je suis le chemin, et la vérité et la vie
(Preparatory material from Romania and meeting held at Vulcan,
Romania)
- 2002 For with you is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:5-9)
Car chez toi est la fontaine de la vie (Psalm 35, 6-10)
(Preparatory material CEEC and CEC, meeting near Augsburg, Germany)
- 2003 We have this treasure in clay jars (2 Corinthians 4:4-18)
Car nous avons ce trésor dans des vases d'argile
(Preparatory material churches in Argentina, meeting at Los Rubios,
Spain)
- 2004 My peace I give to you (John 14:23-31; John 14:27)
Je vous donne ma paix
(Preparatory material from Aleppo, Syria - meeting in Palermo, Sicily)
- 2005 Christ, the one foundation of the church (1 Corinthians 3:1-23)
Le Christ, unique fondement de l'Eglise
(Preparatory material from Slovakia - meeting in Piestaň, Slovakia)
- 2006 Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them
(Matthew 18:18-20)
Là où deux ou trois se trouvent réunis en mon nom, je suis au milieu
d'eux.
(Preparatory material from Ireland - meeting held in Prosperous, Co.
Kildare, Ireland)

- 2007 He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak (Mark 7:31-37)
Il fait entendre les sourds et parler les muets
(Preparatory material from South Africa – meeting held in Faverges, France)
- 2008 Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:(12a) 13b-18)
Priez sans cesse
(Preparatory material from USA – meeting held in Graymoor, Garrison, USA)
- 2009 That they may become one in your hand (Ezekiel 37:15-28)
Ils seront unis dans ta main
(Preparatory material from Korea – meeting held in Marseilles, France)
- 2010 You are witnesses of these things (Luke 24:48)
...de tout cela, c'est vous qui êtes les témoins
(Preparatory material from Scotland – meeting held in Glasgow, Scotland)
- 2011 One in the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer
(cf. Acts 2:42)
Unis dans l'enseignement des apôtres, la communion fraternelle, la fraction du pain et la prière
(Preparatory material from Jerusalem – meeting held in Saydnaya, Syria)
- 2012 We will all be Changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ
(cf. 1 Cor 15:51-58)
Tous, nous serons transformés par la victoire de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ
(Preparatory material from Poland – meeting held in Warsaw, Poland)
- 2013 What does God require of us? (cf. Mi 6, 6-8)
Que nous demande le Seigneur ?
(Preparatory material from India – meeting held in Bangalore, India)
- 2014 Has Christ been divided ? (1 Corinthians 1:1-17)
Le Christ est-il divisé ?
(Preparatory material from Canada – meeting held in Montréal, Canada)

KEY DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

- c. 1740 In Scotland a Pentecostal movement arose, with North American links, whose revivalist message included prayers for and with all churches.
- 1820 The Rev. James Haldane Stewart publishes “Hints for the General Union of Christians for the Outpouring of the Spirit”.
- 1840 The Rev. Ignatius Spencer, a convert to Roman Catholicism, suggests a ‘Union of Prayer for Unity’.
- 1867 The First Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops emphasizes prayer for unity in the Preamble to its Resolutions.
- 1894 Pope Leo XIII encourages the practice of a Prayer Octave for Unity in the context of Pentecost.
- 1908 First observance of the ‘Church Unity Octave’ initiated by the Rev. Paul Wattson.
- 1926 The Faith and Order movement begins publishing “Suggestions for an Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity”.
- 1935 Abbé Paul Couturier of France advocates the ‘Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity’ on the inclusive basis of prayer for “the unity Christ wills by the means he wills”.
- 1958 Unité Chrétienne (Lyons, France) and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches begin co-operative preparation of materials for the Week of Prayer.
- 1964 In Jerusalem, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I prayed together Jesus’ prayer “that they all may be one” (John 17).
- 1964 The Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II emphasizes that prayer is the soul of the ecumenical movement and encourages observance of the Week of Prayer.

- 1966 The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity [now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity] begin official joint preparation of the Week of Prayer material.
- 1968 First official use of Week of Prayer material prepared jointly by Faith and Order and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity).
- 1975 First use of Week of Prayer material based on a draft text prepared by a local ecumenical group. An Australian group was the first to take up this plan in preparing the 1975 initial draft.
- 1988 Week of Prayer materials were used in the inaugural worship for The Christian Federation of Malaysia, which links the major Christian groupings in that country.
- 1994 International group preparing text for 1996 included representatives from YMCA and YWCA.
- 2004 Agreement reached that resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity be jointly published and produced in the same format by Faith and Order (WCC) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (Catholic Church).
- 2008 Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. (Its predecessor, the Church Unity Octave, was first observed in 1908).