

Liturgical Resources for the “Week of Christian Unity Sunday,” January 22, 2017

THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity.

Triune God, may our worship today and our lives always, be a visible witness to the unity you intend for all humankind.

THE CALL TO CONFESSION: Through the confession of our sins, let us make room in our hearts for the wideness of God’s mercy that extends to all of God’s creation.

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison) **Gracious God, your unifying Spirit calls us to be one with you and one with each other, and yet we remain divided.**

Forgive our fears, our anxieties, our prejudices and our misunderstandings.

Strengthen our common bonds and deepen our resolve to promote the unity of our ministry in your Son’s name. Amen.

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON: Sisters and brothers, together we receive God’s mercy. In Christ, we are forgiven, redeemed and made to be a faith community united in ministry.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

THE PASSING OF CHRIST’S PEACE: Sisters and brothers, let us begin to break down the walls that divide us, by sharing with one another signs of peace, unity and love.

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION: Let us pray...As the word is proclaimed, pour out your unifying Spirit upon us again O God, so that we may remain faithful in service and steadfast in communion with you and one another. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE DAY: Let us pray...Most Holy God, we come before you this day, offering our prayers for the unity of the church. Help us to see ourselves as rays from one sun, branches from a single tree and streams flowing from one river.

Most Holy God, you are our common source of strength. Send upon us now your light and love, uniting us with you and each other in ministry. Bless the work that we do together through the United Churches of Lycoming County and through all of the Ecumenical organizations working locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Most Holy God, as we recall your Son’s prayer “That they may all be one,” remind us of the example we set by working together and the good we accomplish by pooling our resources.

THE CALL TO OFFERING: United in mind and purpose, let us now be united in our giving, to further the ministry we do together in Christ’s name.

THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison) Generous God, we offer these tithes and offerings as a sign of our desire to share our resources for the common good. We humbly ask now for your blessing upon these gifts. Use them to strengthen our united outreach to our sisters and brothers in need. Amen.

THE BENEDICTION: Our worship has ended, now our service begins. Go forth with the grace and peace of God to live together in harmony. Go forth with the love and imagination of God to find ways to strengthen our unity in Christ. And go forth with the courage of the Holy Spirit to carry out these commitments. Amen.

Worship resources were reproduced or adapted from; The Worship Sourcebook, the book, "Prayers of Confession and Assurance" by Kenneth Carter Jr., and The Abingdon Worship Annual 2017.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
JANUARY 18–25, 2018

PRAYER / WORSHIP: A Selection of Thematic Music

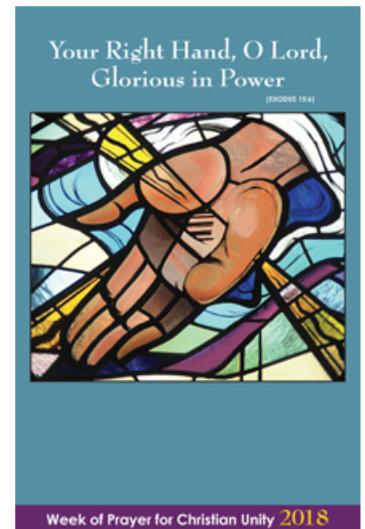
A Selection of Thematic Music for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2018

The following is a list of Hymns that possibly could be used in conjunction with the 2018 celebration of the Week of Prayer For Christian Unity. It is by no means an exhaustive listing. The hymns were chosen from the hymnals of various religious. It is important to note that many of these hymns are common to various religious denominations. In planning for your celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity you may find the hymn in more than one hymnal.

Baptist

Can we by searching find out God
O God, unseen, yet ever near
Our Father, by whose servants
He Leadeth Me
His Name is Wonderful
will Sing the Wonderous Song
Just As I am
Like A River Glorious
Spread, O spread, thou mighty word
Jesus Shall Reign Where'ere the Sun
Take My Life and Let it Be
Tell Out My Soul the Greatness of God
Your love, O God, has called us
Trust in Jesus
Stand Up and Bless the Lord

Church of God



A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
As For Me and My House
Be Thou My Vision
Cleanse Me
Fairest Lord Jesus
Footsteps of Jesus
Forever Shall He Reign
Glorious Things Of Thee Are Spoken
God Is Our Refuge and Strength
I Know In Whom I Believe
I Love To Tell The Story
Love Lifted Me Up
Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus
Take Time to Be Holy
Unto God I lift My Voice
Wonderful Words of Life

Contemporary

Awesome God
Be Glorified
Beautiful Savior (All My Days)
Broken and Beautiful
Every Move I Make
Go Light Your World
Lord You Are
Lord I Lift Your Name on High
Open The Eyes of My Heart
Now is the Time
Sending
Surrender
Take My Life
The Lord Upholds My Life
Walk the World
What This World Needs
Who Am I
Worthy to Be Praise
Your Love is Extravagant

Episcopal

A Hymn of Glory, Let Us Sing
All who love and serve your city
Be A Faithful Witness For the Lord
Christ Thou Alone
Christ For the World We Sing
Hark A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding
How Wondrous Great, How Glorious Bright
Jesus Want Me For A Witness
Lord, make us servants of your peace
Nature with Open Hands
O God Unseen, Yet Ever Near
Reflect the Christ
He Is The Way
Remember your servants, Lord
Stand up, stand up for Jesus
The Great Creator of the Worlds
Tell Out My Soul, The Greatness of the Lord
To Worship, To Work and To Witness
My Way, My Faith, My Life
God of justice and love

Lutheran

All Depends on Our Possessing
All Glory Be To God Alone
Beautiful Savior
Be Strong In The Lord
Christians Come I Sweetest Measure
Flung to the Heedless Winds
Glorious Things Of You Are Spoken
Heaven shall not wait
How Sweet the Name of Jesus
Come and Let us Worship God
My Father Look Upon Thee
In all our living/When We Are Living / Pues Si Vivimos
I Leave All Things To God's Direction

Jesus Christ Your Living Word
Lord of Glory, You Have Brought Us
Listen to the word which God has spoken
O God of Mercy, O God of Might
Take O Take Me As I Am
Today Thy Mercy Calls Us
Thou Art The Way, In Thee Alone
We Bid Thee Welcome
Whoever lives besides the Lord

Methodist

Be A Witness For the Master
Blest Be the Tie That Binds
Child of Blessing Child of Promise
Close to Thee
Come Sinner to the Gospel Feast
I Sing The ALmighty Power of God
Jesus Es I Rey Soberano
God of Grace and God of Glory
My Hope Is Built
Nearer My God To Thee
Nothing Between
O Church of God United
O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing
Pues Si Vivamos
Rule of Life
Standing in the Promise
There's A Spirit of love in this place
To God Be Glory
Ye Are Witnesses

Presbyterian

Be A Light For Jesus, A Witness for Your King
Blessed Be the Tie that Binds
Called as Partners in Christ's Service
Christian Women, Christian Men

Go As A Witness for Jesus
God Be Merciful To Me
God of the Ages Whose Almighty Hand
Great God Your Love Has Called Us Here
Help Us Accept Each Other
Jesus, our divine Companion
Jesus loves me! This I know
Many and Great, O Lord. Are Your Works
Chway jim ma tun oo ree goo joo (What a friend we have in Jesus)
Your Hand O God Has Guided

Roman Catholic

City of God
Here I Am Lord
If You Believe and I Believe
Lord, Today
Glorious In Majesty
One Is The Body
Servant Song
Sing of the Lord's Goodness
Sing Praise To God Who Reigns Above
Song of the Body of Christ
Though The Mountains May Fall
Voices That Challenge
Water of Life
We Are Called

Seventh Day Adventist

Christ The Lord, All Power Possessing
I Would Draw Nearer to Jesus
I Will Sing of Jesus' Love
I saw One Weary
Jesus Calls Us
Jesus Is All To Me
Majesty and Power of God
Rise Up O Church of God

Shower of Blessing
The Spacious Firmament
Turn Your Eyes Upon Me Jesus

UCC

Be Strong in the Lord
Draw the Circle Wide
Eternal Father String To Save
Every Step of the Way
Go As A Witness For Jesus
Guide Me, Thou, O Great Jehovah
I Am Saved for A Witness
I'm Determined
I'm Convinced
I Need You to Survive
I Worship You, Almighty God
One In Christ
Our God Reigns
The Wonder of it All
What A Mighty God We Serve
We Stand Humbly in God's Grace
Wade In the Water

In addition to the above suggested hymns, in celebration of 100 years of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the National Pastoral Musicians Association of the United States announced a Hymn Competition. The winners of this competition are printed within these materials. A one-time use permission is granted for celebrations during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Should you desire to use the works throughout the liturgical year and for other celebrations, permission to use must be obtained from the publisher. Copies of these award winning hymns are available for download at www.npm.org (<http://www.npm.org/>).

“Family of Faith” — Steven Ottományi, 2007

Steven Ottományi, Director of Liturgy and Music at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Huntington Beach, California, has created a new hymn text entitled “Family of Faith” that may be sung to several different tunes familiar to English-speaking Christians. In just four brief stanzas the hymn forms a prayer to Christ to bring about the change of heart required for genuine unity in one family of faith.

Family of Faith - Steven Ottományi

Lord Jesus Christ, who rose from death,
Our spirit's life, our spirit's breath:
You show the way that leads to peace,
Where anger sleeps, where hatreds cease.

O Key of David, open wide
The doors now blocked by human pride.
Come, change our hearts, make clear our need
To follow where your will shall lead.

And still, O Lord, you walk our way;
You walk with us both night and day.
You call us, Lord, in love to be
A sign of hope, of unity.

So lead us, Lord, to live and claim
All that it means to bear your name.
Now make of us one family
Of faith, of hope, of charity.

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This hymn may be sung to the following hymn tunes:

PROSPECT, LM, W. Walter, *Southern Harmony*, 1835;

OLD 100TH, LM, from *Genevan Psalter*, attr. to Louis Bourgeois, ca. 1510-1535.

PUER NOBIS, LM, adapt. by Michael Prætorius, 1571-1621.

DUKE STREET, LM, John Hatton, c. 1710-1793.

“That All May Be One In Christ”

Father Ricky Manalo collaborated with Spanish and Vietnamese text writers to produce a new Communion song entitled “That All May Be One in Christ”. Rodolfo López and Nguyen Dinh Dien translated the text of Manalo's English refrain and then each created three original verses in Spanish and Vietnamese in keeping with the theme of the song yet reflecting their own unique cultural perspective. The result is a liturgical song for the Communion procession that both seeks and expresses unity in diversity. The English version follows. For a copy of the hymn with the verses in the other languages, click the link below.

That All May Be One in Christ Sheet Music

**(<http://www.npm.org/assets/That%20All%20May%20Be%20One%20in%20Christ%20Communion%20Song.pdf>)
[PDF]**

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2018

**PRAYER / WORSHIP: An Ecumenical Celebration of the Word
of God**

**Your Right Hand, O Lord, Glorious in Power
(Exodus 15:6)**

View in Spanish (celebracion_ecumenica.html)

“L” refers to the leader(s) of worship and is chosen from those churches present at worship.

“A” refers to the assembly gathered for worship.

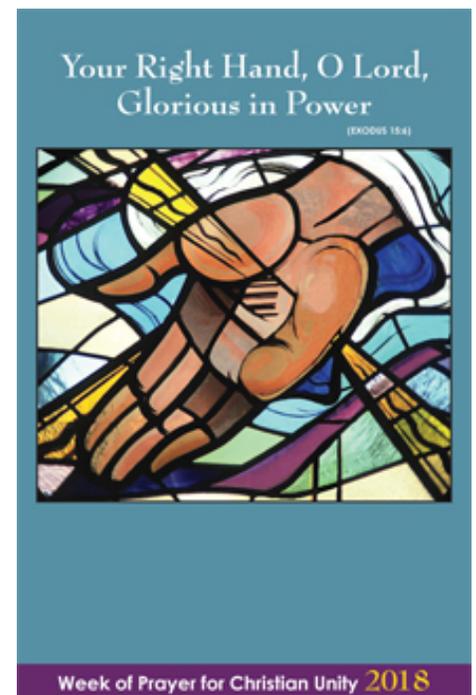
PROCESSIONAL HYMN

OPENING

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

A: And also with you.

L: Dear friends in Christ, as we gather for this service of prayer for unity, we thank God for our Christian heritage, and for his liberating and saving action in human history.



The resources for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the churches of the Caribbean. The history of Christianity in that region contains a paradox. On one hand, the Bible was used by colonizers as justification for the subjugation of the original inhabitants of these lands, and on the other hand, the Bible became a source of consolation and liberation for many who suffered at the hands of the colonizers.

Today, the Bible continues to be a source of consolation and liberation, inspiring the Christian community to address the conditions that currently undermine human dignity and quality of life. As the iron chains of enslavement fall from our hands, a new human bond of love and communion emerges in the human family, expressing the unity prayed for by our Christian communities.

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The response to the invocation may be sung.

L: With the Christians of the Caribbean, let us call upon the Holy Spirit to set our hearts on fire as we pray for the unity of the Church.

L: Unite your servants in the bond of unity.

A: Come, Holy Spirit!

L: Teach us to pray.

A: Come, Holy Spirit!

L: Liberate us from the slavery of sin.

A: Come, Holy Spirit!

L: Help us in our weakness.

A: Come, Holy Spirit!

L: Restore us as your children.

A: Come, Holy Spirit!

HYMN OF PRAISE

PRAYERS OF RECONCILIATION

L: Let us call upon the mercy of God, confident in the saving power of God's Right Hand.

Three members of the assembly come forward, each carrying a chain. After each petition and response, one of the chains is allowed fall to the ground. The Kyrie response may be sung.

L: From structures that undermine human dignity and enforce new forms of enslavement, deliver us, O God. Kyrie eleison.

A: Kyrie eleison.

L: From decisions and deeds that impose poverty, marginalization or discrimination on our brothers and sisters, deliver us, O God. Kyrie eleison.

A: Kyrie eleison.

L: From the fear and suspicion that separate us from each other and place limits on hope and healing, deliver us, O God. Kyrie eleison.

A: Kyrie eleison.

L: The Lord is our strength and our might, and has become our salvation. May God, who has redeemed us, lead into the abode of holiness.

A: Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

L: Redeem us, O God, from human oppression,

A: **That we may keep your precepts.**

L: Make your face shine upon your servants,

A: **And teach us your statutes.**

FIRST READING:

L: Listen and you will be set free. A reading from the book of Exodus 15:1-21

A: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 118:5-7, 10-24

Response: O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His steadfast love endures forever!

Reader:

Out of my distress I called on the Lord;
the Lord answered me and set me in a broad place.

With the Lord on my side I do not fear.

What can mortals do to me?

The Lord is on my side to help me;

I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. **Response:**

I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,
but the Lord helped me.

The Lord is my strength and my might;

He has become my salvation.

There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous. **Response:**

The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;
the right hand of the Lord is exalted;
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.
I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the Lord. **Response:**

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it. **Response:**

I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. **Response:**

SECOND READING:

L: Listen and you will be set free. A reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans 8:12-27
A: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL:

L: Listen and you will be set free. A reading from the Gospel according to Mark 5:21-43
A: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

HYMN/SONG

THE APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Each intercession is read by a different reader. As they finish, the readers each join hands or link arms with members of the assembly, thus creating a human chain.)

L: With thanks for our liberation from slavery to sin, let us place our needs before the Lord, asking Him to shatter the chains that enslave us and to join us instead with bonds of love and communion.

Reader: God of the Exodus, you led your people through the waters of the Red Sea and redeemed them. Be with us now and free us from all forms of slavery and from everything that obscures human dignity.

A: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader: God of abundance, in your goodness you provide for all our needs. Be with us now, help us to rise above selfishness and greed and give us the courage to be agents of justice in the world.

A: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader: God of love, you created us in your image and have redeemed us in Christ. Be with us now, empower us to love our neighbor and to welcome the stranger.

A: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader: God of peace, you remain faithful to your covenant with us even when we wander from you, and in Christ you have reconciled us to yourself. Be with us now and put a new spirit and a new heart within us that we may reject violence and instead be servants of your

peace.

A: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader: God of glory, you are all-powerful, yet in Jesus you chose to make your home in a human family, and in the waters of Baptism have adopted us as your children. Be with us now and help us to remain faithful to our family commitments and our communal responsibilities, and to strengthen the bonds of communion with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

A: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

Reader: God, One in Three Persons, in Christ you have made us one with you and with one another. Be with us now and by the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit, free us from the self-centeredness, arrogance and fear that prevent us from striving towards the full visible unity of your Church.

A: Lay your hands on us, O Lord, that we may live.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

L: Let us join our hands, bound not by chains but by the love of Christ that has been poured into our hearts, and pray to the Father in the words that Jesus taught us.

Our Father...

THE PEACE

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always. Let us give one another a sign of peace.

COMMISSIONING

L: Redeemed by the Right Hand of God, and united in the One Body of Christ, let us go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

A: The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, because the Lord has anointed us to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Amen! Alleluia!

L: Go in God's Peace.

A: Thanks be to God.

HYMN/SONG:

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2018

PRAYER / WORSHIP:
Daily Scripture & Prayer Guide

View in Spanish (guia_diario_de_escritura.html)

Day 1, You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt

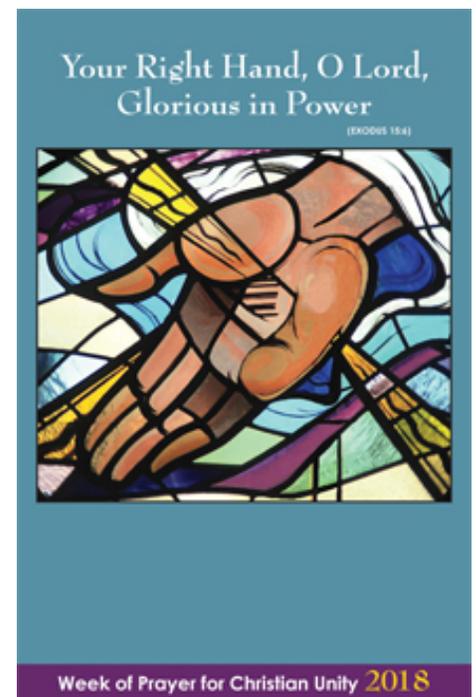
Scripture

- **Leviticus 19:33-34**, You shall love the alien as yourself.
- **Psalms 146:9**, The Lord watches over the strangers.
- **Hebrews 13:1-3**, Entertaining angels without realizing.
- **Matthew 25:31-46**, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Meditation

The Israelites' memory of being strangers in the land of Egypt obliges God's people to welcome the stranger in their midst. Furthermore, Jesus' parable confronts us with the consequences of not showing hospitality.

Like Israel, our common experience of God's saving action goes together with a common memory of being without rights: being a stranger in the sense of being estranged from God and from his kingdom. As God has restored our dignity in Christ, he calls us to uphold the



dignity of all, and to give united witness to the world on behalf of our brothers and sisters who suffer discrimination.

Prayer

Eternal God, You belong to no culture and land but are Lord of all. You call us to welcome the stranger in our midst. Help us by your Spirit to live as brothers and sisters welcoming all in your name and living in the justice of your kingdom. This we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Day 2, No longer as a slave but a beloved brother

Scripture

- **Genesis 1:26-28**, God created humankind in God's own image.
- **Psalm 10:1-10**, Why, O Lord, do you stand far off?
- **Philemon 1:16**, No longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother.
- **Luke 10:25-37**, The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Meditation

God created humankind in God's own image. In the Roman Empire the dignity of those enslaved was denied. Paul however, made bold in Christ, calls Onesimus a beloved brother, transgressing the norms of his society and affirming his humanity. Likewise, Jesus challenges social norms that devalued the human dignity of Samaritans.

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which victims are forced or tricked into sex work, child labor and the harvesting of organs for the profit of the exploiters. It is a global, multimillion-dollar industry throughout the world. Christians must raise a united voice in boldly calling trafficked persons their beloved brothers and sisters and so work together to end modern-day slavery.

Prayer

Gracious God, draw near to those who are victims of human trafficking, assuring them that you see their plight and hear their cry. May your Church be united in compassion and courage to work for that day when no one will be exploited and all will be free to live lives of dignity and peace. This we pray in the name of the Triune God who can do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. Amen.

Day 3, Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit

Scripture

- **Exodus 3:4-10**, God frees those who are in human bondage.
- **Psalms 24:1-6**, Lord, we are the people who seek your face.
- **1 Corinthians 6:9-20**, Therefore glorify God in your body.
- **Matthew 18:1-7**, Woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

Meditation

The Book of Exodus demonstrates God's concern for people in human bondage and this concern extends to modern forms of enslavement. While sexuality is a gift of God for human relationships and the expression of intimacy, human beings have a propensity to misuse this gift in ways which enslave and devalue.

As Christians we are called to give glory to God in our own bodies, and to work together for the kind of society that upholds human dignity and does not put a stumbling block before any of God's little ones.

Prayer

By your heavenly grace, O God, restore us in mind and body. Create in us a clean heart and a pure mind that we may give glory to your name. May the Churches attain unity of purpose for the sanctification of your people, through Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen!

Day 4, Hope and Healing

Scripture

- **Isaiah 9:2-7a**, His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace.
- **Psalm 34:1-14**, Seek peace and pursue it.
- **Revelation 7:13-17**, God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
- **John 14:25-27**, Peace I leave with you.

Meditation

The kingdom which God promised, the kingdom which Jesus proclaimed and made manifest in his ministry is a kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Violence is a problem to which the churches are called to respond. There is an alarmingly high rate of murder, much of which stems from domestic abuse, gang warfare and other forms of criminality.

What does the Good News mean for those trapped in the darkness of violence? How can Christians bring the light of Jesus to those living in the darkness of domestic and gang violence? What sense of hope can Christians offer? Christians striving for unity, offer the world a sign of reconciliation. Christians who refuse to seek special status, who refuse to demean others and their communities, give witness to the peace of God's kingdom.

Prayer

God of all comfort and hope, your resurrection defeated the violence of the cross. As your people, may we be a visible sign that the violence of the world will be overcome. This we pray in the name of our risen Lord. Amen.

Day 5, Hark, the cry of my poor people from far and wide in the land

Scripture

- **Deuteronomy 1:19-35**, The Lord God goes before you and carried you.

- **Psalm 145:9-20**, The Lord upholds all who are falling.
- **James 1:9-11**, The rich will disappear like a flower in the field.
- **Luke 18:35-43**, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Meditation

We can imagine the noise of the crowd as Jesus enters Jericho. Many voices shout down the cry of the blind beggar. But through all this tumult Jesus hears the blind man's voice, just as God always hears the cries of the poor in the Hebrew Scriptures.

How do Christians today hear the voice of the poor over the voices which attempt to silence them? The disunity of churches inhibits Christianity's ability to hear and respond. Through the efforts of churches acting together, we can help one another to hear the cry of the poor and our disunity moves closer to unity in Christ.

Prayer

Loving God, You lift up the poor and distressed and restore their dignity. Hear now our cries for the poor of our world. Restore their hope and lift them up, that all your people may be one. This we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Day 6, Let us look to the interests of others

Scripture

- **Isaiah 25:1-9**, Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.
- **Psalm 82:3**, Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
- **Philippians 2:1-4**, Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.
- **Luke 12:13-21**, Be on your guard against all kinds of greed.

Meditation

According to the readings chosen for today, God takes a preferential option for the poor: the right hand of God always acts for the powerless against the powerful. And Jesus consistently warns against the dangers of greed. As Christians united in our care for the poor we are called to action in defense of the poor and vulnerable.

Following the Lord's command, Christians are summoned to live as brothers and sisters, united across economic divisions of "North" and "South." As Christians we are called to join hands in promoting economic justice for all.

Prayer

Almighty God, give courage and strength to your Church to continually proclaim justice and righteousness in situations of domination and oppression. As we celebrate our unity in Christ may your Holy Spirit help us to look to the needs of others. Amen.

Day 7, Building family in household and Church

Scripture

- **Exodus 2:1-10**, The Birth of Moses.
- **Psalm 127:1**, Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.
- **2 Timothy 1:1-8**, Timothy, Paul's beloved "child."
- **Matthew 2:13-15**, Joseph got up, took the child and his mother and went to Egypt.

Meditation

Families are important for the protection and nurture of children. The births of both Moses and Jesus illustrate how vulnerable children can be to external forces, and how action can be taken to protect them. Matthew offers us a model of fatherhood that is in loving fidelity to the Lord's command, especially in turbulent times.

Jesus calls us his mother, and his brothers, and his sisters (Matthew 12:48). As Christians, we are called to live as supportive family networks, building strong communities in which children are protected and can flourish.

Prayer

Gracious God, you sent your son to be born in an ordinary family with ancestors who were both faithful and sinful. We ask your blessing upon all families, within households and communities. We especially pray for the unity of the Christian family so that the world may believe, In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Day 8, He will gather the dispersed... from the four corners of the earth

Scripture

- **Isaiah 11:12-13**, Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not be hostile towards Ephraim.
- **Psalms 106:1-14 & 43-48**, Gather us to give thanks to your Holy Name.
- **Ephesians 2:13-19**, He has broken down the dividing wall.
- **John 17:1-12**, I have been glorified in them.

Meditation

Throughout the biblical narrative of salvation history, an unmistakable motif is the unrelenting determination of the Lord to form a people whom God could call God's own. The formation of such a people – a united covenanted people – is integral to God's plan of salvation and to the glorification and hallowing of God's name.

God's covenanted people must be a reconciled community – one which itself is an effective sign to "all the peoples of the earth." The prophets repeatedly reminded Israel that the covenant demanded that this relationships should be characterized by justice, compassion and mercy. Like Israel, the Church in its quest for unity is called to be both a sign and an active agent of reconciliation.

Prayer

Lord, we humbly ask that, by your grace, the churches throughout the world may become instruments of your Peace. Through their joint action as ambassadors and agents of your healing, reconciling love among divided peoples, may your name be hallowed and glorified. Amen.

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United Churches of Lycoming
County

Where:

Wendy's
Maynard St.

When:

Tuesday
January 23, 2018
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Wendy's will donate 10% of all sales from time
above!

*Great Food, Great
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