



WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2021

Churches Together SA

Ecumenical Prayer Service

*"Abide in my love
and you will bear much fruit"*

Ecumenical Celebration

Preparation and Introduction

This celebration reflects the ways in which the sisters of Grandchamp pray. In this tradition, three of the monastic prayer services – sometimes called ‘vigils’ or ‘nocturns’ in the Benedictine tradition, traditionally said during the night - are combined into one evening service.

In the same way, our service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity reflects this structure.

Each vigil follows the same pattern:

- readings from scripture
- a sung response
- a time of silence
- intercessions
- action

Each vigil also has an action reflecting its theme. These are outlined below.

The first vigil is centred on the unity of the whole person and our abiding in Christ. The large (possibly Easter) candle will be lit. Silence is a key part of the prayer. Moments of silence are repeated throughout the service.

The second vigil expresses the desire to rediscover the visible unity of Christians. Anchored in the love of Christ, we turn to our neighbours and exchange with each other a sign of his peace.

The third vigil opens us up to the unity of all peoples, all creation. The action in it is inspired by a text of Dorotheus of Gaza. congregation to come and form a circle around the candle – the light of Christ. We will take their candles that are lit from the Christ candle to move out to the world.

It is suggested that:

- Each person in the congregation will have an unlit candle.
- The Christ candle is set as the central point of the circle.
- At the end of each reading, each reader moves to the centre and lights their candle.
- When invited, people come forward and light their candle.
- Everyone may process out with their candles lit

Musical settings of the litany, responses and intercessions used at Grandchamp can be accessed and heard on the website of the Community of Grandchamp: www.grandchamp.org. Listen to their common prayer online every day at: www.grandchamp.org/prier-avec-nous

Order of Prayer Service

"Abide in my love and you will bear much fruit"

L: Leader

C: Congregation

R: Reader

Acknowledgement of Country

The Ancient of Days breathed life into this Land and her Peoples.
From time beyond our reckoning, the Kurna and Peramangk peoples
have blessed this place through their care and concern.
We acknowledge that we stand on their land,
and are thankful for their care and custodianship of this beautiful region.
We pay our respects to their Elders and Leaders, past, present and emerging,
and pray for the future of their communities.
May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.

Adapted from © 2017, A. Koh-Butler

Invitation to Prayer

This is an invitation to pray together in word, song and silence.
It may be different to your usual style as a worshipping community.
Let us be open to this difference and enjoy the whole gathered community,
who are praying across the world.

Welcoming Song - Christ, be our light

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Chorus:

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts,
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your Church, gathered today.

*Words and music: Bernadette Farrell
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Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.



Word of Welcome

L: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always!

C And also with you.

L: Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
this year the theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, chosen by the sisters of the Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland, is: "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit". Since the time of its preparation, the community has been directly affected by COVID 19. As we begin our prayer we remember this community and the many millions of people throughout the world who have suffered or succumbed to this pandemic.

R: It is the great desire of God, expressed by Jesus, that we might come to him and abide in him, especially in the midst of suffering. He waits for us tirelessly, hoping that, united to him in love, we will find solace and produce fruit that will bring life to all. Faced with the difference of 'the stranger', we risk withdrawing into ourselves and see only that which separates us. But let us listen to the way Christ invites us to abide in his love, and so to bear much fruit.

L: In the three moments of prayer that follow, we remember the call of Christ, we turn to his love, to him who is the centre of our life. For the path of unity and love begins with our intimate relationship with God. Abiding in his love strengthens the desire to seek unity and reconciliation with others. God opens us up to those who are different from us, those who are suffering, those who need our love. This is an important fruit, a gift of healing for the divisions within us, between us, and in the world.

The Christ candle is lit in silence.

L: In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

God, you are the vinedresser who cares for us with love.
You call on us to see the beauty of each branch united to the vine,
the beauty of each person.
And yet, too often the differences, the pains and struggle in others
make us afraid.
We withdraw into ourselves.
Our trust in you is forsaken.
Come and direct our hearts toward you once again.
Grant us to live from your forgiveness
so that we may be together,
and praise your name.

Song - Power of Your Love

Lord I come to You
Let my heart be changed, renewed
Flowing from the grace
That I've found in You
Lord I've come to know
The weaknesses I see in me
Will be stripped away
By the power of Your love

Chorus:

**Hold me close
Let Your love surround me
Bring me near
Draw me to Your side
And as I wait
I'll rise up like the eagle
And I will soar with You
Your Spirit leads me on
In the power of Your love**

Lord unveil my eyes
Let me see You face to face
The knowledge of Your love
As You live in me
Lord renew my mind
As Your will unfolds in my life
In living every day
By the power of Your love

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Litany of praise

L Our litany of praise:

C You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

L We sing your praise in the midst of the world and among all peoples,

R We sing your praise in the midst of creation and among all creatures.

C You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

L We sing your praise among suffering and tears,

R We sing your praise among promises and achievements.

C You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

L We sing your praise in the places of conflict and misunderstanding;

R We sing your praise in the places of encounter and reconciliation.

C You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

L We sing your praise in the midst of rifts and divisions,

R We sing your praise in the midst of life and death,
the birth of a new heaven and a new earth.

C You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth: glory to you!

Song: Halle, Halle, Halle

Halle, halle, hallelujah

Halle, halle, hallelujah

Halle, halle, hallelujah

hallelujah, hallelujah

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1990 The Iona Community

First Vigil: Abiding in Christ

The Unity of the Whole Person

Psalm: 103

Reading: Jn 15:1-17

Responsive Song: A New Commandment

A new commandment I give unto you
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you,
By this may all know you are my disciples
if you have love for one another
By this will others know that you are my disciples
if you love one another

Short silence

Intercessions

L God of love, through Christ you said to us: "You did not choose me but I chose you". You seek us, you invite us to receive your friendship and abide in it. Teach us to respond more deeply to this invitation, and grow in a life that is ever more complete.

C The joy of our heart is in God.

R God of life, you call us to be praise in the midst of the uncertainties of this world and to welcome one another as a gift of your grace. May your loving gaze, which rests upon each person, open us to receive each other just as we are.

C The joy of our heart is in God.

L God who gathers, you knit us together as one vine in your Son Jesus. May your loving Spirit abide in us at parish meetings and local ecumenical gatherings. Grant that together we might celebrate you with joy.

C The joy of our heart is in God.

R God of the one vineyard, you call us to abide in your love in all we do and say. Touched by your goodness, grant us to be a reflection of that love in our homes and workplaces. May we pave the way for bridging rivalries and overcoming tensions.

C The joy of our heart is in God.

Action: Longer silence

L Very often we think of prayer as something we do, an activity of our own.

Silence

In this short time, we are invited to an interior silence, and to turn aside from all the noise and concerns of our lives and thoughts.

In this silence, the action belongs to God. We are simply called to abide in God's love, to rest in God.

Silence

Song: The Lord is my Light, my Light and salvation

The Lord is my light,
My light and salvation:
In God, I trust,
in God, I trust.



Second Vigil: The Visible Unity of Christians

Psalm: 85

Reading: 1 Cor 1:10-13a

Sung Response: There is One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism

There is one Lord one faith, one baptism;
there is one God who is Father of all.

Short silence

Intercessions

L: Holy Spirit, you create and re-create the church in all places.

Come and whisper in our hearts the prayer which Jesus addressed to his Father on the eve of his passion: "that they may all be one ... so that the world may believe".

C: Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

R: Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so that suspicions, contempt and misunderstanding cease in the church, even more so in this time of uncertainty due to the pandemic and other natural disasters. May the walls that separate us fall.

C: Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

L: Holy Spirit, Consoler of all, open our hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation and bring us back from our wanderings.

C: Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

R: Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, give us poverty of spirit so that we may welcome the unexpectedness of your grace.

C: Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

L: Holy Spirit, you never abandon the men, women and children in so many countries around the world who are persecuted for their fidelity to the gospel. Give them strength and courage, and support those who help them.

C: Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

Song: Make me a Channel of your Peace

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there is hatred let me bring your love
Where there is injury, your pardon Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in you

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness ever joy

Oh, master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul

Make me a channel of your peace
It isn't pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving of ourselves that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life

©Based on an anonymous prayer c. 1900. This version by Johann Sebastian Templehoff 1928

Action: Sharing a Sign of Peace

L: The Lord calls us to be united among ourselves. He gives us his peace and invites us to share it.

Let us exchange a sign of his peace with our neighbours by putting our hands to our heart as we wish each other peace from where we are sitting.

Everyone turns to those near them and offers a sign of peace, in keeping with their local context (and pandemic requirements).

Song: The Lord is my Light, my Light and salvation

The Lord is my light,
My light and salvation:
In God, I trust,
in God, I trust.

Third Vigil: The Unity of all peoples and creation

Psalm: 96

Reading: Rev. 7: 9-12

Sung Response: Halle, halle, halle

Halle, halle, hallelujah
Halle, halle, hallelujah
Halle, halle, hallelujah
hallelujah, hallelujah

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Homily

Short silence

Intercessions

R: God of life, you have created every human being in your image and likeness. We sing your praise for the gift of our many cultures, expressions of faith, traditions and ethnicities. Grant us the courage always to stand against injustice and hatred based on race, class, gender, religion, and fear of those who are different from ourselves.

C: God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

R: Merciful God, you have shown us in Christ that we are one in you. Teach us to use this gift in the world so that believers of all faiths in every country may be able to listen to each other and live in peace.

C: God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

R: O Jesus, you came into the world and shared fully in our humanity. You know the hardships of life for people who have suffered physically, emotionally and economically, as a result of the pandemic. May the Spirit of compassion move us to share our time, life and goods with all those in need.

C: God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

R: Holy Spirit, you hear the fury of your wounded creation and the cries of those already suffering from climate change, including our neighbours in the Pacific. Guide us toward new behaviours. May we learn to live in harmony as part of your creation.

C: God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

Action: Moving to the centre... and out to the world

L: We are called to be ministers of God's healing and reconciling love. This work can only be fruitful when we abide in God, as branches of the true vine which is Jesus Christ. As we come closer to the light of Christ, we draw closer to one another.

The people are invited to come forward and form a circle around the Christ candle.

L: When people living in this world, desire to draw closer to God, each walks toward the light. As they move closer to the light of Christ, they also move closer to each other.

In silence, light your candle, as we stand together in a time of prayer.

Short Silence

Song: The Lord is my Light, my Light and salvation

The Lord is my light,
My light and salvation:
In God, I trust,
in God, I trust.

After the singing, please return to your seats.

L: When we abide in Christ, we receive the Spirit of courage and wisdom to act against all injustice and oppression. We say together:

C:

Pray and work that God may reign.

Throughout your day

let the Word of God breathe life into work and rest.

Maintain inner silence in all things so as to dwell in Christ.

Be filled with the spirit of the Beatitudes: joy, simplicity, mercy.

(These words are recited daily by the Sisters of the Grandchamp Community.)

The Lord's Prayer

L: With the words that Jesus taught us, let us now pray in confidence together:

C:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen**

Blessing

L: Be one, so that the world may believe!
Abide in God's love.
Go out from this place and bear the fruits of God's love.

C: **May the God of hope fill us all with joy and peace in faith,
so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
In the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Song: Christ Be Our Light


Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Chorus:
Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts,
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your Church, gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

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Churches Together SA

Give thanks for the ministry of the Grandchamp Community.

Give thanks for Blackwood Church of Christ, for their welcoming hospitality and worship leading through music, and enabling those who are unable to attend in person, to attend online.

Give thanks to the NCCA Faith & Unity Commission for their adaptation of this service for use across our country.

The printed and streamed service will be available to watch & share at churchestogethersa.org.au/prayer-service