

## 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

### Acknowledgement

This resource use in Australia is based on the international material for the 2014 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Churches in Canada were invited to prepare the resources these were then agreed to by the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. It has been adapted by the Faith and Unity Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

The NCCA thanks the small working group adapting the resources for use in Australia; Sr Carmel Pilcher, Rt Rev'd Dr Douglas Stevens Cannon Richard Tutin, Jela Virzi and Rev Meredith Williams for their contributions to the 2014 materials

**Donation:** If you have found this service useful, any donations to help cover the cost of producing the resource will be gratefully received by NCCA Faith and Unity. Locked Bag 199, QVB NSW 1230. Many thanks.

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# Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

1 – 8 June, 2014

## Order of Service



## Has Christ been divided?

1 Cor (1:1-17)

## **I. We Gather in Hope and Unity**

### **Processional Hymn**

*The worship leaders and others may enter in procession.*

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

As we gather here today, we acknowledge the traditional owners who have walked and cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who maintain these spiritual connections and traditions.

### **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, 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

**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**

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 in company with our French-Canadian brothers and sisters, "*Don de Dieu*".

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

**C: Peace be with you.** "*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.**

boats and from our farms, 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, mindful that their relationship with their environment is so very different from ours:

*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 the cold and mighty wind and the white snows, giving us strength and endurance.

**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 warmth, guidance and the beginning and the end of life.

**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:** 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**

### **Apology**

### **Recognition of other cultures and offering peace in our traditional way ...**

**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

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:** 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, the Canadian and the Australian 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