

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

### THEMES 1968-2013

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

*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)
- 1969 Called to freedom (Galatians 5: 13)  
(Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy)
- 1970 We are fellow workers for God (1 Corinthians 3: 9)  
(Preparatory meeting held at the Monastery of Niederaltaich, Federal Republic of Germany)
- 1971 ...and the communion of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13: 13)
- 1972 I give you a new commandment (John 13: 34)  
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1973 Lord, teach us to pray (Luke 11: 1)  
(Preparatory meeting held at the Abbey of Montserrat, Spain)
- 1974 That every tongue confess: Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2: 1-13)  
(Preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1975 God's purpose: all things in Christ (Ephesians 1: 3-10)  
(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  
(Material from Caribbean Conference of Churches. Preparatory meeting held in Rome, Italy)
- 1977 Enduring together in hope (Romans 5: 1-5)  
(Material from Lebanon, in the midst of a civil war. Preparatory meeting held in Geneva)
- 1978 No longer strangers (Ephesians 2: 13-22)  
(Material from an ecumenical team in Manchester, England)
- 1979 Serve one another to the glory of God (1 Peter 4: 7-11)  
(Material from Argentina - preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1980 Your kingdom come (Matthew 6: 10)  
(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)  
(Material from Graymoor Fathers, USA – preparatory meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland)
- 1982 May all find their home in you, O Lord (Psalm 84)  
(Material from Kenya - preparatory meeting held in Milan, Italy)
- 1983 Jesus Christ - the Life of the World (1 John 1: 1-4)

- (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)  
(Preparatory meeting held in Venice, Italy)
- 1985 From death to life with Christ (Ephesians 2: 4-7)  
(Material from Jamaica - preparatory meeting held in Grandchamp, Switzerland)
- 1986 You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1: 6-8)  
(Material from Yugoslavia (Slovenia), preparatory meeting held in Yugoslavia)
- 1987 United in Christ - a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5: 17-6: 4a)  
(Material from England, preparatory meeting held in Taizé, France)
- 1988 The love of God casts out fear (1 John 4: 18)  
(Material from Italy - preparatory meeting held in Pinerolo, Italy)
- 1989 Building community: one body in Christ (Romans 12: 5-6a)  
(Material from Canada - preparatory meeting held in Whaley Bridge, England)
- 1990 That they all may be one...That the world may believe (John 17)  
(Material from Spain - preparatory meeting held in Madrid, Spain)
- 1991 Praise the Lord, all you nations! (Psalm 117 and Romans 15: 5-13)  
(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)  
(Material from Belgium - preparatory meeting held in Bruges, Belgium)
- 1993 Bearing the fruit of the Spirit for Christian unity (Galatians 5: 22-23)  
(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)  
(Material from Ireland - preparatory meeting held in Dublin, Republic of Ireland)
- 1995 Koinonia: communion in God and with one another (John 15: 1-17)  
(Material from Faith and Order, preparatory meeting held in Bristol, England)
- 1996 Behold, I stand at the door and knock (Revelation 3: 14-22)  
(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)  
(Material from Nordic Ecumenical Council, preparatory meeting held in Stockholm, Sweden)
- 1998 The Spirit helps us in our weakness (Romans 8: 14-27)  
(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)  
(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)  
(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)  
(Preparatory material from Romania and meeting held at Vulcan, Romania)

- 2002 For with you is the fountain of life (Psalm 36: 5-9)  
(Preparatory material CEEC and CEC, meeting near Augsburg, Germany)
- 2003 We have this treasure in clay jars (2 Corinthians 4: 4-18)  
(Preparatory material churches in Argentina, meeting at Los Rubios, Spain)
- 2004 My peace I give to you (John 14: 23-31; John 14: 27)  
(Preparatory material from Aleppo, Syria - meeting in Palermo, Sicily)
- 2005 Christ, the one foundation of the church (1 Corinthians 3 1-23)  
(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)  
(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)  
(Preparatory material from South Africa – meeting held in Faverges, France)
- 2008 Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5: (12a) 13b-18)  
(Preparatory material from USA – meeting held in Graymoor, Garrison, USA)
- 2009 That they may become one in your hand (Ezekiel 37: 15-28)  
(Preparatory material from Korea – meeting held in Marseilles, France)
- 2010 You are witnesses of these things (Luke 24: 48)  
(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)  
(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)  
(Preparatory material from Poland – meeting held in Warsaw, Poland)
- 2013 What does God require of us? (cf. Micah 6:6-8)  
(Preparatory material from Student Christian Movement of India)

### 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)