

G52 Churches Christian Unity Service January 2021

Abiding in Christ

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.

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

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

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

5. 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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Words of welcome

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

Congregation And also with you.

Litany of praise

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

Reader 1 We sing your praise in the midst of the world and among all peoples,

Reader 2 We sing your praise in the midst of creation and among all creatures.

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

Reader 1 We sing your praise among suffering and tears,

Reader 2 We sing your praise among promises and achievements.

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

Reader 1 We sing your praise in the places of conflict and misunderstanding;

Reader 2 We sing your praise in the places of encounter and reconciliation.

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

Reader 1 We sing your praise in the midst of rifts and divisions,

Reader 2 We sing your praise in the midst of life and death, the birth of a new heaven and a new earth.

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

<p>Ubi caritas et amor. Ubi caritas Deus ibi est.</p>
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First Vigil - Abiding in Christ: The unity of the whole person

- Reading: John 15:1-17.
- Short silence

Intercessions

Reader 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.

Congregation The joy of our heart is in God.

Reader God of life, you call us to be praise in the midst of the 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.

Congregation The joy of our heart is in God.

Reader God you who gather, you knit us together as one vine in your Son Jesus. May your loving Spirit abide in us at local church and community meetings and ecumenical gatherings. Grant that together we celebrate you with joy.

Congregation The joy of our heart is in God.

Reader 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 bridge rivalries and overcome tensions.

Congregation The joy of our heart is in God.

O, Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.

When I call, answer me.

O, Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.

Come and listen to me.

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Second Vigil - The visible unity of Christians

- Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17
- Short silence

Intercessions

Reader 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”.

Congregation Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy).

Reader Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so that suspicions, contempt and misunderstanding cease in the Church. May the walls that separate us fall.

Congregation Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy).

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

Congregation Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy).

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

Congregation Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy).

Reader Holy Spirit, you never abandon the men, women and children who are persecuted for their fidelity to the gospel. Give them strength and courage, and support those who help them.

Congregation Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy).

Sign of peace.

There is One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.

There is one God who is Father of all.

Third Vigil - The unity of all peoples with all creation

- Reading: Revelation 7: 9-12.
- Homily (Rev. Deborah Davison)
- Short silence

Intercessions

Reader 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 not like ourselves.

Congregation God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

Reader 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.

Congregation God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

Reader O Jesus, you came into the world and shared fully in our humanity. You know the hardships of life for people who suffer in so many different ways. May the Spirit of compassion move us to share our time, life and goods with all those in need.

Congregation God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

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

Congregation God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!

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

inspired by a text of Dorotheus of Gaza

Reader Jesus calls us to abide in him, as branches of the true vine. He calls us to bear the fruit of God's healing and reconciling love. He calls us to draw closer to God and to one another as we offer this love to the world.

Imagine a circle drawn on the ground. Imagine that this circle is the world.

A candle is placed in the central display

Reader At the centre of the world is God, in whom all our desires and longings find their meeting place.

Reader As we move closer to God, so we draw closer to one another. And the closer we come to one another . . .

Reader ...the closer we come to God

Short Silence

The Lord's Prayer

Leader With the words that Jesus taught us, let us now pray together:

Congregation

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 for ever.

Hymn

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

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Blessing

Leader Be one, so that the world may believe! Abide in God's love, go into the world and bear the fruits of this love.

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

Final Hymn

Be still and know that I am God...

I am the Lord that health thee...

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust

(Anon)

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Published by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

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Registered charity no 1113299.

Company limited by guarantee,

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