

2026 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

“There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to the hope of your calling” (*Ephesians 4:4*)

ABRIDGED ORDER OF WORSHIP

The 2026 WPCU international and Canadian resources are available to download at:

weekofprayer.ca (English)
semainedepriere.ca (French)

Introduction to the Abridged Order of Worship

This service is based on the 2026 international Ecumenical Worship Service but edited down for a small chapel setting. This is intended for services where a preacher or a guest speaker may not be possible, or for settings where services would be shortened to approximately 30 minutes. It would require one worship leader and 2 readers, with sections for 2 hymns.

The full-length 2026 international worship service is available on www.weekofprayer.ca. We also encourage you to consult the Annotated Ecumenical Worship Service available on this website, which has helpful annotations provided by the Canadian WPCU Writing and Animation Team for more wording options and planning considerations. For this abridged chapel service, we modified some language to better suit the Canadian context, but this language can easily be altered for your own community or reverted to the original text of the international 2025 WPCU Ecumenical Worship Service.

We encourage you to be creative in your use of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity resources! For example, you may wish to alter the ecumenical worship service to better suit the context of your community, or you may draw inspiration from the WPCU materials to create something entirely new. Communities should also feel free to use the WPCU materials not only during the traditional Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18-25 in the northern hemisphere), but throughout the year, to pray for Christian unity and to foster ecumenical fellowship and service.

Order of Worship

- L** Leader
R Reader (one or more readers may be appointed)
A Assembly
C Choir or Cantor

Invitation

R: May the name of the Lord be blessed forever, for his name is before the sun.

A: **All the nations of the earth will be blessed through him
and all generations will extol him.**

R: Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, the only worker of wondrous deeds,
the holy name of his glory is forever blessed.
The whole world will be filled with his glory.

A: **Amen! Amen!**

L: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

A: **Now and always, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.**

R: Again, in peace let us beseech the Lord.
Heed our prayers, raise us to life, and have mercy on us.

L: Blessing and glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Now and always and unto the ages of ages.

A: **Amen.**

Hymn of Light

As the hymn is being sung, a large candle is lit in the front of the church.



1 From the East and to the West,
2 Chur- ches of the right- eous ones,



Zi- on's bless- ed heirs,
all who ho- nour him,



al- ways praise un- ceas- ing- ly
glo- ri- fy the One who gave



him who dawns the light.
mean- ing to the light.

Litany

R: From Sunrise in the East to Sunset in the West, and throughout the entire Christian world, wherever people call on the name of the Lord in holiness – by their prayers and intercession may the Lord have mercy on us.
Let us beseech God to deliver us from sin and from the temptations of the world.
May the Lord accept the vows and supplications of our hearts and count us worthy of his faith and his commandments together with all of his saints.
Almighty Lord our God, raise us to life and have mercy on us.

A: Raise us to life, O Lord.

R: God, we pray to you: be our help. save those who are afflicted among us, have mercy on the wretched
Show your face to those in need.

A: Kyrie, eleison! Lord, have mercy!

(If celebrated in the morning) or *(If celebrated in the evening)*

R: That the Lord may usher forth this sunlit morning and guide the day ahead in peace; with faith, let us beseech the Lord.	That the Lord may usher forth this coming evening and the night ahead in peace; with faith, let us beseech the Lord.
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A: Grant it, O Lord.

R: For an angel of peace to be our guardian, let us ask the Lord.

A: Grant it, O Lord.

R: For the pardon and forgiveness of our transgressions, let us ask the Lord.

A: Grant it, O Lord.

R: For the great and mighty power of the holy Cross to help us, let us ask of the Lord.

A: Grant it, O Lord.

R: Once again, for our true and holy faith, all together, let us beseech the Lord.

A: Lord, have mercy.

R: Let us commit ourselves and one another to the almighty Lord our God.

A: We commit ourselves to you, O Lord.

R: Have mercy on us, Lord our God, in your great mercy. Let us all say together as one:

A: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Praying and Sharing the Peace

The Leader may face east for the following prayer, which is prayed with arms outstretched:

L: From Sunrise in the East to Sunset in the West, blessed are you, O Lord, because you are King, and your name is revered throughout the universe.
Let our psalmody resound sweetly in your hearing.
Let justice dawn from your righteousness and rise over our frailty,
and may your most holy name be glorified.

And let us become worthy to abide by your commandments and to sing praise and glory
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The Leader faces the people and may make the sign of the Cross, while saying:

L: Peace to all.

A: **And with your spirit.**

The people may exchange a suitable greeting of peace.

R: Let us bow down to God.

The people may bow, kneel, genuflect, or make some other gesture of reverence, saying:

A: **Before you, O, Lord.**

The Leader may turn to the east, and prays again, saying:

L: Everlasting God, Eternal God, you dawned as light in this world
and you illumined us from the darkness of our sin.
Infinite God, you came into our finite existence,
abundantly pouring out the gifts of the Holy Spirit on your creatures.
Now and for all eternity you are extolled, most great God,
with the Father and the most Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages.

A: **Amen.**

Scripture Reading *Ephesians 4:1-13*

R: This reading is from the Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians (4:1-13)

I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high, he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people." (When it says, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) He himself granted that some are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

A: **Alleluia. Alleluia.**

For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

Gospel Reading *John 12:31-36*

R: Alleluia. Rise to your feet.

The leader faces the people, and may make the sign of the Cross, while saying:

L: Peace to all.

A: And with your spirit.

R: Listen attentively to the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to John (12:31-336).

A: Glory to you, Lord our God.

R: Attention! God is speaking.

Jesus said to the crowd: "Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains for ever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light."

A: Glory to you, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Contemplative Silence / Group lectio divina

(Silence may be kept for 3-5 minutes, or participants may share brief phrases from the readings which made a particular impression on them, without explanation or elaboration).

Prayer

R: Gracious Lord, God of all, Guide for the lost, Light for those in darkness.

Our eyes turn to you, hear our prayers.

May the sun of your glory shine forth, giving life and light to all,
from the East to the West, and from the North to the South.

Let the morning rays of your eternal spring awaken us who await your coming.

O Jesus Christ, Light from the Light, dwell within us,

who have come together to worship your holy and precious name.

Let your life-giving radiance kindle within us a deeper love for one another.

May your brilliant light stir us to ever more flourishing unity.

Like diverse flowers in the garden of your kingdom,

may your divine brilliance cause us to bloom in harmony.

And so, all as one, may we always joyfully praise and glorify you,

and the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Adapted from St Gregory of Narek

Psalm 97

The verses of the psalm may be divided between two readers, between the leader and reader, or between two groups of participants, with all joining together on the response. As the psalm is being recited, candles are distributed to the congregation.

R: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

A: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

1: The Lord is king. Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!

2: Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

A: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

1: Fire goes before him, and consumes his adversaries on every side.

2: His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

A: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

1: The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth.

2: The heavens proclaim his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory.

A: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

1: All servants of images are put to shame, those who make their boast in worthless idols;
all gods bow down before him.

2: Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O God.

A: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

1: For you, O Lord, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

2: You who love the Lord, hate evil; he guards the lives of his faithful;
he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.

A: Our eyes turn to you, O God of all. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers.

1: Light dawns for the righteous and joy for the upright in heart.

2: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!

**A: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.**

Hymn

While the hymn is being sung, two participants light hand-candles from the central candle and the light is passed to all in the church. Verses may be read by the Leader or Reader, or chanted by a cantor or small choir (see appendix). ("Looys" is pronounced like "Luis").



Ageless, uncreated God, Father, Lord of all;
heed our prayers, the earnest pleas of those serving you.



From the Father, wondrous Dawn, just and righteous Sun;
 rise, shine forth upon us all, kind and tender Light.

A:



Spirit pouring from the Father, wellspring of the good;
 fill us with your radiant Light in this new day's morn.

A:



Persons three, in nature one, one Divinity;
 we confess you at all times – Holy Trinity.

A:



St Nersess the Gracious

Closing Prayers

- L: Again, in peace, let us beseech the Lord.
 Let us glorify Almighty God, who has shined his light upon his creatures.
 Now, may he once more shine his abundant mercy upon those who glorify his name in song. Almighty Lord our God, raise us to life and have mercy on us.
- A: **Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**
- L: Gracious and almighty Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
 you are the true Light, who cast out the darkness of sin,
 and shined into our hearts the joy and hope of your eternal Kingdom.
- A: **Lord, have mercy.**
- L: Loving Lord, accept the prayers of all your faithful children throughout the world,
 who call out to you with one mind, one voice, and one heart.
 Through your beloved disciple John, you promised that if we walk in your light,
 then we will have communion with one another,
 and your precious blood will cleanse us of all sin.
 Bring us that blessed communion, O Saviour!
- A: **Lord, have mercy.**
- L: Grant us peace, O Loving Lord,
 and remove the scourge of civil unrest and violence from the face of the earth.
 Change the hearts of all who make war and touch the wounds of all who are afflicted by war.
 Comfort all prisoners of war and speedily bring them home.

Let the light of your love shine in all the dark places of our world
and hasten the day when all peoples may dwell in peace with justice.

A: Lord, have mercy.

L: O Refuge and Shelter, Lord Jesus Christ,
look with compassion on refugees throughout the world,
who suffer the agony of displacement and the loss of their homes.
Move us to manifest our communion with you, with them and with each other
through gestures of hospitality and loving help.

A: Lord, have mercy.

L: O Christ, our Saviour, we pray for the people of Armenia and Artsakh,
and their kindred throughout the world,
who long ago turned to your light through the preaching of the Apostle Thaddeus
and the miraculous witness of St Gregory the Illuminator.

A: Lord, have mercy.

L: Shine the light of your righteousness and wisdom on all your creatures.
Make us children of light and children of the day,
so that we may always live our lives reverently,
and become for all the world, worthy lampstands for your life-giving light.

A: Lord, have mercy.

L: For you are our Saviour, and to you be glory, dominion and honour,
now and always and unto the ages of ages.

A: Amen.

Closing Hymn



1 Christ, the good and gra- cious Way,
2 Je- sus, Door to Life, True God,



and the liv- ing Truth,
through you we shall come;



Lea- der of our spi- rits from
now ad- mit us to your Fa- ther,



earth to heav'n a- bove.
by your Ho- ly Spi- rit.

St Nersess the Gracious

Lord's Prayer

L: Blessed is our Lord Jesus Christ.

A: Amen.

or

A 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. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Dismissal

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

A: Amen.

Appendix

The verses of the candle-lighting hymn may simply be read (in between the sung refrains) or chanted to a pattern like the following:



Ageless, uncreated God,
Father, Lord of all;
heed our prayers, the earnest pleas
of those serving you.

From the Father, wondrous Dawn,
just and righteous Sun;
rise, shine forth upon us all,
kind and tender Light.

Spirit pouring from the Father,
wellspring of the good;
fill us with your radiant Light
in this new day's morn.

Persons three, in nature one,
one Divinity;
we confess you at all times –
Holy Trinity.