

2024 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

*You shall love the Lord your God ...
and your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27)*

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The 2024 WPCU international and Canadian resources are available to download at:

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

We encourage you to be creative in your use of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity resources! For example, you may wish to use this resource to plan activities for the children and youth of your communities throughout 2024, 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.

This year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) theme is focused on the story of the Good Samaritan, and on asking ourselves who is our neighbour and how we can love them. These activities are for children of all ages to learn more about the 2024 WPCU theme and celebrations, and how we can love our neighbours in thought and action.

1. This year the ecumenical WPCU celebration was prepared by a team representing different Christian traditions in Burkina Faso, facilitated by the local *Chemin Neuf* Community (CCN). This would be a great opportunity for children and youth to learn more about Burkina Faso. Using a map or globe, show where the country is in Africa, and allow students to compare it to Canada in size, population, average climate, demographic, etc.
2. The 2024 WPCU worship service starts with a *calabash*, a hollowed-out drinking gourd. Before the service, encourage your children or youth participants to learn more about the cultural and spiritual significance of the calabash and why the Burkina Faso team centres this year's worship service around it. During the worship service, participants can see a calabash, or another drinking gourd that would be used in their community if a calabash is not available. Depending on their age, participants may want to help make a calabash themselves. You can simply search on YouTube for "making a calabash" to find a variety of tutorials.
3. We are asked to love our neighbour. Who is our neighbour? On a poster board, ask participants to write out who is their neighbour – from the literal neighbours, to friends and classmates, to strangers. Using photos or magazines, make a collage of who would be their neighbour.
4. Helping and serving others is a part of how we show our love to them. Invite the children and youth to take part in an outreach project your church is involved with, such as the local food bank or diaper drive.
5. Create a Kindness Tree: Using sticks, construction paper, and ribbon or string, have the children write out acts of kindness that either they have done for others or others have done for them, and decorate the "tree" with these acts of kindness. It can stay with the children as a reminder of the acts of kindness in our lives.

6. Put on a skit! For children's time, have the children and youth show a skit re-creating the Good Samaritan story, whether directly from the Scripture or adapted to contemporary times.