

2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

TIPS FOR ORGANIZING AN ECUMENICAL WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE

While the worship materials provided in this year's kit can be used to craft a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity-themed service within your own congregation, that is not our goal. Our intention is that worship for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity be truly ecumenical, promoted widely, and draw leaders and worshippers from a broad range of Christian traditions in your community.

But how can you meet this goal of inclusive, ecumenical worship celebrating the Week of Prayer? Here is a basic plan you can use to get you started:

4-6 months prior:

- Reach out to other faith leaders in your neighbourhood by phone, email, or just dropping into their place of worship; invite them (or their representative) to participate in a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service planning meeting.
- Gather those interested for a meeting; select a date and venue for your event; divide tasks (e.g., event promotion/communications, worship planning/bulletins, music/musicians, hospitality/refreshments); craft a 'save the date' media release inviting others who are interested to get involved (or make use of the sample release provided on www.weekofprayer.ca); decide how you will use social media to promote and report on the event (e.g., create a Facebook or Eventbrite event page, use Twitter with hashtag #WPCU2019, post photos of your celebration on Facebook or Instagram, etc.).
- Order an appropriate number of posters and/or bulletin covers based on preliminary estimates of attendance.

1-2 months prior:

- Hold a follow-up planning meeting; divide worship leadership roles; finalize order of worship and select hymns and other music; order additional print materials, if necessary.
- Finalize plans to promote your event in each participating congregation and in the wider community (e.g., assign someone to place posters in grocery stores, libraries, other public locations; craft another media release with more details about event; divide posters for distribution in churches; plan to include details of the event on various church websites; continue your social media promotion plan; share your event with us for promotion via CCC channels: www.weekofprayer.ca/share-your-week-prayer-celebration).

2-4 weeks prior:

- Communicate with all participating churches; remind them to promote the event in their worship bulletins and during announcements (you may wish to use the bulletin insert found on www.weekofprayer.ca).
- Do social media promotion: write a Tweet with a hashtag #WPCU2019, create a Facebook event page and/or an Eventbrite event page.

1-2 weeks prior:

- Hold final, brief meeting to confirm all arrangements (e.g., event staffing, hospitality); walk through the service with leaders (and musicians, if possible); finalize bulletin.
- Print bulletin.
- Do a major social media push in the final week.

At event:

- Have a guest register, so you can capture information about how many faith communities are represented.
- Assign a photographer / videographer to capture some moments to share via traditional or social media (get signed releases if you will be making images public).
- Speak with participants to ask about their experience at the event – to gather material for an article or to send some quotes / impressions from your celebration for posting on www.weekofprayer.ca/wpcu-canada (make sure to get permission if you will attribute any quotes).

After event:

- As soon as you are able, meet briefly with the organizing team to reflect on the event and collect ideas on what went well, and what you would change for next year.
- Write a brief article about the event for submission to local media outlets, and be sure to include pictures.
- Complete your social media communications about the event.
- Post photos, quotes, or links to stories from your celebration on Facebook and Twitter (using hashtag #WPCU2019).
- Invite people to live-tweet (using hashtag #WPCU2019) or comment on your Facebook page and post their photos.
- Send your photos, stories, and quotes to the Canadian Council of Churches for posting on the Week of Prayer in Canada website (www.weekofprayer.ca/wpcu-canada). Please send your materials to: communications@councilofchurches.ca, with a cc to Maria Simakova, Coordinator, Faith and Witness: simakova@councilofchurches.ca.
- Pass along any helpful feedback you may have to the Canadian Week of Prayer for Christian Unity writing team, using the evaluation form available on www.weekofprayer.ca.
- Select the organizing team and venue for next year's event.