

## 2021 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

*“Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit” (John 15:5-9)*

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

*PLEASE NOTE: At the time of preparing this resource, our nation is facing the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and a wide variety of physical distancing measures. Any of the suggestions below can be adapted to online meetings / gatherings if necessary. We would encourage you, at the earliest planning stages, to reach out to members of your community who have experience with organizing online worship or online gatherings.*

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 for Christian Unity? Here is a basic plan you can use to get you started:

#### 4-6 months prior:

- Visit [www.weekofprayer.ca](http://www.weekofprayer.ca) / [www.semainedepriere.ca](http://www.semainedepriere.ca) to download 2021 WPCU international and Canadian resources and to find great tips for organizing WPCU ecumenical worship services, Bible studies, and other events. You might also be inspired by the photos and stories from previous years’ WPCU events across Canada published on those websites!
- 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(s); divide tasks (e.g., event promotion/communications, worship planning/bulletins, music/musicians, hospitality/refreshments, children’s story time/activities); craft a ‘save the date’ media release inviting others who are interested to get involved; decide how you will use social media to promote and report on the event(s). **For social media posts this year, use #WPCU2021 and #SPUC2021.**
- Print or order an appropriate number of posters and/or bulletin covers based on preliminary estimates of attendance.

#### 2 months prior:

- Hold a follow-up planning meeting; divide worship leadership roles; finalize order of worship and select hymns and other music; print or order additional print materials, if necessary.

- Finalize plans to promote your event(s) 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!  
<https://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.

#### **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

#### **At event:**

- Place hospitality ministers / greeters at the doors of the venue so that people who are unfamiliar with the worship space can be welcomed, provided with a worship aid, and directed to seating.
- At the beginning of the service, ask your worship leader – or someone from the host congregation – to let everyone know where the washrooms are located and whether there is a space that can accommodate special needs (such as a designated space for those with mobility issues, etc.) – as you are expecting a number of people who are probably unfamiliar with your space.
- 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. Post a sign on all doors with a standardized message, such as: "Please be aware that photographs may be taken at today's event and may be used in congregational media or by The Canadian Council of Churches and its Week of Prayer for Christian Unity team (in print or online) to promote and share this event. Your participation today constitutes your agreement to have your photograph taken and used in this way." This notice can also have a little camera icon.
- **Use hashtags #WPCU2021 (for posts in English) and #SPUC2021 (for posts in French) when you share your celebration on social media.**
- Speak with participants to ask about their experience at the event and/or to gather material for an article (make sure to get permission if you will attribute any quotes).
- If you would like to share your photos, videos, quotes or stories on [www.weekofprayer.ca](http://www.weekofprayer.ca) and CCC social media, please contact our Communications Coordinator, Nicole Roccas ([roccas@councilofchurches.ca](mailto:roccas@councilofchurches.ca)).

**After event:**

- As soon as you are able, meet briefly with the organizing team to reflect on the event(s) and collect ideas on what went well, and what you would change for next year.
- Write a brief article about the event(s) for submission to local media outlets or for publication on [www.weekofprayer.ca](http://www.weekofprayer.ca), and be sure to include pictures.
- Complete your social media communications about the event(s).
- Pass along any helpful feedback you may have to the Canadian Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Writing and Animation team, using the evaluation form available at [www.weekofprayer.ca](http://www.weekofprayer.ca).
- Select the organizing team and venue for next year's WPCU event(s).