



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2018  
**That All May Be Free**  
Opening Worship Service



Sunday 21 January 2018 – 6:00pm  
**All Saints' Church Oakham**

*Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power*  
Exodus 15.6

## Welcome

Praying for the unity of the Church involves a recognition not only of the brokenness of Christian relationships but also how injustice in the world at large rends asunder Christian communities and impedes our participation in God's mission. History too plays a part, casting a shadow over how we live our lives together in community.

All of these issues emerge from the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity materials for 2018. The churches of the Caribbean region describe to us their own context, how the hand of God was active in ending slavery, and how God's mission in the world is a call to us all to unite together in ending injustice, that which casts a shadow from the past and current forms of injustice such as poverty, trafficking and discrimination.

This particular Caribbean experience is a challenge to us in our context to reflect more deeply on the injustices in our own nations in Britain and Ireland which create the divisions that impede our participation in God's mission, with the call to actively work to end all division.

**Bob Fyffe**, *General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland*

# ¶ Gathering

## Hymn



1. The church's one foundation  
is Jesus Christ her Lord;  
she is his new creation  
by water and the word:  
from heaven he came and sought her  
to be his holy Bride;  
with his own blood he bought her,  
and for her life he died.

2. Elect from every nation,  
yet one o'er all the earth,  
her charter of salvation  
one Lord, one faith, one birth;  
one holy name she blesses,  
partakes one holy food,  
and to one hope she presses  
with every grace endued.

5. Yet she on earth hath union  
with God the Three in One,  
and mystic sweet communion  
with those whose rest is won:  
O happy ones and holy!  
Lord, give us grace that we,  
like them, the meek and lowly,  
on high may dwell with thee:

3. Though with a scornful wonder  
men see her sore opprest,  
by schisms rent asunder,  
by heresies distrest;  
yet saints their watch are keeping,  
their cry goes up, 'How long?'  
And soon the night of weeping  
shall be the morn of song.

4. 'Mid toil and tribulation,  
and tumult of her war,  
she waits the consummation  
of peace forevermore;  
till with the vision glorious  
her longing eyes are blest,  
and the great church victorious  
shall be the church at rest.

*Words: Samuel John Stone (1832-1900)  
Music: Aurelia, Samuel Wesley (1766-1837)  
(Ancient & Modern – 506)*

## Words of Welcome

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

**And also with you.**

We are here to be thankful for God's goodness  
to the Christian Churches throughout the world.  
Today we share in the experience of the Churches of the Caribbean  
and their history of oppression, colonisation and slavery.  
We also celebrate that through the scriptures  
they found their lives transformed  
by the liberating action of God.

By the Grace of God their chains of enslavement were replaced  
by new human bonds of love and community.  
In this action of God they found their unity.  
May God speak to us through their experience.

### ¶ Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Unite your servants in the bond of unity.

**Come, Holy Spirit!**

Teach us to pray.

**Come, Holy Spirit!**

Liberate us from the slavery of sin.

**Come, Holy Spirit!**

Help us in our weakness.

**Come, Holy Spirit!**

Restore us as your children.

**Come, Holy Spirit!**

### ¶ Prayers of Reconciliation

God calls us to liberation in Christ.

We have not received a spirit of slavery and fear  
but adoption into His family.

But still old sins and habits enslave us,  
so let us pray and call on the mercy of God's saving power.

Forgive us when we fall into old habits of sin that undermine the dignity of others.  
Kyrie eleison.

**Kyrie eleison.**

Forgive us when our choices perpetuate enslavement and poverty.  
Christe eleison.

**Christe eleison.**

Forgive us when fear and suspicion separate us from each other  
and place limits on hope and healing.

Kyrie eleison.

**Kyrie eleison.**

*An assurance of pardon may be given*

## ¶ Proclamation of the Word of God

### Reading – Romans 8.12-27

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Listen, that all may be free.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Song



*Steal away, steal away,  
steal away to Jesus!*

*Steal away, steal away home;  
I ain't got long to stay here.*

1. My Lord, he calls me;  
he calls me by the thunder.  
The trumpet sounds within my soul;  
I ain't got long to stay here.

2. Green trees are bending;  
poor sinners stand a trembling.  
The trumpet sounds within my soul;  
I ain't got long to stay here.

3. My Lord, he calls me;  
he calls me by the lightning.  
The trumpet sounds within my soul;  
I ain't got long to stay here.

*Words & Music: African-American spiritual*

## Reading – Mark 5:21-43

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered round him; and he was by the lake. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, 'My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.' So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, 'If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.' Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' And his disciples said to him, 'You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, "Who touched me?"' He looked all round to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.'

While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, 'Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?' But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, 'Do not fear, only believe.' He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When

they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, 'Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.' And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, 'Talitha cum', which means, 'Little girl, get up!' And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Listen, that all may be free.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Sermon**

### **The Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.**

**Amen.**

## Hymn

*This hymn was specially written by Patrick Prescod for the Conference of Caribbean Churches and has a long association with the Caribbean Ecumenical Movement.*



1. The right hand of God is writing in our land,  
writing with power and with love;  
our conflicts and our fears, our triumphs and our tears,  
are recorded by the right hand of God.
2. The right hand of God is striking in our land,  
striking out at envy, hate and greed;  
our selfishness and lust, our pride and deeds unjust,  
are destroyed by the right hand of God.
3. The right hand of God is lifting in our land,  
lifting the fallen one by one;  
each one is known by name, and rescued now from shame,  
by the lifting of the right hand of God.
4. The right hand of God is healing in our land,  
healing broken bodies, minds and souls;  
so wondrous is its touch, with love that means so much,  
when we're healed by the right hand of God.

*Words: Patrick Prescod, Jamaica*

*Music: Noel Dexter, Jamaica*

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## ¶ Prayers of the People

Let us place our needs before the Lord.

God of the Exodus,  
you led your people through the Red Sea  
from slavery into freedom.

Free us from all forms of slavery  
and everything that obscures human dignity.

**Lead us by your hand, that we may live.**

God of abundance,  
you provide for all our needs.  
Help us to rise above selfishness and greed  
and give us the courage to be agents of justice in the world.  
**Lead us by your hand, that we may live.**

God of love,  
you created us in your image  
and have redeemed us in Christ.  
Empower us to love our neighbour  
and to welcome the stranger.  
**Lead us by your hand, that we may live.**

God of the covenant  
you remain faithful to us  
even when we have wandered into violence.  
Put a new spirit and a new heart within us  
that we may instead be servants of your peace.  
**Lead us by your hand, that we may live.**

God of glory,  
in Jesus you chose to humble yourself  
and become part of our story.  
You made your home with a human family,  
and have adopted us as your children.  
Help us to remain faithful to our families and communities,  
and make us one in Christ.  
**Lead us by your hand, that we may live.**

God of the Trinity,  
you make us one with you and each other.  
Free us from the self-centredness, arrogance and fear  
that hinders the full visible unity of your Church.  
**Lead us by your hand, that we may live.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Let us join together, bound not by chains  
but by the love of Christ that has been poured into our hearts,  
and pray to our Father in the words that Jesus taught us.

**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.  
Forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory.  
For ever and ever. Amen.

## ¶ Commissioning

Redeemed by God  
and united in the One Body of Christ,  
let us go out into the world  
in the power of the Spirit.

**The Spirit of the Lord is upon us,  
because the Lord has anointed us  
to bring good news to the poor,  
to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.  
Amen! Alleluia!**

*Luke 4.18-19*

## Hymn



1. There's a wideness in God's mercy  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in his justice  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than up in heaven;  
there is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgement given.

2 For the love of God is broader  
than the measure of our mind,  
and the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
But we make his love too narrow  
by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify his strictness  
with a zeal he would not own.

3 There is plentiful redemption  
through the blood that has been shed;  
there is joy for all the members  
in the sorrows of the Head.  
There is grace enough for thousands  
of new worlds as great as this;  
there is room for fresh creations

Words: Frederick William Faber (1814-1863) Music: Corvedale, Maurice Bevan (1921-2006) (Ancient & Modern – 806)

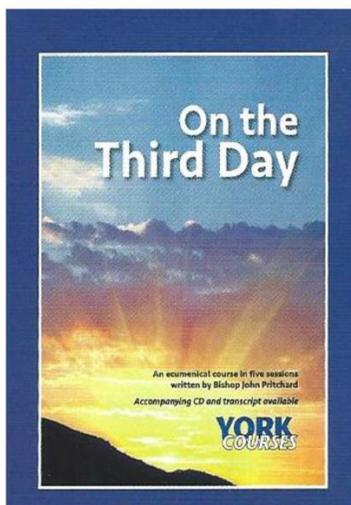
in that upper home of bliss.

*Second half of tune:*

4 If our love were but more simple,  
we should take him at his word;  
and our lives would be all gladness  
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

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## Churches Together in Oakham and District York Lent Course 2018



"The resurrection is the Big Story that turned a little Jewish protest movement into a world transforming religion. And yet by Easter Monday we've almost forgotten about it and are planning our summer holidays.

How can we recapture the explosive power of the resurrection that ricocheted around the world?

How can we live in the glow of resurrection and be an Easter people?

How can 'there and then' become 'here and now'?"

Featuring: Libby Lane, Bishop of Stockport  
Tom Wright, former Bishop of Durham and NT Scholar  
Ruth Gee, former President of the Methodist Conference  
Paul Vallely, Roman Catholic journalist and broadcaster

Session 1: Have I got news for you!  
Session 2: So What? The implications of the Resurrection  
Session 3: Let him Easter in us  
Session 4: Celebrating and praying Easter  
Session 5: A risen Church

If you would like to participate in this year's Lent Course, please sign up on the sheet in your church by **Sunday 4th February at the very latest.**

**The courses will start in the week beginning Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February.**

