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CHURCH UNITY COMMISSION

'that they may be one as we are one – so that they may be brought to complete unity.' (John 17:22-23)

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – 2019

This letter introduces the material for the Week of Prayer for Church Unity – 2019. The week covers the period from the Feast of the Ascension to Pentecost. This is more than a week, but that gives us more time to engage in the way in which we as Churches should take seriously the prayer of Jesus as set out in John 17.

The service is set out in the attached booklet, and the prayer pamphlet includes the prayer for the week as well as a set of readings for daily meditation. These are for individual use through the week and it is hoped that local congregations will provide them for their members.

However, the week is intended for corporate prayer, worship and witness in local communities and these need to be planned together by representatives of the local churches.

The Feast of the Ascension is no longer recognized as a public holiday and many think that this limits engagement within the local community. But this is quite the opposite. When it was a holiday, many would take the Friday off as well, and go away for the week-end which meant that they missed Sunday worship as well. The present situation means that a major feast of the Church can be celebrated ecumenically by the local community, without having to close down regular services. The material has been provided and it is hoped that worship teams will be encouraged to gather and plan a combined service that will blend different styles of worship.

Seventh Sunday of Easter might be used to swap pulpits in the churches of the local communities with the focus on the set passage from John 17.

The weekday evenings can also be used for a series of sermons or meditations at different venues through the following week with preachers representing the different denominations.

Friday evening could bring youth groups together for celebrations of their unity within the community recognizing that many would attend the same schools even as they worshipped in different congregations.

Group meetings could be paired with a group from a different congregation to enable the connections to cement at every level of church activities.

Service Groups could share in the projects that were already established in congregational programmes as a witness to the responsibilities that are shared in serving the community.

Please let us know of the ways in which you shared in the great Week of Prayer for Church Unity.

Rev K. Griffiths

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