

Please take time to go through this service slowly to receive the words of light and life which God has for you this day 24th January 2021.



Today marks the conclusion to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and the theme for our online service together is Abide in Me". Parts of this service have been adapted from material produced by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Reading:

"I am the true vine {says Jesus} and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.....Remain in me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself, it must remain on the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me".

John 15: 1-5a

Opening Prayer:

Lord, you invite us to abide in you, the vinedresser who cares for us with love. You call us to see the beauty of each branch united to the vine, the beauty of each person. And yet too often the differences in others make us afraid. We withdraw into ourselves. Our trust in you and in one another is lost. Come and direct our hearts towards you once again. That is, as one family, we may praise your name. Amen.

Song: (Mission Praise 1094)

Men of faith rise up and sing
Of the great and glorious King
You are strong when you feel weak
In your brokenness complete.

**Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is Saviour to all
Lord of Heaven and earth.**

Rise up women of the truth
Stand and sing to broken hearts
Who can know the healing power
Of our glorious King of love

**Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is Saviour to all
Lord of heaven and earth.**

We've been through fire
We've been through rain
We've been refined by the power of your name
We've fallen deeper in love with you
You've burned the truth on our lips

**Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is Saviour to all
Lord of heaven and earth.**

Rise up church with broken wings
Fill this place with songs again

notwithstanding, we live in challenging times, beset by wars, violence, poverty, racism and climate change. Yet, as Christians seeking reconciliation, justice and peace, we also know the full value of a spiritual life, have an immense responsibility to unite and help bring about the precepts of God's kingdom on earth.

As we seek to abide in the love of Christ, we witness suffering and conflict. Through solidarity with those who suffer, we allow the love of Christ to flow through us and bear fruit when we offer love to our brothers and sisters and nurture hope for the world.

Abiding in Christ and thus grafted onto the vine, we receive the strength and wisdom to act against structures of injustice and oppression, to fully recognize ourselves as brothers and sisters in humanity, and to be creators of a new way of living, with respect for, and communion with, all of creation.

Challenge:

In what ways are you/we working in unity/solidarity with others during this time of pandemic?

Intercessions:

In the power of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we pray to you.....

Holy Spirit, you create and re-create your Church in all places and in all times. Come and whisper in our hearts the prayer which Jesus addressed to his Father on the eve of his Passion: "..... that they may all be one, so that the world may believe."

Lord, in you is our hope.

Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so that suspicions and misunderstandings cease in your Church. May the barriers that separate us, fall.

Lord, in you is our hope.

Holy Spirit, consoler of all, open our hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation and bring us back to you when we lose our way.

Lord, in you is our hope.

Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, give us poverty of spirit so that we may be open to your grace..

Lord, in you is our hope.

God of life, you created us in your image and likeness. We praise you for the rich tapestry of cultures and traditions. Grant us the courage to speak out against injustice and prejudice.

Lord, in you is our hope.

Merciful God, you have shown us through your Son that we are one in you. Help us to listen to each other and live in peace.

Lord, in you is our hope.

O Jesus you came into this fractured world and shared your humanity. You know the suffering of your people. May the spirit of compassion move us to share our time, gifts and resources with those in need.

Lord, in you is our hope.

In this time of global pandemic and the challenges of climate change, you hear the cries of those affected. In the silence, we offer you our own prayers for situations known personally to us. (PAUSE)

We pray also for ourselves and for strength to come through the effects of our isolation from one another. Protect and guide us, and empower us as we strive

for new ways of living which is in harmony with all of creation. We pray for the healing of the nations.

Lord, in you is our hope.

Gracious Lord, accept these prayers in the name of your precious Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Hymn: (Mission Praise 501)

O Jesus I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
Be thou for ever near me,
My master and my friend.
I shall not fear the battle
If thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If thou wilt be my guide.

O let me feel thee near me;
The world is ever near;
I see the lights that dazzle,
The tempting sounds I hear;
My foes are ever near me,
Around me and within;
But Jesus, draw Thou nearer,
And shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear Thee speaking
In accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
To hasten and control;
O speak and make me listen,
Thou guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, Thou hast promised,
To all who follow Thee,
That where Thou art in glory
There shall my servant be;
And, Jesus I have promised to serve Thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow
My Master and my friend.

O let me see the footmarks,
And in them plant mine own;
My hope to follow duly
As in Thy strength alone;
O guide me, call me, draw me.
Uphold me to the end;
And then in heaven receive me,
My Master and my friend!

Words: John Ernest Bode (1816-1874)

Music: James William Elliot (1833-1915)

[O Jesus I have promised \(modern version\) - YouTube](#)

Jesus' prayer for us:

".....I pray also for those who will believe in me through their own message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me".

John 17: 20-23

The Blessing:

Be one, so that the world may believe. Abide in God's love; go into the world and bear the fruits of his love.

May the Lord of all creation fill us with joy and all peace in faith so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ, Amen.

