



All of this is us



#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer from the Assembly to mark our 40th Anniversary

WEEK TWO

Day 9 – Monday 22 May 2017 – A Prayer for Church Leaders

Today we pray for the leaders of our Church. This prayer was written by Dr Jill Tabart, the first woman President of the Uniting Church in Australia. She held this position from 1994-1997.

Living, loving God,

We give you thanks that your Spirit has endowed members of your Church with a diversity of gifts, and that there is no gift without its corresponding service. For those with the gift of leadership in the Uniting Church in Australia, we pray this day:

- for those whose vision and faithfulness fashioned the Basis of Union to provide boundary markers for the journey of the new Church;
- for those whose faithful and scholarly interpretation of the Scriptures is helping us all discern, with an informed faith, where you are calling the Church in this day and age;
- for those whose hearts are heavy at declining numbers in congregations, and who grieve that patterns of the past are no more;
- for those whose creativity and passion are opening up fresh ways of helping people find you, and worship you, and serve you;
- for those catching anew the vision of your call to a Pilgrim people, alive with the urgency of proclaiming the timeless good news of your love and forgiveness for all.

Living, loving God,

We give you thanks this day as we seek your blessing on all in leadership positions across this church.

Amen

Day 10 – Tuesday 23 May 2017 – Prayer for our Justice work

Today we pray for the work we do in pursuit of justice. This prayer was written by Rev. Elenie Poulos, former National Director of Uniting Justice. It was first published on Social Justice Sunday in 2004.

Loving God,
help us to be true:
to see the truth of our brokenness,
hear the truth of our pain,
and speak the truth of our violence,
regardless of the cost.

Loving God,
help us to be merciful:
to open our hearts to everyone we meet,
to reach out our hands with compassion,
and offer love without condition.

Loving God,
help us to be just:
to transform our violent world -
overturning the systems and structures of oppression
and bringing justice to all creation.

Loving God,
help us to be community:
to live together in trust -
all people and all creation,
reconciled and renewed in your grace,
a world of peace.
Now and forever. Amen.

#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer for the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in 2017

Day 11 – Wednesday 24 May 2017 – Prayer for Parish Missions

Today we pray for Parish Missions. It is also the day the Uniting Church remembers church reformers John and Charles Wesley.

This prayer was written by Rev. Dr Chris Walker, National Consultant Christian Unity, Doctrine & Worship.

God of love and justice, we pray for the work of Parish Missions across Australia. We thank you for the extensive ministries they have developed to serve people, especially those with particular needs.

Be with the leaders of the Missions both ordained and lay that they may offer servant leadership that is wise and compassionate.

Uphold the many staff that they may serve people in the spirit of Christ.

May the Parish Missions continue to hold word and deed together as they proclaim the gospel and serve in the name of Jesus.

Assist the leaders in Parish Missions and all of us to take John Wesley's prayer to heart as we remember John and Charles Wesley on this day.

Deliver us, O God,
from a lazy mind,
all lukewarmness of heart,
and all depression of spirit.
We know that these must deaden our love for you;
mercifully free our hearts from them all.
And give us such a lively, fervent and cheerful spirit
that we may vigorously perform whatever you command,
thankfully suffer whatever you choose for us,
and always be eager to obey your holy love
in all things;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer for the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in 2017

Day 12 – Thursday 25 May 2017 – Prayer for our work in following God's mission

Today we pray for our work following God's mission. This prayer has been shared by Rev. Dr Dean Drayton who was President of the Uniting Church from 2003-2006.

Living reconciling God, we thank you for the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ, who through his life and death and resurrection has let loose the grace in which we now stand.

In him we see the sheer scope of the renewal and healing of the whole creation already beginning to happen, naming and destroying all that works to subvert the Kingdom of God.

Death is faced and life is given, Sin is exposed and taken away, sickness is replaced with healing, injustice is rejected and overwhelmed with rightness and darkness is lit up with the light of life.

You have called us into the strange way Jesus Christ seeks both our obedience and delight as those who witness to the unfolding directions of grace and joy that is your mission.

You have called us as a Church to be the bearer of uniting as your sign that we may all be one, in a diversity more than ecclesiastical unitedness that is a searching reconciliation with all sisters and brothers owning you.

You have called us as congregations to live beyond ourselves to embody your grace for the sake of our nation and world, with all who long for that which is good and right and true.

You have called each of us because you love us and have gifted us to be found in your mission of hope and light and truth.

Living joyous God you delight in the creation you have brought into being, larger than we can conceive, yet a hazelnut in your hand.

We thank you for gathering us into your mission, in which you walk with us in the power of your Holy Spirit, lighting up the way even as sometimes the darkness seems all pervasive.

Keep us in this grace that is given through our Lord Jesus Christ, freely given to be freely received.

Help us to find companionship and partnership with you, and each other, as we celebrate this first forty years of the Uniting Church.

In our worship and witness and service let us see the gift of your Shekinah glory.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer for the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in 2017

Day 13 – Friday 26 May 2017 – Prayer for our work as stewards

Today we pray for our work as stewards of the environment and all its resources. This prayer was written by Rev. John E. Mavor AM, Past President, Uniting Church in Australia, 1997-2000.

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work and speak and think for Thee.

Charles Wesley

TIS 572

Loving Lord,

We thank you that the Uniting Church was called into being 'to work and speak and think for you'. You have called us to be stewards sharing with the world what we have received through your love.

We praise you that we have been called to be stewards of the Faith to share the Good News that in Christ we are a new creation.

We celebrate that we are stewards of this world in which we live, that you call us to use the resources of the world wisely and productively, that the environment may be respected and cared for and that sea levels may not rise.

We recognise that we are stewards of your Kingdom and that we ask for your help as the starving are fed, the homeless are housed, the refugees find safety and people learn to live in harmony in this world which you love and to which your Son came to make all things new.

Amen

#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer for the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in 2017

Day 14 – Saturday 27 May – We begin A Destiny Together

Today we enter into A Destiny Together: A Week of Prayer and Fasting for justice for First Peoples. At the same time, we mark National Reconciliation Week from 27 May to 3 June.

A Destiny Together is an expression of the Uniting Church in Australia's commitment to the Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC). In 2012, the 13th Assembly resolved to call all members and congregations to a week of prayer and fasting.

The week, celebrated 17-23 March 2014, included a public prayer vigil outside Parliament House in Canberra. Church members from all over Australia came to Canberra to participate in what is likely to be remembered as one of the most significant events in the life of the Uniting Church. Rev. Ronang Garrawurra, Chairperson of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) and Assembly President, Rev. Prof. Andrew Dutney, led the service. From remote communities in places like Arnhem Land and the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands and from the centres of our big cities, people gathered to pray.

This prayer was written by Rev. Dr Chris Budden, Acting Interim National Coordinator, Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress

Reconciliation,
Justice,
prayer and fasting,
forging a common 'destiny together'!

Gracious and loving God, Spirit of life and land, Spirit of the living Word Jesus,
these are fancy words for a broken people.

There are other words:

invasion,
dispossession,
massacres,
stolen children
that wash over us with shame and pain,
words we can only speak because we trust your grace and forgiveness,
and know that you call us to seek reconciliation, reparation, and new life.

We are reminded this week that you call us to be a people who break down the walls that divide us.

We are reminded that in Christ there are no divisions, but only a people who share the bread and wine of the table with the whole world.

#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer for the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in 2017

We are reminded how easy it is to expect others to offer us forgiveness, to not tell us of the pain and broken-ness that remains. We want to be let off too easily; we want to feel good.

We are reminded that we are bound together; we cannot escape each other. We are tied with the covenant of creation, the call of Christ, and our Church's covenant commitment. You, O God, have called us to learn to love our neighbours as we love ourselves.

In your grace, draw us into the week. Help us find words to name injustice and division. Give us courage to hope and pray for justice and reconciliation, for new life for First and Second Peoples in this land.

Hear us we pray.

Amen

Day 15 – Sunday 28 May 2017 – A Destiny Together

We continue our prayer for justice for First Peoples. This prayer is drawn from the A Destiny Together Congregational Worship resource:

https://assembly.uca.org.au/images/PDF/A_Destiny_Together_Congregational_Worship.pdf

Reconciliation Prayer

God of love,
you are the creator of this land and all good things.

We acknowledge the pain and shame of our history
and the suffering of our peoples
and we ask your forgiveness.

We thank you for the survival of indigenous cultures.

Our hope is in you because
you gave your son Jesus
to reconcile the world to you.

We pray for your strength and grace to forgive,
accept and love one another as you love us and forgive and accept us
in the sacrifice of your Son.

Give us the courage to
accept the realities of our history
so that we may build a better future for our nation.

Teach us to respect all cultures.

Teach us to care for our land and waters.

Help us to share justly the resources of this land.

Help us to bring about spiritual and social change
to improve the quality of life
for all groups in our communities,
especially the disadvantaged.

Help our young people to find true dignity
and self-esteem by your Spirit.

May your power and love be the foundations
on which we build our families,
our communities and our nation.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Prepared by the Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group,
March 1997. © NATSIEC. Used with permission.**

#40PRAYERS

40 days of prayer for the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in 2017