

*Churches Together in Farnham*  
*2013 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*  
***Order of Service***  
*for an Ecumenical Act of Worship*  
*at St Thomas-on-The Bourne Church on 20th January*  
*What does God require of us?*  
*(based on Micah 6: 6-8)*



# **2013 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

*Text, from Micah 6:8:*

**“What does the Lord require of you?**

**To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.”**

**Chosen by Christians in India, the international theme for 2013 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity focuses upon the injustice and exploitation caused by social division - especially as it affects the low caste Dalit community who were formerly known as the untouchables.**

**Almost 80 percent of Indian Christians  
have a Dalit background.**

**What does God require of us?**

## ***I. OPENING***

***Welcome and Call to Worship  
by our host the Revd Karen Hutchinson***

Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered in my name,  
I am there among them".

Let us acknowledge the presence of the triune God  
Creator, Reconciler and Gift-giver,  
in our midst.

### ***Invocation***

*All*        **There is neither Jew nor Greek,  
There is neither slave nor free person,  
There is neither man nor woman,  
For you are all one in Christ Jesus.**  
[based on Galatians 3: 28]

***The Revd John Edwards – Holy Family Church – invites the  
people to call upon God in the words of Rabindranath Tagore:***

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high  
Where knowledge is free  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments  
By narrow domestic walls  
Where words come out from the depth of truth  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way  
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit  
Where the mind is led forward by thee  
Into ever-widening thought and action

*All*        **Into that heaven of freedom, let my country awake.**

## ***II. PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING***

### **Hymn**

**Sing for God's glory that colours the dawn of creation,  
racing across the sky, trailing bright clouds of elation;  
sun of delight succeeds the velvet of night,  
warming the earth's exultation.**

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**Sing for God's power that shatters the chains that would bind us,  
searing the darkness of fear and despair that could blind us,  
touching our shame with love that will not lay blame,  
reaching out gently to find us.**

**Sing for God's justice disturbing each easy illusion,  
tearing down tyrants and putting our pride to confusion;  
lifeblood of right, resisting evil and slight,  
offering freedom's transfusion.**

**Sing for God's saints who have travelled faith's journey before us,  
who in our weariness give us their hope to restore us;  
in them we see the new creation to be,  
spirit of love made flesh for us.**

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### ***Prayers led by Pastor Michael Hall – Farnham Pentecostal Church – Chair of Churches Together in Farnham***

We praise you O God, our creator  
for the blessing of our many cultures, ethnicities and languages.

We thank you for the times that our many church traditions  
have kept our communities strong and active.

Teach us to celebrate our different identities,  
strengthen our bonds of fellowship and lead us into greater unity.

*All*      **How wonderful it is for God's people to live together in  
harmony!**

We praise you Jesus Christ for reconciling us with God,  
challenging us to respect the dignity and value of all human  
beings.

We thank you for the message of hope  
that in you we can overcome all that is evil in our world.

Teach us to stand in solidarity with those whose dignity is  
crushed  
by social, political and economic structures.

*All*      **How wonderful it is for God's people to live together in  
harmony!**

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We praise you Holy Spirit for the gift of interdependence that is our heritage as part of the Body of Christ.

Teach us to treasure the unity that we enjoy as we beseech your continuing presence with us.

Inspire us on our journey with all those peoples and movements that engage in the struggles for life.

*All*     **How wonderful it is for God's people to live together in harmony!**

### **III. CONFESSION OF SIN & ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

*Leader*     We know that in Christ we are already one, but our human weakness does not witness to this reality. Let us now confess our sins of disunity and seek the Lord's healing.

*All*     **In humility we come to your feet, dear God as we remember our sinfulness and the disunity for which we have been responsible. We confess that we preserve the inherited human barriers of caste, class, power and all things that keep us apart. We ask for your forgiveness that we have often used our history and our past as churches to discriminate against one another and hurt the unity to which Christ has called us. Forgive us our divisions and help us to continue to strive for unity, in the precious name of Jesus your Son. Amen**

**Silence**

#### ***Supplication***

*Leader(s)*     Come now Jesus into our midst, heal us and our disunity. Lead us into the paths of righteousness so that all can find life.

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Come now Jesus into our midst,  
teach us how to listen  
to the cries of those who are pushed to the margins.

Come now Jesus into our midst,  
inspire us to work for liberation  
and to unite your fragmented world.

*All*            **Amen**

### ***Assurance of pardon***

*Leader*      If we confess our sins,  
God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins  
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.  
[1 John 1: 9]

### ***The Peace***

The leader invites the assembly to share this assurance of pardon by moving towards each other and sharing the peace. This may be accompanied by instrumental music.

## ***IV. LITURGY OF THE WORD***

### ***First Reading: Micah 6: 6-8***

***The Revd Canon Jeffrey Bell – All Saints Church, Tilford***

With what shall I come before the Lord  
and bow down before the exalted God?

Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousand rivers of oil?

Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has showed you, O mortal, what is good.  
And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.

***A Testimony of Faith***

***Reader Stella Walter – St Thomas-on-The Bourne Church***

When they came for Sarah Digal, she wasn't there. She had fled, five children and mother-in-law in tow, to the safety of the jungles a kilometre away. So, they set ablaze all that she had left behind, a framed picture of Jesus, a Bible in Oriya, utensils in the kitchen, some clothes, mats and linen. By the time Sarah tiptoed back, when she saw it was safe, her home was gone. What was left was smouldering embers, ashes and smoke. Some neighbours came to commiserate with her. Sarah took a good look, stood erect, and pulled her sari firmly over her head. She began to pray. "Lord, forgive us our sins. Jesus, you are the only one. Save us from our misfortune. Free us, Lord." The words were tumbling out. Sarah's children slowly joined her. She was weeping as she pleaded with God for deliverance. Her neighbours and others around her joined her. It was a simple bond of human compassion and a strong reminder to her that nothing can sever a woman from her God. "I will die one day. But I will not stop being a Christian," Sarah said through her tears."

*Leader* Let us in silence meditate on this testimony of faith and courage. As we commend the faith of our sister Sarah and others, let us do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

**Silence**

**Psalm 86: 11-16**

Teach me your way, O Lord,  
that I may walk in your truth;  
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

**You alone are God.**

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,  
and I will glorify your name for ever.

For great is your steadfast love towards me;  
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

**You alone are God.**

O God, the insolent rise up against me;  
a band of ruffians seeks my life,  
and they do not set you before them.

**You alone are God.**

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But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Turn to me and be gracious to me;  
give your strength to your servant;  
save the child of your serving-maid.

**You alone are God.**

### ***Second Reading: Galatians 3: 26-28*** ***Bob Skinner – Weybourne Baptist Church***

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus For all of you who were baptised in Christ have clothed yourselves in Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

### **Hymn**

**Walk up on the wounded side  
where the injured and the lame  
find their sorrows like a tide;  
no one cares to know their name.  
Dare to tell me then your tale  
of your burdens and your woe:  
face to face with hurt this real,  
minor stresses might just go.**

**Do not fear the wounded side,  
where pretension cannot be;  
broken souls are open wide,  
and you have a chance to see:  
difference you presumed is fake,  
you share all the needs you find  
and to give rather than take  
is love of the healing kind.**

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### ***Gospel: Luke 24: 13-35*** ***The Revd Michael Hopkins – Farnham United Reformed Church***

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other

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about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

“What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, “It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.” Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

**SERMON:**

*Revd Vida Foday – Farnham Methodist Church*

Hymn 470 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

**V. PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*Michael McDonnell – St Joan of Arc Church*

In the prayers the following response may be used:

*Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.*

As we walk together, send your Spirit to strengthen our resolve and deepen our conversations to realise Jesus' prayer in us.

*Response*

As we walk with the wounded body of Christ, hasten the day when we can realise the fullness of fellowship at his table and inflame in our hearts the desire to overcome all that divides us.

*Response*

As we walk towards freedom, raise the unity of the Churches to be a sign of hope in situations of discrimination and injustice.

*Response*

As we walk as part of God's creation, help us to tread carefully and respect the earth that we may be attentive to the suffering of the landless.

*Response*

As we walk as friends of Jesus, enlarge and deepen our fellowship and friendship with each other and with those who are marginalised.

*Response*

As we walk beyond barriers, grant us courage to overcome cultural prejudices that hinder us from recognising the presence of God in each other.

*Response*

As we walk in solidarity with women like Sarah and other victims of discrimination, encircle us all with your love and enable us to do justice.

*Response*

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As we walk in celebration, help us to see the wonderful diversity in human life, born of the struggles for dignity and survival amid oppression, and see your abiding faithfulness.

*Response*

In Christ's name we raise all these prayers, O God.

**Amen**

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

**As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:**

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.**

**Amen**

## ***VI. BLESSING AND DISMISSAL***

Triune God, who nurtures us, remind us of the purpose you have for us and for our churches.

**Amen**

Triune God, who walks with us, lead us on the path to unity.

**Amen.**

Triune God, who inspires us, sustain us as we stand together.

**Amen.**

And the blessing of the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.

Go and do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.

**In the name of Christ. Amen**

**Hymn 590 The Kingdom is upon you**

**Organist: Julian Cooper**

***Please join us to share refreshments and to view Churches  
Together in Farnham's Golden Jubilee Exhibition.***

**In addition to the United Service  
daily prayer meetings are being held  
throughout the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
– 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January –  
at St Joan's Centre, Tilford Road, Farnham at 10.30am  
*Everyone is welcome***

***Resources provided by Churches Together  
in Britain and Ireland***