

New Year and Epiphany

Prayers and worship resources on the themes of 'New Year' and 'Epiphany' – updated December 2013



New Year

As we enter this new year, we bring before you our hopes and dreams, our aims and objectives, the best of our intentions and the worthiest of our ambitions. We bring before you all that we hope to make out of this year, and submit it all to your life-changing grace.

When our priorities submerge us in pointless tasks,
When our ambitions fail us or overtake us,
When our hopes seek the fulfilment of none but ourselves,
When our hearts deceive us to think that we are right when we are not
Open our eyes to who you really are.

Open our eyes that we might see the future you have already planned for us.

Grant us:

the courage to seek your kingdom;
the energy to labour where labour is needed;
the wisdom to see when it is not;
the grace to be quiet when we need to listen,
the humility to receive from others,
the compassion to hear and see and love those who nobody wants to hear and see and love.
By your loving-kindness, make us the body of Christ, thriving by the indwelling of your Spirit, bringing glory to the Father.

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Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is on 18-25 January. This prayer is taken from the resources which are available at: <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/658>

This year the theme is 'Is Christ Divided?' using texts from 1 Corinthians.

Loving God,
in whom our divisions have no meaning,
send us your Holy Spirit to guide us
as we strive for reconciliation.
Unite us in mind and purpose
and renew us for mission,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Epiphany

Journeying God, who beckons us to join you on the road,
be with all your peoples as we set out into this new year.

Give courage to the cautious,
strength to the weary,
vision to the short-sighted,
hope to those who are broken in spirit.

When we are unsure of where you are leading
and cannot chart our path or progress,
give us trust and a toleration of not knowing.

When we are certain about the pattern of your mission,
give us humility – and the grace
to listen and learn from each new situation.

As the wise men brought gifts to the Christ-child,
so may we bring gifts to one another in the world:

GOLD

May we share material resources justly;
practise fair trade; respect the earth;
and exercise mutual deference.

FRANKINCENSE

May we promote freedom of thought, speech and worship;
find opportunities for all to grow in grace and stature;
take quietness with us wherever we go;
and exercise mutual encouragement.

MYRRH

May we stand in solidarity with the oppressed and suffering;
weep with those who weep; lament the atrocities of history;
bring balm for tomorrow
and exercise mutual love.

Journeying God, help us to follow you,
however risky it seems,
for in you lies our ultimate security, our greatest freedom.

Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January)

L: To those who walk in darkness

*R: **show the light of your Life.***

God, we pray for your Church
in its fractiousness,
divided, and even proud of its divisions.
Bless with the challenge of your call
all who bear leadership
in the churches.
Keep us 'foolish' for Christ,
and close in love and vision
to all who have nothing to lose...

To those who walk in darkness

show the light of your Life.

God, we pray
for all people of faith,
all who long to hear you speak to them
in a language they can understand.
Bless those who work, day by day,
for harmony but not uniformity
among the faith-seekers
of the human family...

To those who walk in darkness

show the light of your Life.

God, we pray for all people
with power or influence
to change the way the world is.
Bless all peacemakers
in your strong love.
Challenge all war-makers,
by the radicalness
of that same love.
May there be peace with freedom
and justice with forgiveness.
May they come speedily
and in our days...

To those who walk in darkness

show the light of your Life.

God, we pray for our neighbourhood,
that our streets too may know peace and celebration.
May we be hospitable to all
who come in real need.
Bless all who work with us
for the common good;
all who keep alive

memories we must not forget,
and hopes for futures we must hasten towards...

To those who walk in darkness

show the light of your Life..

God, we pray
for all who in any way
help people on the journey
from sickness to health.
Bless all who are called 'disabled',
so that together we can all
change what can be changed,
and, with that, rejoice
in the diversity of your creation...

To those who walk in darkness

show the light of your Life.

God, we pray for all who today
will make the final journey
of their mortal lives,
from life to death,
all who will care for them,
and all who mourn.
In your time
and in your own way,
accompany their journey
from the darkness of grief,
through consolation,
to thanksgiving and joy.

To those who walk in darkness

show the light of your Life.

God, we know
that you never feel stuck with us,
but, loving our company,
you long for better things for us,
and all we have to do with.
Teach us, even now,
what is that one next step
we need to take,
to be who you would have us be. **Amen.**

*Taken from the resources for Holocaust Memorial Day
produced by Churches Together for Britain and Ireland and
the Council for Christians and Jews. For more resources
see:*

http://www.ccj.org.uk/Groups/173198/The_Council_of/Re-sources/Holocaust_Memorial_Day/Holocaust_Memorial_Day.aspx

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The Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) is changing its legal status from a charitable unincorporated association to a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). From 1 January 2020, BUGB will operate as a CIO with registered charity number 1181392

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