



*One in Christ Jesus,
engaged in God's mission,
empowered by the Spirit*



January 2019

A letter to Christians from the Presidents of Churches Together in England and other Church leaders
The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This week our churches will be praying together for Christian unity in our life together, our witness and our longing to see the Kingdom of God in the midst of our world. We encourage every church to take this call to prayer with the utmost seriousness, and to find ways to give expression to our search for greater unity in obedience to the command of Christ that we love one another.

Christ prayed that the church might be one, and our striving for greater unity is in obedience to Christ, but unity looks outwards also – it is for the sake of others. We hear this as we listen in to the prayer Jesus prayed the night before he died. He asked his Father to give eternal life to all those given to him, saying ‘this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (John 17:3). In this same chapter he also prayed for all Christians to be one, as Jesus and his Father are one (17.21). In this week of prayer for Christian Unity, this prayer from the heart of God reminds us that unity is good for us and for others. Jesus’ desire for his followers to be one was so that the world may know that the Father has loved them even as he loved his son, Jesus Christ (17.23).

In this context we also write to invite all Christians to be united in prayer for many to come to faith in Jesus Christ and look ahead to another opportunity to pray together in early June. ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ is a global prayer movement. Focussed in the days between Ascension and Pentecost, it invites Christians from all around the world to pray that the good news of the gospel might be heard and more people might come to know Jesus Christ.

For the past three years, more and more Christians from all around the world have pledged to pray ‘Thy Kingdom Come’. We have been delighted that, so far, Christians from 65 different denominations and 114 countries have joined us in praying, each in their own way, for the spread of the Gospel. This year we are asking you to join us, whether for the first time or as you have before. We hope that it will become truly a worldwide movement as we pray together side by side.

This week we come together, as Jesus urged us to, to pray that Christians throughout the world might be one. As we do so can we invite you to pledge to join together again in the days leading up to Pentecost to pray that the whole world might come to know God’s love?

In particular, can we encourage you to, perhaps, join with us in praying for 5 particular individuals to make the best decision anyone can ever make in their lives – to become followers of Jesus Christ? Or to pray that in your community, in very specific ways, the love of Christ might be seen and heard so that there will be many whose lives are touched by the grace of God?

This call to prayer through ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ enables us to give a practical response to the call to be one that The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has provided for many years.

As we pray together, witness together and work together for unity and the mission of God, join us in seeking the empowering of the Spirit poured out at Pentecost through all of our prayers and in all of our common witness to Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Signatories:

Cardinal Vincent Nichols

Archbishop of Westminster and
President of CTE

Archbishop Dr John Sentamu

Archbishop of York

His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos

Coptic Archbishop of London
and President of CTE

The Revd Michaela Youngson

President of the Methodist Conference

The Revd Lynn Green

General Secretary of the Baptist Union
of Great Britain

Archbishop Justin Welby

Archbishop of Canterbury and
President of CTE

His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios

Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain

Rev Dr Hugh Osgood

Moderator of the Free Churches Group
and President of CTE

Pastor Agu Irukwu

Chair of Redeemed Christian Church of God
UK and President of CTE

The Revd Canon Billy Kennedy

Leader of the Pioneer Network