
Ecumenical Prayer Service for Election Eve/Day 2016

INTRODUCTUION

What we often experience, whenever we go to the polls, is a sense of disunity among us. The cultural context of American elections is somewhat similar to the context of sport games nowadays; Either you win or you lose. We cannot tell since when political elections have become an arena of competition, rather than a process of choosing public servants.

As the elections for a new President and other political leaders approach, Christians in this country are more concerned with the cultural implications of the election and its consequences, which can damage relationship beyond repair.

The *Council on Christian Unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* believes that Christians still can get together at the places of prayer as one body of Christ no matter what kind of political opinions we hold as citizens. In order to help you organize an ecumenical prayer service for election eve/day, Rev. Kara Markell, Lake Washington Christian Church, Kirkland, WA, has created a liturgy for an Ecumenical Prayer Service for Election Eve/Day.

This order of worship can be adapted to the particular circumstances in which it is to be used. As the *Disciples of Christ*, we believe that the best place we experience unity beyond differences is the Lord's Table. If you are planning to have this service at your local congregation, I hope you celebrate the Lord's Supper. If you decide to share Communion with ecumenical friends, however, we strongly urge you to confer with your colleagues and friends and plan it with them.

I hope that, as you gather together with your ecumenical friends to pray for your community and this nation, you truly experience the oneness in Christ and that this order of the prayer service can be of help to you as you plan a service. I am sincerely thankful for Rev. Markell. She has shared her busy life for this important ecumenical work.

Rev. Seung Un (Paul) Tche
President
Council of Christian Unity
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada

ORDER OF SERVICE

Statement of Purpose

We gather together in this place,
in the presence of God,
to remember that our identity is not rooted in political affiliations,
but in our covenant with God who created us in God's own image;
that we are one through Jesus Christ and members of his body;
and that the Holy Spirit binds us together into one family.

Call to Prayer

If this election season has left you feeling hopeless and heart sick
Come, hear God's word of peace, hope and unity.
If you feel like your voice is lost in the public square
**Come, and remember the covenant God has made with you,
to never leave you.**

If political views and rhetoric have damaged your relationships
Come, to the table where all are forgiven and welcomed.
If the brokenness of the world, the nation, and the city seem beyond repair
Come, to pray for the coming of God's realm here and now.

Gathering Song

Invocation

God of all peoples and nations, we have gathered in this place at your invitation to pray for our country. We come from varied backgrounds and political beliefs that often put us at odds with our friends, our family and our neighbors. In this time of prayer inspire us through your Spirit to a renewed sense of unity in Christ. Move us beyond the things that would divide to a deep awareness of all that we share, through Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 56.1-8
Responsive Psalm 145
Ephesians 4.1-5
John 17.20-23

Remembrance of Baptism

Presider says the following as water is poured into a basin/font.

In the water of baptism we affirm that we belong to God.

In the water of baptism we are united with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.

In the water of baptism we are made one with the church through the Holy Spirit.

In the water of baptism we receive our commissioning to ministries of love, peace and justice.

Remember your baptism and be glad!

Note: There are several options for this ritual—use what works best for your gathering. You may want to sing a brief song or refrain during the ritual as presiders dip a small evergreen branch in the water and sprinkle the congregation while walking around the space, or invite individuals to come forward and dip their finger in the water and make the sign of the cross on their forehead.

Prayers of the People

Out of gratitude for your many gifts, O God, and trusting in your abiding faithfulness...

We pray for our president elect, that they will lead our country with strength and compassion; that they may represent the very best of the United States around the globe; that they may be committed to justice and peace, and bringing our nation together to address our challenges.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for our governors and legislators, that they will be responsive to their whole constituency and enact laws that ensure the wellbeing of all the people they represent.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all others elected to public office, that their service to their people would be just and beyond reproach; that where ever they serve in local government, schools, or law enforcement, they would treat all people with dignity and serve the common good.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for our nation, our cities, and our neighborhoods, that together we can create a place where all people are respected and safe, where difference of opinion does not lead to violence, and where our combined creativity heals brokenness of all kinds.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray also that regardless of the outcome of this Election Day, we would remember that we are called by Christ to care for our neighbor, pursue peace and work for justice in our communities. Inspire us to work together, across divisions and difference, to create beloved community where ever we can.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray all of these things in the name of Jesus, who also taught us to pray...*Lord's prayer*

Song of Preparation for Communion

Communion

Note: If you choose to share communion, there are important ecumenical considerations when we gather at the table to ensure that all feel welcome. It is suggested that you craft this portion of the prayer service with your ecumenical colleagues

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessing

Go from this time of prayer into the world to be people of love, justice, peace and hope, and may God—Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer—guide and support you in all you do. Amen.



“Let Unity Be Our Polar Star.”

Barton W. Stone