

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019

Order of Service

20 January 2019

Justice and only Justice you shall pursue

(Deuteronomy 16 18-20)



Photo: Flickr /Argo Negoro

The Churches of Indonesia have chosen the theme of Justice
for the 2019 Week of Christian Unity

The material consists of eight preparatory sessions and the service outline,
for churches across the world to adapt to their contexts.

All available online.



Indonesia

Where is Indonesia? It is about 16 hours flying time southeast of us. It would take until 2a.m. tomorrow morning to get there if we started flying now at 11a.m..

How big is it? According to the latest aerial survey, it comprises about 13,500 islands which straddle the Equator between Singapore & Malaysia to the north and Australia to the south. They spread west to east across such a huge area that they are a third wider than the US for those of you who have driven across it OR about the same distance as travelling across the Atlantic to Montreal in Canada.

Just under 1,000 islands are permanently inhabited. There are five main islands where most of the huge population clusters. Indonesia is estimated to have about four and a half times UK's population.

What's the weather like? Temperatures are a fairly constant warm 25-32C at sea-level. Usually fairly humid, sweaty conditions. Cooler as you travel to higher altitudes.

Tends to be a rainier season and a drier season but these get more marked as you go further away from the Equator. There are some very large tropical storms.

Natural hazards Did you see the TV news just before Christmas when a huge tsunami swept into a narrow bay on an Indonesian island and over 2,000 people drowned? That was caused by a volcano collapsing under the sea. Indonesia lies on one of the most active areas of the earth for live volcanoes and earthquakes. You may have seen the TV pictures of the devastation caused by earthquakes in August and September last year with the following tidal waves. As a result of the volcanic activity and the heavy rain washing soil down from the forested hills, there are often very fertile soils on lower slopes, valleys and coastal areas but there are also some very impenetrable mountainous areas. On Papua, the mountains are so high there are permanent snow-capped peaks. They experience lots of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions everywhere.

Call to worship

Leader Let us worship God.
God, our Father, you crown your creation with justice and mercy.

Congregation We come to worship you.

Leader Jesus Christ, your cross brings new life and justice,

Congregation We come to worship you.

Leader Holy Spirit, you inspire our hearts to act justly,

Congregation We come to worship you.

Leader May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation And also with you.

Leader **Processional Hymn 264 Judge Eternal, throned in splendour**
Tune: Rhuddlan

Welcome and Notices:

Leader Please welcome those around you to church with a handshake.

Introductory words

Leader As Christians, we gather here to pray for unity. This year, we pray with the churches of Indonesia, whose chosen theme is "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue".

Prayer of repentance

Leader Beloved sisters and brothers, let us confess before God that we have sinned. We ask for forgiveness.

Reader 1 Compassionate God,
Jesus ate with outcasts and sinners. We confess that we prioritize those of higher social status, that we ignore strangers, the poor and the least in society and that we fear to defend the oppressed.
Lord, have mercy.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Reader 2 Righteous God,
you call us, the Church in every place, to act justly. We confess that we misuse Church resources and power. This causes some people to turn away.
Lord, have mercy.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Reader 3 Loving God,
Jesus challenged us to love one another. We confess that we view other churches as rivals and disregard those who do not share our point of view.
Lord, have mercy.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Reader 4 Gracious God,
You call us all to love without discrimination. We confess that we
disrespect our neighbours, spread falsehood and gossip, and participate in
the disruption of social harmony.
Lord, have mercy.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Leader May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and lead us to
eternal life.

Congregation Amen.

Leader **Hymn 263 God of freedom, God of Justice : Tune Picardy**

Proclamation of the Word of God

Bible Reader Let us listen for the word of God in the Hebrew scriptures

First reading: Deuteronomy 16:11-20

This is the word of the Lord

Congregation Thanks be to God

Leader **Responsorial Psalm: 82:1-8**

Rise up, O God, judge the earth.

Congregation Rise up, O God, judge the earth.

God has taken his place in the divine council;
in the midst of the gods he holds judgement:
‘How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked?’

Congregation Rise up, O God, judge the earth.

Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

Congregation Rise up, O God, judge the earth.

They have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they walk around in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

Congregation Rise up, O God, judge the earth.

I say, ‘You are gods,
children of the Most High, all of you;
nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince.’

Rise up, O God, judge the earth;
for all the nations belong to you!

Congregation **Rise up, O God, judge the earth.**

Bible Reader Hear the Gospel according to St Luke.

Gospel: Luke 4:14-21

This is the Gospel of Christ.

Praise to Christ our Lord.

Reflection “Only Justice” Leaders



Scales of Justice at the Old Bailey



Social Injustice

Commitment to Justice, Mercy and Unity

Leader Jesus Christ prayed for the unity of his disciples.
The gift of his life is justice for the world.

Reader 1 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to walk humbly and act justly.
Let justice roll down like waters.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, unite us in our prayers.**

Reader 2 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to speak out against injustice.
Let our word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, unite us in our words.**

Reader 3 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to lavish God’s grace and mercy on all.

Let us break through barriers of ethnicity, religion and culture.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, unite us in our humanity.**

Reader 4 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to keep our lives free from the love of money, and be content with what we have. Let us break the cycle of greed and live in simplicity.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, unite us in our weakness.**

Reader 1 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to bring good news to the poor. Let us condemn exploitation and the systems that perpetuate it.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, unite us in anger towards injustice.**

Reader 2 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to care for the whole of creation. Let us protect the life and beauty of all that God has made.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, heal us and restore us.**

Reader 3 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to treat all with dignity. Let us recognize discrimination, oppression and abuse.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, open our ears to the cries for justice.**

Reader 4 As members of the body of Christ, we are called to bring hope to others. Let us be salt and light.

Congregation **Holy Spirit, unite us in hope for justice.**

Leader We have just asked the Holy Spirit to unite us in action. In a few moments we will have time to consider what commitment each one of us can make to justice. As you entered the church you were given a card. Write your commitment on it. They will be collected and offered to God, along with our Offering this morning. So take a moment now to consider: What step, however small, can you take to further God's justice in our broken world?

Music played as the congregation write their commitments.

Leader **Offertory Hymn 262 For the world and all its people**

Leader What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)
We commit ourselves to acts of justice
Gracious God, You have shown us your compassion and care for all creation. Your love inspires us to offer these commitments to act justly by loving others wholeheartedly regardless of their cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Accept now our offerings and transform them into action for the unity of your church. We ask this through your Son Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, who live with you as one God forever and ever.

Congregation **Amen.**

The St John's Journey Statement

Leader Let us join together in saying the St John's Journey Statement (please stand)

St John's is a fellowship of Christians whose faith and witness are inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth.

We provide a place of sanctuary where spiritual awareness can deepen and where the traditions and insights of others can be valued, challenging the view that differences are divisive. Our approach to others is non-discriminatory and non-judgemental; all are welcome on our journey.

St John's is a place of welcome, supporting groups and individuals with different interests and purposes. By working together in a spirit of openness and love with people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs, our community is enriched. In this way God's kingdom becomes real for Northwood.

God's love awakens us to the needs but also the gifts of those who are marginalised or neglected. We are called to open our hearts and minds to friend and stranger alike. Diversity is a gift from God, allowing us to better understand our own unique calling as Christians and providing an insight into the circumstances, beliefs and practices of others.

We are the living body of Christ, with all the promise and challenges this brings.

Prayers of intercession

Leader Let us raise to God our common prayer for the Church and for the needs of all humanity.

Reader 1 From the islands and the oceans,
we worship you, O God, the Creator of life.
Throughout the mountains and the valleys,
we praise you, O God, the Saviour of the world.
With the tongues of all nations,
we thank you, O God, the Comforter of bodies and souls.
We come before you bearing our burdens and hopes.

Congregation O God, hear our prayer and grant us your love.

Reader 2 We pray for those who live with injustice.
Encourage us to lift up their voices and strengthen their hope.
We pray for those who continue to perpetuate injustice.
May your kindness transform their hearts and make them agents of freedom and peace.
We pray for every institution and every person who stands for justice.
Let us act justly according to your words.

Congregation O God, hear our prayer and grant us your justice.

Reader 3 You have shown us the path of justice
You are the father of the orphan.
You are the constant companion of the widow
You are the friend of the stranger.
In each of these may we meet you
And recognise the wind of your Spirit,
Moving us towards the need for justice

Congregation O God, hear our prayer and grant us a passion for unity.

Reader 4 We thank you for the many colours, cultures, and customs of our world.
In our differences, unite us by your love.
Enable us to act together to uphold life
and to make this world a just and peaceful household for all humanity.

Congregation O God, hear our prayer and grant us your peace.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader **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.**

Leader **Hymn 706 For the healing of the Nations : Tune Cwm Rhondda**

Blessing

Leader May God embrace you with love and make kindness flow out from you.
May God ignite courage within you and give you perseverance.
May God grant you humility and transform you into agents of justice & peace.

Congregation Amen!

Hymn 786