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January 10, 2023

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
January 18 to 25, 2023

To Clergy, Religious, & Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Saskatoon:


During the week of January 18 to 25, our diocese joins with Christians around the world to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, asking the Holy Spirit to bring us together in ever-greater unity to give witness to the Gospel. On the night before he died, Jesus prayed that his followers “may all be one” as He and the Father are one, in order that the world might believe (John 17). Our witness to the world is especially powerful when Christians from many traditions join together in prayer and action.

Praying for Christian unity is an ecumenical practice going back at least to the Lambeth Conference of 1867. Churches around the world began using the now-established resources in 1968. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches and have published the resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023.

The theme of the 2023 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is from Isaiah 1: 17: “Do good, seek justice.” This scripture passage calls upon all Christians and people of good will to seek the good in all things and ways, and to work for right relationship and justice in all affairs between persons, families, cultures, and nations. The prophet Isaiah challenged God’s people in his day to seek to do good *together* – to seek justice *together*, to rescue the oppressed *together*, to defend the orphan and plead for the widow *together*. The prophet’s challenge applies equally to us today.

As we prepare to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are asked to reflect on the following questions: i) How can we live our unity as Christians so as to confront the evils and injustices of our time? ii) How can we engage in dialogue, increase awareness, understanding and insight about one another’s lived experiences?

This week of prayer not only reminds us that Jesus Christ is the one Saviour of all peoples and nations, but also that there is great blessing and new life when those of many families of faith come together in wonder, praise, and commitment to follow the One true King.

 In all things we are *rooted in Christ*,
in His desire to bring God’s love to all peoples.

For further information and resources, please see the attached resource jointly prepared and published by the Pontifical Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, and the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches. You can also go to: <https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/2023-WPCU-ENG.pdf>

Let us pray in the words of one of the resources available for this week:

Everlasting God, look upon these faces gathered together in holy community and send them anywhere you would have them go.

Encourage them by your Holy Spirit to continue to tell their stories, to do good, and to seek justice for the sake of your Creation through their actions.

Sustain them that they may be one, so the world may believe that you sent your only Son, Jesus for the life of the world. Amen.

As we begin this New Year 2023, let us renew our commitment to educate ourselves and others regarding the goal and work of ecumenism.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Mark A. Hagemoen". The signature is written in a cursive style.

✠ Most Rev. Mark A. Hagemoen