

UNITING IN PRAYER 2024

19 May - 22 June

Worship Resources

A Resource to Help Shape a Uniting in Prayer Service or
Gathering/Event



**UNITING CHURCH
IN AUSTRALIA**



Uniting In Prayer 2024

God,
Creator, Christ, Spirit,
Three-in-one woven together,
Setting community as the heart of all being.
Weave us together as your people - your Church.
Unite us in prayer,
As we share our stories,
Offer our insights,
Joining together to join with you,
In your work for the common good,
And the bringing of your Kingdom ever nearer.
God, you are love,
And those who live in love live in you and you in them.
In love we are woven into your body,
Sharing the strands of stories and gifts,
Each one of us a vital thread in the tapestry of your mission and ministry.
Help us to give ourselves and our communities into your hand,
And let you weave us through love,
Into relationship with you and each other,
Discovering the patterns of patience and joy,
As your gentleness and kindness,
Faithfully creates new things and new ways of being.
Take each thread of love,
Each blessing of difference and diversity,
And entwine us together,
Till every unique strand contributes to the patterns and colours which shape your grace and
mercy.
Weave us together as your people - your Church,
This we are uniting in prayer as an amen in your name.

Introduction

Uniting in Prayer is about us in the Uniting Church in Australia uniting together in prayer between Pentecost and the Uniting Church Anniversary – 19 May – 22 June

Uniting in Prayer is a time to pray and reflect on our past and present as the Uniting Church and what God might have in store for our future. All who call the Uniting Church home are invited to join together in thanksgiving and hope to pray and seek the leading of the Spirit for the years ahead.

This year we will be drawing on the upcoming Assembly theme, “Threads of Love, Weaving Christ’s Love Across Cultures and Boundaries” as a catalyst for reflection.

Using the Resource

We hope that this is a useful resource which helps you or leaders in your congregation, group or community to develop a service or event which is tailored for your people and which helps them unite in prayer together with each other and with the whole of the Uniting Church. This resource can be used as a whole or parts of it might be drawn on to create your own order of service.

For each section there are multiple options to select from. Please choose one from the resource or you yourself or people in your congregation might write or find prayers which are suitable for your context.

Our theme is “Threads of Love: Weaving Christ’s Love Across Cultures and Boundaries” some of the prayers are provided in different languages. We encourage you to use languages different to that which may be the dominant one for your community. If there are not native speakers, we encourage you to include versions of the prayer in different languages in any printed or visual display. This helps us clearly identify that we are multicultural and intercultural, as well as helping us be cross-cultural.

This resource was developed by the Transforming Worship Circle of Interest of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia

Preparing a Uniting in Prayer Service or Event

This is a resource to help plan a Uniting in Prayer Service or Event. There are also other resources which provide suggestions and ideas for other creative elements which you might include in your special service or as elements in regular services over the 35 days of Uniting in Prayer.

One of our greatest resources is each other. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12, we are the Body of Christ and individually members of it. We each have different gifts and parts to play. The Basis of Union, Paragraph 13, reminds us that we each have gifts from God as Spirit and there is no gift without its corresponding service. Use people's gifts. It is often better to specifically invite people in person rather than just putting out a call-out for volunteers or helpers. That can be useful, but there is something especially affirming about being asked to use our gifts to serve the community. We are more truly the Church when we share in the mission of God together and gather to encourage each other towards love and good works (Hebrews 10: 23-26)

As this is a Uniting in Prayer activity, it is good to get other people involved in the planning, preparation and leadership of the service or event. Maybe convene a group to help with the planning or, as coordinator, ask people to take on preparation and/or leadership of parts of the service/event. This reinforces the whole aim of bringing the community together in prayer. The word liturgy comes from the Greek word λειτουργία/leitourgia which is often translated as 'work of the people' or 'work for the people.' Prayer is part of our work as disciples. Liturgy can be the shape of the work of prayer and praise for people to take up, but equally it can also be the work of preparing or developing the prayers and words of praise etc. **Consider inviting people to write prayers for this service or event, as well as leading/reading prayers for it** for it works to have people doing the work of preparation as well as leadership. **Also, consider incorporating practical, collaborative and interactive elements/activities into your service/event** for this truly gets all the people involved in the work of prayer and discernment.

Furthermore, don't necessarily just go to the people who are the ones usually involved, but maybe seek out some who are not normally volunteers to help lead the service or on rosters. **Try to include people from a diversity of background or who represent different groups within your congregation or community.** These can be different ages, cultural backgrounds or differing abilities. Part of uniting in prayer is to bring the community together and welcome all people as part of the Church. Being asked to help in a significant ways helps people feel like they belong and are valued. Being truly welcome, accepted, valued and that we have a place in a community where we can contribute our gifts and talents in meaningful ways is part of how we build a sense of unity.

Preparing the Space

The space where you are holding your service or event can help set the tone of your event or service. However, one doesn't have to change the space to do this. The words that we use can do this. Yet, there can be something powerful in changing the look or arrangement of things to get people thinking about what it is that we are doing and to signify that we are doing something special. It can be as simple as setting up a focus on a table or even the Communion table and go as far as the way the space is decorated and the seating is arranged.

Helpful principles when being creative with the space

1. **Consider your context and your people.** The aim of this service or event is to encourage people to unite in prayer. Too much change might make people feel too uncomfortable and alienate them or cause them to not want to participate.
2. **Don't plan more than you are able to reasonably do.** We can get caught up in the excitement of planning something special that we can sometimes get carried away. Don't go to great expense, but instead try to use what is at hand or what you can gather or borrow. Allow for more than enough time, for large changes such as creative decoration or moving of seating or furniture often takes more time than we initially anticipate.
3. Whatever you are planning, it is advisable to **seek the approval of key leaders** such as the clergy person who serves the congregation or the council of elders or church council.
4. **Induct people into any change and explain the reason for changing the space that they might be used to.** As part of the introduction, welcome people into the space. Point out some of the differences and the reasons for the change. You don't have to explain all the symbolism, but some explanation or focus questions might help people understand it. What is clear and makes sense to one person is not always clear or makes sense to another. As this is a service or event to unite people in prayer, it is good to help people access the meaning and purpose of any creative changes to the space.
5. **Invite people to help you.** This is not simply to share the load, but because this is a Uniting in Prayer activity, it is good to have people uniting in helping prepare for the service or event and lead it.



The following are some ideas about how you might be able to creatively set the space for your Uniting in Prayer service/event.

Simple Focus

On a table at the front of the space or on the communion table if you are using the worship space you might set up a simple focus. This could be a special bunch of different kinds of flowers which represent diversity. It could be an image or an icon. It could be some symbols which represent the different groups within the community or congregation. might involve a table cloth or different cloths for the table.

It might be as simple as a special candle. You could use such a candle holder as one of the people together type of candle holders which are quite popular in some places. Objects or coloured cloth can also be very effective. Given the theme, "Threads of Love: Weaving Christ's Love Across Cultures and Boundaries" having something woven as the symbol would be very appropriate.

Writing a Prayer

You might offer prayers of adoration, invocation, lament, confession, illumination, thanksgiving, intercession, or something else.

We invite you to reflect on prayers that speak to the threads of love found in:

- Our history
- Our life as a church
- God's faithfulness to our church
- Those who have come before us
- Those who will come after us
- Christ's love across our cultures and boundaries

Below are some thoughts that may aid in your reflection:

- Since our formation we have been changing, but God's presence is our constant and Christ our foundation
- We honour the courage of our founders in embracing God's new thing
- We give thanks for our history and God's faithfulness to our Church
- There is much in our life to celebrate!
- We recognise that we have not always lived up to all we could be and that is painful, disappointing for some people
- We trust in God's promises of new life and that there is a future for us
- For those that feel despairing about where we are as a church right now, know there is hope

Gathering

It is important for this service or event that part of welcoming introduces the aim and purpose of the gathering. You could use the invitation video or the introduction by Reverend Sharon Hollis to the time of Uniting in Prayer.

As mentioned previously, if the space has been changed or rearranged for the service or event, it is good to share with people the intention why things look and might feel different. It is usually helpful to acknowledge that this might bring a sense of discomfort for some people, and apologise if that is how they feel, but invite them to participate as they feel comfortable and to perhaps embrace the unusual for this time of gathering so that they might approach things from a different perspective from which they might be used to.

A Gathering Prayer

People of God,

We gather today, uniting in prayer.

We pray for the life, witness and future of the Uniting Church.

We gather to pray and reflect on our past as the Uniting Church.

We gather to seek the leading of the Spirit for the years ahead.

We gather to remember Christ, our foundation.

We gather to give thanks for God's faithfulness to our Church.

We gather to confess that we have not always lived up to all we could be.

We gather to reflect on our present life,

And with hopeful expectation, listen attentively to your calling for our future.

We gather to open our lives to you, God, in prayer.

Our God of all hope,

Our God of all joy,

Our God of all peace,

Our God who is love.

Weave us together in love.

Uniting in prayer this is our amen.

Passing of the Peace

Greet one another with "Peace be with you" in the language of your choice.

It might be helpful to have a slide or some visual resource with ways for greeting people and passing peace in different ways languages

Acknowledging Country

In this space you, God, are present, just as you are present in all spaces. In this time you, God, are here, just as you are in all times. We are your people from many places and many times. We gather here, and acknowledge the important threads of love which our First Peoples bring the tapestry of the story of our land. We acknowledge the wonder, beauty and spirit of Country and the place it has in the identity and spirituality of the [*insert name of First Nations people of the place you are meeting in*]. We pay our respect to elders past and present. May we journey in harmony and togetherness into a better future for all.

Call to Connect with God

More traditionally, this part of the service is titled 'the call to worship.' In many ways our whole lives are worship to God, so in gathering for a service together at this point we seek to connect better with God.

The Christ candle might be lit at this time.

Blessed be you, O Holy Light-fitter,
who set the sun in its proper place
and scattered the stars across the skies
to brighten up our way.

(the first candle is lit)

Blessed be you, Bright Morning Star,
the hope of our salvation,
dawning in our lives,
drawing nearer in this very moment.

(the second candle is lit)

Blessed be you, O Sacred Flame,
who gives us life
and tends our growth
through Your constant, gentle presence

(the third candle is lit)

Blessed be You,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
light with and within us.

In the midst of our troubles, anxiety, uncertainty and fear,
we gather this day to proclaim
the gift of God-with-us.

Amen.

Hymn/Song

(find song suggestions in the Additional Resources document)

Opening Prayer

Prayers of Thanksgiving

(A Tongan translation of this prayer is available in the Additional Resources document, along with others Prayers of Praise in Indonesian and Korean)

Loving Lord, we give you praise!
Since our formation we have been changing,
but Christ has been our foundation
and Your presence is constant O God.
We live in an ever-changing world.
Our Church is in flux too.
There are times we might not understand,
but you are always with us.
Awaken our spirit,
stir our thoughts and minds!
Motivate us into action,
make us ready to follow your call,
wherever it may lead.
Help us leave behind any pain of the past.
Replace the old, tired
and disappointed ways of our heart,
restore us with your grace and strength.
Fill us with new blessings of joy and peace.
We pray, Amen!

OR

Basis of Union Thanksgiving

We give thanks, gracious God, that your church
is built upon the one Lord Jesus Christ.
In our worship, witness and service,
we seek to make him known
as the risen crucified One
and to confess him as Lord
to the glory of God the Father.

We rejoice that in Jesus Christ,
you are reconciling the world to yourself:
for he has announced your sovereign grace
through which the poor in spirit
are enabled to receive your love.

We are grateful for your loving gift to us
of your Son, Jesus:
in his life and in his death,

he made a response
of humility, obedience and trust,
through which, in your grace,
you offer pardon to sinners.

We celebrate that when you raised him to life,
you confirmed and completed
the witness which Jesus bore to you:
and you have made in Jesus
a representative beginning
of a new order of righteousness and love.

Prayer of Confession

You might choose from the following suggestions or write/select an alternate prayer.

A Great Change Lament

God,
You have always been with us.
You are always with us
You will always be with us.
As always, you lead us into change,
For you call us to grow, and growth is change.
You call us to change,
For the world is always changing,
And you are always changing and adapting to keep your mission of love on track.
You call us to change,
Even though we don't name it that way,
Salvation, repentance and redemption are all change,
And these we must embrace in your way.
Some like us don't want things to change.
Some of us lament that things seem to be changing.
Some of us want things to be the same,
Some of us want everything to honour tradition,
Keeping things as they are and what we are used to.
Some of us fear that if we change then we will lose what is good.
Some of us find change hard and painful. Yet, some like us want things to change.
Some of us want everything to change.
Some of us don't like things as they are.
Some of us want to do new things in new ways.
Some of us lament things are not changing, or are not changing fast enough.
We fear that if things don't change then we will decline and what is good will be lost.
We find the lack of change hard and painful.
Whoever we are,
Whatever is happening,
Whatever we may feel,
May we be united in prayer,

Open to you and your call,
Looking to us for guidance as you lead us into a future that we find hard to discern.
Forgive our failings.
Overlook our flaws and fractures,
Looking to our potential
Focusing on our gifts which you awaken in us as Spirit,
That we might join you in your mission.
Care for us in our need.
Comfort is in our distress.
Strengthen us in your way of the cross.
Help us to better be your people,
Your Church in the world,
The embodiment of your love to the world.
Help us to lament that which needs to be lamented,
But open us in hope towards the future you are leading us into.
May we bear the fruit of you as Spirit, along with a healthy blessing of courage.
Uniting in prayer,
Honouring the good things which have been,
Celebrating the good things which are,
Looking towards the good things which are to come,
We pray.
Amen.

OR

[Confession Based on the Basis of Union](#)

You call all people to respond in faith;
yet we humbly acknowledge our faltering responses:

We have not responded to your love
with a full obedience;

Lord in your mercy

Our common worship, witness and service
has not always set forth
the word of salvation for all people;

Christ in your mercy

At times we have been hesitant
to go forward together
in sole loyalty to Christ,
the living Head of the Church;

Lord in your mercy

We have resisted your call
to constant reform under your Word;

Christ in your mercy

And we have faltered in our efforts
to seek a wider unity
in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Lord in your mercy**

OR

Not Always United in Prayer: a Confession

Christ,
You are God with us,
Calling us to unity in our diversity
To be your people
The Church.
Together we do so much good.
Together we carry the faith.
Together we uphold each other in prayer.
But, there are times when we don't.
There are times when we pray, but fail to act.
There are times when we pray one thing, but do the opposite.
Even in prayer, we bear our brokenness.
We are your people.
Be with us as Spirit.
Unite us in prayer.
Forgive us our trespassing of your way,
And straying from our communion.
Reinvigorate us in grace.
Lead us once more into harmony as we share the journey of faith and discipleship together.
Grow in us new Fruit of the Spirit,
That we might be your apostolic people who join you in your mission,
Being and embodying your love as we each share our gifts and talents in ministry,
With each other,
And with the world.
United in humility, we pray.
Amen

Assurance of forgiveness

This is the best of all:

When we are empty, God fills us;
when we are disheartened, God is compassionate;
when we are lost, we are found;
when we open our lives to God, no door is closed.
In Christ, through Christ and because of Christ,
our sins are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.
You refill the cup of our life, O God.
In Christ, we find refuge, strength and hope. Amen.

Hymn/Song

(find song suggestions in the Additional Resources document)

Suggested Bible Readings

The following are some suggestions for Bible readings for your event or service.

- 1 Corinthians 12: 1-31
- Galatians 3:28
- Matthew 18:15-35

Alternatively, please use a lectionary reading such as the Revised Common Lectionary or the Narrative Lectionary

The additional resources provide suggestions for creative and engaging ways to present Bible readings

Preaching of the Word

There are available bible reflections prepared by President Elect and the Act2 project Team.

OR

instead of the Preaching of the Word, you may choose to have a time of quiet, a time of shared reflection, or a time of open/spontaneous prayer.

The additional resources provide a range of suggestions for how you might present a message in a creative way.

Response to the Word

- You may like to offer a time of open or spontaneous prayer. If your community is not familiar with this practice or you will be doing this for the first time, see some tips in the Facilitators Guide
- You may like to use one of the Prayers of Thanksgiving in the additional resources document
- A hymn or song of thanksgiving could be sung

Prayers of the People

You might like to use this time to pray for the life, work and future of the Uniting Church; for your home church community and local community; the Uniting Church community you are praying for through the national prayer chain; or other things that make sense in your context.

If you'd like to engage with the Prayers of the People creatively, see the Additional Resources document for ideas.

Prayers For Being the Church

Commitment to Reconciliation Based on the Basis of Union

We are humbled
that you have given us the Holy Spirit:
as a pledge and foretaste
of that coming reconciliation and renewal
which is the end in view for the whole creation.

So, grant your gift of reconciliation and renewal
to each of us, gathered here today,
and to those we represent
in our local communities of faith,
even as we commit ourselves again
to serve that end:
to be a fellowship of reconciliation,
at one with the First Peoples of this land,
in harmony with the magnificent range
of living creatures across this planet,
and striving faithfully to live a life
that honours and respects
the whole creation.

OR

Offering of Service Based on the Basis of Union

Keep us faithful through all the changes of history:
so we may recognise Christ
when he is preached among people
as the Word of God,
the One who acquits the guilty,
who gives life to the dead
and who brings into being
what otherwise could not exist.

Move amongst us
as we share in the fellowship of his sufferings;
help us to show that we are
the disciples of a crucified Lord;
encourage us to be assured
that, in his own strange way,
Christ constitutes, rules
and renews us as his Church.

And so, we offer to you
this time of meeting together:
that we may be guided by your Spirit,
strengthened in our service,

and steadfast in our faithfulness;
and we pray that you will use
our ongoing worship, witness and service
to your eternal glory,
through Jesus Christ, the Lord of all.
Amen.

OR

God Who Unites Us in the Work Towards the Common Good

(Adapted from the Uniting Church in Australia, 'Statement to the Nation' 1977)

God who unites us in the cause of the common good,
The path to unity can be long and at times difficult.
You call us into unity as a sign of the reconciliation you seek for the whole human race.
In Christ you commission us with a responsibility to society which will always fundamentally
involve us in social and national affairs.
You give us responsibilities within and beyond this country to work to uphold basic Christian
values and principles,
Such as the importance of every human being and the need for integrity in public life.
You give us the task of proclaiming truth and justice and the rights of each citizen to
participate in decision-making in their community.
You call us to advocate for religious liberty and personal dignity.
You commission in us a concern for the welfare of the whole human race.

God who unites us in the cause of the common good,
Move us to seek the correction of injustices wherever they occur.
Push us to spend our time and effort for the eradication of poverty and racism within our
society and beyond.
Fill our lungs with your Spirit that we might call for and affirm the rights of all people to
equal educational opportunities, adequate health care, and freedom of speech.
Spur us forward to work so that all may find employment or dignity in unemployment if
work is not available.
Fire up our passion and burn away our complacency so that we might oppose all forms of
discrimination which infringe basic rights and freedoms.
Give us the desire and the want to challenge values which emphasise acquisitiveness and
greed in disregard of the needs of others.
Separate us from selfish thoughts and values
That we might stand against that which encourages a higher standard of living for the
privileged in the face of the daily widening gap between the rich and poor.

God who unites us in the cause of the common good,
Concern us with the basic human rights of future generations.
Urge us to find wisdom and take action to ensure the wise use of energy,
the protection of the environment
and the replenishment of the earth's resources.

God who unites us in the cause of the common good,
We owe you our first allegiance.

Under you the policies and actions of all nations must pass judgment.
Steel us for when our discipleship and allegiance bring us into conflict with the rulers of our day, that we may stand your ground.
Unite us as one people so that your universal values find expression in national policies and that humanity may survive and flourish under your guidance.

God who unites us in the cause of the common good,
We pledge ourselves to hope and work for a nation whose goals are not guided by self-interest alone,
but by concern for the welfare of all persons everywhere.
We commit ourselves the family of the One God — the God made known in Jesus of Nazareth;
Who is the One;
Who gave His life for others.
In the spirit of His self-giving love may this be so.
Amen

OR

Ke tau lotu

in Tongan and English

'Otua e Fekumi, Ko kimautolu eni oku mau he fano he toafa.
Oku mau fekuki ai moe ngaahi pole 'o e mo'ui.
Oku mau lotu ma'a kinautolu oku nau ongo'i oku mole taumu'a oku nau ha'u ai kihe lotu,
tuku Eiki ke
nau ilo oku iai e fakatu'amelie mo e Amanaki Lelei.
Fakafou mu'a homau loto mo homau atamai.
Tokoni mai ke mau situ'a meihe kona moe mamahi 'oe mo'ui oe kuo hili.
Kae fakafonu'aki kimautolu ho'o Kelesi mo ho Malohi.
Tapuaki mai aa kimautolu'aki ho'o Fiefia mo e Melino!
Ko emau Lotu ia Kalaisi Sisu.
Ko homau Eiki,
Emen

Let us Pray

Wondering God, we have been in the wilderness.
We have wrestled, and have been challenged.
We Pray a Prayer for those that feel despairing about where we're at as a church right now,
know
there is hope.
Renew our hearts and our minds.
Help us leave behind the unpleasantness and pain of the past.
Replace the old and shattered ways of our heart and restore us with your grace and strength.
Fill us with new blessings, joy and peace.
We pray
Amen!

Communion [If Included in Your Service]

Invitation to Communion

Communion is a sign of our oneness in Jesus Christ.
It is a powerful reminder of our unity in Christ,
despite theological, political, linguistic, and cultural differences.
This table is for all of us,
near and far, high and low, east and west and north and south.
This table is for all of us, but it is not our table.
It's God's table, for all of us, and it's a table of grace.
So come and take your place at the table.
You are welcome, you are invited, you are called:
come, let us share this meal together.
For here at this table, the hungry are fed, strangers become friends,
Sadness is turned to joy and love proves stronger than death.
All things of earth are holy, all things are one in you, O God.
This earth is filled with your beauty, charged with your love.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Option 1:

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.
For this Land and the First Peoples
We give thanks!
For the Second Peoples
We give thanks!
For the culturally and linguistically diverse peoples
We give thanks!
For the seeds and fruits of this Land
We give thanks!
For the work of those who have tended the earth and prepared the feast
We give thanks!
For the One who breathes life into this feast
We give thanks!
So together with all of creation
We sing to the one who has provided all we need:
**Holy, holy, holy God of all that is,
All that was and all that will be.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Hosanna in the highest.**

Option 2:

For creation in all its amazing diversity, the span of the cosmos and this planet which supports myriad expressions of life,

Thank you God

For the life you have given, the people we are connected with and for all which sustains us,
Yinca Leec (in Dinka) Asante Mungu (in Swahili)

For the prophets, poets and scholars through whom you have spoken through the ages, ever calling us into the embrace of your love,

Tenda Mwari (in Shona)

For Jesus your Son who shared our life and expressed your love, in whose dying and rising we know your love and have life as your people

Hananim Gamsahamnida (in Korean)

For all the saints who have gone before, through whose faithful witness we have heard the good news about Jesus, and for the saints with whom we are gathered here today,

Vinaka Jisu (Fijian)

For this meal of ordinary things made sacred by your touch and through which you reach out to us with blessing

Malo 'Eiki (Tongan)

Amen

The Breaking of the Bread

Rice is heaven.

As no one can monopolize heaven

So we have to share the rice together.

Rice is heaven.

As all share the sight of the heavenly stars,

So rice is something which must be shared.

Rice is heaven.

When rice passes your throat

You accept heaven in your body.

Rice is heaven.

Ah! Rice is something that must be shared.

- (KIM, Chi Ha, Korean poet)

[You might like to use a rice cake instead of bread for this Communion Service and if so, substitute 'rice cake' for 'bread' in this prayer and the one that follows.]

The bread, we break

Is a sharing in the body of Christ

The cup we take

Is a sharing in the blood of Christ
The gifts of God for the people of God

We eat this bread as acknowledgement of our place in God's promise.
We drink this cup as an act of faith, believing that forgiveness is real and that the healing power of life reconciles and recreates all things anew.

Sharing bread is a sign of love,
Inclusiveness and interdependence.
So the table is set and the meal is ready.
Come and take your place.

Come because you love a little and are open to loving more,
Come because God longs to be in relationship with you.
Come and receive Christ's resurrection meal,
meal of the mystical presence, meal of fulfillment, meal of the Spirit's empowering love.

Glory be to you, O God.

Prayer of Invocation

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us,
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break together, and the cup we share together,
may retell our common stories together
and reshape our common bonds together,
and remember our common grace together,
in the communion of the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ,
the one in whose life and death you have torn down our divisions.

And so may we be one with all who share this feast,
on this day, of all days, with all your children at every corner of your table.
May we share this abundant cup with all those who thirst for your justice.
May we share this abundant bread with all those who hunger for your righteousness,
May we be united with every corner of your story,
united in hope, united in vision, united in purpose,
united in ministry in every place.

Lord's Prayer

Participants are invited to say the Lord's Prayer in one's own heart language/mother tongue.

Serving the Elements

It is suggested that participants serve the elements in the way which is most familiar to the community. Given that there may be elements of this service which are strange or unfamiliar to participants, it is good to have the sacrament in the form of what people are used to and comfortable with.

Prayer after Communion

God of many faces and names,

You created all people in your image.

We thank you for the amazing diversity of races, languages, accents and cultures in this world you created.

We thank you for the wonderful diversity reflected within the First Peoples and Second Peoples of this land and in our church.

We thank you for the blessings and enrichment we have received from the rich diversity in the Body of Christ.

We pray that in our diversity we will find the unity that's given to us in Christ and appreciate the gifts that others bring to us.

We pray that we will reach out to those who are different from us,

We pray that we see you in the faces of the poor, strangers and persecuted.

We pray that we may be transformed, and drawn into intentional, intercultural relationships and community.

Help us to take the steps you call us to take, to build a more just, inclusive community, where diversity is truly embraced, where difference is respected.

In the Name of the triune God, amen, amen, and again we say:

Amen!

Hymn/Song

(find song suggestions in the Additional Resources document)

Word of mission

Beloved people of God,

we who belong to the family of the Uniting Church,

go from here with the promise that in Christ,

we indeed have hope and a future.

Give thanks for those who have walked this path before us.

Rejoice in the richness of our Church, enlivened with faith.

Proclaim Christ crucified and risen,

and the promise of new life for the whole creation.

And may the God who called us into being,

the Christ who is our foundation,

and the Spirit whose breath of life animates us

today and every day,

Be with us now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

We are blessed by you God
for you call us into the blessing of unity,
that communion of hope
that we call the Church.

We are blessed, God,
for you call us into your mission.

We are blessed, God,
for you came to us as the Christ,
and shook up our living,
by reminding us of your way,
which brings out the light in us,
which transforms the world.

We are blessed, God,
for you are with us, as Spirit,
leading us into each moment,
rich with possibility.

We are blessed, God,
by your invitation into the discomfort
of your way of the cross,
which takes us from that
which is old and dying
into resurrected life.

OR

Uniting in the Blessing of Prayer

For you call us into the blessing of unity,
That communion of hope that we call the Church.

We are blessed, God,
For you call us into your mission,
And we are blessed by meaning and purpose that you keep us find in the sharing of our gifts
and talents as we join you in your working for good in the world.

We are blessed, God,
For you came to us as the Christ,
And shook up our living,
By reminding us of your way,
Which brings out the light in us,
Which transforms the world.

We are blessed, God,
For you are with us, as Spirit,
Leading us into each moment,
Rich with possibility,
For us to embody your love as we lay down our lives in loving service of our neighbour who
is all people.

We are blessed, God.

We are blessed by your invitation into the discomfort of your way of the cross,
Which takes us from that which is old and dying into new life full of the resurrection of
redemption.

We are blessed, God.

We are blessed as we are uniting in prayer,
Calling on you to bless us with a future which is full of promise,
The blessed journey of journeying together
And journeying with you

As we all journey towards the promised end you see that we need to be directed to.

We are blessed, God,

Blessed to be a blessing.

Continue to bless us,

United we pray.

Amen