

January Prayers

Decisions Facing the Baptist Union...

Lord, as we gather to search for means of coping with the financial crisis and how it affects our union, we long to hear your voice.

We pray especially for all whose livelihoods will be, and already have been, profoundly shaped by the difficulties we face.

Amidst the difficult conversations to be had and decisions to be made, keep our gaze fixed upon you.

When we are convinced that we are infallible, open our ears to your voice in those with whom we disagree. When we are unwilling to relinquish power, show us again who we really are. When we are pre-occupied with the things that make us feel secure, show us the way of the cross.

Keep our eyes open to the financial crisis and realities that have brought us to this moment. Forgive us that we have relied upon the economic injustices we should have confronted.

Lead us, to renew our church structures, not around the Christ we forge in our own image, but around the Christ who is Prophet and Priest and King.

By your grace, help us grow ever more into communities of radical listening, May your Holy Spirit continually enliven our organisation and administration, our worship and mission, our thinking and hearing and speaking. May the hearts of our Churches and Associations pulse with resurrection life.

Through the pain, anxiety, and uncertainty we face, release us, we pray, into the future you have planned for us.

May the ongoing life of our Union be a living witness to the world, that Jesus is alive.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Lord God of heaven and earth, we pray as part of your world-wide church. We praise you for the gift of creation and its diversity of life. We thank you for heights and depths, for light and dark, for the noise and the quiet, for the busy and the peaceful. We thank you for the diversity of human life, and pray that your church worldwide might be ever more an example of what it means to be truly human in your image.

When pride distorts the image we bear, teach us to be humble. When our arrogance shatters the image of a loving God, show us how to be broken, in order that we may become whole. When discord and sin, bitterness and envy, make their mark upon relationships within your worldwide church, enlarge our vision of the Gospel, and send your grace to transform and renew.

Lord God of heaven and earth, we praise you as the one who is pleased to dwell in the midst of his people, who makes himself at home even here in our midst today. May your whole body here on earth, be ever more faithful in the Gospel it proclaims, and ever more true to the image it reflects.

It's Not Fair

We want to tell you, it's not fair. We see earth soaked with innocent blood, worship you as God, and wonder why it goes on.

We see the child with distended abdomen, the parent unable to feed them, and we worship you as God, and wonder why it goes on.

We see hatred wrecking people's lives, sowing seeds of discord and disunity, and worship you as God, and wonder why it goes on.

We don't have to look far beyond ourselves to see horrific unfairness, in our lives and in our world. And the unfairness goes on, and you seem to do nothing, and we want to tell you "it's not fair".

And when we say "it's not fair" and can't help ourselves from saying it, help us to slow down, to sit down and listen to you and hear your word.

Speak your word, and help us to listen: save us from our distractions, speak your word, your life-changing, life-giving, life-saving word. So fill your church with that word, that injustice is challenged, that unfairness is exposed, that hungry people are fed, that enemies are reconciled, that forgiveness is real, that your life is known in our lives, in our church, in our world.