Universal Day of Prayer for Students 2014

Theme:
We are Many, We are One

Sent out to build God’s peace

16 February 2014

Prepared by the
World Student Christian Federation
Inter-Regional Office
INTRODUCTION

We have many things to be thankful for, and many things to look forward to. Our Student Christian Movements continue to inspire students toward a deepened faith that reaches out to speak and work for justice and peace in our communities and world. Our 6 regions are working to support and strengthen the life of the movements and to share the wisdom and challenges of the movements with the WSCF gathered. The global leadership of our movement is working to strengthen our internal communication and our capacity to effect change in the world around us, through our common voice and global platform.

Leaders from the Executive Committee, Asia Pacific Region, and SCM in Korea (KSCF) participated in the World Council of Churches Assembly in Busan, Korea, learning more about the larger ecumenical conversation and testifying to the ongoing life and vision of WSCF to provide quality contributions and leadership to the ecumenical movement. And now we are preparing for our own General Assembly and expect it to be a life-giving moment of renewal that will propel us into the next years with a strong common purpose and concrete steps to achieve our goals.

Representatives of the 10 member movements of the WSCF and 3 “contact” movements met in 1897 and decided to hold a universal day of prayer for students in the first half of February, the only day they found it possible to unite. They believed in the importance of prayer as a foundation for the ministry and work they were called to do, and they believed in the power and potential of the Federation united in common prayer and common vision.1

The UDPS has continued over all these years, making it one of the oldest ecumenical days of prayer. It serves as one of the tangible signs of our common life and connection between students and Senior Friends (alumni) of the Federation all around the world, and we invite all our members and friends to unite in prayer for the world, the church, the students, and the WSCF itself on (or around) the 3rd Sunday of February, WSCF’s current tradition. (You may also choose to set an alternate date that is more convenient for your community.)

This year’s UDPS liturgy was inspired by the Federation’s General Assembly theme: “We are Many, We are One - Sent out to build God’s peace” (16-21 August 2014, Bogota, Colombia).

We invite you to use this year’s UDPS as a “kick-off” to regular and earnest times of community and individual prayer for the success of our General Assembly. Through the Assembly process, we are called to acknowledge clearly the injustices in the church and in the world and to consider WSCF’s unique potential and role to speak and act for peace, justice, and transformation. One of our challenges is to make these transformations significant, lasting and structural, and to achieve this we are called to work in partnership with churches, ecumenical organizations and like-minded actors.

We call upon God to give us, and all our partners, the wisdom, grace, courage, discernment, and love to prepare for, fund, and implement the General Assembly. So that we can take the needed steps of renewal in our movement, for the sake of students and young people, the universities, the churches, the ecumenical movement, and the world.

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1 The following text is from the first announcement of the Universal Day of Prayer for Students from the chairperson Karl Fries and the general secretary John Mott: “February 13, 1898, will be the first day that Christian students of all continents of the world have been called by their representatives to unite in prayer for a great object. The world has not yet begun to realize the marvellous possibilities of united prayer. When we recall the unchanging truth of Christ’s promise ”That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew xviii. 19); when we remember what spiritual awakenings have been experienced in certain colleges, both in the Occident and the Orient, when little bands of Christian students have united in importunate, believing prayer; when we remember how great national student movements have been born as a result of concert of prayer, and then mightily used to impress the Christian life of whole nations; what may we not expect from this practical and spiritual union of Christian students of all nations and races for the purpose of wielding the unseen yet irresistible forces of the Prayer Kingdom?”
PREPARING TO CELEBRATE THE UDPS

- Appoint a small committee of interested persons to organize the service and to assign parts to leaders and readers. Try to involve both female and male students and Senior Friends.

- Feel free to adapt the service for your region and/or context.

- Try to organize a good choir to lead the singing. The choir may vary/change the sung parts and select different hymns or songs if desired. Parts to be sung may be spoken if preferred.

- Brainstorm creative and symbolic acts in the service that would serve to highlight the theme “We are Many, We are One: Christian students creating a world of peace.

- Give adequate time for the preacher (student, Senior Friend, or clergy) to prepare a short sermon (recommended 7-12 minutes). She or he may select other Bible readings for the service as the spirit leads.

- If you wish to add a service of Eucharist together with this prayer service, please do so according to your tradition.

- Organize the collection. This year we encourage the SCM or group organizing the service to take the collection to support your national delegate to the upcoming General Assembly in Bogota, Colombia in August 2014, or as a solidarity offering to support other delegates. Please contact the IRO or your national or regional office to arrange the best way to transfer the funds collected.

- Inform churches in different parts of the country and invite them to organize this service in their communities.

We thank Andrew Donaldson and John Gibaut of the World Council of Churches for their support in designing this service. As always, we thank you for your ongoing work and contribution to the ministry of the World Student Christian Federation and we pray for the success of a very meaningful and inspiring UDPS!

In Christ,

Horacio Mesones, Chairperson

Christine Housel, General Secretary

Geneva, Switzerland

January 2014
Opening and Welcome

Greeting

With our many voices and many languages
We rejoice!
As we gather together from many places.
We rejoice!
We know again how good it is to gather here,
together once more,
to pray, to sing together;
To see once more the vision of the new heaven,
To dream the dream of the new earth,
To tell the good news of your kingdom of justice,
To pray with our Lord Jesus
That we be one, as you are one
And together to worship you,
One God in Trinity.

Hear the word of the Lord, spoken by the prophet Isaiah. From Isaiah 58: 6 -12, selected

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
(…)
Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;

(…)If you take away the yoke from your midst,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noonday.
(…)12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to dwell in
Let us pray:
Gather us together, O God.
Make us one, not as we would make ourselves,
But as you would make us,
Our many voices and languages
Gathered into one prayer,
Our different points of view
Sharpened into one focus,
Our many songs
Woven together into one great song of joy.

Proclamation of the Word

A reading from 1 Corinthians (12, 14-20)

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.
Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Thanks be to God

Song  Hallelujah

A reading from the Gospel of John (17:21-23)

I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

The Gospel of Christ

Praise to the Risen Christ

Reflection or Sermon
Song  

Uhibbuka Rabbi Yasu’

Anon. Palestine

Intercessory Prayers

Based on the United Nations’ “Eight Millennium Goals.”

L: We pray for all people who suffer day to day in poverty and hunger. Their precarious state often causes divisions; may Christ’s love restore justice and peace. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for all those striving for universal education. May their thirst for knowledge build bridges between our churches and restore respect in our differences. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those striving for equal dignity and rights of man and woman. May the image of God be honoured in all women and men. We remember especially the need for equal access to jobs, goods and
services. As we become one in Christ Jesus, may we fully receive the gifts of both men and women. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for the young who are sick and those who seek to improve child health. As we take care of children, may we welcome Jesus himself. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for women who bear children, and for their maternal health. May we take care of these mothers who carry new life and whose love for their children reminds us of God’s uniting love for us. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those who “combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases”. May we hear the voices of those denied a life of dignity, and work to create a world in which all people are respected and cared for, and where no one is excluded. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for all who suffer the consequences of the poor stewardship of creation, and for all endangered species. Guide us to “environmental sustainability” so we can be reconciled with creation. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: We pray for those who practice international solidarity and global partnership. As we favour a fair trade of goods and we cancel debt in the poorest countries, may we also strive for justice. Gracious God, hear our prayer,

C: And in your love, answer.

L: As we strive to realize these goals, may we discern your voice, O Lord, and journey together towards the Kingdom for which you prayed. And so we pray:

Prayer of commitment, dedication
- We will live out Jesus’ prayer that we be one as God is one: unity in community, One in Trinity
- We celebrate the dance of the Trinity

Our legacy
We embrace our legacy
- We are called not to conform to the world – competition, alienation, isolation, etc – but to be transformed
- We look to you for your changing power
- We step forward in faith that you are changing us into what you need us to be
- By our being different from the fractured world around us, we can embody your vision of being one as you are one,
  - O God, three in one

The Lord’s Prayer (said or sung)
Symbolic action

Symbolic action (Please share the God’s peace with one another. Here you may also do another symbolic action illustrating the diversity of the body of Christ and the beautiful diversity of all of God’s creation and the unity in Christ we are called to as live Christians and unity God desires for the whole creation.)

Sending forth

Sending forth
Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold fast that which is good. Render no one evil for evil. Strengthen the faint-hearted. Support the weak. Help the afflicted. Honor all persons. Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Song:

Enviar soy de Dios

Nicaragua

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