

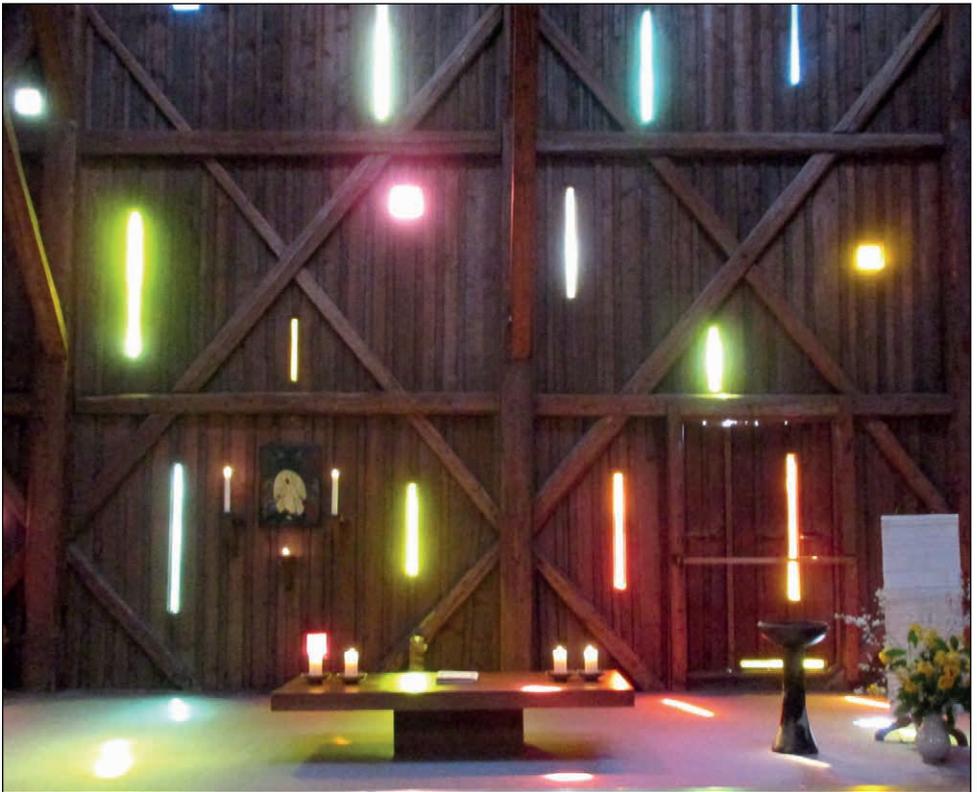
DAY 1

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021

ECUMENICAL CELEBRATION

Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit

(cf. Jn 15:5-9)



Coloured windows in the chapel at the Community of Grandchamp

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Introduction



The worship this year closely follows the prayer life of the Community of Grandchamp, which follows the Benedictine tradition. In this tradition three of the monastic prayer services – sometimes called ‘vigils’ (traditionally said during the night) – are combined into one evening service. In the same way, our service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is shaped by three sections, called ‘vigils’, which follow a pattern used by the community of Grandchamp.

Each vigil follows the same pattern: readings from scripture; a sung response; a time of silence; and intercessions.

☒ **he first vigil** is centred on the unity of the whole person and our abiding in Christ. Participants are invited to keep five minutes of silence. These moments are repeated throughout the celebration.

☒ **he second vigil** expresses the desire to rediscover the visible unity of Christians. Anchored in the love of Christ, we turn to our neighbours and exchange with each other a sign of his peace.

The third vigil opens us up to the unity of all peoples and all creation. The action in it is inspired by a text from Dorotheus of Gaza. The closer we move to God the centre - the closer we draw to each other.

During the Service, please mute your microphone.

You can then say, or just listen, to the responses.

Thank you

Invitation to prayer

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

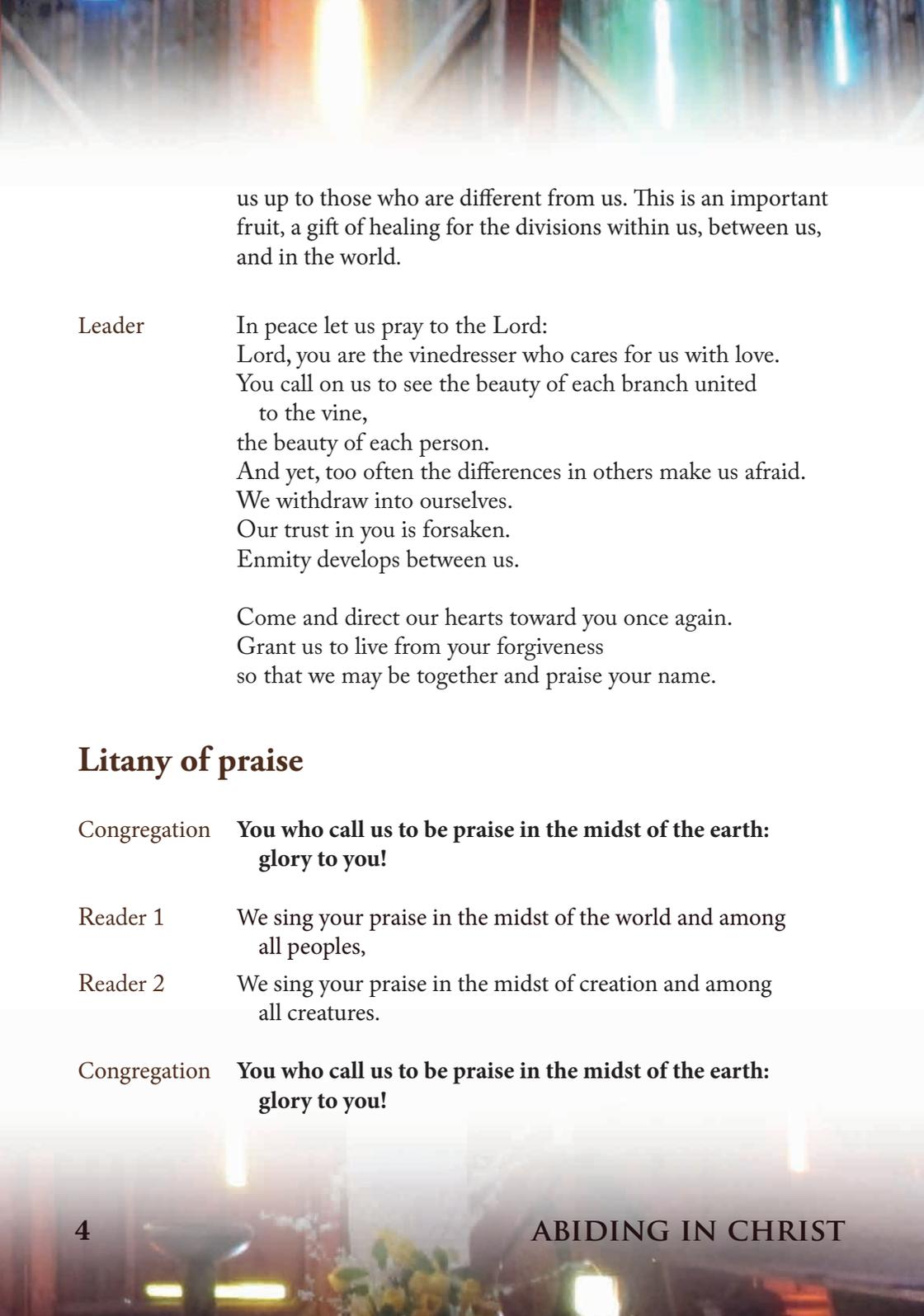
Congregation **And also with you.**

Words of welcome

Reader 1 *Brothers and sisters in Christ, this year the theme of the
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, chosen by the sisters of the
Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland, is: "Abide in my love
and you shall bear much fruit".*

Reader 2 It is the great desire of God, expressed by Jesus, that we might
come to him and abide in him. He waits for us tirelessly,
hoping that, united to him in love, we will bear fruit that will
bring life to all, Faced with our differences, we risk
withdrawing into ourselves and seeing only that which
separates us. But let us listen to how Christ calls us to abide in
his love, and so bear much fruit.

Reader 1 In the three moments of prayer that follow, we remember the
call of Christ, we turn to his love, to him who is the centre of
our life. For the path of unity begins in our intimate
relationship with God. Abiding in God's love strengthens the
desire to seek unity and reconciliation with others. God opens



us up to those who are different from us. This is an important fruit, a gift of healing for the divisions within us, between us, and in the world.

Leader In peace let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, you are the vinedresser who cares for us with love.
You call on us to see the beauty of each branch united
to the vine,
the beauty of each person.
And yet, too often the differences in others make us afraid.
We withdraw into ourselves.
Our trust in you is forsaken.
Enmity develops between us.

Come and direct our hearts toward you once again.
Grant us to live from your forgiveness
so that we may be together and praise your name.

Litany of praise

Congregation **You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth:
glory to you!**

Reader 1 We sing your praise in the midst of the world and among
all peoples,

Reader 2 We sing your praise in the midst of creation and among
all creatures.

Congregation **You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth:
glory to you!**

Reader 1 We sing your praise among suffering and tears,
Reader 2 We sing your praise among promises and achievements.

Congregation **You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth:
glory to you!**

Reader 1 We sing your praise in the places of conflict and
misunderstanding;
Reader 2 We sing your praise in the places of encounter
and reconciliation.

Congregation **You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth:
glory to you!**

Reader 1 We sing your praise in the midst of rifts and divisions,
Reader 2 We sing your praise in the midst of life and death,
the birth of a new heaven and a new earth.

Congregation **You who call us to be praise in the midst of the earth:
glory to you!**

First Vigil | Abiding in Christ: The unity of the whole person

Psalm: 103: 3-5

He forgives your sins - every one.
He heals your diseases - every one
He redeems you from hell - saves your life!
He crowns you with love and mercy - a paradise crown.
He wraps you in goodness - beauty eternal.
He renews your youth - you're always young in his presence.

Reading: Jn 15:5-8

I am the Vine, you are the branches.
When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant.
Separated, you can't produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is - when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

Short silence: (approximately 1 minute)

Intercessions

Reader God of love, through Christ you said to us: “You did not choose me but I chose you.” You seek us, you invite us to receive your friendship and abide in it. Teach us to respond more deeply to this invitation, and grow in a life that is ever more complete.

Congregation **The joy of our heart is in God.**

Reader God of life, you call us to be praise in the midst of the world and to welcome one another as a gift of your grace. May your loving gaze, which rests upon each person, open us to receive each other just as we are.

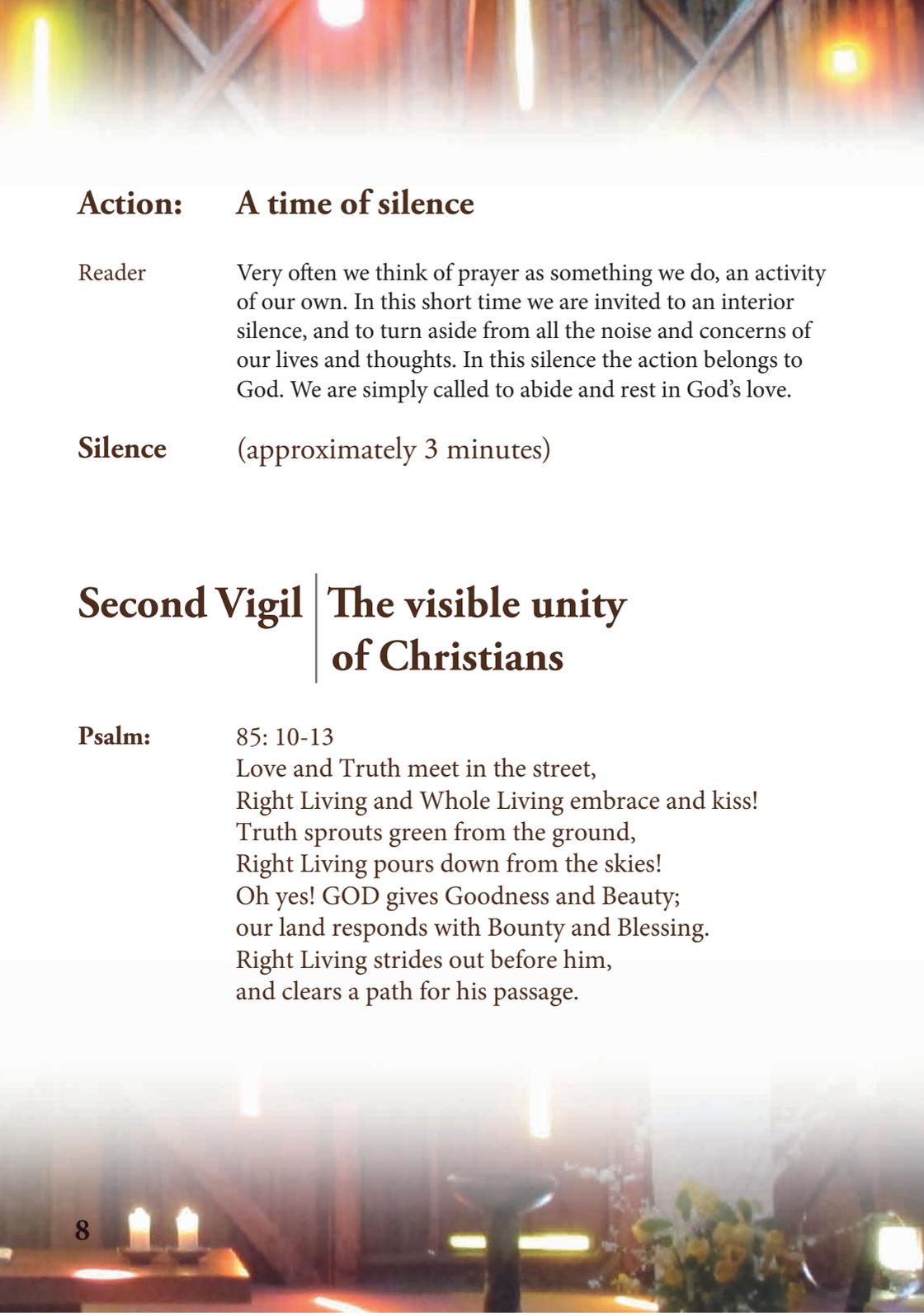
Congregation **The joy of our heart is in God.**

Reader God you who gather, you knit us together as one vine in your Son Jesus. May your loving Spirit abide in us at local church and community meetings and ecumenical gatherings. Grant that together we celebrate you with joy.

Congregation **The joy of our heart is in God.**

Reader God of the one vineyard, you call us to abide in your love in all we do and say. Touched by your goodness, grant us to be a reflection of that love in our homes and workplaces. May we bridge rivalries and overcome tensions.

Congregation **The joy of our heart is in God.**



Action: **A time of silence**

Reader Very often we think of prayer as something we do, an activity of our own. In this short time we are invited to an interior silence, and to turn aside from all the noise and concerns of our lives and thoughts. In this silence the action belongs to God. We are simply called to abide and rest in God's love.

Silence (approximately 3 minutes)

Second Vigil | **The visible unity of Christians**

Psalm: 85: 10-13
Love and Truth meet in the street,
Right Living and Whole Living embrace and kiss!
Truth sprouts green from the ground,
Right Living pours down from the skies!
Oh yes! GOD gives Goodness and Beauty;
our land responds with Bounty and Blessing.
Right Living strides out before him,
and clears a path for his passage.

Reading: 1 Cor 1:10

I have a serious concern to bring up with you, my friends, using the authority of Jesus, our Master. I'll put it as urgently as I can: You must get along with each other. You must learn to be considerate of one another, cultivating a life in common.

Response: There is One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism

Short silence: (approximately 1 minute)

Intercessions

Reader Holy Spirit, you create and re-create the Church in all places. Come and whisper in our hearts the prayer which Jesus addressed to his Father on the eve of his passion: "that they may all be one... so that the world may believe".

Congregation **Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)**

Reader Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, light the fire of your love in us so that suspicions, contempt and misunderstanding cease in the Church. May the walls that separate us fall.

Congregation **Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)**

Reader Holy Spirit, Consoler of all, open our hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation and bring us back from our wanderings.

Congregation **Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)**

Reader Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, give us poverty of spirit so that we may welcome the unexpectedness of your grace.

Congregation **Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)**

Reader Holy Spirit, you never abandon the men, women and children who are persecuted for their fidelity to the gospel. Give them strength and courage, and support those who help them.

Congregation **Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)**

Action: Sharing a Sign of Peace

Reader The Lord calls us to be united among ourselves. He gives us his peace and invites us to share it. Let us exchange a sign of his peace with our neighbours.

Everyone turns to those near them and offers a sign of peace, in keeping with their local context.

Third Vigil | The unity of all peoples with all creation

Psalm:

96: 5-6

God made the heavens - Royal splendour radiates from him, A powerful beauty sets him apart.

Reading:

Rev. 7: 9-12

I looked again. I saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there - all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were standing, dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the Throne and the Lamb and heartily singing:

Salvation to our God on his Throne!

Salvation to the Lamb!

All who were standing around the Throne - Angels, Elders, Animals - fell on their faces before the Throne and worshiped God, singing:

Oh, Yes!

The blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving,

The honour and power and strength,

To our God forever and ever and ever!

Oh, Yes!

Response:

O you who are beyond all things

Meditation

The start of the journey is an encounter between a human being and God, between the created and the Creator, between time and eternity.

Abraham heard the call: “Go to the land I will show you”

that which is familiar and go to the place that God has prepared in the depths of our hearts. Along the way, we become more and more ourselves, the people God has wanted us to be from the beginning. And by following the call that is addressed to us, we become a blessing for our loved ones, our neighbours, and the world.

The love of God seeks us. God became human in Jesus, in whom we encounter the gaze of God. In our lives, as in the Gospel of John, God’s call is heard in different ways. Touched by his love, we set out. In this encounter, we walk a path of transformation - the bright beginning of a relationship of love that is always started anew.

“One day you understood that, without your being aware of it, a yes had already been inscribed in your innermost depths. And so you chose to go forward in the footsteps of Christ

In silence in the presence of Christ, you heard him say, ‘Come, follow me; I will give you a place to rest your heart.’”

[The Sources of Taizé (2000) p. 52]

Leader Let us pray:
Jesus Christ,
you seek us, you wish to offer us your friendship
and lead us to a life that is ever more complete.
Grant us the confidence to answer your call
so that we may be transformed and become witnesses of
your tenderness for the world.

Short silence: (approximately 1 minute)

Intercessions

Reader God of life, you have created every human being in your image
and likeness. We sing your praise for the gift of our many
cultures, expressions of faith, traditions and ethnicities.
Grant us the courage always to stand against injustice and
hatred based on race, class, gender, religion, and fear of those
not like ourselves.

Congregation **God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!**

Reader Merciful God, you have shown us in Christ that we are one in
you. Teach us to use this gift in the world so that believers of all
faiths in every country may be able to listen to each other and
live in peace.

Congregation **God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!**

Reader O Jesus, you came into the world and shared fully in our
humanity. You know the hardships of life for people who suffer
in so many different ways. May the Spirit of compassion move
us to share our time, life and goods with all those in need.

Congregation **God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!**

Reader Holy Spirit, you hear the fury of your wounded creation and the cries of those already suffering from climate change. Guide us toward new behaviours. May we learn to live in harmony as part of your creation.

Congregation **God of peace, God of love, in you is our hope!**

Pictures: Moving to the centre... and out to the world

inspired by a text of Dorotheus of Gaza

Reader 1 Jesus calls us to abide in him, as branches of the true vine. He calls us to bear the fruit of God's healing and reconciling love. He calls us to draw closer to God and to one another as we offer this love to the world.

Imagine a circle drawn on the ground. Imagine that this circle is the world.

Reader 2 At the centre of the world is God, in whom all our desires and longings find their meeting place.

Reader 1 As we move closer to God, so we draw closer to one another. And the closer we come to one another . . .

Reader 2 ...the closer we come to God

Short Silence (approximately 1 minute)

The Lord's Prayer

Leader With the words that Jesus taught us, let us now pray together:

Congregation **Our Father...**

Leader Spirituality and solidarity are inseparably linked. Prayer and action belong together. When we abide in Christ, we receive the Spirit of courage and wisdom to act against all injustice and oppression. We say together:

Congregation **Pray and work that God may reign.
Throughout your day
let the Word of God breathe life into work and rest.
Maintain inner silence in all things
so as to dwell in Christ.
Be filled with the spirit of the Beatitudes:
joy, simplicity, mercy.**

These words are recited daily by the Sisters of the Grandchamp Community.

Blessing

Leader Be one, so that the world may believe! Abide in God's love, go into the world and bear the fruits of this love.

Congregation **May the God of hope fill us with all joy and all peace in faith, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

For consideration on your own after the service:

- *Have you ever been aware that God was asking you or someone you know to begin a new journey in life – whether literally moving to somewhere else, or ‘changing direction’ in some other way? How did you respond?*
- *What changes could your church or group of churches make to empower God’s people to walk more faithfully the path God has set for you, or to discern God’s guidance more clearly?*
- *What are some of the stories of the ‘new’ members of your community, whether they have crossed a county boundary or journeyed across continents to get there?*

Go and Do (see www.ctbi.org.uk/goanddo)

Global: Get informed about and take action on global refugee and asylum issues and campaigns.

Local: Participate in any hospitality being offered locally to those who have had no choice but to go on a long journey to find safety in an unfamiliar place across the world.

Personal: Spend time exploring what is unfamiliar to you in another Christian tradition and which might help lead you to greater understanding and unity.

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