

Racial Justice Sunday is an opportunity for all Christians in Britain and Ireland to focus their worship, prayer and action on racial justice by:

- Celebrating human diversity.
- Rejoicing in how far God's people have travelled together.
- Recognising that there is much further to go both in the Church and in the world.

What are the aims?

- To raise awareness and deepen understanding of the diversity of culture and experience both in society and in the church.
- To become more inclusive, outward-looking and welcoming.
- To encourage all Christians to tackle injustice, not ignore it.

Make sure your church remembers racial justice!

Important announcement:

The group that is responsible for writing the 2011 Racial Justice material has not yet been able to complete it. CTBI apologises for the delay; they will endeavour to make the resources available at the first opportunity.

In the meantime they suggest the possibility of using (or re-using) the resources from 2008, A banquet for all peoples, which invites churches to celebrate the diversity of humankind and the biblical promise of a banquet to which all the peoples of the world are invited.

The full text of this resource is now available [free to download](#).

Resources 'planned' for 2011

This year's Racial Justice Sunday resources are planned to be based around the theme

"Created by God, Treated like Slaves: Tackling Human Trafficking" and "Love your neighbour as yourself, do this and you will live" from Luke 10:27-28.

Google 'people trafficking' and you will find a wealth of information.

Here are some links to get you started

(use ctrl+click to go to the location)

<http://www.stophetraffik.org/default.aspx>

STOP THE TRAFFIK is a growing global movement of individuals, communities and organisations fighting to PREVENT the sale of people, PROTECT the trafficked and PROSECUTE the traffickers

http://www.antislavery.org/english/slavery_today/trafficking.aspx

Trafficking involves transporting people away from the communities in which they live and forcing them to work against their will using violence, deception or coercion. When children are trafficked, no violence, deception or coercion needs to be involved: simply transporting them into exploitative conditions constitutes trafficking.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/5401350.stm>

Headline: People - trafficking centre opens

Europe's first dedicated centre for victims of people trafficking has opened in Sheffield. The Human Trafficking Centre will aim to provide specialist care for the victims - mostly women brought from abroad and forced into prostitution

<http://www.blueblindfold.co.uk/index.php> and <http://www.blueblindfold.co.uk/partners/>

Blue Blindfold is the international campaign of the UKHTC.

The United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) was created to lead the fight against human trafficking. Global experts in their field, the UKHTC is a specialist team formed from a number of agencies:

- Law enforcement
- Government
- Non-Governmental Agencies (NGOs)
- Charities

<http://www.ccme.be/who-we-are/> and <http://www.ccme.be/areas-of-work/anti-trafficking-in-human-beings/>

CCME is an ecumenical organisation that serves the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible, which insists on the dignity of every human being. CCME aims at promoting an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and ethnic minority groups." (CCME mission statement)

Taken from the 2008 Racial Justice Sunday Resource:

Prayers for the beginning of worship

God of all creation, you have made all people in your image
And you call us to worship you.
We come to you in all our diversity
young and old, black and white, rich and poor, male and female –
because we know we are all invited to your table.
Thank you for your generous hospitality,
for the food of love that never fails to satisfy.

Lover of all nations, of all peoples,
We rejoice at the rich banquet you have set before us;
Choice food, mellow wine and exceptional company.
Thank you that no one is excluded and everyone is welcome.
Help us to enjoy the feast in all its variety
So that it becomes for us not an occasional treat
But a staple diet of your bounty.

God our provider, sustaining humanity and all creation by your love,
Thank you for this opportunity to worship you.
Help us to appreciate all your gifts
And to value the contribution of every person
So that our prayers, words and actions
Mirror your endless creativity and boundless love and enable us to taste the feast of the kingdom of
heaven.

Intercessions

God of all peoples, we pray for all victims of racial hatred and discrimination. We pray for your protection especially for those affected in our churches, our institutions of learning, our places of work and in our communities.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

We pray that we may be able to feel the power of reconciliation through the work of God's Spirit. Wherever there is division between us and others, because of our culture or ethnicity we pray that we may all be led to reconciliation.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

We pray that our young people will make meaningful contributions to build a world where everyone, of any ethnicity, culture or religion, can live a truly human life.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

Merciful God, we ask you to fill our hearts with your love. Give us the grace to rise above our human weakness, and keep us faithful to the Gospel of your Son.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

We remember the sick in our communities especially those who have worked for Racial Justice.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

We remember all the dead, particularly those who worked tirelessly for racial justice: that they may have a place at the banquet of eternal life, and that perpetual light may shine upon them.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

God our Father, we offer to you these prayers, and the work of our hands, and the love of our hearts, that in all things your will may be done. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

Weaving and Believing -ONE CLOTH (A prayer for Racial Justice Sunday)

Gracious God
You call us to make one cloth;
Woven from the variety of traditions
And we bring before you now,
The threads we have to offer:

We bring from our *traditions*:
The things we treasure and value-
And the things we could let go.
The things which inspire and encourage us-
The things which only embarrass us.
The things which are gifts to the whole church-
And the things that are stumbling blocks
In our pilgrimage together.

We bring from our *selves*:
Our openness in theory-
But our suspicion in practice.
Our willingness to learn-
But not always to be changed.

Our willingness to share-

But not always to receive.
Our readiness to work-
But not always together.

Gracious God
Take the threads we have to offer.
Reject what is useless
And accept what is good.
Use the shuttle of your Spirit
To weave a serviceable cloth,
And give us the grace to use it well.

We ask this in the name of Christ - Amen

For more on prayer (use ctrl+click to go to this location) <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/libs/misc/130.doc>

Song Suggestions:

A new commandment

All over the world the spirit is moving

Ascribe greatness to our God the Rock

Christ is the world's true light

Fill your hearts with joy and gladness

For the healing of the nations

From the sun's rising

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise

He brought me to his banqueting table (with added verses as appropriate)

He's got the whole world in his hands

I the Lord of sea and sky

Jesus put this song into our hearts

Jubilate everybody

Make me a channel of your peace

Challenges for response by the congregation

Get involved!

Develop a supportive link with a parish that is working with issues of racial justice for instance; set up a store of food in your church building for distribution to churches that help asylum seekers.

Develop the habit of noticing who's not there in your services, meetings and other activities, because they are or feel excluded by some factor. Build strategies to deliberately include these groups and individuals.

Plan a number of opportunities through the year – harvest, Christmas, anniversary etc – when your church can have a meal to which the whole community is invited, with a really inclusive menu.

Contact an organisation – see what their needs are, pray for them ask them to perhaps speak in your church.

Suggestions of fundraising events

Have a retiring collection for racial justice at the end of the service, perhaps for Leeds City of Sanctuary or PAFRAS

Organise a non-stop sponsored reading of the Gospel of Matthew, the “inclusive” gospel

Give the regular collection for Sunday 11th September to Racial Justice

Hold a coffee morning to benefit Racial Justice

Sell coffee and cakes to the congregation at the end of Sunday worship – donate the proceeds to racial justice

Host an International Fashion Show as a church social event. Sell tickets to raise money for racial justice

Finally! A quote to focus on

There is no Such Thing as a Totally Hopeless case. "Dear Child of God, I write these words because we all experience sadness, we all come at times to despair, and we all lose hope that the suffering in our lives and in our world will never end. I want to share with you my faith and my understanding that this suffering can be transformed and redeemed. There is no such thing as a totally hopeless case. Our God is an expert at dealing with chaos, with brokenness, with all the worst that we can imagine. God created order out of disorder, cosmos out of chaos, and God can do so always, can do so now — in our personal lives and in our lives as nations, globally. The most unlikely person, the most improbable situation — these are all 'transfigurable' — they can be turned into their glorious opposites. Indeed, God is transforming the world now — through us — because God loves us.

"This is not wishful thinking or groundless belief. It is m deep conviction, based on my reading of the Bible and of history. It is borne out not only in my experience in South Africa but also by many other visits to countries suffering oppression or in conflict. Our world is in the grips of a transformation that continues forward and backward in ways that lead to despair at times but ultimately redemption. While I write as a Christian, this transformation can be recognized and experienced by anyone, regardless of your faith and religion, and even if you practice no religion at all."

— **God Has A Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time, Bishop Desmond Tutu.**