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## **MULTIPLE DENOMINATIONS JOIN TOGETHER IN PRAYER SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

Multiple denominations will gather together on the Drake University campus on January 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm for a prayer service focused on Christian Unity. The service will take place in Parent Hall North in Olmsted Center (2875 University Ave., Des Moines). Parking permits are available to purchase here: [www.tinyurl.com/unityprayer](http://www.tinyurl.com/unityprayer)

In this time of societal fracture and in the wake of a divisive political campaign, it is time for followers of Jesus to take concrete steps to follow Jesus in his prayer that all his people “might be one.”

There is much to be said positively about the distinctive Christian traditions to which we belong. There is, however, also this – in the 500 years since the Protestant Reformation, division and re-division has been more our practical reality than has been unity in mission. We must acknowledge that particularity has been more our expertise than has been common resolve to serve the neediest among us. Certainly, Christ expects better of us.

At a recent meeting of denominational leaders in Ames, it was decided that we should take practical, if modest, steps to invite ourselves into common mission. To that end, it was decided to join together for prayer and for exploration of potential mission partnerships during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January 2017.

It is not accidental, of course, that this event is scheduled in close proximity to Martin Luther King Jr’s birthday. One of the common missional project to which we might commit is the ongoing need for greater racial equity in our nation. The willingness to confess our individual and corporate failings and sins is a necessary prerequisite to moving closer to the beloved community into which we believe Christ beckons all of us.

We hope to welcome people to worship, prayer and conversation on January 18 and then into common ministry which is always an appropriate response to worshipful encounter with the Holy.

The Prayer Service for Christian Unity is being planned by leaders of Christian denominations across the state of Iowa, who make up the Judicatories of Iowa. Organizers include leaders from the Episcopal Church, Methodist Church, Catholic Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church (USA) Disciples of Christ, and many more. All are welcome!