



**Industrial Christian Fellowship**

# **INDUSTRIAL SUNDAY**

## **Industrial Sunday**

We suggest it would be good to revive Industrial Sunday.

Injustices and power struggles still exist at work, and there are still plenty of employers, small and large, who wish to state publicly their commitment to good human relations at work.

Today, we suggest it is more appropriate to emphasise the importance of workers and employers working together for the common good, and to balance the struggle for social justice with the struggle to be free to manage for wealth creation.

But power still corrupts, and there are still many employees (Christian as well) who are bitter against 'the system' and their employers. The need may be greater today, because there are so few now who have a union to defend them against injustice.

We feel that Industrial Sunday has its place, not as a macro statement about Industrial Relations, but as a local Christian statement by local Christian employers and employees to treat each other fairly, and so become part of the overall strategy to bring the Kingdom of heaven upon earth.

People may feel more comfortable to have a service about work which concentrates on the human aspects rather than the new ICF Rogationtide services, which try to widen visions to include all work as God's co-creation.

Industrial Sunday is the Sunday before Labour Day (1st May). This was originally designed by ICF to bring a Christian perspective to labour day, rather than allow it to lapse into a secular and confrontational occasion.

## ***Sermon or talk***

### ***Final Prayer***

O Holy Spirit,  
the go-between God,  
come and inspire us with your love.  
Break down the barriers of selfishness and suspicion;  
enable us to understand each other;  
strengthen us to share our talents and our wealth;  
and give us the joy of working together as brothers and sisters,  
children of the same heavenly Father,  
and fellow workers with Christ.

**Amen**

***Hymn:*** 'Guide me O thou Great Redeemer'

### ***Final blessing:***

May God bless you and keep you  
May God walk with you and direct you  
May God be your companion as you work together  
and give you his peace.  
My brothers and sisters,  
the Lord bless you.

**Amen**

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Bless all those who work for Trade Unions  
and all who struggle to ensure fairness  
and justice in the workplace;  
give them wisdom and strength  
to benefit the employer  
as well as the employed  
Lord in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer**

Bless employers' Federations  
and those responsible for pay and conditions at work;  
give to those employers who are generous  
the power and freedom to create wealth  
Lord in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer**

Bless our Government and Parliament  
that they may legislate wisely for the common good;  
and bless all government officials  
who administer the law for the workplace  
especially Employment, Health and Safety  
and Environmental Protection  
that we may work in comfort and security  
and be a blessing to our local community,  
without the burdens of bureaucracy.  
Lord in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer**

And bless all of us here present;  
that we may work together  
in peace and harmony,  
giving each other mutual respect  
and acting in generosity of spirit;  
not pursuing our own selfish interests  
but the good of our community at work.  
Merciful Father  
**accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

We suggest that if there are any local unions or employers federations, they should all the same be encouraged to bring their banners, as this gives colour, as well as being part of the Industrial Sunday tradition. However, if any local organisations have the *Investors in People* award, or other awards for good practice, please encourage them to bring the award flag, or even their organisation flag. They can also be invited to put up a stand in the place of worship, illustrating their work. Most organisations do have these already, for use at exhibitions and trade fairs.

The flags, banners or awards can either be brought in procession to the place of worship (as they were originally), or brought up during a procession in the Service.

People may like to come in the uniforms they wear for work, and if they are encouraged to come in the same clothes they wear at the office, or the overalls of the workshop or farm (cleaned for the occasion?), this makes a statement that religious life and work life are not separate.

We have divided the suggested worship material into two sections: the first consists of individual prayers for inclusion within a normal Sunday Service (for example, a Eucharist), and is designed for those regularly attending worship. The second is a special service for Industrial Sunday, which is designed to attract those 'on the fringe', and to use language they would not find too strange.

We believe the material conforms to the Church of England guidelines in *Patterns for Worship*, and references are given where appropriate. The readings are all from authorised translations (the references are for information only, and are not meant to be read out). The Hymns have been selected as being familiar even to occasional worshippers. The bold type is used to indicate the words the congregation join in.

## Prayers for inclusion in normal Sunday Worship

### *Introductory Sentence:*

Do not repay anyone evil for evil.

Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

(Romans 12:17-18)

### *Opening Prayer:*

Be our guide and companion, merciful God

in our place of work;

so that setting aside all bitterness and rivalry,

and treating others as we would wish to be treated,

we may be subject to your just and gentle rule;

through him who gave up his throne in heaven

to reconcile the whole world on the cross,

even Jesus Christ our Lord

**Amen.**

### *Proper Preface (for Eucharist):*

and now we give you thanks because

you have made us dependent on each other,

and to create wealth by working together;

### *Intercessory Prayers:*

We pray for all those, who from within the structures of our churches support us and build us up for our ministry at work.

Bless our bishops, priests and deacons

with true knowledge and understanding of the world of work

that by their teaching and their counsel

they may touch the hearts of employer and employed.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Bless all those who work for Trade Unions

and all who struggle to ensure fairness

and justice in the workplace;

give them wisdom and strength

to benefit the employer

as well as the employed

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Reader A: Let your aims be such as all count honourable.

Reader B: If possible, so far as it lies with you, live at peace with all.

Reader A: My dear friends, do not seek revenge, but leave a place for divine retribution;

Reader B: for there is a text which reads, 'Vengeance is mine, says the Lord, I will repay.'

Reader A: But there is another text: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; by doing this you will heap live coals on his head.'

Reader B: Do not let evil conquer you, but use good to conquer evil. (Romans 12:3-13:21)

### *Prayers:*

**Our Father**

**who art in Heaven,**

**Hallowed by thy name,**

**Thy kingdom come**

**Thy will be done,**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread**

**And forgive us our trespasses**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory**

**For ever and ever. Amen.**

We pray for all those, who from within the structures of our churches support us and build us up for our ministry at work.

Bless our bishops, priests and deacons

with true knowledge and understanding of the world of work

that by their teaching and their counsel

they may touch the hearts of employer and employed.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

*Hymn: Love Divine*

*Reading: (We suggest that one reader is an employer, and the other is an employee)*

*Reader A:* By authority of the grace God has given me I say to everyone among you: do not think too highly of yourself, but form a sober estimate based on the measure of faith that God has dealt to each of you.

*Reader B:* For just as in a single human body there are many limbs and organs, all with different functions, so we who are united with Christ, though many, form one body, and belong to one another as its limbs and organs.

*Reader A:* Let us use the different gifts allotted to each of us by God's grace;

*Reader B:* the gift of administration to administer,

*Reader A:* the gift of teaching to teach,

*Reader B:* the gift of counselling to counsel.

*Reader A:* If you give to charity, give generously;

*Reader B:* if you are a leader, lead with enthusiasm;

*Reader A:* if you help others in distress, do it cheerfully.

*Reader B:* Love in all sincerity, loathing evil and holding fast to the good.

*Reader A:* Let love of the Christian community show itself in mutual affection.

*Reader B:* Esteem others more highly than yourself.

*Reader A:* With unflagging zeal, aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord.

*Reader B:* Let hope keep you joyful;

*Reader A:* in trouble stand firm;

*Reader B:* persist in prayer;

*Reader A:* contribute to the needs of God's people,

*Reader B:* and practise hospitality.

*Reader A:* Call down blessings on your persecutors -blessings, not curses.

*Reader B:* Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

*Reader A:* Live in agreement with one another.

*Reader B:* Do not be proud, but be ready to mix with humble people.

*Reader A:* Do not keep thinking how wise you are.

*Reader B:* Never pay back evil for evil.

Bless employers' Federations  
and those responsible for pay and conditions at work!  
give to those employers who are generous  
the power and freedom to create wealth  
Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Bless our Government and Parliament  
that they may legislate wisely for the common good;  
and bless all government officials  
who administer the law for the workplace  
especially Employment, Health and Safety  
and Environmental Protection  
that we may work in comfort and security  
and be a blessing to our local community,  
without the burdens of bureaucracy.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

And bless all of us here present;  
that we may work together  
in peace and harmony,  
giving each other mutual respect  
and acting in generosity of spirit;  
not pursuing our own selfish interests  
but the good of our community at work.

Merciful Father

**accept these prayers**

**for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

***Final blessing:***

May God bless you and keep you;  
may God walk with you and direct you;  
may God be your companion as you work together,  
and give you his peace.

My brothers and sisters,  
the Lord bless you.

**Amen**

## Industrial Sunday Service

*Leader:*

Today, the Sunday before May Day, is Industrial Sunday. This is the Sunday when we come together as employers and employed, to affirm our willingness to put human relations in the workplace under the hand of God. We hope in this way to make the struggle for social justice, and the struggle to be free to manage our enterprises for the creation of wealth, part of an overall strategy to bring the Kingdom of heaven upon earth, where everyone will work together in peace and prosperity.

*Introductory Sentence:*

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.  
If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.  
(Romans 12:17-18)

*Opening Prayer*

Be our guide and companion, merciful God  
in our place of work;  
so that setting aside all bitterness and rivalry,  
and treating others as we would wish to be treated,  
we may be subject to your just and gentle rule;  
through him who gave up his throne in heaven  
to reconcile the whole world on the cross,  
even Jesus Christ our Lord  
Amen.

*Hymn:* Now thank we all our God

*Leader:*

Listen to some words of Jesus:  
*When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. If you forgive others the wrongs they have done, your heavenly Father will also*

*forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs that you have done.*  
(Matthew 5:23-24, 6:14-15)

Let us therefore forgive one another for any wrongs they have done to us; this does not mean that we should not fight for justice and fairness at work, but simply that we should do so without personal animosity or hatred, speaking the truth in love.  
Lord, we need to forgive;  
take from us all hatred and bitterness  
through the power of your cross  
Lord have mercy  
**Lord have mercy**

Lord, we must forgive;  
without your Holy Spirit to  
bring peace and love  
how can we work together  
to produce wealth for all?  
Christ have mercy  
**Christ have mercy**

Lord, we desire to forgive  
we are sorry that we have misused our power over others  
or been vindictive in our search for justice.  
All our power and strength  
come from you who made us,  
our Father and creator  
Lord have mercy  
**Lord have mercy**

*(Note: Patterns for Worship (p48) permits freedom in Kyrie Confessions)*

God who is both power and love  
forgive you and free you from your sins,  
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,  
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**