



## Pressezentrum

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Sperrfrist:	24. Mai 2017 19.00 Uhr
Projekt:	Eröffnungsgottesdienste
Veranstaltung:	<b>Worte und Grüße zur Eröffnung</b>
Zeit, Ort:	Mi. 19.00 – 19.30, Bühne auf dem Platz der Republik, Tiergarten (214   b2)
Referent/in:	<b>Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, London/Großbritannien</b>

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Five months ago, in this very city, as people went about preparing for Christmas, a terrorist killed 12 people and injured many more. On Monday night in Manchester terror was once again directed at people – many of them young children – who were simply going about their daily lives, enjoying the excitement of a concert and preparing to return home.

The terrorist aims to cause division and disintegration, to separate us from our fellow human beings with fear and horror. As Easter Christians who follow the Lord Jesus Christ, conqueror of all death and evil, we reply "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"; "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott".

Yet we must face the reality of suffering as well as the power of God. Those injured and bereaved before Christmas are still suffering. The attention of the world moves on, but their hurt and pain remains. Those injured and bereaved in Manchester are beginning a long, hard and cruel journey. For all of them we mourn. We lament. We cry out. We protest. We weep.

We must be united with those in grief, through prayer, through acts of love and compassion. To light up the Brandenburg gate with the Union Jack expressed your solidarity. We are grateful. Those who grieve and those who seek healing need to be accompanied. Then terrorism is overcome by the power of God's Spirit to unite, to integrate, not divide and disintegrate. We discover in our unity that "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott"; the truth becomes our reality.

How do we pray? We pray 'Thy Kingdom Come' – for a kingdom where his peace shall know no end, where none shall mourn and there will be no more tears. Prayer moves us closer not only to God, but to one another. It connects us with those whom we otherwise cannot see. Prayer breaks down division, in prayer we take each other's hands and find our safe stronghold, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott". Manchester and the cities around will recover, it is a heroic city, it will demonstrate its generosity and character in standing with those suffering, in showing that love overcomes hate.

We must also go also beyond individual prayer and unity. Whatever is happening politically, across Europe we belong to each other in our culture, our Christian history. In this year of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, after the most war torn century of history, we know that the evils of division and disintegration must be resisted. I am not speaking of Brexit, nor of any politics, but of an attitude of mutual support and care. God is our mighty fortress when we stand together. A year ago one of our members of Parliament, Jo Cox, was murdered by a political extremist. Before her death, she said "there is far more that unites us than divides us". Let that be true amongst Christians, let us declare our unity in the love of Christ, in prayer, in celebration of joy, in mourning with the poor and the broken and the terrorised, for we know beyond any doubt that "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott".

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