

# Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration

Sunday, January 15, 2023

An asterisk \* invites you to stand in body or in spirit,  
and you are invited to read responses found in **bold**.

Welcome to First Lutheran Church!



"Darkness cannot  
drive out  
darkness;  
only light  
can do that.  
Hate cannot  
drive out hate;  
only love  
can do that."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Gathering in God's Presence

**Prelude** — "Deep River"

African American Spiritual, Setting by William Bliem  
Nancy Nelson, flute

**Welcome**

**\*Gathering Hymn** —

"Commonwealth is God's Commandment"



- 1 Com-mon-wealth is God's com-mand-ment; com-mon goods are meant to share.
- 2 Shar-ing lav-ish gifts and bless-ings, love that not one mite with-holds,
- 3 Gen-ders, rac-es, tribes, and na-tions, hear the Ho-ly One who calls,



Ta-bles set and doors wide o-pen wel-come an-gels un-a-ware.  
stretch out arms to friends and strang-ers: God has sheep of man-y folds.  
bid-ding all to work to-geth-er, bridg-ing lives and breach-ing walls.



Plead for the peace of all cre-a-tion. Pray for a place where grace is found.



Shan-ti, pax, sha-lom, mas-la-ha: com-mon good is ho-ly ground.

**\*Confession and Forgiveness — “Repenting and Lamenting in Times like These”**

You are the God who hears:  
hear our prayer today for all who lament or repent.

For those among us who face discrimination every day  
because of their skin color, **we lament.**

For those among us with white skin who benefit  
from racist systems sometimes even without realizing it,  
**we repent.**

For those among us who have struggled and waited so  
long for the Promised Land of freedom and equality,  
**we lament.**

For those among us who have acted in racist ways  
and have hurt people of color, **we repent.**

For those protesting injustice who face police brutality  
and a justice system rigged against them, **we lament.**

For those who think racism is someone else’s problem, and  
not a problem for humanity, **we repent.**

God of hope, show us how to work for  
justice together,  
standing up for what is right,  
stepping in when something’s wrong,  
shouldering each other’s burdens,  
holding each other accountable,  
righting the wrongs we’ve done,  
speaking truth to power.

**We pray for change, lasting change,  
for protection for protesters,  
for a de-escalation of violence  
and for government leaders who listen.**

Deliver us from evil, within and without,  
in Jesus’ name we pray, **Amen.**

**\*Canticle of Baptism — no. 459**

“Wade in the Water”

**\*Responsive Litany — “Shake Us From our Slumber”**

When our eyes do not see the gravity of racial justice,  
**Shake us from our slumber and open our eyes,  
O God.**

When out of fear we are frozen into inaction,  
**Give us a spirit of bravery, O God.**

When we try our best but say the wrong things,  
**Give us a spirit of humility, O God.**

When the chaos of this dies down,  
**Give us a lasting spirit of solidarity, O God.**

When it becomes easier to point fingers outwards,  
**Help us to examine our own hearts, O God.**

God of truth, in your wisdom, **Enlighten Us.**  
God of hope in your kindness, **Heal Us.**  
Creator of all people, in your generosity, **Guide Us.**

Racism breaks your heart. Break our hearts for what breaks yours, O God.

Ever present One, you called us to be in relationship with one another and promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered. In our community, we are many different people; we come from many different places, we have many different cultures. Open our hearts that we may be bold in finding the riches of inclusion and the treasures of diversity among us. We pray in faith. **Amen.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

Holy and righteous God, you created us in your image. Grant us grace to contend fearlessly against evil and to make no peace with oppression. Help us, like your servant Martin Luther King, Jr. to work for justice among people and nations, to the glory of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Light shines in the darkness, **and the darkness cannot overcome it.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation** — *see Yellow Supplement, refrain only (sung twice)*

**\*Gospel** — John 1:29-42

The Gospel of John, the 1st chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.”

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon** —

Pastor Chris Culuris

**\*Hymn** — no. 453

“Baptized and Set Free”

**\*The Apostles’ Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the power of the Holy  
Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;**

**he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the  
dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen**

## \*Prayers of Intercession

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Put a new song in the mouth of your church. Inspire the baptized to tell of your faithfulness, sharing the good news of your salvation throughout the earth. Bless the witness of missionaries. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The waters of baptism call us into life in the Spirit. Preserve the world's waters: protect them from pollution, support plants and animals who depend on them, and bring rain in places of drought. Guide us in protecting local waterways, especially the Minnesota River, and in responding to devastating floods. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

In Jesus you are the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Show your mercy to all nations. Direct leaders to do your will; fill governing bodies with righteousness; equip judges with discernment and compassion. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You incline your ear to all who cry to you. Draw near to individuals and communities suffering violence, injustice, illness, or poverty. Hide them in the shadow of your hand and make us signs of your faithfulness to all in need. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You are glorified in the servants you have called. As we remember Martin Luther King Jr., give us bold trust in you. Even when it feels like a sharp sword or polished arrow, give us courage to receive your call to repentance and racial justice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

In every place and time, you have sanctified your people. We praise you for the testimony of those who have died in the faith. Strengthen us as we wait for the day of Christ. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ. **Amen.**

## Offering

*Music at the Offering*

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

African American Spiritual, Setting by Doris Gazda & Larry Clark

Nancy Nelson, flute

# Sharing the Meal

\*Great Thanksgiving & Preface — *see Yellow Supplement*

\*"Holy, Holy, Holy" — *see Yellow Supplement*

\*Words of Institution and The Lord's Prayer

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

To our God of true justice, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

**\*Invitation to Communion**

Here is the table set for our special meal. The bread, the wine, prepared and presented. Ready to be served and shared.

We remember Jesus sharing a meal like this with his disciples, his friends. He included everyone, those he could trust and those he could not trust.

Today we are his disciples, his friends. Each one of us is welcome. How amazing it is to be loved and wanted even when we have not been perfect. How wonderful it is to be included as we are.

**Distribution of Communion**

**Communion Canticle — no. 1056, from *All Creation Sings* “God Bless to Us Our Bread”**

Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan, y da pan a los que tien - en  
 God bless to . . us our . . bread, and give bread . . to all those who are

ham - bre y ham - bre de jus - ti - cia, a los que tien - en  
 hun - gry, and hun - ger for jus - tice to those who are

pan. Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan.  
 fed. God bless to . . . us our . . . bread.

**Hymn — “God, with Joy We Look Around Us”  
 Sung to the tune REGENT SQUARE (“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”)**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1. God, with joy we look around us<br/>         At your world’s diversity.<br/>         Folk of every kind surround us<br/>         And you call your church to see:<br/>         All are made in your own image!<br/>         All are people whom you love!</b></p> <p><b>2. In the times we’ve hurt each other,<br/>         Lord, we’ve hurt the ones you bless.<br/>         Hating sister, cursing brother,</b></p> | <p><b>We’ve denied what you express:<br/>         All are made in your own image!<br/>         All are people whom you love!</b></p> <p><b>3. God, you sent a Savior to us,<br/>         Breaking walls that would divide.<br/>         By your Spirit, now work through us<br/>         As we witness side by side:<br/>         All are made in your own image!<br/>         All are people whom you love!</b></p> |
|--|--|

**Communion Blessing and Prayer**

Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table. Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you. Amen.

**Departing to Serve God’s World**

**Announcements**

### \*Benediction

As the Savior so taught...go now and overcome.

Overcome racial hatred with love and understanding. Overcome sexism with mutual honor and respect.

Overcome social inequities with fair and equal educational and employment opportunities.

Overcome mean-heartedness with a kind word or good deed.

Overcome war, poverty, hunger, and suffering throughout our streets and lands abroad,  
by sharing the love of Christ Jesus with your neighbor. Go now and overcome!

### \*Dismissal

Go in peace. Remember the call to justice. **Thanks be to God!**

### Postlude — “Ain’a That Good News!”

African American Spiritual, Setting by Christina Shehi  
Nancy Nelson, flute

*I got a Savior in-a that kingdom, ain'a that good news!  
I'm-a gonna lay down this world, gonna shoulder up-a my cross.  
Gonna take it home-a to my Jesus, ain'a that good news!*

### Acknowledgements

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Many prayers and excerpts of this service taken from “Evening Prayer in Memory of Martin Luther King, Jr.” as posted at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org).  
<https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Martin-Luther-King-2018.pdf>

“Shake Us From Our Slumber” by Martin Luther King, Jr. Posted at

<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/prayers-for-racial-justice-and-reconciliation>

“Repenting and Lamenting in Times like These” by Carol Penner, <https://carolpenner.typepad.com/leadinginworship/>

“Invitation to Communion” by Anna Gobledeale, <https://worshipwords.co.uk/all-age-easter-communion-liturgy-ana-gobledeale-uk/>

Benediction: adapted from The [www.AfricanAmericanLectionary.org](http://www.AfricanAmericanLectionary.org), Posted on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Worship Resources, on the Disciples of Christ Council on Christian Unity website: <https://www.disciplescuim.org/>

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### Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Audio/Video: Joe Greenig, Brett Peterson

Acolytes: Dylan Greenig, Natalie Twait

Greeters: Erik Lutz, Lathe & Laird Bly

Reader: Barbara Wilkinson

Ushers: Tom Thorkelson

Musicians: Nancy Nelson, flute

Communion Preparers: Mary Spear, Pat

Duenwald

Communion Servers: Sharon Domier, Mary

Spear

Bread Bakers: Michelle Doose, Shirleen Sylvester

### Prayers

- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Myrene Bunge, Glenn Stryker, Erika Schuldt, Ursula McRostie, Karen Wendroth, Allen Storkson, Gene Roemhildt, Karen Smithers, and Shirley Storkson.
- We pray for the family of Shirley Strand, who died on January 6.
- We pray for all those mourning the recent loss of loved ones.
- We pray for Karen Smithers, who is recovering from hip surgery.

- We pray for Shirley Storkson, Shanon Nowell's mother-in-law, who is recovering from a broken hip.
- We pray for Mary Lynn Ditch and Nancy Timm as they mourn the loss of their sister and aunt Joan Reschke.
- We pray for peace and unity around the world and for those affected by all forms of racism and exclusion.

### Announcements

- **Resources for Anti-Racism:** Would you like to learn more about the history of racism and the anti-racism movement? There are numerous resources; visit <https://tinyurl.com/2p9b53hr> for ideas, and you are encouraged to support black-owned bookstores, such as one on this list: <https://tinyurl.com/2z3fph5d>
- Emily Bruflat will be leading a **presentation on the book** *Activist Theology* by Dr. Roberto Che Espinoza following worship this morning. Get ready to be challenged!
- **Flowers** for the Altar today are given by Barbara Wilkinson.
- **Fellowship** refreshments are being served today after worship by the Fellowship Committee. Thank you!
- **MLK Celebration at Christ Chapel**, 10 a.m. tomorrow morning: Justice Alan Page presenting.
- **All Congregation Meeting** on January 29 in the Sanctuary after worship. At this important meeting the congregation will vote for representatives and approve the budget for 2023. Please be there as a quorum of 75 voting members is needed!
- After worship next Sunday, you are invited to join Pr. Chris in the Dining Hall as we continue our Bible study on *Making Sense of Martin Luther*. No prior experience is necessary. Please join us!
- A reminder to sign up for our **"First's Friends and Family Women's Retreat"** by Jan. 30. The retreat will be held from 9:00am - 12:30pm on Sat. Feb. 4th. Women high school age and older are invited to attend!
- **Where is Angela?** Angela has been working remotely while she is receiving chemotherapy for stage 2 cancer. She will be working in the office as often as she possibly can. With this in mind, if you do see her in the office please do not come in feeling ill at all. We also ask that you wear a mask when she is in the office. If all goes as planned she will be finished with chemotherapy in May followed by surgery and radiation. Thanks to all of you for your support and understanding during this complicated time.

### An Examine for Racial Justice

*You are invited to reflect on these questions in your prayer, meditation, and/or journaling this week.*

- Have I fully loved God and fully loved my neighbor as myself?
- Have I caused pain to others by my actions or my words that offended my siblings?
- Have I done enough to inform myself about the sin of racism, its roots, and its historical and contemporary manifestations? Have I opened my heart to see how unequal access to economic opportunity, jobs, housing, and education on the basis of skin color, race, or ethnicity, has denied and continues to deny the equal dignity of others?
- Is there a root of racism within me that blurs my vision of who my neighbor is?
- Have I ever witnessed an occasion when someone "fell victim" to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism and I did or said nothing, leaving the victim to address their pain alone?
- Have I ever witnessed an occasion when someone "fell victim" to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism with me inflicting the pain, acting opposite of love of God and love of neighbor?
- Have I ever lifted up and aided a person who "fell victim" to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism and paid a price for extending mercy to the other? How did I react? Did my faith grow? Am I willing to grow even more in faith through my actions?