

Everybody can
be great,
because
everybody can
serve.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Commemoration

Sunday, January 16, 2022

Gathering in God's Presence

Prelude — “Give Me Jesus”

African American Spiritual, Setting by Stan Pethel
Lauren Russell, viola

Welcome

Today we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., an outstanding champion of the struggle against oppression and social injustice. In the 1960s he was the most well-known spokesperson of the US civil rights movement. A visionary leader, who propagated civil disobedience as a tool against the political practice of racial segregation. A pacifist. On 4 April 1968 at 6:01 p.m., while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, he was fatally wounded by a bullet from a racist sniper.

Today, many of Martin Luther King's visions have become reality. Others have not. War is still omnipresent, and so is poverty. The rich still become richer at the expense of the poor. People are still treated as second-class citizens – for motives stemming from fear or hate. That is why we are remembering Martin Luther King and seeking new visions for ourselves and our world.

***Gathering Hymn** —

“O God of Creation, We See All Around Us”
Sung to the tune THE ASH GROVE

O God of creation, we see all around us:
How richly diverse are the people you've made!
In all of our neighbors who daily surround us,
Your love for your children is ever displayed.
We're made in your image, we're equal before you;
Yet often injustice and hatred abound.
Forgive us the ways that we sin and ignore you,
Accepting the structures that push others down.

Christ Jesus, you lived in the same way you taught us;
You welcomed the people that others despised.
You talked and you ate with the poor and the outcast;
You saw every person through welcoming eyes.
Forgive our re-building the walls you have broken-
Our making of barriers you came to tear down.
The gift of your cross is the world's reconciling
With God and with all of God's people around.

O God, by your Spirit, now give us a vision
Of life in your kingdom through Jesus your Son-
Where background and culture
won't lead to division,
And all will feel welcomed and all will be one.
God, now may we work with a new dedication
For justice, equality, freedom and peace,
Until we are called to your great celebration
And share at your table in your banquet feast.

***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 colour,

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 colour,

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.**

Kyrie — from *Setting Twelve, All Creation Sings

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.
Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

***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 Lord.

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

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

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

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

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 Lord.

Ever present God, 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, 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.**

Hearing & Responding to Scripture

A Reading from Hebrew Scriptures — Isaiah 62:1-5

¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of
the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

⁴You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
⁵For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your builder marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 36:5-10 — spoken responsively by verse

⁵Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

**⁶Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgments are like the great deep;
you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.**

⁷How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

**⁸They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your
delights.**

⁹For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.

**¹⁰O continue your steadfast love to those who
know you,
and your salvation to the upright of heart!**

A Reading from the Epistles — 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

¹Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit

the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation** — from *Setting Twelve, All Creation Sings*

“Alleluia”



***Gospel** — John 2:1-11

The Gospel of John, the 2nd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

1On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” 4And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.” 5His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” 6Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. 8He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.” So they took it. 9When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom 10and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.” 11Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon — “Learning and Growing in God's Grace”

Pastor Chris Culuris



1 Je - sus, come! for we in - vite you, guest and mas - ter,
 2 Je - sus, come! trans-form our plea - sures, guide us in - to
 3 Je - sus, come! in new cre - a - tion, heav'n brought near in
 4 Je - sus, come! sur - prise our dull - ness, make us will - ing



friend and Lord; now, as once at Ca - na's wed - ding,
 paths un - known; bring your gifts, com-mand your ser - vants,
 pow'r di - vine; give your un - ex - pect - ed glo - ry,
 to re - ceive more than we can yet im - ag - ine,



speak and let us hear your word: lead us through our need or
 let us trust in you a - lone: though your hand may work in
 chang-ing wa - ter in - to wine: rouse the faith of your dis -
 all the best you have to give: let us find your hid - den



doubt - ing, hope be born and joy re - stored.
 se - cret, all shall see what you have done.
 ci - ples— come, our first and great - est Sign!
 rich - es, taste your love, be - lieve, and live!

**5. Jesus, come! remove divisions,
 stir in us your zeal for grace;
 with your leadership and guidance,
 we will bridge the walls we face:
 serve us love, compassion, justice,
 this the banquet we embrace.**

*Litany — “Here I Am, Send Me”

A child once dreamed the Voice was calling his name. . . ‘Samuel’;
 Fishermen once heard the Voice when a young man bid them follow;
 And still the Voice beckons today. . .can you hear?

Here I am. Send me.

Moses protested vehemently as the Voice spoke at the burning bush;
 Mary stood amazed as the Voice proclaimed impending birth;
 And still the Voice beckons today. . .can you hear?

Here I am. Send me.

Rosa Parks followed the Voice to the front of the bus;
 Martin Luther King, Jr. heard the Voice as the bullet shattered;
 And still the Voice beckons today. . .can you hear?

Here I am. Send me.

The Voice beckons from humble places. . .
 in the tears of hungry children,
 in the cries of the frail and frightened elderly,
 in the pleas of those whose dreams have been too long deferred;
 and still the Voice beckons today. . .can you hear?

Here I am. Send me.

A timid believer pauses to listen to the Voice;
 A struggling church hears the Voice and turns;
 and still the Voice beckons today. . .can you hear?

Here I am. Send me.

*Prayers of Intercession

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

Gracious God, by your Spirit, activate within your church gifts of faith, healing, and prophecy. Unite those who profess your name across congregations, denominations, racial, ethnic, and geographic boundaries. Open our hearts to recognize and celebrate surprising miracles. God of unity, **hear our prayers for justice.**

God, our refuge and strength, you have bound us together in a common life. In all our conflicts, help us to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, to listen for your voice amid competing claims, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect. God of unity, **hear our prayers for justice.**

Look with mercy, gracious God, upon people everywhere who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Rouse us from our complacency and help us to eliminate cruelty wherever it is found. Strengthen those who seek equality for all. Grant that everyone may enjoy a fair portion of the abundance of the earth. God of unity, **hear our prayers for justice.**

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick, especially as the pandemic continues to impact our world. Let us be mindful of the ways that our healthcare system is unfairly stacked against the poor and marginalized in our society, and kindle in us a passion to actively work for real change so that all may receive equal access to care. God of unity, **hear our prayers for justice.**

O God, your Son came among us to serve and not to be served, and to give his life for the life of the world. Lead us by his love to serve all those to whom the world offers no comfort and little help. Through us give hope to the hopeless, love to the unloved, peace to the troubled, and rest to the weary. God of unity, **hear our prayers for justice.**

God our Teacher, you bless us through the spiritual gifts of the saints who have gone before us. We give thanks for the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and all who have modeled the way of courageous faith. God of unity, **hear our prayers for justice.**

God with us, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior, who taught us to pray:

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.

Departing to Serve God's World

Announcements

*Sending Hymn — no. 841

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

*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 — “Go Down, Moses”

African American Spiritual, Setting by Stephen DeSesare
Lauren Russell, viola

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.
<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/>

“Litany: Here I Am, Send Me” by K. HawkerSelf, <http://liturgyoutside.net>

Benediction: adapted from The 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: Shanon Nowell

Greeter/Reader: Ellen Conover & Judy Fienen

Ushers: David Kennedy

Musicians: Lauren Russell (GAC Student)

Announcements

- An update to our masking policy: due to the highly contagious nature of the Omicron variant, cloth masks are no longer sufficient. Please wear an N-95, KN-95, or surgical mask in the building at all times, covering your mouth and nose! Surgical masks are available in the Gathering Space.
- We continue welcoming Pastor Chris to First Lutheran Church! Pastor Chris will be installed by Pastor Stephen Cook from the SWMN Synod during worship on January 23, 2022.
- Lay persons will be recommissioned on January 23 to serve communion in the community. If you have not been trained in this and would like to be, please contact Shirb Sylvester.
- Notice: FLC’s Annual Meeting will be held on January 30 at 11 a.m. following worship.
- Flowers for the Altar are given today by Barb Wilkenson in memory of her husband Steve.

- Give to Lutheran Disaster Response for Wildfire Relief:
 - Donate to “US Wildfires” here: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8peucr>
 - Make a general donation to Lutheran Disaster Response: <https://tinyurl.com/2gtsf2ea>
 - To donate with a check, get a half sheet insert from an usher and fill out the form with your information.

Prayers

- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Tom and Deb Johnson, Tom Michels, Abigail Christenson, Betty Gustafson, Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Myrene Bunge, Glen Stryker, Erika Schuldt, Tim Sebring, Mary Pieklo, Gloria Kane, Gwen Powell, Nancy Maag, and Urusla McRostie.
- We pray for the family of Trip Kilander and his mother Judy Chaffee. Trip passed away on Jan 6.
- We pray for the family Bev Gustafson who passed away on January 8.
- We pray for all those families continuing to adjust to the loss of loved ones, including the families of Pastor Heidi Hagstrom and Julie Giedd.

Resources for Anti-Racism: Would you like to learn more about the history of racism and the anti-racism movement? There are numerous resources, but the following would be a good place to start:

- *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.* by Lenny Duncan
- *Embracing Diversity: Faith, Vocation, and the Promise of America* by Darrell Jodock and William Nelsen
- *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo
- *Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendi
 - *Stamped: Racism, Anti-Racism, and You* by Jason Reynolds, Ibram X. Kendi (good for youth)
- *So You Want to Talk about Race* by Ijeoma Oluo
- *Write on Race, to be Right on Race: Resource Journaling Guide* by Bukata Hayes and Stacy Wells
- For more, visit <https://tinyurl.com/2p9b53hr>, and you are encouraged to support black-owned bookstores, such as one on this list: <https://tinyurl.com/2z3fph5d>

An Examine for Racial Justice

- 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 brother or my sister?
- 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?

“An Examine for Racial Justice” by To Go Forth – a blog from the USCCB, Department of Justice, Peace & Human Development - inspired by Pope Francis. <https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog>