



Worship Resources for Sunday, Sept. 6, 2015 "Confession, Repentance and Commitment to End Racism Sunday"

Confession and Forgiveness

Gracious God, we thank you for making one human family of all the peoples of the earth and for creating all the wonderful diversity of cultures.

Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship and show us your presence in those who differ most from us.

From the bondage of racism that denies the humanity of every human being and the prejudices within us that deny the dignity of those who are oppressed, Lord set us free:

Lord, have mercy.

From racism that blinds oppressors to the destruction caused by the spirit and practice of racial injustice, Christ set us free:

Christ, have mercy.

From the racism that will not recognize the work of your Spirit in other cultures: Lord set us free:

Lord, have mercy.

Forgive those of us who have been silent and apathetic in the face of racial intolerance and bigotry, both overt and subtle, public and private.

And take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts.

Break down the walls that separate us.

And help us to find that unity that is the fruit of righteousness and will enable us to become your beloved community.

Empower us to speak boldly for justice and truth and help us to deal with one another without hatred or bitterness, working together with mutual forbearance and respect.

And work through our struggles and confusion to accomplish your purposes.

O God of unconditional love,

you who show no partiality in respect to people or nations,
we have heard your good news of great joy for all the people.

We hear that good news, and in hearing, believe.

We know that your sanctuary is a house of worship for all people,
with no regard for the color of our skin.

As we worship you, knit us into a people,
a seamless garment of many colors.

May we celebrate our unity, made whole in our diversity.

Forgive us for our inability to let our "old selves" die to the world.

We acknowledge that we participate in structures that are inherently racist, and yet we so often do nothing to remedy it.
Show us we fail when we judge others according to the color of their flesh.

God, who is rich in mercy, loves us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of +Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

Adapted from the United Church of Christ's "Prayers for Racial Justice Sunday" (www.ucc.org/worship/ways) and from the United Church of Canada (www.united-church.ca/bfw/resources.shtm)

Or an alternate suggestion is:

A Litany For Those Who Aren't Ready For Healing

Let us not rush to the language of healing, before understanding the fullness of the injury and the depth of the wound.

Let us not rush to offer a band-aid, when the gaping wound requires surgery and complete reconstruction.

Let us not offer false equivalencies, thereby diminishing the particular pain being felt in a particular circumstance in a particular historical moment.

Let us not speak of reconciliation without speaking of reparations and restoration, or how we can repair the breach and how we can restore the loss.

Let us not rush past the loss of this mother's child, this father's child ... someone's beloved son.

Let us not value property over people; let us not protect material objects while human lives hang in the balance.

Let us not value a false peace over a righteous justice.

Let us not be afraid to sit with the ugliness, the messiness, and the pain that is life in community together.

Let us not offer clichés to the grieving, those whose hearts are being torn asunder.

Instead ...

Let us mourn black and brown men and women, those killed extrajudicially every 28 hours.

Let us lament the loss of a teenager, dead at the hands of a police officer who described him as a demon.

Let us weep at a criminal justice system, which is neither blind nor just.

Let us call for the mourning men and the wailing women, those willing to rend their garments of privilege and ease, and sit in the ashes of this nation's original sin.

Let us be silent when we don't know what to say.

Let us be humble and listen to the pain, rage and grief pouring from the lips of our neighbors and friends.

Let us decrease, so that our brothers and sisters who live on the underside of history may increase.

Let us pray with our eyes open and our feet firmly planted on the ground.

Let us listen to the shattering glass and let us smell the purifying fires, for it is the language of the unheard.

God, in your mercy ...

Show me my own complicity in injustice.

Convict me for my indifference.

Forgive me when I have remained silent.

Equip me with a zeal for righteousness.

ALL: Never let me grow accustomed or acclimated to unrighteousness.

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<http://yolandapierce.blogspot.com/2014/11/a-litany-for-those-who-arent-ready-for.html>

Additional Prayers of Intercession:

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unites us in bonds of love; and, through our struggle and confusion, work to accomplish your purposes on earth; so that, in your good time, every people and nation may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Out of the darkness we cry to you, O God. Enable us to find in Christ the faith to trust your care even in the midst of pain. Assure us that we do not walk alone through the valley of the shadow, but that your light is leading us into life.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

O God, call us into a deeper relationship to be your church for the sake of the world. Help us to see with new eyes the injustices within church and society. Call us to have a loving heart that respects and uplifts the humanity and dignity of every person; open our ears to listen to and learn from the experiences of people of color. Open our mouths to speak up and about injustices. Join us with others to work for racial equity and inclusion for all people.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Additional resources

The following prayers from Evangelical Lutheran Worship may be appropriately inserted into the prayers of the people, used in pastoral care situations, or drawn upon at other opportunities for prayer around the devastation of crises.

Time of civic mourning

God our creator, through whose providing care we enjoy all goodness and life, turn our eyes to your mercy in this time of confusion and loss. Comfort this nation as we mourn; shine your light on those whose only companion is darkness, and teach us all so to number our days that we may apply our hearts to your wisdom; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Social justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a peaceful night

Dear Jesus, as a hen covers her chicks with her wings to keep them safe, protect us this night under your golden wings; for your mercy's sake. Amen.

Those in emotional distress

Merciful God, you give us the grace that helps in time of need. Surround *name* with your steadfast love and lighten *her/his* burden. By the power of your Spirit, free *her/him* from distress and give *her/him* a new mind and heart made whole in the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

Those who suffer abuse and violence

Holy One, you do not distance yourself from the pain of your people, but in Jesus you bear that pain with all who suffer at others' hands. With your cleansing love bring healing and strength to *name*, and by your justice, lift *her/him* up, that in body, mind and spirit, *she/he* may again rejoice. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Those in trouble or bereavement

Almighty God, your love never fails, and you can turn the shadow of death into daybreak. Help us to receive your word with believing hearts, so that, confident in your promises, we may have hope and be lifted out of sorrow into the joy and peace of your presence; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Anxiety, apprehension, fear

O most loving Father, you want us to give thanks in all circumstances and to lay all our cares on you, knowing that you care for us. Grant that fears and anxieties in this mortal life may not hide from us the light of your immortal love shown to us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bitterness, anger

Lord God, when we are assaulted by the troubles of life, and the deep waters of anger threaten to overwhelm us, do not let us sink. In your great compassion, hear us and help us. Deliver us from anger's power over us. Lead us out of bitter silence and hurtful words so that we may speak the truth in love. Heal every heart set on vengeance, and show us the way to honesty and reconciliation; through the one who has shown us both impassioned zeal and forgiving love, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Discouragement, despair

God our comforter, you are a refuge and a strength for us, a helper close at hand in times of distress. Enable us so to hear the words of faith that our fear is dispelled, our loneliness eased, our anxiety calmed, and our hope reawakened. May your Holy Spirit lift us above our sorrow to the peace and light of your constant love; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Guidance, protection

O God, full of compassion, we commit and commend ourselves to you, in whom we live and move and have our being. Be the goal of our pilgrimage, and our rest by the way. Give us refuge from the turmoil of worldly distractions beneath the shadow of your wings. Let our hearts, so often a sea of restless waves, find peace in you, O God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Suffering abuse or violence

Holy One, you do not distance yourself from the pain of your people, but in Jesus you bear that pain with all who suffer at others' hands. With your cleansing love bring healing and strength to *name*; and by your justice, lift *her/him* up, that in body, mind and spirit, *she/he* may again rejoice. In Jesus' name we pray.

Isolation, loneliness

Merciful God, our Father, in the stillness of our souls we listen for your voice to know again that you are God. Quiet our restless hearts with the knowledge that you stand within the shadows, keeping watch over your own. Rekindle our faith and light the lamp of hope within our hearts. Then deal with us as seems best to you, for where you lead we can confidently go with Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Lord our God, you see and know and feel the pain of the world. Look upon us when we feel alone, and enfold us with your love, that in the midst of pain we may know your presence; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Blessed Lord, in moments of pain we turn to you for strength; in times of loneliness we seek your loving nearness. Grant that your life and love and joy may flow through us for the healing of others in Jesus' name.

Time of conflict, crisis, disaster

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; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We pray to you almighty God, in this time of _____. You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Do not let us fail in the face of these events. Uphold us with your love, and give us the strength we need. Help us in our confusion, and guide our actions. Heal the hurt, console the bereaved and afflicted, protect the innocent and helpless, and deliver any who are still in peril; for the sake of your great mercy in Jesus Christ our Lord.

A prayer attributed to Francis of Assisi

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

These hymns are found in the JUSTICE, PEACE; CONFESSION, FORGIVENESS; TRUST, GUIDANCE; HEALING; GRIEF, SORROW; GRACE, FAITH; RECONCILIATION sections of Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

247	Come now, O Prince of peace	626	By gracious powers
358	Great God, your love has called us	646	The peace of the Lord
262	Wait for the Lord	651	Oh, praise the gracious power
266	All earth is hopeful	673	God, whose almighty word
323	God loved the world	684	Creating God, your fingers trace
325	I want Jesus to walk with me	690	We raise our hands to you, O Lord
328	Restore in us, O God	697	Just a closer walk with thee
331	As the deer runs to the river	698	How long, O God
333	Jesus is a rock in a weary land	699	In deepest night
335	Jesus, keep me near the cross	700	Bring Peace to Earth Again
354	Calvary	702	You, dear Lord
439	Soon and very soon	703	O God, why are you silent
479	We come to the hungry feast	704	Where pain of the world surrounds us
482	I come with joy	712	Lord, who love in humble service
502	The King of love my shepherd is	716	Lord of all nations, grant me grace
523	Let us go now to the banquet	726	Light dawns on a weary world
530	Here, O Lord, your servants gather	735	Mothering God, you gave me birth
546	To be your presence	753	Dona nobis pacem
561	Joyous Light of heavenly glory	759	My faith looks up to thee
572	Now it is evening	763	My life flows on in endless song
581	You Are Mine	769	If you but trust in God to guide you
600	Out of the depths I cry to you	770	Give Me Jesus
603	God, when human bonds are broken	773	Precious Lord, take my hand
605	Forgive our sins as we forgive	777	Come to me, all pilgrims thirsty
606	Our Father, we have wandered	784	Grace peace, we pray, in mercy, Lord
607	Come, ye disconsolate	788	If God my Lord be for me
612	Healer of our every ill	790	Day by day
613	Thy holy wings	801	Change my heart, O God
614	There is a balm in Gilead	808	Lord Jesus, you shall be my song
615	In all our grief	841	Lift every voice and sing
622	Neither death nor life	860	I'm so glad Jesus lifted me
624	Jesus, still lead on	871	Sing praise to God, the highest good
626	By gracious powers	882	My soul does magnify the Lord
632	O God, our help in ages past	887	This is my song
633	We've come this far by faith	889	The right hand of God
635	We walk by faith		

If used within the context of a service of Holy Communion, the following Eucharistic Prayer from Evangelical Lutheran Worship is suggested:

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way.
In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into the path of love and light.
In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity.
The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted,
to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

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 all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the
earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the
earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and
wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world. Come, Spirit of freedom!
And let the church say, Amen.
Amen.

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the
resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours,
almighty Father, now and forever.
Amen.