

Prayer Service for Peace and Justice

The service may begin with silence or a song, as circumstances suggest.

SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GREETING

Presider: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.**

All: Amen.

Presider: **The Lord be with you.**

All: And with your spirit.

INTRODUCTION

The presider welcomes the people in these or similar words:

Dear friends in Christ,

**in the name of Jesus, we pause today to join in prayer
for peace and justice in our communities.**

We gather with troubled hearts,

**sorrowed by the sins of racism, hatred, violence, and indifference,
and we grieve for those who have been victims of injustice.**

We gather also with thanksgiving

**for the gift of the goodness of those gathered here,
dedicated to restoring wholeness to our communities.**

Although we find ourselves in a broken world,

**we gather as brothers and sisters united in hope,
knowing that you desire for us justice and peace.**

PENITENTIAL ACT

Presider: **Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to enter into this time of prayer.**

(Brief silence)

All: I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do.
(Striking the breast) Through my fault, through my fault,
Through my most grievous fault;
Therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Presider: **May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.**

All: Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray ...

**O God, author of true freedom,
whose will it is to bind all men and women together
as one Body of Christ,**

grant to us, we pray,

the grace to purify our hearts

**and the strength to overcome evil and build a just
society,**

**so that prejudice and animosity will no longer infect
our minds or hearts**

**but will be replaced with a love that respects the
dignity of each person.**

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,

**who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 61:1

Other suggested readings: Revelation 7:9-10, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 1 John 13:11-18

Lector: **A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:**

**For Zion's sake I will not be silent,
for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her vindication goes forth like the dawn,
and her victory like a burning torch.**

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HOMILY or REFLECTION

SILENCE or SUNG RESPONSE

Suggested music: "There Is a Balm in Gilead"; "Canticle of the Turning"; "O Healing River"; "We Shall Overcome"

INTERCESSIONS

Presider: **Brothers and sisters, confident that God hears the voices of those who trust in the Lord Jesus, we join our prayers to his.**

For our Church, that we may uplift life and human dignity for all diverse faces of Christ in our community, our worship, our ministries, and our leaders, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For an end to racism in our country, for courageous leaders who will condemn it and work for justice; and for citizens who will no longer tolerate it in their communities and institutions, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For our public officials, that the Spirit of Wisdom may help them to dismantle systemic racism so that all may enjoy equal education, suitable housing, and equal employment opportunities, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For our community, that we may receive the grace to see every human being as a child of God, regardless of race, language, or culture, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For all of us gathered here, that by the Holy Spirit we may be stirred to action and seek solutions to end racism and violence, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For families touched by violence, that they may know consolation and comfort, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For all who have died, especially Breonna Taylor, David McAtee, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd – may their names be in our minds and hearts as reminders of the work that lies before us, and may they be with you forever in glory, we pray. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

LORD'S PRAYER

Presider: **United in one voice, let us pray as Jesus taught us –**
 Our Father ...

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Presider: **Let us pray ...**
O God, our shelter and strength,
you listen in love to the cries of your people.
Forgive us for being a party to injustice in the lives of your
children,
especially our black sisters and brothers,
and all victims of racism in our community.
Increase our strength, we pray, O Lord,
that we may drink deeply of love's power
and everywhere promote your justice and peace.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GREETING

Presider: **The Lord be with you.**
All: **And with your spirit.**
Presider: **May almighty God bless us (+), protect us from all evil**
and bring us to everlasting life.
All: **Amen.**
Presider: **Go in peace.**
All: **Thanks be to God.**