

Liturgy for Martin Luther King Day

Call to Worship

We worship the God who inhabits our world
and indwells our lives.
We need not look up to find God,
We need only look around:
within ourselves, beyond ourselves, into the eyes of another.
We need not listen for a distant thunder to find God,
we need only listen to the music of life,
the words of children,
the questions of the curious,
the rhythm of a heartbeat.
We worship the God who inhabits our world
and who indwells our lives.

Opening Prayer

We turn to you often, O God, as we seek through prayer to find the meaning of life. Sometimes it's a fervent prayer in the midst of serious mediation, but more often it's a fleeting prayer on the run. We pray for patience when there are too many things to be done. We pray that you will awaken us to hear the cries of the poor, the homeless, the broken-hearted. Help us to redirect more of our resources to clothe the naked and feed the hungry. Mold us, O God, and open our hearts and minds to be willing vessels of your spirit. Amen.

Hymn 472

O Sing to the Lord

Scripture Reading

Amos 5:21-24

Reflection:

Words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A Covenant Prayer of Recommitment to Justice

Reader 1: O God, who has created your children to be free, we attest in word and deed that you are our God and we are your people. From our earliest days as the people whom you intend to be free, O God, you have called us forth from self-seeking bondage, comfort, complacency, and complaint, to freeing and redeeming action for justice everywhere in the world.

People: **You are our freeing God, and we would be your free and freeing people.**

Reader 2: O God of Exodus and the Burning Bush, of the Prophets and of Jesus, we hear your powerful calling to be your servants in the service of all those who are oppressed. At every turn we hear your voice in the cries of the poor, the hungry, the imprisoned, and the broken, for you made yourself one with those who seek justice, freedom, and peace. We share a vision, a promise, and a yearning for the day of your reign, O God.

People: You are our servant God, and we would be your serving people.

Reader 3: O God, Our Sustainer, search our hearts and reveal to us our sinfulness, all the ways that we contribute to injustice and to self-destroying bondage. Give us deep courage to find the true path of your way, ready to give our very selves as living sacrifices for your will. We have heard your calling. Hear us now as we make our pledge. (*All rise, if able*).

People: You are our God and we are your people. We pledge ourselves now to pursue relentlessly that living, breathing justice which transforms persons and peoples. To your will for justice we recommit ourselves and pledge ourselves, our funds, our actions. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

Hymn 563

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Benediction

Go from this place to reap the harvest of God's love.

Go from this place to continue to sow seeds of justice, peace, and love.

Go from this place to nourish and to be nourished, knowing that God is ever a part of our lives. Amen

Sources:

Ruth Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, eds., *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*

Coretta Scott King, *The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.*