

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral
Seattle, Washington

Diocese of Olympia Circles of Color present:

A JUNETEENTH SERVICE OF FREEDOM & HEALING

June 19, 2021

WELCOME AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A POURING OF LIBATIONS

First Pouring: to acknowledge God our source, our Creator, the giver of Life

Second Pouring: to acknowledge the full presence of God with us Source, Savior and Holy Spirit

Third Pouring: to acknowledge our ancestors, the great cloud of witnesses now one with God.

Fourth Pouring: to acknowledge the generations that fought died and led us to freedom from slavery, persecution, Jim Crow laws, and inequitable access to the rights and resources in this society.

Fifth Pouring: to acknowledge, those who have led the struggle for freedom in recent times and even now we name them with our voices and in our hearts.

Sixth Pouring: to acknowledge our children and our children's children. The generations of hope and promise entrusted to us by the Grace of God.

Seventh Pouring: to acknowledge God our Source, Our Savior Jesus the Christ, Our Sustainer and Counsel and Comforter the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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 those of generations before us who resisted the evil of slavery, to resist human bondage in any form and any manner of oppression. Help us to use our freedoms to bring justice among people and nations everywhere, to the glory of your Holy name through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A READING FROM THE WRITINGS OF HARRIET TUBMAN

“Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. Now I've been free, I know what a dreadful condition slavery is. I have seen hundreds of escaped slaves, but I never saw one who was willing to go back and be a slave.”

A READING FROM THE WRITINGS OF FREDRICK DOUGLASS

“Liberty is meaningless where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist. That, of all rights, is the dread of tyrants. It is the right which they first of all strike down. They know its power. Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, founded in injustice and wrong, are sure to tremble, if men are allowed to reason... Equally clear is the right to hear. To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker.”

A LITANY ADAPTATION OF "LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"

Celebration rises, up from the deep places, finding voice in the light and air no longer denied.

**Lift every voice and sing, sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.**

Celebration rises, not blind to the suffering, not blind to the sorrow. Celebration comes at a cost.

**Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our parents sighed.**

Celebration rises, remembering the way we have come, the paths taken that have brought us here and now to this place and time of celebration. Celebration rises, up and up, full of remembering. Remembering lives and freedom stolen. Remembering the ones led to freedom by champions from the past;

**We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
we have come treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.**

Celebration rises, recognizing what has been done and left undone, knowing there is still and yet much to do, so much further to go. Celebration rises, naming the victories, recognizing the challenges yet ahead. Celebration rises on voices offering unfinished praise.

**Lest our feet stray from the places,
our God where we met thee;
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget thee;**

Celebration rises, resisting illusions, embraced by the real and abiding presence of God who breaks our chains, and sets us free for freedom, in power and love and joy.

**God of our weary years, God of our silent tears
thou who hast brought us thus far on our way;
thou who has by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.**

Celebration rises, with the power of healing wings and promise to endure. Celebration rises, celebrating that by God's grace, I am because You are, You are because I am; Celebrating that the fullness of my humanity does not diminish yours and the fullness of your humanity does not diminish mine.

**Shadowed beneath thy hand may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.**

True to who we are, True to who we have been and true to who we are becoming. Thanks be to God.

READING FROM THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

MEDITATION ON FREEDOM AND HEALING

THE PRAYERS

O Lord, God of our salvation, it is a beautiful day. It makes the world seem good and beautiful. But Lord, our souls are burdened. Too many of us live with the constant experience of being seen and treated as inferior goods, of being left behind in the land of opportunity, even we are playing by the rules. Too many of us turn away when our siblings are suffering the abuses of racism and pains of racial hatred. Too often we throw up our hands in despair and say, "Nothing can be done."

We are wounded and weary, O God. And bring it all to you.

(A time of silence is offered for people to consider ways in which they have been wounded and/or have wounded others, especially in matters of race)

We know we have no true power but yours. We have no lasting place of comfort but at your feet.

Bring us close to you and warm our hearts when they grow cold. Renew our lives, fill us with your love.

Only you can help us find peace and healing. Only you can help us love those who would spitefully use us, hate us, isolate us, take away our personhood. Remind us that you've created them, too, and love them too.

Hold us, Lord and don't let us fall apart.

Bless us, Lord. Strengthen us. Show us the way. Bind our wounds. Heal our hurts. Forgive us when we forget to "to love one another."

Only in the power of your love and redemptive acts can we find the right thoughts to think, the right words to say, the right actions to take.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We offer our petitions to you, O God of Love and Mercy, of Healing and Renewal, in the name of Jesus your Son. Amen.

From Women's Uncommon Prayers Edited by Elizabeth Rankin Geitz, Ann Smith, and Marjorie Burke

THE BLESSING

Healing is more than words, more than nice thoughts, more than a liturgy. It is the reality of what we have in Christ. This is the reality we bring to the world. Therefore go into the ongoing work of applying the grace of God to your wounds, to the wounds of others and to the wounds of our society. Knowing that through His wounds we are healed. And the blessing of God Almighty, The Source of all being, the Incarnate Word and the Holy Spirit, be with you now and always.

Amen.

Let us go forth in the name of Christ, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia.