

Princeton UMC Prayer Vigil to End Racism

Closing Event

Tuesday, June 8, 2020 * 5:00p.m.

#PrayWithUsPUMC * princetonumc.org

Gathering

Welcome and Introduction

Opening, Scripture and Confession

Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked will I return.

The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

O God, come to my assistance: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Rebuke me, O Lord, but not in your anger, lest I come to nothing.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Our scripture this evening is: Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

This is the Word of Life
Thanks be to God.

Let us confess our brokenness, our sin, our separation before God and one another:

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, daughter, child.

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, sisters, and siblings 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.

Never let me grow accustomed or acclimated to unrighteousness.

Prayer by Rev. Dr. Yolanda, Professor of African American Religion and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary, and Liaison with the Princeton University Center for African American Studies

Candle Lighting

8 Minutes, 48 Seconds of Silence (with Breath Prayer)

#SayTheirNames

Breath Prayer:

(on the breath in)

Heavenly Father,

(on the breath out)

Justice for _____.

(on the next breath in)

Holy Mother

(on the breath out)

end racism.

At the conclusion of the 8 minutes and 48 seconds, you'll hear a bell. Then we will say the name of the people we have been praying for, one at a time, allowing time for a bell toll before reading the next name.

Bearing Witness

Intercession and Call to Action

We pray for an end of institutional racism.

We name institutions and policies that need changing.

We name our commitment at work for the change we name:

{People name specific institutions or policies like policing tactics, education reform, health reform, etc.}

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

We pray for an end of systemic racism that perpetuates cycles of poverty and violence.

We name the systems that need changing.

We name our commitment at work for the change we name:

{People name specific instances, such as power inequalities, unequal access to opportunities, evidence of racism embedded in culture that often goes unnoticed, etc.}

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

We pray for the awareness, awakening, and courage we need to create change in our own circle of influence: our family, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, our church, my work, my community.

We name our own need on our anti-racism journey.

We name our commitment to create change in our circle of influence:

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

We pray for the formation of new relationships that we need to desegregate our lives.

We name our need.

We name our commitment.

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

We pray for courage to become your instrument of change to end racism.

We name our fear or sense of weakness.

We name our commitment to a next step.

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

Invitation to Prayer Flags and Other Commitments

You are invited to write a prayer or a commitment on your prayer flag(s) and (with patience and social distancing) tie it on the net. (Or leave it for someone else to tie on if it's taking too long)

You are invited:

- to take a jar and bear witness.*
- to further prayer.*
- to action. (suggestions on website)*
- to study.*
- to join in the next steps for PUMC*

Benediction and (Touchless) Passing the Peace