The Charles H. Wright Museum presents Martin’s Prayer: 100 Word Prayers provided by Metro Detroit Faith-Based Leaders

A Prayer for the Championing of Justice:
(Adapted from the International Commission on English in the Liturgy)
God of justice, you adorned the human race with marvelous diversity, and you clothed each human person with a dignity which may never be diminished. Instill in every American respect for that dignity, so that we may follow in the steps of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, and always champion for others the justice which we seek for ourselves. Grant this in the name of the one in whose name he prayed, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Brother Loren Connell, OFM, Pastor
St. Aloysius Catholic Church-Detroit

Dear heavenly father,
A nation established as a perfect union where all men were created equal has found itself entangled in injustice, inequality and racial disparity. According to your word, if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. The soul of our nation desperately yearns for healing and restoration. Fortify our hearts and cause us to unite to become a perfect union. In Jesus name, Amen.

Dr. Corey James, Lead Pastor
Community Impact Church

Lord, God of all peoples, in this springtime as we remember the death of our brother, Martin, awaken in us a fresh and renewed hope that the Spirit of Justice will flow down the mountain of despair that many feel in our nation. Awaken the Soul of the Nation that the hungry, poor, downtrodden, the refugee and immigrant may find what they need to live in dignity and peace free from violence and injustice. Through our spiritual and temporal efforts, may we be strengthened to make our nation a place of hope. May the Soul of the Nation where we live, work, and play, be ever drawn to your light and life. Amen.

Rev. Duane R. Novelly, Pastor
St. Matthew Catholic Church

Abba Father, the Artisan of all things and Creator of life in perfect order; we give you Praise! You commanded and reminded us through the Prophets to love you; love one another; walk humbly, be just and have Mercy! Our nation, in our collective arrogance and ignorance, is mired in greed, hatred, self-destruction, and wickedness. Our future lies in the balance. If we desire to abide in “peace and freedom”; we must turn from our oppressive and deviant ways; seek to “set free” the minds and souls of all peoples that have been enslaved by an institution of “entitlement”; and individually accept that we all have been complicit in this malignancy. Forgive us O Lord and heal our nation! You are our hope and help!

Rev. Stancy Adams
Russell Street Baptist Church
Council of Baptist Pastors Of Detroit and Vicinity, Inc.
Founder, Safe, Sacred, Space
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God of glory I come with a humble heart asking that you please hear my prayer for our people and our nation. As we remember the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., I pray for the realization of his dream. That one day freedom, equality and justice will ring from every hill and valley of this nation. Bind us together, heal our land, strengthen our people, let your miraculous intervention open every blind eye, and every hardened heart, so they may witness the power of your love for all of your children. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Willie F. Smith, Pastor
Conant Avenue United Methodist Church

Gracious God of all peoples…. We remember this month, especially, the gift that Jesus Christ was and is to us. We remember, also, Martin Luther King, Jr., who worked tirelessly for justice and equality—and that he, too, lay down his life to achieve justice and equal opportunity for all people. We thank you for Martin’s preaching and his faithfulness to his call. We pray to God that we will continue to work against all violence. We pray that the sickness of racism will be healed. We pray that all of us may continue walking the blessed journey of shared community with our African American sisters and brothers. This we ask in the name of our savior, Jesus Christ. May we, too, be resurrection people. Amen.

Nancyann Turner, OP
Rosa Parks Children and Youth Program & Capuchin Soup Kitchen

I humbly offer these two petitions to add to the Martin’s Prayer celebration. They are taken from our service book "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" (Pgs. 76,77, copyright). 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. Amen. The nation: Almighty God, you have given us this good land as our heritage. Make us always remember your generosity and constantly do your will. Bless our land with honesty in the workplace, truth in education, and honor in daily life. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance; and from every evil course of action. When times are prosperous, let our hearts be thankful; and, in troubled times, do not let our trust in you fail. Amen.

Rev. Colleen Nieman
St. Paul Lutheran Church

Loving God, we thank you for raising up among us apostles of righteousness. In your Name, they show us the Way: from Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglas; to Martin Luther King and Fannie Lou Hamer; to those young people who, in the midst of today’s violence, call for peace. You called them to do your work. Use us as well. Give us compassionate hearts, that we may bring to your people the love of Jesus. And, following Jesus’ example, we ask for the courage to speak truth in the face of injustice. In his Name, we pray.

Rev. Margaret Hass
Grace Episcopal-Detroit
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We come to you with heavy hearts. It’s been 50 years since Dr. King fought for our civil rights. While much has changed, much more remains to be done. Today, America has taken a step backward in race relations. Hatred, violence and apathy have escalated. Yet, we are reminded that you are omnipotent, and nothing is impossible for you! We pray that you will continue to strengthen and protect us as we press on in the fight for justice. Because you are with us, we can endure until Dr. King’s dream is a reality and all people will be free indeed! Amen.

Rev. Dr. Denise Henderson, Interim Pastor
New Calvary Baptist Church

Father God,
We exist because of you. All that we are and all that we have is because of you. You are the sovereign creator of the universe in who is no variableness either shadow of turning. Today I intercede and lift up my voice for our country…. We are in desperate need of you in these moments and this time in history. The division we are experiencing and injustice breaks our hearts and is even more heartbreaking to yours. I ask in Jesus’ name that you by the power of your Holy Spirit will do something that man cannot do…that you would open our hearts to the true gospel of Jesus Christ… the one who came not to divide but to heal, restore and save. May justice truly flow like a river and may your love that held Jesus on the cross for each and every one of us be the healing thread that knits our hearts back together as one. It is in the name of Jesus…. the way, the truth and the life I pray all these things. Amen.

Tim Holdridge, Lead Pastor
Woodside Bible Church-Detroit Campus

God of love for all nations, at a time in America’s history when efforts to form a perfect union are rebuffed by ignorance of the things that make for peace – we confess our need for your guidance. We pray for racial reconciliation. We pray for an end to violence. We pray that you would give us, the electorate, the wisdom to choose leaders and elect to public office women and men who are committed to doing justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before you. Create within us all a hunger to know what is right. And give us the good sense and the courage to do the right thing. Amen.

Dr. Robert O. Dulin, Jr., Pastor Emeritus of the Metropolitan Church of God
Regional Pastor for the Churches of God in Southeastern, MI

We pray for the soul of this nation. For the self-evident dignity and respect due to every person of every race and religion, every gender and color and ability. We pray for a vigorous defense of freedom that does not seek to squelch hard fought rights too recently offered to all. As we pray with our feet in the streets against the national sins of racism and sexism. As we pray with our hearts for the full inclusion of every person. As we pray with our voices the songs of solidarity and safekeeping. So we pray, today, for America.

Rev. Dr. Stephen Butler Murray, Minister
The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit
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O Lord, my God, surely you must cringe when you witness the pain we now face, shiver when you see the agony which aggravates us, and weep contemplating the racially inflicted problems of poverty that seem to perpetually plague us. I ask that you remind us that you were our help in times past when facing the blast from water hoses, and the segregationists fights and perilous dog bites. And I pray that as much as you have been to us, in those Jim Crow Days, that you now empower us in our ways to once again stand up and fight and to make all things right. Please Lord, we need you and we need ourselves.

Rev. Horace L. Sheffield, III, MA, MPA, Pastor
New Destiny Christian Fellowship, Detroit

God of Justice:
We have forgotten your purposes and our responsibilities. Extreme greed crushes the soul of this nation and leads us to become stiff-necked and selfish. We forfeit the futures of children, trade away the pride of our peoples, and sell the birthright of all creation. Forgive our complacency. As millionaires become billionaires, as corporations have more human rights than millions of individuals, call us to confront systems which perpetuate inadequate education, racist institutions, and a decaying infrastructure which kills its citizens. Save us from greed that has no bound. Inspire our work for justice and sustain our hope. In the name of our brother Jesus, Amen.

Rev. Louise Ott, Senior Pastor
Rev. Elizabeth Hoban, Pastoral Director of Christian Education
Congregational Church of Birmingham, UCC

Dear Father, in the name of Jesus, we praise you for just being God. And at this moment we honor Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King Fought for Civil Rights, and the gospel. And He stood on the word of God. Now our youth are marching on. So help us, for Jim Crow is having a family reunion. Help us, for hatred, and bigotry has been given a wink and a nod through this Whitehouse. But, God is our strong tower, so right here and right now, we march, pray, and glorify you. In Jesus Name, Amen!

Pastor Deborah Smith-Satterwhite
New St. John A.M.E. Church-Dearborn

Heavenly Father! We come before you today in the name and spirit of your fallen angel of mercy: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Father God we thank you for the blessing of being able to reflect upon, and through his eyes, look into the soul of America, yesterday and today Lord: An America reflective of Babylon where Revelations 18:2 says: And He cried out mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devil’s, and the hold of every foul spirit, and cage of every unclean and hateful spirit. Heavenly Father we bow down before you today praying for your Holy Spirit of correction and redemption. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray.

Reverend Aaron McCarthy Jr.
President and CEO/SCLC-DETROIT
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Lord, we pray, a prayer for the soul of America. Transform the dark clouds of fear and insecurity into the bright sunshine of confidence and acceptance of people of all colors, ages, gender and social strata. We pray for spiritual renewal— from the basement of poverty to the balcony of wealth, the national shame of slavery, those in hiding without passport, each with the hope of freedom and prosperity, touch our hearts, that as a nation we might celebrate our common bond of humanity, release the mantle of hate, and embrace mutual love for one another. In Jesus name! Amen.

Rev. Dr. Nicholas Hood III, Senior Minister
Plymouth United Church of Christ

Father, we are grateful that you have ordained America as our home. We are thankful that you have fashioned this nation as the Point of the Spear for Christian Evangelism in the earth. We praise you in advance, being confident that you will raise up others with the spirit of our departed brother Dr. King to do greater things for your Kingdom and thereby convert In God We Trust into a fulfilled prophecy. Amen.

Rev. James E. Owens
Rosedale Park Baptist Church

Dear Almighty and Everlasting Father,
As we commemorate the Jubilee Celebration of the assassination of the Moses of the twentieth century, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we solicit your Divine empowerment and guidance in helping concerned citizens of this nation to continue the fight for liberty and justice for all. Father we need emotional stamina, spiritual convictions and physical prowess to remove the barriers of segregation, rip the fabrics of racism and destroy the pavements of xenophobia. Help us to understand that we are all members of the human race and there are common physiological genes in all of our DNA and that is the desire for basic needs of life and to be respected while exhibiting respect for humanity. Even though the dreamer might not physically be present with us his dream lives on and we are determined the dream will not deteriorate into a nightmare. As we reflect on the events of fifty years ago remind us not to be marrd in the past but to serve this present age.

Rev. Dr. Mickarl D. Thomas, Sr., Pastor
Ebenezer AME Church

Rev. Dr. Georgia Hill
Plymouth Church
Kind and loving Father of grace, peace and love, we glorify your name in all the earth. We acknowledge you as the source of all our supply. We acknowledge you as the creator of all things. And we acknowledge our inability to resolve the fierce problems we now experience in America and in the world. But you, O God are the eternal problem solver. We have no other God but you who has the power to create peace and love in our nation and the world. So we come to you, gracious Father, asking for your intervention in the horrible situations happening in the world. We know that you hear and answer prayers. We know you are faithful to your word. So today, we come boldly to your throne of grace, asking that you would release a double portion of peace, love and joy over our country and the world... And we thank you and praise you now, for all your bountiful blessing. Thank you, God. To God be the Glory.

Rev. Priscilla Carey-Tucker, Pres. & CEO
Metropolitan Christian Council

God of grace and God of glory, God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, on this holy and sacred day, and at this holy season, we gather to remember the life and legacy of your prophet and servant: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We remember, with gratitude, his courage to challenge the injustices of racism, poverty, and war and how he called us to transform this nation into a beloved community. Here we are, fifty years after his assassination, and the nation seems to have gone backward. Racism has again lifted its serpentine head. Economic injustice still hampers the poor. Violence is everywhere, and our leaders still prepare for war! Oh, God, help us! Let your spirit fall on this land! Bring our leaders to their senses! Let the words of your prophet become a reality among us when he said: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness as a mighty stream!” Thank you for the life he lived and the legacy he left us. Give us the courage to live up to the righteousness he set before us, and we’ll be careful in all things to give you praise and glory. Amen!

Rev. James C. Perkins, D., Min., Pastor
Greater Christ Baptist Church
Lord, I humbly welcome your good and perfect presence. As we come to the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we must pause and reflect on God’s love and justice. Lord, we need your help as we view the world through the distorted lens of hatred, racism, & poverty. Fifty years ago you spoke to our hearts and minds as you witnessed the ebb and flow of the world. Give us a strong mind and a fearless heart to continue the fight for the marginalized, disenfranchised and poor. Thank you, Amen.

Rev. Dr. Constance B. Simon
Minister of Christian Education, Fellowship Chapel, Detroit

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy immortal one, have mercy upon us as we come before you for the soul of self and soul of a nation broken by racism, discrimination, injustice, poverty, and inequality, in ways too vast to number. Save us from the arrogance and deflection of asking you to fix us or it. Give us we pray the courage cast off our fears, and the unwavering resolve to embrace each person, each community, and our own self, in our common and holy humanity. Make these words more than words, and give us the spirit and action of Jesus. Amen!

Dr. S. Scott Hunter, 10th Dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul Detroit

Loving God,
We come to you in sorrow and humility. We see violence in our cities and towns. We see prejudice and discrimination. We see people living in poverty, without the basic necessities of life. And much too often, we are divided not only about how to address these problems, but about which problems should be addressed. And so we turn to you, our great healer and reconciler. Open our minds to eliminate the divisions between us that rob us of the creativity we need to implement the solution you gave us so long ago: To love each other as you have loved us. In your holy name…. Amen. In peace, thank you.

Fr. Philip Paxton, CP
St. Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat Center
What is Peace?
Merciful God, we often pray for peace. Yet, seldom do we ask, what is Peace? When we hear one another, there will be peace in the world. When we understand one another, there will be peace in the world. When we love one another, there will be peace in the world. For you are the God…. Who listens. Who understands. Who is love. When we believe in one another, there will be peace in the world. When we learn from one another, there will be peace in the world. When we work with one another, there will be peace in the world. For you are the God…. Who is always faithful. Who is always ready to teach. Who is ever working. Who is just. When we see beauty in every face and place, there will be peace in the world. When we welcome and protect every child, there will be peace in the world. When no one is excluded, and everyone embraced, there will be peace in the world. For you are beautiful, o Lord. You welcome and protect each of us as your beloved. You have made us in all our diversity, because you love differences, and will reconcile your creation. Give us your peace….Which passes all understanding. Which heals the broken-hearted. Which is water to our parched souls. Bread for our hungry hearts…. And balm for our wounds. These things we ask in all humility…. For we know that peace begins in you, not in us. Amen.

God of love for all nations, at a time in America’s history when efforts to form a perfect union are rebuffed by ignorance of the things that make for peace – we confess our need for your guidance. We pray for racial reconciliation. We pray for an end to violence. We pray that you would give us, the electorate, the wisdom to choose leaders and elect to public office women and men who are committed to doing justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before you. Create within us all a hunger to know what is right. And give us the good sense and the courage to do the right thing. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Robert O. Dulin, Jr., Pastor
Metropolitan Church of God

Rev. Canon Dr. William J. Danaher, Jr., Rector,
Christ Church Cranbrook
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