



A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In America

A SERVICE OF LOVE AND LAMENT: REMEMBERING THE EMANUEL NINE ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR MARTYRDOM

June 17, 2020 - 6:00 PM



Welcome to Trinity Lutheran Church

As disciples of Christ seeking peace and justice in the world, we welcome, affirm, and include all people into the fullness of God's love. We celebrate people of all races, cultures, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical or mental abilities, socioeconomic statuses, appearances, family status and citizenship as equally loved and valued in the eyes of God and in this place. All are invited to join this community as we worship God, grow in faith, and strive to love and serve one another. All, without exception, are welcome in this place.

OPENING PRAYER

Save us, O God, from ourselves,
from racism often cloaked in pious words,
from the machinations of white supremacy hidden in calls for civility,
from micro aggressions thinly veiled in arrogance,
from apologies that do not give way to action,
from forgiveness without facing the truth,
from reconciliation without reparation.

Deliver us, O God, from expecting siblings of color to continue to bear this emotional work,
which is not theirs to do.

Grateful for the long arc that bends toward justice, we pray:

Grant us wisdom, give us courage for the facing of these days,

By the power of the Spirit, all for the sake of the kingdom that we share in Christ Jesus.

AMEN.

OPENING DIALOGUE

We gather on this day, June 17, the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine, when these nine beloved children of God were slain in their church as they welcomed a newcomer. This guest, who they loved, honored, and welcomed, took their lives in an act of hatred and violence.

A lighted candle has been placed in our Chancel for each of these nine beloved children of God. We remember them. We honor their sacrifice. We give thanks for their lives of witness, faith, and praise.

As we gather this evening our hearts are heavy with the death and division, pain and suffering, loss and disappointment, grief and burden of our world.

Even as our community, nation, and world battles the coronavirus that has wreaked havoc in all of our lives, we are assaulted with the reality of white supremacy, police brutality, and the senseless murder of our black and brown siblings.

We are stunned, angry, heartbroken. How can these things happen?

How can it be that an officer of the law – the ones many of us with white skin have been taught to trust and respect – can be capable of such a heinous act as we see in the brutal murder of our brother George Floyd?

How can it be that our brother, Ahmaud Arbery, a young black man out for an evening run, could be hunted down and killed by white men filled with hate and evil?

How can it be that police officers entered a home by force and murdered our innocent sister, Breonna Taylor?

We are wracked with guilt. How could we let this happen? We want to do something. We want to protest, to make our voices heard by lawmakers and leaders, people with power. We need an end to this senseless violence and hatred and death and destruction.

What is happening to our world?

To our nation?

To our communities?

To our neighborhoods?

We recognize that we have all played a part in the systemic racism in our country. We have all benefitted from a system that favors white people, that treats black and brown people as less than, inferior, not worthy. While we did not create this system, the system benefits us.

What shall we do?

How shall we respond?

On this evening, we cry out to you, God.

We are lost and alone in our sin, and our guilt, and our fear.

Come and help us. Come and save us, all of us. Save us from ourselves.

Rain down justice on our world.

Give us eyes to see the humanity in every living being.

Give us eyes to see that every human being is created in your image and is worthy of love, honor, protection, and respect.

Come to the aid of our broken world. We have made a mess of things.

Use us, your broken, sinful people to heal the world, to start a revolution of love, to work for justice for ALL, to definitively declare that Black Lives Matter, that black and brown people are equally valued in God's kingdom.

It is not enough for this to be true in God's kingdom.

Help us to bring your kingdom of justice, freedom, and equality to the kingdom of this world.

This is not a time for patience. This is not a time for silence. This is not a time for stillness.

This is a time for action, a time for change, a time for healing, a time for restoration. This is a time for radical racial redemption.

Come to our aid, O God. Make yourself known. Rain down justice.

SCRIPTURE

Galations 5: 1, 13-14

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE SERMON

Pastor Susan Crowell

HYMN

Light Dawns on a Weary World

#726

**Light dawns on a weary world when eyes begin to see all people's dignity;
Light dawns on a weary world: the promised day of justice comes *Refrain***

**Love grows in a weary world when hungry hearts find bread and
children's dreams are fed. Love grows in a weary world: the
promised feast of plenty comes. *Refrain***

**Hope blooms in a weary world when creatures, once forlorn, find
wilderness reborn. Hope blooms in a weary world: the
promised green of Eden comes. *Refrain***

Refrain

**The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs:
the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!**

**We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,
as all of the world in wonder echoes shalom.**

A LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE EMANUEL NINE

A bell is rung ten times, once for each of the nine victims and once for the survivors.

We join with Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in remembering the slain nine –

the Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney,

the Rev. Daniel Lee Simmons,

Cynthia Maria Graham Hurd,

the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton,

the Rev. Myra Singleton Quarles Thompson,

Tywanza Kibwe Diop Sanders,

the Rev. DePayne Middleton Doctor,

Susie Jackson,

Ethel Lee Lance – and those who survived.

We remember.

We remember that they lovingly welcomed the stranger into a Wednesday night Bible study – they sang, they prayed, they gathered to study the Word of God.

We remember.

We pray for the continual presence of God's peace; may it comfort and surround the families of the nine who were slain.

We remember.

We pray for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, its senior bishop and episcopal leaders, the community of Charleston, and all who continue to grieve – trusting that God will continue to unite us in the work to end racism and white supremacy, so that we may be witnesses of Christian unity.

We remember.

We remember the legacy of the Rev. Pinckney and his fight for racial justice for his parishioners and his community. Let us not only be moved by emotion but also be moved toward action.

We remember.

We call the United States to remember and confront its history of racial injustice. We must not forget the crimes committed against humanity in the name of Christ; the land taken from and genocide of indigenous peoples and the enslavement of black bodies that built this nation.

We remember.

We call this country to remember the policies and practices that excluded Chinese immigrants and that forced the internment of Japanese Americans.

We remember.

We remember the faith leaders whose lives are a living witness to black liberation and womanist theology in the struggle for black freedom: Bishop Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, Sojourner Truth, Denmark Vesey, Daniel Payne, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, James Cone, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Katie Cannon.

We remember.

We remember the unarmed innocent black lives lost at the hands of law enforcement: Eric Garner, Laquan McDonald, Sandra Bland, Sean Bell, Philando Castile, Alton Sterling, Michael Brown, Freddie Gray, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, Atatiana Jefferson, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many others, known and unknown.

We remember.

We remember the innocent, unarmed black bodies that were racially profiled, shot, and killed because whiteness stood its ground: Emmett Till, Trayvon Martin, Jordan Davis, Ahmaud Arbery, Renisha McBride, and many others, known and unknown.

We remember.

As we remember, Living God, may we be re-membered as your body, connected to one another and empowered for the work you call us to do in the name of Jesus and by the power of his renewing Spirit.

Amen.

**Lift every voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as a rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.**

**Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning 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?
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.**

**God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who last brought us thus far on the way;
thou who by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we meet thee;
lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget thee;
shadowed by beneath thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.**

FINAL BLESSING:

Go out into the world in peace; have courage;
hold onto what is good; return no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak,
and help the suffering; honor all people; live in hope;
love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
In the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. AMEN.

Go in peace. Work for justice in the world.

Thanks be to God.

CHURCH STAFF

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