

Nativity Lutheran Church Worship January 17, 2021

Commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr.

An American prophet of justice among races and nations, Martin Luther King, Jr. was pastor, an eloquent preacher, a leader of the nonviolent resistance to race-segregated society, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Born on April 15, 1929 he was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

Prelude

Welcome

Gathering Song *Lift Every Voice and Sing* ELW #841

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (*2 Corinthians 13:13*)

C: And also with you.

A: In the beginning was the Word,

C: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

A: In the Word was life,

C: and the life was the light of all people.

A: The Word became flesh and lived among us,

C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.

(John 1)

Hymn of Praise (sung) *Glory to God* *(from With One Voice)*

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:
We worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of
the world: have mercy on us.**

**You are seated at the right hand of the Father;
receive our prayer.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

Prayer of the Day

Gracious Lord, in every age you have sent men and women who have given their lives for the message of your love. Inspire us with the memory of those martyrs for the gospel like your servant Martin and others like him whose faithfulness led them in the way of the cross. Give us courage to bear full witness with our lives to your Son's victory over sin and death; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lesson: Romans 12:9-21

You may follow along in your Bible if you would like to

Psalm 46

¹God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;

³though its waters rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

⁵God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken;

God shall help it at the break of day.

⁶The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake;

God speaks, and the earth melts away.

⁷The Lord of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

⁸Come now, regard the works of the Lord,
what desolations God has brought upon the earth;

⁹behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;

who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰“Be still, then, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”

¹¹The Lord of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Gospel: John 15:12-21

You may follow along in your Bible if you would like to

Sermon

Hymn

Lead Me Guide Me

ELW #768

Response to the Word: Creed and Confession

A: In Christ, you have heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation.

C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

A: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen

Response to the Word: Confession

The Sun of righteousness shall rise with shining beams of healing. Let us gather under the wings of God's mercy.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Gracious God,

we acknowledge that we are sinners and we confess our sins—those known to us that

burden our hearts, and those unknown to us but seen by you. We know that before you nothing remains hidden, and in you everything is revealed. Free us from the slavery of sin; liberate us from the bondage of guilt; work in us that which is pleasing in your sight; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

From the house of David, God raised up a mighty Savior.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who comes to set us free.

Remembering the covenant, God delivered us from our enemies.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who comes to set us free.

Before God we are holy and righteous, free to worship without fear.

We Remember Litany

P: We remember the conviction of Martin Luther King Jr. that

"freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."

Therefore, let us pray

C: for courage and determination by those who are oppressed.

We remember Martin's warning that

"a negative peace which is the absence of tension" is less than "a positive peace which is the presence of justice."

Therefore, let us pray

that those who work for peace in our world may cry out first for justice.

We remember Martin's insight that

"injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

Therefore, let us pray

that we may see nothing in isolation, but may know ourselves bound to one another and to all people under heaven.

We remember Martin's lament that

"the contemporary church is often a weak,

Anthem

Why Should I Feel Discouraged

Offering Prayer

O God, receive our gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. Amen.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who comes to set us free.

With a heart full of mercy and compassion, God saves us and forgives us all our sins. Christ, the dawn from on high, shines upon us, and by the light of the Holy Spirit guides our feet into the way of peace.

Amen

ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the arch-supporter of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's silent and often vocal sanction of things as they are."

Therefore, let us pray

that neither this congregation nor any congregation of Christ's people may be silent in the face of wrong, but that we may be disturbers of the status quo when that is God's call to us.

We remember Martin's hope that

"dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities, and in some not so distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty."

Therefore, in faith,

let us commend ourselves and our work for justice to the goodness of almighty God. Amen

Quotations from *Letter from the Birmingham City Jail*, Martin Luther King Jr., 1929-1968

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Litany by W B. McClain and L H. Stookey

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Prayers

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

A brief silence.

For the body of Christ gathered throughout the world and for all servants of the gospel, that following Jesus, the church lives out its calling every day, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the well-being of creation, for plants and animals, and for all that God has marvelously made, that we serve as wise stewards of Earth, our home, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For police officers and firefighters, for attorneys and paralegals, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For those lacking food or shelter, for those who are sick or grieving, and for those who are imprisoned or homebound (*especially*), that God console all who suffer, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For our neighborhood, for visitors joining us for the first time or returning, and for those absent from our assembly, that all who seek to know God are nourished by word and sacrament, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In thanksgiving for the saints who have gone before us, that their lives give us a vision of the gospel in action, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

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Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Amen.

Closing Hymn:

Wade in the Water

ELW#459

Postlude

Announcements & Dismissal

Our worship has ended but our service has just begun. Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God

Fellowship time

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Scripture for individual devotions or study this week:

Mon — Jan. 18	1 Samuel 9:27—10:8	2 Corinthians 6:14—7:1	Psalm 86
Tue — Jan. 19	1 Samuel 15:10-31	Acts 5:1-11	Psalm 86
Wed — Jan. 20	Genesis 16:1-14	Luke 18:15-17	Psalm 86
Thu — Jan. 21	Jeremiah 19:1-15	Revelation 18:11-20	Psalm 62:5-12
Fri — Jan. 22	Jeremiah 20:7-13	2 Peter 3:1-7	Psalm 62:5-12
Sat — Jan. 23	Jeremiah 20:14-18	Luke 10:13-16	Psalm 62:5-12

Revised Common Lectionary readings for next Sunday, January 24th, 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

Please remember in your prayers this week

Joni Amalfitano; Beccy Chamberlain; Holly; Chris Haines; Ajay; Tina Huntley; Kathleen Sheets and family; Karin Pratt; Sue Dawson; Esther Guy; Janet Dawson; Lester Avery; Ethan Thompson; Irene Olson; Dick Pelletier; Pastor Tim Roser; Peter DeRuiter; Beth Guiseley; Ray Geraldson; Christopher LeLacheur; Peter Perry; Irene Eaton; Peter Perry II; Carla Sykora; Sharon Rowling; Linda and Timothy Pratt.

Weekly Announcements

- Pieces of our worship this morning are from *“This Far by Faith, An African American Resource for Worship,”* published in 1999 by Augsburg Fortress for use in the ELCA.
- *Committed to Listen, a public reading of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter From a Birmingham Jail* will be presented by the BTS Center and The Maine Council of Churches via Zoom and Facebook Live on MLK day, Monday January 17 at 12:15 p.m. The gathering, will include multiple voices, contemplative music, and space for reflection. To receive Zoom information by email, register at the BTS website here <https://www.thebtscenter.org/committed-to-listen/>
- It's not too late to drop off your food donations at church. Items especially needed include ready rice pouches, macaroni and cheese & pasta, cereal & oatmeal, pop-top canned foods and Chef Boyardee meals, single serving lunch items, 100% juice boxes, shelf stable milk, powdered milk, and kid-friendly snacks (granola bars, peanut butter crackers, 6-pack raisins). They are asking no glass items for this drive. Drop your items at the church no later than Monday morning. For other drop off locations and more information see the story in the January View.
- Christ in Our Home devotional booklets finally arrived. If you would like one dropped off or mailed to you email Pastor Anderson. Or stop at the church most mornings Monday-Thursday (but not the 11th) or whenever you see her car there.