

## ■ Litany of Freedom and Unity

(Based on the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Holy Scripture)

One: "It may get me crucified. I may even die. But I want it said even if I die in the struggle that 'He died to make people free.'"

All: For freedom, Christ has set us free; let us stand fast and never submit again to the yoke of slavery.

One: "The agony of the poor diminishes the rich, the weak enriches the strong. We are inevitably our brother and sister's keeper because of the interrelated structure of reality."

All: Before we are able to love one another we need to learn what it means to respect each other. Lord, teach us that brother and sister-hood begins with respect.

One: "The soft minded person always fears change. They feel security in the status quo, and they have an almost morbid fear of the new. For them, the greater pain is the pain of a new idea." "Change is not accomplished by peeling off superficial layers when the causes are rooted deeply in the heart of the organism."

All: Stir us up, O Lord, who are at ease. Use us so that justice may roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.

One: "The Christian Gospel is a two-way road. On the one hand it seeks to change the souls of people and thereby unite them with God; on the other hand it seeks to change the environmental conditions of people so that the soul will have a chance after it is changed."

All: Grant us faith and courage not to grow weary. Help us to seek strength to overcome the evil that is present all about us.

One: "Nonviolence means avoiding not only external violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a person but you refuse to hate people."

All: Lord, we have discovered through long years what it means to take up the sword and perish by it. Help us to strike out hate from the hearts of all people.

One: There are some who still find the cross a stumbling block and others consider it foolishness, but I am more convinced than ever before that it is the power of God for social and individual salvation.

All: However difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, a society that cannot live with its conscience will not be long, because truth pressed to earth will rise again

One: How long?

All: Not long, because no lie can live forever.

One: How long?

All: Not long, because we still reap what we sow.

One: Not long, because the arm of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

We will worship God, my God and your God, the God of Justice and Truth.

## **Unison Prayer of Confession**

In this worship and work we do today and after, we pray for more than conviction. We pray, O Lord, for change. Change the easy peace we make with ourselves into discontent because of the oppression of others. Change our tendency to defend ourselves into the freedom that comes from being forgiven and empowered through your love. Change our need for disguises, excuses and images into the ability to be honest with ourselves and open with one another. Change our inclination to judge others into a desire to serve and uplift others. And most of all, Lord, change our routine worship and work into a genuine encounter with you and our better self so that our lives will be changed for the good of all. Amen.

## **Assurance of Pardon**

Take heart: God's Spirit empowers us to move from the ways of death to the ways of new life. Our sins are forgiven. Let us forgive one another and give ourselves to one another in the joyful community of justice and peace.