

REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

A PROPHETIC LISTENING GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH

*The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue,
to know the word that sustains the weary.*

*He wakens me morning by morning,
wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.*

*⁵ The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears;
I have not been rebellious,
I have not turned away.*

*⁶ I offered my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;
I did not hide my face
from mocking and spitting.*

- Isaiah 50:4-6

*****Prophetic listening*** is a spiritual practice of deeply attuning oneself to the divine, the voices of marginalized people, and the call for justice and compassion in the world. It involves listening with empathy, moral clarity, and a commitment to truth, inspiring transformative action for justice, peace, and the well-being of all.

REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH, a national organization that trains moral leaders and builds social justice movements rooted in a framework that uplifts our deepest moral and constitutional values, believes that it is more than a coincidence that the **47th President of the United States inauguration and the commemoration of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday coincide on January 20, 2025.**

Because we believe a vision of love and a moral agenda is needed for the establishment of justice and promotion of domestic tranquility and because we, as people of faith, know that the beloved community Dr. King and the civil rights movement worked to realize requires us to challenge the abuse of political power publicly. Because we continue to believe that the movement for love, justice, and mercy has the power to transform political possibilities, we are calling the faith communities across the length and breadth of this land to engage with us in the spiritual discipline of prophetic listening on the King Holiday and the **Inauguration of the 47th President of the United States.**

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As we prepare to listen prophetically with an “awakened ear like one being instructed,” we keep Isaiah 50 front and center, and we keep the **six steps of nonviolent social change** before us:

- **Information gathering:** Learn about the problems and speak with those affected.
 - **Education:** Use the information gathered to educate others about the issues.
 - **Personal commitment:** Prepare for obstacles and inspire others.
 - **Negotiation:** Use humor, grace, and intelligence to find solutions.
 - **Direct action:** Use peaceful demonstrations, letter-writing, and civil disobedience.
 - **Reconciliation:** Keep actions peaceful and constructive.
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1. Preparing for Prophetic Listening

a. Ground Yourself in Prayer: Begin with a prayer seeking clarity and courage to hear God's truth.

Prayer Example:

“Lord, grant us ears to hear Your truth, hearts to discern Your will, and courage to act for justice. May we see all things through Your Kingdom lens.”

b. Equip Yourself with Sacred Texts: Anchor yourself in scripture that reveals God's priorities:

- **Isaiah 50: 4-6:** God's call to listen, speak truth, and sustain the weary.
- **Amos 5:24:** "Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream."
- **Micah 6:8:** "To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."
- **Isaiah 1:17:** "Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed."
- **James 1:22:** "Do not merely listen to the word... do what it says."
- **Matthew 23:23:** Justice, mercy, and faithfulness as core expressions of righteousness.
- **Matthew 25:** Calls us to care for the least among us,
- **Luke 4:** Jesus proclaims good news for the poor and oppressed.
- **Surah Al-Ma'un (107:1-3):** Islamic teachings also emphasize justice and compassion for the vulnerable

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c) Read the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution:

- a. Examine the articles and amendments, mainly the 14th, 15th, and 19th Amendments.
- b. What does general welfare mean and establish justice?

d) Consider singing or listening to the music and words of Lift Every Voice and Sing; America (second verse; O beautiful for pilgrim feet

Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare of freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!),

e) Set Your Focus:

Prepare to listen for:

- **Unity or Division:** Does the message foster peace and justice?
 - **Commitments to Justice:** Are the needs of the marginalized prioritized?
 - **Moral Implications:** What values are uplifted?
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2. During the Inauguration:

Begin Prophetic Listening

a. Listen with Discernment: Ask these key questions:

- **Language of Inclusion:** Who is acknowledged, and who is ignored?
- **Commitments to Justice:** Are concrete plans proposed to address poverty, inequality, or climate justice?
- **The Tone of Leadership:** Is it one of humility and service or self-interest and power consolidation?

b. Take Notes and Reflect: Write down key phrases, policies, or omissions that align or conflict with God's call for justice.

c. Ask Prophetic Questions:

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- Who benefits from these policies? Who bears the cost?
 - Are systemic injustices addressed or perpetuated?
 - Whose voices are absent or marginalized?
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3. Post-Inauguration Reflection and Discernment

a. Gather and Reflect: Meet with your faith community or peers to share observations.

b. Key Questions to Reflect On:

- What stood out in the speech?
- Were the needs of the poor and vulnerable centered?
- How did the message reflect (or fail to reflect) God's vision of justice and equity?

c. Prayerful Response: Conclude with a prayer seeking wisdom and courage to act.

Prayer Example:

"Lord, guide us to discern truth, challenge injustice, and act as Your hands and feet in the world. May justice roll like a river through our words and deeds."

4. Turning Prophetic Listening into Prophetic Action

Prophetic listening requires a faithful response:

- **Advocate for Justice:** Address issues raised (or ignored) during the speech. Example: If poverty or healthcare disparities were omitted, join efforts to advocate for change.
 - **Developing a moral agenda:** Engage in non-violent moral action
 - **Amplify Marginalized Voices:** Center the stories and struggles of the poor, oppressed, and excluded in your ministry and communities.
 - **Partner for Change:** Collaborate with us or other organizations working toward justice and equity.
 - **Commit to Prayer and Accountability:** Pray for leaders while holding them accountable to God's call for justice.
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5. A Prophetic Charge: Listening and Doing

Prophetic listening transforms hearing into action. Let this guide inspire you to embody God's call for justice, equity, and compassion.

Six Steps of Nonviolent Action (Adapted from Dr. King's Principles):

1. **Information Gathering:** Understand the issues through thorough observation and listening.
2. **Education:** Inform the community about the injustices present.
3. **Personal Commitment:** Prepare spiritually and emotionally for the work of justice.
4. **Negotiation:** Engage with leaders seeking dialogue and solutions.
5. **Direct Action:** Peacefully confront injustice if negotiations fail.
6. **Reconciliation:** Seek healing and restoration for all parties involved.

Sacred Charge (Isaiah 50:4-5):

"The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary... I have not turned away."

Closing Commitment:

As ministers, advocates for justice, and faith leaders, let us listen carefully, speak truthfully, and act boldly for a just and compassionate world.