A LITANY OF CELEBRATION

LEADER: Dr. King had a dream. The ideals of justice and freedom and the belief that all are created equal in the eyes of God are noble principles. But they are meaningless unless we embrace these ideals.

ALL: I will not keep silent. I will struggle with myself. I will not rest until the dream of justice and freedom becomes my personal dream. I must realize that I am not an innocent bystander. I can help bring about the dream by my action, or delay it by inaction.

LEADER: Dr. King's dreamt of a day when people from all races and nations, even the offspring of slaves and former slave owners, can sit at a table as brothers and sisters and find ways of transforming their differences into the common good. That was Dr. King's dream. What is your dream?

ALL: My dream is that one day soon I will find a way to stop just celebrating the dream and start living it. It must become a part of my daily life or nothing much will change.

LEADER: The dream is not about an ideal world. It is about the real world. Dr. King's poetic refrain, "I Have a Dream," is a call for us to remember the real world where injustice rules.

ALL: When I am in the shelter of my home, I must remember the homeless. When I eat, I must remember the hungry. When I feel secure, I must remember the insecure. When I see injustice, I must remember that it will not stop unless I stop it.

LEADER: I have a dream!

ALL: I also have a dream. I have a dream that the Holy Spirit will arouse in me that very flame of righteousness that caused Dr. King to become a living sacrifice for the freedom and liberation of all of God's children. Then I will be able to resist racial injustice everywhere I see it, even within myself.

(Adapted from the United Presbyterian Church Prayer on Martin Luther King, Jr.)

CLOSING PRAYER

God of Hope, as we venture forth to be women and men of service,
go before us as our Guide.

Renew us with the spirit of service and sacrificial love exemplified in the life of Dr. King.

May we be vessels of hope and justice in a world
inundated with countless forms of violence and injustice.

May we never stand on the sidelines as we witness injustice done upon our sisters and brothers,
but walk with eyes open to the needs of our communities,
with ears open to the needs of our world,
and with hands open in helpful service to our neighbors.
Then we will not only be blessed, but be a blessing to our world.

This is our prayer. Amen.

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