

## **Black History Month: February 2021 ~ Christian+**

### **Honoring Black History Month at St. Mark's**

The Parish's marquee says in quoting Scripture, "A house of prayer for all people." Therefore, we welcome all people and honor them for who they are as children of God. For far too long in our nation's history, Black Americans have not been honored in ways which are consistent with Christian values as set-forth and lived by Jesus. This month, we honor our **Black** sisters and brothers and long for a more just, fair and equitable society for them.

This month, we will pray a particular prayer every Sunday (see below) and intentionally schedule hymns from the *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (Red Hymnal). Many of the hymns in that hymnal come from the African American tradition of hymnody and elsewhere.

### **Prayer to Celebrate Black History Month**

"Merciful God, you bring freedom to those who have been oppressed and enslaved. You are the liberator of your people. May we be a people who reflect your character and advocate for the liberation of people who are pushed down by systemic injustice, racism, and prejudice. We thank you this month for leaders like Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr. Pauli Murray, and Absalom Jones. May we follow their lead and fight for freedom from oppression at every turn. May we accept the weight of our responsibility for this work and the levity of your grace."\*

### **Selected Quotes from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

"Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed." "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," 1963

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." Sermons from his book *Strength to Love*, 1963

"A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom." From his book *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*, 1967

"The true neighbor will risk his position, his prestige and even his life for the welfare of others." *Strength to Love*, 1963

"Many white Americans of good will have never connected bigotry with economic exploitation. They have deplored prejudice but tolerated or ignored economic injustice." From his book *Why We Can't Wait*, 1964

"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." "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 1963

\*<https://www.tsgeg.org/prayers/black-history/>