



Tulsa Re-Membered June 8, 2021

Dear Member of the JustFaith Network,

We are grateful that you are a part of our JustFaith community. Whether you are a graduate of one of our programs or you are just getting to know us, we hope this offering will help sustain you spiritually and equip you to work for justice.

Our bi-monthly resources will appear in your inbox on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, and you can access an archive of past resources by logging into your JustFaith account. You can use these resources for personal reflection, or you can invite your friends, family, Sunday School class, or current or past JFM small group to join you in-person or via video conferencing. If you are new to video conferencing, Zoom tutorials are available on our YouTube page – [Click here to access.](#)

While we hope that these twice-monthly resources will inspire and sustain your community while distancing, now is also the perfect time to start one of our regular programs. This resource highlights themes found in JustFaith Ministries' three programs on racial justice. For more information, click [here](#); scroll down to the square labeled "Racial Justice," and click on one of the three options.

If you are doing this resource with a small group, be sure to send out this [link](#) to the podcast discussed in this resource and invite members of your group to listen to the podcast (or read the transcript) before you come together.

Last but not least, all of our work is a collaboration with people like you. When you donate, your gift helps us sustain and equip individuals committed to making the world better. [Click here to help out.](#) Also, please feel free to forward this resource to friends and family!

With gratitude,

The JustFaith Ministries Staff



Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

When everyone has dialed in, begin your time together with these or similar words:

Welcome, friends! It's so good to be with all of you. Today we'll begin with an opening prayer and spend a few minutes checking in with each other. Then we'll have some conversation around the podcast you listened to, before closing in prayer. Most importantly, though, this will be a time to care for one another and to be the community we're called to be.

Let's take a few seconds of silence to pause, to listen to our breathing, and to be present in this space.

Pause for 30 seconds before beginning the opening prayer. In advance, assign two readers to read aloud the following prayer:

Shake Us from Our Slumber

When our eyes do not see the gravity of racial justice,
Shake us from our slumber and open our eyes, O Lord.

When out of fear we are frozen into inaction,
Give us a spirit of bravery, O Lord.

When we try our best but say the wrong things,
Give us a spirit of humility, O Lord.

When the chaos of this dies down,
Give us a lasting spirit of solidarity, O Lord.

When it becomes easier to point fingers outwards,
Help us to examine our own hearts, O Lord.

God of truth, in your wisdom, Enlighten Us.
God of hope in your kindness, Heal Us.
Creator of All People, in your generosity, Guide Us.

Racism breaks your heart,
break our hearts for what breaks yours, O Lord.
Ever present God, you called us to be in relationship with one another and promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered. In our community, we are many different



people; we come from many different places, have many different cultures. Open our hearts that we may be bold in finding the riches of inclusion and the treasures of diversity among us. We pray in faith.

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Check-In Time (10 minutes or so)

Ask these open-ended questions. If you are by yourself, journal about them.

Note: If you are with a group, these questions have the potential to take up a lot of time. Some weeks may require more check-in time than others, depending on the needs of the group. To provide a shorter yet meaningful check-in time, choose ONE of the questions below, and ask participants to share a ONE sentence response.

- **Before we begin this week's reflection, let's take a few minutes to check in. How is everyone feeling?** (It will be a bit more difficult via phone to know if someone is being talked over or is trying to get a word in.... Be sure everyone has a chance to speak).
- **What is something you're struggling with this week?**
- **Where have you seen a sign of hope this week?**

Other optional questions include: What is something you've learned about yourself during this time of social distancing? Where have you experienced a "thin place" in the last week? Where have you seen beauty this week? What is one new behavior you'd like to continue doing when the virus has passed us by?

Reflection (25 minutes or so)

Members of your group should have listened to this podcast (or read the transcript).

"The Burning of Black Tulsa"

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/podcasts/the-daily/tulsa-race-massacre-centenary.html?>

Invite responses to these questions:



1. What surprised you in the podcast?
2. Even a month ago, most white Americans were completely unfamiliar with the Tulsa massacre. Offer your thoughts on the deliberate cover-up of this event. What does this say about the importance of historical record?
3. In the name of understanding our shared human condition, what do you think compelled the white community of Tulsa to destroy Greenwood? What do we do to make sure this never happens again?
4. At the very end of the podcast, we hear Viola Ford Fletcher say, “Greenwood represented all the best of what was possible for Black people in America, and for all the people. When my family was forced to leave Tulsa, I lost my chance of an education. I never finished school past the fourth grade. I have never made much money. To this day, I can barely afford my everyday needs. I am a 107-year-old and have never seen justice. I pray that one day I will.” This would seem to be a situation in which reparations are justified and required. What are your thoughts on reparations?
5. To repeat a question offered in the podcast, “Is the recovery of the historical truth enough?”

Announcements (5-10 minutes)

- This resource touches on the topic of racial justice and gives just a taste of a much larger exploration that is possible. For a more robust experience, consider one of our Racial Justice programs, found [here](#); scroll down to the square labeled “Racial Justice.”
- JustFaith Ministries hosts a monthly webinar series called “Acting for Justice,” in which an expert on a justice-related topic offers insights and tips for taking action. Join us on Thursday, June 24, at 7:00 p.m. EDT as Joe Mitchell, Passionist priest and founder of the Earth & Spirit Center, speaks to the topic, “**Seeds of Hope for Our Planet: Thomas Berry and the Great Work.**” The presentation will focus on how we can respond to Pope Francis’ call to “Care for Our Common Home.” Inspired by the wisdom of Thomas Berry, known as one of the great religious ecological thinkers of the 20th century, this presentation will explore the Great Work of our time: how to make a transition from a period of human devastation of the Earth to a period when humans would recognize the sacredness of all creation and find their place within the web of life. Register [here](#).
- Let participants know that the materials for this gathering were free, put together by the JustFaith Ministries staff to equip more people for the work of peace and justice.



To support the creation of more resources and programs, participants are encouraged to donate to JustFaith Ministries through justfaith.org.

- Are there any opportunities for action or advocacy happening in your community this week? Invite participants to share ways to support the work of local groups working for justice or care for the environment.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Then say: **Before we join in the closing prayer, let us pause to acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is as close as our very breath.**

Pause for 30 seconds. Then share this prayer:

A Litany for Those Not Ready for Healing

Let us not rush to the language of healing,
before understanding the fullness of the injury and the depth of the wound.

Let us not rush to offer a bandage, when gaping wounds requires surgery and complete reconstruction.

Let us not offer false equivalencies,
thereby diminishing the particular pain
being felt in a particular circumstance in a particular historical moment.

Let us not speak of reconciliation without speaking of reparations and restoration,
or how we can repair the breach and how we can restore the loss.

Let us not rush past the loss of this mother's child, this father's child...someone's beloved son.

Let us not value property over people; let us not protect material objects while human lives hang in the balance.

Let us not value a false peace over a righteous justice.

Let us not be afraid to sit with the ugliness, messiness, and the pain that is life in community together.

Let us not offer clichés to the grieving, those whose hearts are being torn asunder.



Instead... Let us mourn black and brown men and women, those killed extrajudicially in the US every 28 hours.

Let us lament the loss of a teenager, dead at the hands of a police officer who described him as a demon.

Let us weep at a criminal justice system, which is neither blind nor just.

Let us call for the mourning men and the wailing women, those willing to rend their garments of privilege and ease, and sit in the ashes of this nation's original sin.

Let us be silent when we don't know what to say.

Let us be humble and listen to the pain, rage, and grief pouring from the lips of neighbors and friends.

Let us decrease, so that our brothers and sisters who live on the underside of history may increase.

Let us pray with our eyes open and our feet firmly planted on the ground.

Let us listen to the shattering glass & let us smell the purifying fires, for it is the language of the unheard.

God, in your mercy... Show me my own complicity in injustice.

Convict me for my indifference.

Forgive me when I have remained silent.

Equip me with a zeal for righteousness.

Never let me grow accustomed or acclimated to unrighteousness.

Amen.

Rev Dr Yolanda Pierce

Then, in these words, invite any participants who have a prayer, a concern, or a request to briefly share it:

We are disciples on a journey.

We are the body of Christ, broken for the world.

We hold one another as we carry the concerns of our neighbors.

If you feel moved, please share your prayer aloud.



Leader: We pray also for the members of the JustFaith community across the country. Unite us through the power of your Holy Spirit, that together we might participate with you in the building of your Kingdom, in order to create a more just and peaceful world. Amen.