



Dear friends,

Attached you will find a prayer service for the election, which we have composed as a gift to you. We hope you will receive it as a gesture of our solidarity with you as we work together for justice and peace in these trying times.

Below are some instructions on how to use this resource.

Who to invite: You can conduct this prayer service individually, with your family, or with a small group of people over video-conferencing. You might consider inviting your friends, Sunday School class, JustFaith group, extended family, or coworkers.

When to conduct your prayer service: Either in the days preceding the election or the afternoon/evening of the election.

A few notes about how to prepare:

- Send an email out to participants ahead of time:
 - Call for two volunteers to help read the prayers/meditations. (Coordinate readers in advance in order to maintain the flow of the service).
 - Invite participants to download the prayer service so that they can follow along. They can do so by signing up for the JustFaith Network: <https://justfaith.org/get-involved/justfaith-network/>
 - Ask participants to bring a journal and pen. If your group is meeting via video-conferencing ([click here](#) for Zoom training videos), encourage participants to place a candle and matches next to their computer.

- Pull up the videos and play through the ads before the prayer service begins. (Double click the blue/purple underlined text to access embedded links). Look up the Scripture passages ahead of time, using whichever biblical translation you prefer.

- Enforce nonpartisanship. Though our faith calls us to political activism, this is not the space for partisanship. We recommend that participants remain on mute for the majority of the prayer service.

About the [JustFaith Network](#): Each week we email out a free resource like this one, with the hope that it will sustain our community in their work for justice and peace. This election prayer service is the Network resource for the week of November 2nd, but we have released it early in order to allow Network members time to plan ahead.



Gathering and Centering

15 minutes

Words of Welcome

When everyone has joined you, greet participants with the following words:

Welcome, everyone! It is so good to be with all of you today. In the midst of polarization, political tension, and anxiety about the future, we pause now to remember that God is present with us. Through prayer and meditation, we will center ourselves in God's light and God's love; through Scripture, we will listen for the Spirit's guidance for us in this historic moment; through fellowship and music, we will celebrate the unbreakable bond with one another, with all Creation, and with the Holy One. This is not a gathering of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, and it is not a gathering to pray for the victory of one candidate over the other. This is a gathering of God's people, in which we open our hearts to receive God's peace as we support one another in this time of great suspense, fear, and hope for our future.

Optional: Light your candle and hold it up to the screen, and encourage participants to light their candles as well.

Invite participants to join you in prayer.

Opening Prayer

Facilitator: A reading from Psalm 121:1-2:

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Reader 1: Holy God, we pause to center ourselves in your presence. As the sands shift around us, as cultures clash, and as each side dehumanizes the other, we stand firmly on the rock of your salvation.

As we breathe in, we notice stillness that surrounds us.
As we breathe out, we release our anxiety unto you.

Reader 2: God of grace, we pause to celebrate our interconnectedness with one another: with those who share our thirst for justice, and with those who think very differently than we do. Regardless of political parties, regardless of our



theological convictions, and regardless of our differing priorities, we honor the ties that bind us together as one family.

As we breathe in, we receive God's unconditional love.
As we breathe out, we pour out God's love onto others.

Reader 1: Creator of all things, we pause to celebrate our interconnectedness with the earth. An oak tree captures carbon dioxide from the air and releases it as the oxygen we breathe. Wild berries provide joy and sustenance for humans and other animals, who return their gift by dispersing their seeds. A handful of soil contains more microorganisms than there are people on the face of our planet, tiny beings that sustain human life.

As we breathe in, we honor our oneness with all Creation
As we breathe out, we release our loneliness and isolation.

Reader 2: God of compassion, cleanse us of the poisonous anger and self-righteousness that eats away at our own souls, our relationships, and the justice work we seek to accomplish. We lay down our resentments and commit to seeking justice through nonviolent words and actions.

As we breathe in, we inhale compassion.
As we breathe out, we release our bitterness.

Reader 1: God of hope, we give to you the cynicism that paralyzes us from action. Help us hold onto your promise that every valley shall be lifted up and every hill made low. We open our hands to receive a new understanding of our own calling and vocation, and we ask for your guidance as we face this historic moment.

As we breathe in, we are filled with hope.
As we breathe out, we release our cynicism.

Facilitator: Loving God, as we continue throughout our time together, we ask that you continue to be present with us, filling us with hope, surrounding us with love, and restoring us with your peace. Amen.

Opening Meditation

Facilitator or volunteer reads aloud Pope Francis's words:

Good politics combines love with hope and with confidence in the reserves of goodness present in human hearts. Indeed, 'authentic political life, built upon respect for law and frank dialogue between individuals, is constantly renewed whenever there is a



realization that every woman and man, and every new generation, brings the promise of new relational, intellectual, cultural and spiritual energies. [\[195\]](#)

Viewed in this way, politics is something more noble than posturing, marketing and media spin. These sow nothing but division, conflict and a bleak cynicism incapable of mobilizing people to pursue a common goal. At times, in thinking of the future, we do well to ask ourselves, “Why I am doing this?”, “What is my real aim?” For as time goes on, reflecting on the past, the questions will not be: “How many people endorsed me?”, “How many voted for me?”, “How many had a positive image of me?” The real, and potentially painful, questions will be, “How much love did I put into my work?” “What did I do for the progress of our people?” “What mark did I leave on the life of society?” “What real bonds did I create?” “What positive forces did I unleash?” “How much social peace did I sow?” “What good did I achieve in the position that was entrusted to me?”

– From Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 196-97.

Invite participants to pause for one minute of silent reflection.

Opening Hymn

Play the opening hymn “[God of Day and God of Darkness](#)” by Marty Haugen. Encourage participants to remain on mute but to sing along if they feel led to do so.

You may want to share your screen so that participants can view the lyrics, which are available at the bottom of [this page](#).

Listening for God’s Voice

30 minutes

Scripture and Meditation: [Isaiah 42:1-9](#)

Facilitator or volunteer reads aloud [Isaiah 42:1-9](#). Then invite participants to pause for silent reflection. (Pause for 1 minute).

Then say:



This text is known as a “servant song,” which is a poem about God’s call upon an individual’s life. Servant songs not only speak of hope and promise, but they also describe the suffering, doubt, and frustration that accompanies servant leadership.

We will now take ten minutes to write our own “servant songs.” We will *not* read our servant songs aloud, so they can take whatever form you like: a poem, a doodle or illustration, a letter, or a journal entry. Shape your “servant song” around the following question: when have you felt God’s call on your life? How might God be calling you now?

After seven minutes, draw the group back together.

Scripture and Meditation: [Romans 8:35-39](#)

Facilitator or volunteer reads aloud [Romans 8:35-39](#). Then invite participants to pause for silent reflection. (Pause for 1 minute).

Then read aloud the following meditation:

Albert Camus, the French philosopher, wrote:

“In the midst of hate, I found there was, within me, an invincible love.
In the midst of tears, I found there was, within me, an invincible smile.
In the midst of chaos, I found there was, within me, an invincible calm.
I realized, through it all, that...

In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer.
And that makes me happy. For it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there’s something stronger - something better, pushing right back.”

In so many ways, these words echo the words of Roman 8, speaking to a power, a presence, a reality that transcends the news of the moment. We Christians identify God’s grace as the ultimate and enduring pulse of this universe. No matter what the hardship or crisis, there is, just a bit below the surface, the presence of God’s love healing, beckoning, grieving, and—sooner or later—making all things new. We are never alone, never abandoned, never without hope.

Pause for one moment of silent reflection.

Then ask: What is a sign of hope you have seen recently? If you feel comfortable doing so, type your answer into the “chat” box on your toolbar.



Scripture and Meditation: [Luke 4:18-20](#)

Facilitator or volunteer reads aloud [Luke 4:18-20](#). Then invite participants to pause for silent reflection. (Pause for 1 minute).

Then invite participants to join you in this prayer.

Reader 1: *The Spirit has come to bring good news to the poor...* We pray in thanksgiving that we are part of a larger community who has the capacity and resources to respond to those experiencing poverty - if we want to. We pray in thanksgiving for those who live in right relationship with each other and our planet, for all who choose to share what they have, so others may simply live.

All: **We pray for the common good.**

Pause

Reader 2: *The Spirit has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners...* We pray for prisoners residing behind physical bars and all who are held captive by their own interests, ideals, opinions, ideologies, possessions, and even religious convictions.

All: **We pray for freedom of heart and mind.**

Pause

Reader 1: *The Spirit sent me to proclaim recovery of sight for the blind...* We pray for all those who experience physical blindness and all who are blinded by our “rightness” and self-righteousness, all who are blinded to the needs and gifts of others.

All: **We pray for respect and civility.**

Pause

Reader 2: *The Spirit has come to set the oppressed free...* We pray for those who experience racism, poverty, violence, and all those who experience anything that demoralizes or dehumanizes them. We pray for the courage and will to end every kind of injustice.

All: Amen.



Responding to God's Word

10 minutes

Commitment to Justice

Facilitator: Because the Spirit of the Lord is upon us today, we proclaim our deeply held beliefs about what it looks like to be “good news”:

If you are meeting in-person, have participants read in unison. If you are meeting through video-conferencing, have two readers alternate between lines.

We believe all people are created in the image and likeness of God.
We believe all have a responsibility to treat others accordingly.

We believe all people have a God-given sense of dignity and worth.
We believe all have a responsibility to uphold both.

We believe all people know what they need to attain their own self-sufficiency.
We believe all have a responsibility to empower them.

We believe all people reflect God's image.
We believe all are called to be anti-racists.

We believe all people are called to love their enemies.
We believe all are called to non-violence.

We believe all people are called to live simply, so others can simply live.
We believe all have a responsibility to contribute to the common good.

We believe God created the world and it is GOOD!
We believe all have a responsibility to care for our planetary home.

We believe in freedom for those imprisoned, recovery of sight to the blind, and that the oppressed be set free. We believe all have a responsibility to be Good News.

Prayer of Petition

Facilitator: Together we pray the “Litany of Elections” by [Bread for the World](http://www.breadfortheworld.org), “a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.”



- Reader 1: Gracious God, you are the source of all blessing. Among the many gifts that you have given us, we are blessed with the ability to have a voice in government. Let us be good stewards of our citizenship, and use it for the common good.
- Reader 2: God of steadfast love, whenever your people have gone astray, you have sent your prophets to call us back to the way of justice and righteousness. Let your people be a voice for justice in public life.
- Reader 1: Creator of the Universe, you are the source of all power and authority. All of our earthly differences melt away in your presence. Let us be bound together in your name alone, making a place at the table for all your children.
- Reader 2: Oh, Great Spirit, people have been raised up to lead our nations. Guide all candidates for public office and all officials to be faithful and courageous leaders, and give them the wisdom and courage to do not what is expedient but what is right. Let us bring our moral convictions to public life, encouraging our leaders to work for the common good.
- Reader 1: O Holy One, it is our privilege to participate in your work in the world. Free us from the cynicism that makes us despair of ever seeing justice and lets us serve only our own narrow interests. Encourage us with the knowledge that what we are engaged in is larger than ourselves. Let us join together to exercise faithful citizenship in this global community in service of your mission.
- Reader 2: God of unquenchable hope, you are with us in times of plenty and in times of need. Continue to uphold your people who suffer this day from war, poverty, abuse and discrimination. Use our lives as a witness to your love for them, seeking shalom and justice for all. Let us be your vessels to bring blessing to all who hunger for food, for justice and for peace!

“Litany for Elections” adapted from Elections Matter: Vote to End Hunger, Bread for the World Institute

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.

Closing Hymn

Play "[If Not Now](#)" by Carrie Newcomer.

Sending Forth *5 minutes*

Announcements

Copy and paste these links in the chat box to share with the group:

JFM Programs: <https://justfaith.org/programs/>

JFM Network: <https://justfaith.org/get-involved/justfaith-network/>

- Let participants know that the materials for this gathering were free, put together by the JustFaith Ministries staff in order to equip more people for the work of peace and justice. In order to support the creation of more resources and programs, participants are encouraged to donate to JustFaith Ministries through justfaith.org.
- [JustFaith Ministries offers programs](#) for small groups on various topics, including racial justice, poverty, immigration, hunger, spirituality, youth programming, nonviolence, and grassroots organizing. You do not need to be an expert on the material or have prior experience facilitating conversations in order to facilitate JustFaith Ministries programs.
- To receive free weekly resources like this one in your inbox, sign up for the [JustFaith Ministries Network](#).

Benediction

Read aloud the following benediction by United Methodist Bishop Woodie White:

“And now,
May the Lord torment you.

May the Lord keep before you the faces of the hungry, the lonely, the rejected and the despised.



May the Lord afflict you with pain for the hurt, the wounded, the oppressed, the abused, the victims of violence.

May God grace you with agony, a burning thirst for justice and righteousness.

May the Lord give you courage and strength and compassion to make ours a better world, to make your community a better community, to make your church a better church.

And may you do your best to make it so, and after you have done your best, may the Lord grant you peace.” Amen.

Invite participants to extinguish their candles.