



White Supremacy: Same Dog, Same Tricks -Time to Change the Training September 20, 2022

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/or equip you to work for justice.

Our monthly small group resource is sent on the third Tuesday of each month; you can access an archive of past resources by logging into your JustFaith account. You can invite your friends, family, Sunday School class, or current/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 resources will inspire and nourish your community, for a more robust experience, consider one of our longer programs. Click [here](#) for more information.

This week's small group experience is enhanced by participants having watched a short video; click [here](#) to watch. Please share the link in advance so that all participants can come prepared to discuss; you can find the full link in the "Reflection" section that follows.

Last but not least, JustFaith Ministries is a nonprofit organization. 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! In fact, we urge you to do so. We want this resource to reach as many people as possible.

Thanks for all you do in the name of love and justice,
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 about the reflection, before closing in prayer. This a time to care for one another and to be inspired to grow and act.

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

Opening 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 our 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: Where have you experienced a "thin place" in the last week? Where have you seen beauty this week?

Reflection (25 minutes or so)

Participants should have watched the video below:

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUhbDZ4jwCQ>

Discussion questions

1. **What did you find most compelling about the video?**

2. Near the beginning of his talk, Russell Ellis, the presenter says that where he's from "Racism is so casual that it's culture." Have you experienced places like this?
3. Later, the presenter recalls asking his father about the meaning of "The South will rise again." What do you remember in your young life about being educated for racism?
4. Ellis observes that "white silence is violence." Describe your own experience of confronting conspiratorial comments (or not).
5. The speaker offers three solutions: speak up; educate yourself; get involved. Share your own experience of engaging in any of these three.
6. What is your insight, hope, or prayer consequent to this discussion?

Announcements (5-10 minutes)

- Join us on Zoom next Thursday, September 29, at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time for a live presentation by Network staff members Colin Martinez Longmore and Sr. Emily Tekolste on the topic of "Your Vote Is Your Voice: Deepening Your Commitment to Voting and Our Democracy." Register [here](#).
- This resource is a small sample of the kinds of conversations had in our 8-session programs. For a more intensive experience, see a description of our programs; click [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; click [here](#).
- 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 advocating for peace, working for justice, or caring 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 the reflection below.



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.

Pause

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.