**Emanuel Nine Commemoration Service**

☩ indicates you are invited to make the sign of the cross.

Congregation speaks the **Bold** text.

Opening

Blessed be God: Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit

whose steadfast love is everlasting,

whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

**Amen**.

Prayer of the Day

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

Confession and Forgiveness

Gracious God, we thank you for making one human family of all the peoples of the earth and for creating all the wonderful diversity of cultures.

**Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship and show us your presence in those who differ most from us.**

From the bondage of racism that denies the humanity of every human being and the prejudices within us that deny the dignity of those who are oppressed, Lord set us free:

**Lord, have mercy.**

From racism that blinds oppressors to the destruction caused by the spirit and practice of racial injustice, Christ set us free:

**Christ, have mercy.**

From the racism that will not recognize the work of your Spirit in other cultures: Lord set us free:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Forgive those of us who have been silent and apathetic in the face of racial intolerance and bigotry, both overt and subtle, public and private.

**And take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts.**

Break down the walls that separate us.

**And help us to find that unity that is the fruit of righteousness and will enable us to become your beloved community.**

Empower us to speak boldly for justice and truth and help us to deal with one another without hatred or bitterness, working together with mutual forbearance and respect.

**And work through our struggles and confusion to accomplish your purposes.**

**O God of unconditional love,**

**you who show no partiality in respect to people or nations,**

**we have heard your good news of great joy for all the people.**

**We hear that good news, and in hearing, believe.**

**We know that your sanctuary is a house of worship for all people,**

**with no regard for the color of our skin.**

**As we worship you, knit us into a people,**

**a seamless garment of many colors.**

**May we celebrate our unity, made whole in our diversity.**

**Forgive us for our inability to let our “old selves” die to the world.**

**We acknowledge that we participate in structures that are inherently racist,**

**and yet we so often do nothing to remedy it.**

**Show us we fail when we judge others according to the color of their flesh.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loves us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

*Adapted from the United Church of Christ’s "Prayers for Racial Justice Sunday" (www.ucc.org/worship/ways) and from the United Church of Canada (www.united-church.ca/bfw/resources.shtm)*

**A Reading from Revelation 7:**

9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying,
‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!’
11And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, 12singing,
‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.’

13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, ‘Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?’ 14I said to him, ‘Sir, you are the one that knows.’ Then he said to me, ‘These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
15 For this reason they are before the throne of God,
   and worship him day and night within his temple,
   and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.
16 They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
   the sun will not strike them,
   nor any scorching heat;
17 for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
   and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’

**Emanuel Nine, martyrs, 2015**

On June 17, 2015, Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel Lee Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson were murdered by a self-professed white supremacist while they were gathered for Bible study and prayer at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church (often referred to as Mother Emanuel) in Charleston, South Carolina. Pastors Pinckney and Simmons were both graduates of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. A resolution to commemorate June 17 as a day of repentance for the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine was adopted by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 8, 2019. Congregations of the ELCA are encouraged reaffirm their commitment to repenting of the sins of racism and white supremacy which continue to plague this church, to venerate the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine, and to mark this day of penitence with study and prayer.

Prayers of Intercession

God, our truth, through the ages you have spoken through prophets. Stir up in your church a passion for your word revealed in Jesus, that following the witness of the Emanuel Nine, your church studies the scriptures, shows hospitality, prays without ceasing, and embodies prophetic justice in community. Embolden church leaders and all the baptized to remember the lives of the Nine, repent of racism and white supremacy, and renew our commitment to your word revealed

most fully in Jesus, our way, truth, and life.

In your great mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Mighty and loving God, we pray for our nation and the plague of racism that threatens, destroys, and kills. Root out white supremacy wherever it takes hold. Release its grip on those lured by its false promises. Bring to repentance all who continue to benefit from prejudice and hatred, both hidden and revealed. Plant in our hearts and nation a willing spirit open to truth-telling and healing.

In your great mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Immanuel, God with us, you embrace in love those who cry out to you. Lift up all whom hatred has cast down (especially … ); embolden those who need courage to speak and act against oppression (especially … ); sustain those who are weary from efforts that bring no end to injustice (especially … ). Comfort parents weeping for children, children who have been separated from parents, and families in crises of any kind. Restore hope where it has been lost, so that all may trust your love that reaches to the depths of pain and suffering.

In your great mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

We give you thanks, Holy God, for the faithful life and witness of Clementa, Cynthia, Daniel, DePayne, Ethel, Myra, Sharonda, Susie, and Tywanza, the Emanuel Nine. May their faith and witness to your forgiving love in Jesus Christ inspire all people to pursue paths of justice,

courage, and self-giving love.

In your great mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

*(From the* Book of Common Prayer)

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast
faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim
your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with
compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and for ever. **Amen.**

**Our Father,**

**who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come.**

**Thy will be done,**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,**

**for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**