

Invitation to reflection

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character."

Dr Martin Luther King Jr. (August 28 1963)

"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word."

Dr Martin Luther King Jr. (10 December 1964)



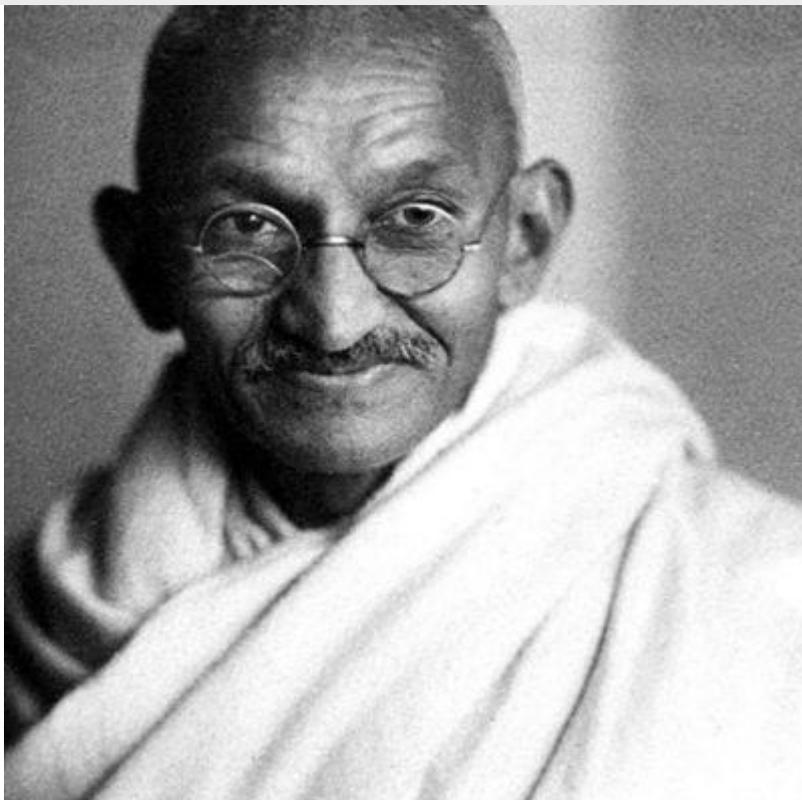
'The plague of racism is insidious, entering into our minds as smoothly and quietly and invisibly as floating airborne microbes enter into our bodies to find lifelong purchase in our bloodstreams.'

Maya Angelou



• *"We must be the change we wish to see in the world."*

Mahatma Gandhi



• *"Finally, I've come to believe that the true measure of our commitment to justice, the character of our society, our commitment to the rule of law, fairness, and equality cannot be measured by how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged, and the respected among us."*

The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned. We are all implicated when we allow other people to be mistreated.”

Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*



1 Corinthians 13: 1-8

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

Invitation to prayer

If you consider yourself a person of faith, you may also choose at this time to pray and here are some words that you may find helpful taken from a prayer written by Alan Paton (South African author of *Cry, the Beloved Country*):

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others
Open my ears that I may hear their cries;
Open my heart so that they need not be without succor;

Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong,
Nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.
Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,

And use me to bring them to those places.
And so open my eyes and my ears
That I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee.

Amen



Invitation to a challenge

There will be a time in the near future when the name of George Floyd will not be the first thing we read about on mainstream or social media but the grief of George Floyd's family and all victims of injustice around our world will continue long after the headlines have disappeared.

And so there is an invitation to a challenge - to continue the conversation - to continue to engage with issues of injustice and each play our small part to challenge and stand against injustice in our city, our country and our world.

We invite you in your own time to watch this TED talk by Bryan Stevenson: We need to talk about injustice.

[Bryan Stevenson: We need to talk about an injustice | TED Talk](#)

Prayers from Churches Together in Britain & Ireland

God of all creation, you have made all people in your image

And you call us to worship you.

We come to you in all our diversity in Nottingham/shire,
young and old, black and white, rich and poor, male and female –
because we know we are all invited to take part in your family.

Thank you for your unconditional love for us,

Revealed in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

God of all peoples, we pray for all victims of racial hatred and discrimination. We pray for your protection especially for those affected in our churches, our institutions of learning, our places of work and in our communities in Nottingham/shire, elsewhere in our land, and across the world.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We pray that we may be able to feel the power of reconciliation through the work of God's Spirit. Wherever there is division between us and others, because of our culture or ethnicity we pray that we may all be led to reconciliation.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We pray that our young people will make meaningful contributions to build a world where everyone, of any ethnicity, culture or religion, can live a truly human life.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Merciful God, we ask you to fill our hearts with your love. Give us the grace to rise above our human weakness, and keep us faithful to the Gospel of your Son.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

God our Father, we offer to you these prayers, and the work of our hands, and the love of our hearts, that in all things your will may be done. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer

One God, in Three Persons, creator of one human species, in many hues: all who pray to you are descendants of Adam and Eve, all members of one race called "human." Forgive the blindness that causes our eyes to notice and magnify those things we regard as different from ourselves in others. Teach us to see clearly, that we, your children, are far more alike than we are different. Help us to put aside the racial prejudices imbedded within us, and to see within every person the Child of God you created, our sister or brother, destined for Glory. In the name of One who died for all persons, of all colours, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Creator of all people, in our amazing diversity of size, shape, colour, and giftedness: guide us, by your grace, to recognize the beauty and fitness of all whom you have made in your own image. Give us gifts of humility and generosity of spirit to recognize in all people, the face of our Saviour, Jesus, and to practice his commandment to “love one another,” toward the end of bringing harmony and peace among persons of all colours, origins, and abilities, for the sake of your Kingdom. Amen.

God our Creator, you created humankind in your image, and blessed us with your love. Help us to show that love to one another as we work for equality for all races in education, housing, public services, and employment opportunity. Give us strength and courage to speak out against injustice, and to work for the transformation of unjust systems that keep some in bondage: that we may more fully live out your kingdom here on earth; through Jesus Christ your son, who came to set us free.
Amen