

LITANY OF RENEWAL:

Remembering Those Who Became People of God
(Honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2024 of this past week)

Leader: Miriam hid a baby in the bullrushes, disobeying pharaoh's edict to kill the male children of the Hebrew slaves.

People: The child grew to adulthood. Called by God, Moses liberated his people from Pharaoh's bondage—and Miriam sang a freedom song!

Leader: Jonah, called by God to preach repentance to his enemies in Nineveh, resisted as we sometimes do, fleeing from Nineveh in a storm-tossed ship.

People: Rescued from the depths of the sea, he returned to the enemy city, preached, and witnessed the turning of the Ninevites to God. Lord, rescue and empower us to share good news.

Leader: Mary, the mother of Jesus, accepted her call from God with rejoicing, saying, "God has filled the hungry with good food and sent the rich away empty." Mary, mother of Jesus, may we follow your example of brave embrace.

People: Likewise, women in our time have answered the call—marching together, demanding peace and acceptance of all races. Called by God, they struggled seventy years to win the right to vote in the United States so that their granddaughters could take up the work they had begun.

Leader: Honoring the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr., we also honor the many who labored with him, both white and black from east and west, north and south. We lift up Desmond Tutu, Anglican bishop and theologian, for his work against apartheid and violations of human rights.

We acknowledge many places around the world where the rhythm to labor and walk toward a new day—a day when fairness and equality, liberty and justice would be shared by all. Called by God, may we keep the drum beat going.

People: As Paul the apostle journeyed over the known world, he preached reconciliation among Jew and Gentile, bringing controversy and challenge, new understandings and hope. Pursuing God's purpose, he founded Christian communities drawing those estranged to inclusion and peace.

Leader: The march continues as we raise our voices with all who are oppressed, violated, and rendered invisible. We are called to join with all creation crying out for the renewal of humanity and sanity among the nations.

People: Christ, our peace, we hear your call. We experience your ministry through the lives of peacemakers and justice seekers everywhere. Guide us as we follow the path of shalom. We thank you for the cloud of witnesses who have known your presence in their struggles. We trust that your promises are sure and peace is possible when we follow the way you lead.