# Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GATHER

This week we mark the beginning of the international Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and the theme this year is **Be-longing: Praying for unity amidst injustice**. As we join with other Christians around the world for the Week of Prayer we pray that our hearts will be open to see and hear the many ways in which racism continues to destroy lives, and to discern the steps we can take as individuals and communities to heal the hurts and build a better future for everyone.

# WE LISTEN Genesis 1:26-28

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.



## **MISSION**

- •Do you find it easy to recognise the image of God in other people? Or is that sometimes a challenge?
- Take time to learn about a culture/language/nation of which you know nothing, or very little.

#### **RESPONSE**

You made us, God,
in your own image,
and then became one of us,
proud of those you have made.
Make us proud of being part
of that worldwide family,
and eager to discover and
celebrate your image
in every person,
every culture, every nation
that we are privileged to encounter.
Amen

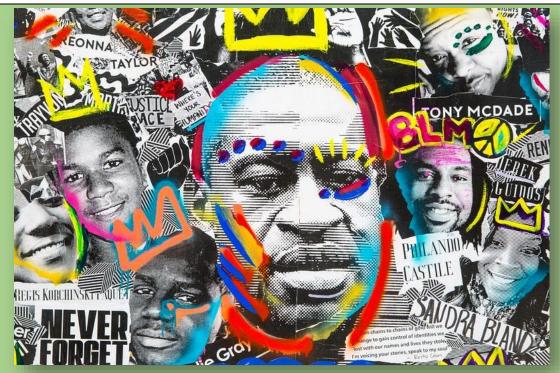
# Tuesday17th January 2023

### SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GATHER

Learning to do good requires an openness to change. This is the perfect season for us to reflect not just on unity but on the role we can all play together in promoting racial justice. There is joy in doing what is right. There is joy in affirming that "Black Lives Matter" in the pursuit of justice for God's oppressed, dominated, and exploited people.

# WE LISTEN Isaiah 1:16 – 18

Learn to do right; seek justice.
Defend the oppressed.
Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.



### **RESPONSE**

God of Unity,
forgive us when we are
self-serving
and help us to grow in
unity and understanding
as we extend your love
and justice to all.
Amen

### **MISSION**

What can we do today to do the right thing, with **integrity** to help others? What social justice or local outreach projects are active in your area and led by those from a different tradition or background to you? Find out and get involved.

# Wednesday 18th January 2023

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GATHER

We are blessed and we are to bless others. We are loved and we are to love others. We are to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God, together. We. Not Me. We can make a difference, in our communities and our **faith** and diversity is a strength, not a thing of division.

# WE LISTEN Amos 5:14-15

Seek good, not evil,
that you may live.
Then the Lord God
Almighty will be with you,
just as you say he is.
Hate evil, love good;
maintain justice in the
courts.



## **MISSION**

Discuss: Thinking about our school value of **respect**, how often do we think and act as 'We. Not me'?

How do we recognise and celebrate difference in our school?

What might we do better?

#### **RESPONSE**

Gracious and loving God, expand our vision that it may be wide enough to recognise the beautiful complexity of the tapestry you chose to weave with each and every one of us. Gather our frayed edges, our loose ends and bind us together for your glory. Amen

# Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GATHER

A young woman looked and saw the tears of the oppressed. The video she shot on her phone of the murder of George Floyd in May 2020 was seen all around the world and unleashed rage as people witnessed, and finally acknowledged, what African Americans have experienced for centuries.

In the UK, black men between 18 and 25 years are five times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police and black women are four times more likely to die during childbirth.

# WE LISTEN Martin Luther King





## MISSION

Which of our school values did he mention?
How will you become a witness for change in our world, what can you do?

#### **RESPONSE**

God of justice and of grace, remove the scales from my eyes so
I can truly see the oppression around me, and give me courage not only to name it, but to fight it while providing authentic presence, witness, and compassion to the oppressed.

Amen.

## SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GATHER

Let us all work together with God in our hope and commitment to shut the mouth of injustice and eradicate oppression in all areas of our society. In prayer we align our hearts with the heart of God, to love what God loves and to love as God loves. Prayer with *integrity* therefore aligns and unites us – beyond our divisions – to love what, who and how God loves, and to express this love in our actions.

# WE LISTEN Matt 5:1-8

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."



### **RESPONSE**

God of justice,
Empower us to be agents of
your grace and mercy.
Bless us with the courage to
relinquish our power.
Bless us with the humility to stand
with the oppressed.
Bless us with the *integrity* to love
our neighbours as we ourselves
would seek to be loved.
Amen

### **MISSION**

Can you think of a time when you felt powerless? How would you have liked others to respond? What action will you take today to stand up for those whose voice isn't heard and to stand up for the rights of the BAME community?