

Kingdom of Justice Daily Office
Week of June 22th

Morning

Intro

Welcome to the Practice of the Daily Office. In this season of disruption and uncertainty, we invite you to join us in a rhythm of prayer. How might our days be grounded more deeply in God's presence if we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer?

Recent events remind us of the injustice that has simmered beneath the surface our world for centuries. But God is not silent on issues of justice. Throughout history, the Lord has spoken through the prophets calling the Lord's people to be just people: caring for the poor and oppressed, refusing to seek our prosperity at the expense of others, and upholding the dignity of all people as beloved image bearers of God.

In this season, the daily office will be grounded in God's desire for justice. In the morning, we will reflect on a prophetic call for justice from scripture, and allow God's Word to lead us in prayer. At midday, we will pray for justice, and in the evening, we will join with the psalmist and lament injustice.

Silence

Let's begin in silence.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, you are in God's loving presence. However you are beginning this day, whatever emotions you are feeling, the Lord is with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence.

Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now I invite you to listen to the word of the Lord spoken through the prophet Isaiah. These words from the first chapter of Isaiah were delivered to the people of Israel. How might the Lord be speaking similar words to us today? As you listen, pay attention to how the Spirit might be stirring you to respond today?

When you come to worship me,
 who asked you to parade through my courts with all your ceremony?
Stop bringing me your meaningless gifts;
 the incense of your offerings disgusts me!
When you lift up your hands in prayer, I will not look.
 Though you offer many prayers, I will not listen,
 for your hands are covered with the blood of innocent victims.
Wash yourselves and be clean!
 Get your sins out of my sight.
 Give up your evil ways.
Learn to do good.
 Seek justice.
Help the oppressed.
 Defend the cause of orphans.
 Fight for the rights of widows.

"Come now, let's settle this,"
 says the Lord.
"Though your sins are like scarlet,
 I will make them as white as snow.
Though they are red like crimson,

I will make them as white as wool.
If you will only obey me,
you will have plenty to eat.
But if you turn away and refuse to listen,
you will be devoured by the sword of your enemies.
I, the Lord, have spoken!"

The Lord says, "Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed." Let's reflect on these words

Learn to do good. What are you doing to learn what good work can be done?

Seek justice. How have your actions contributed to justice in our world?

Help the oppressed. What have you done to serve those who are oppressed or marginalized in our culture?

How is the Holy Spirit stirring you now to respond?

Prayer

Just as the rain and snow fall, Lord, your word produces fruit. May we live in joy and peace. May the cypress trees grow where once was only thorns. May the myrtle bloom where only nettles grew. And may your name be honored as an everlasting sign of your power and love. Amen.

Mid-day

Silence

We pause now in mid-day. Perhaps much has happened already today, or maybe the day has begun slowly. However, this day is unfolding. Let us begin our mid-day prayer in silence. Take a deep breath. Remembering what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

These next moments of silence are yours to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer for the Kingdom

Would you now join me in this prayer written by W.E.B. DuBois?

Give us grace, O God, to dare to do the deed which we well know cries to be done. Let us not hesitate because of ease, or the words of men's mouths, or our own lives. Mighty causes are calling us—the freeing of women, the training of children, the putting down of hate and murder and poverty—all these and more. But they call with voices that mean work and sacrifices and death. Mercifully grant us, O God, the spirit of Esther, that we say: I will go unto the King and if I perish, I perish.
Amen.

Evening

Silence

This evening we pause once again to recognize and rest in the loving presence of God. Take a deep breath. In Matthew 28, Jesus promised, "surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Lament is the practice of crying out to the Lord in our pain. Though many of us are unfamiliar with this practice it has been a common one throughout the history of the church. In fact, a third of the Psalms are categorized as Psalms of lament.

Whether lament is a natural response to this day or not, I invite you to join with me in this prayer. If lament does not feel like an appropriate response to your day, would you seek to pray this prayer of lament in solidarity with those who are in pain? Perhaps you will think about a specific person who is struggling in this season, or perhaps you'll consider a people group who are in pain, and lament alongside them.

Now, I invite you to join me in praying this lament from Psalm 5.

O Lord, hear me as I pray;
pay attention to my groaning.
Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God,
for I pray to no one but you.
Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord.
Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.
O God, you take no pleasure in wickedness;
you cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked.
Therefore, the proud may not stand in your presence,
for you hate all who do evil.
You will destroy those who tell lies.
The Lord detests murderers and deceivers.
Because of your unfailing love, I can enter your house;
I will worship at your Temple with deepest awe.
Lead me in the right path, O Lord,
or my enemies will conquer me.
Make your way plain for me to follow.
My enemies cannot speak a truthful word.
Their deepest desire is to destroy others.
Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave.
Their tongues are filled with flattery.
O God, declare them guilty.
Let them be caught in their own traps.
Drive them away because of their many sins,
for they have rebelled against you.
But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them sing joyful praises forever.
Spread your protection over them,
that all who love your name may be filled with joy.
For you bless the godly, O Lord;
you surround them with your shield of love

Amen