

# Litanies

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[Litany for the Wall of Oppression – GC Reception 2015](#)

**The Episcopal Peace Fellowship Reception**

**at the 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church**



Lifting up the connections that bind our work for social justice, challenging us to dismantle every wall, both visible and invisible, that separates the one human family.

The Cathedral Church of St Mark

231 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah

June 24, 2015

## **A Litany for Palestine**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice in solidarity with all those Palestinian families whose lives and freedom are diminished by the Israeli Separation Barrier – lands divided, houses and businesses split, schools on one side and students on the other, access to hospitals and medical care, to holy sites in holy seasons, dependent on permits granted or denied. Will you work and pray for the end of Occupation and a just resolution to all territorial disputes in the Holy Land?

**People:** We will with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering the Palestinian farmers denied access to their crops, orchards and olive groves, watching their farmland confiscated for Settlements or parks, while their human right to property and movement is restricted by gates and check points. Will you work to bring down these walls of restriction and confiscation on behalf of abundant life for all who work the soil of the Holy Land?

**People:** We will with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering the people of Gaza, besieged and encircled by the closed border with Egypt, hard pressed by buffer zones and restricted crossings into Israel, existing amidst the rubble of total war. We witness that even the fishermen on the sea are enclosed within limits enforced by Israel. Will you work and pray for the end to the Siege of Gaza?

**People:** We will with God's help.

### **A Litany for Capital Punishment**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice in solidarity with all men and women condemned to a state sanctioned death. Based on our understanding of Jesus Christ's call to redemption, love and mercy, we reject retribution or collective vengeance as a reason for taking human life. Will you work and pray for the abolition of capital punishment in our country?

**People:** We will with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice recognizing that capital punishment is an expensive, racist, classist, error-prone system with no internal consistency. While we give thanks for the 154 exonerated men and women whose lives have been spared since 1973, we rend our hearts over the 1 in 25 innocent individuals who remain on death row. Will you pray for all who are imprisoned on death row, that their lives may be spared?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering that Jesus Christ was a victim of cruel and unusual capital punishment, and even in the midst of his agonizing death, he was not overcome by hatred. Will you reach out to civic leaders, urging them to respect every human life by ending the use of the death penalty?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

### **A Litany for Economic Justice**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering immigrants, refugees and sojourners in our Bible story. From Eden, all have traveled to the lands of the Earth. The People of Israel crossed the Red Sea in search of freedom, answering the call of God. God of Noah, Abraham, Sarah and Hagar, open our hearts to refugees and sojourners around us. Will you remember our shared history as a refugee people?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand at the Wall of Injustices remembering Joseph, sold into slavery, First Nations Peoples forced from their lands, Africans captured, separated and sold for profit, the dispossession of Palestinians in the ongoing Nakba. We recognize that there are more displaced people on our planet today than at any time since World War II. Will you pray that the example of Jesus' open table fellowship will inspire us to offer hospitality to strangers in our midst?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before the Wall of Injustices praying for a spirit of abundance, to replace our fear of scarcity and our suspicion of the stranger. As Jesus stood with the workers in the vineyards calling for just wages, God calls us to stand with workers today, calling for living wages and just working conditions. Will you work and pray for abundant life to be shared among all members of the One Human Family?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

### **A Litany for Black Lives**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice proclaiming that all black bodies are wonderfully and beautifully made because they are created in the image of God. Will you deconstruct the discriminating stereotypes that have legalized Black death, criminalized black boys and girls, and dehumanized black women and men?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice hearing the 12 shots fired at Michael Brown's body, seeing the horror on Eric Garner's face as he uttered his last words, "I can't breathe," and grieving the unfulfilled dreams of seven year old Aiyana Jones killed during a police raid. Will you protest our country's unjust forces of police brutality, racial profiling and systematic oppression?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice demonstrating our resolve to stop the murder of black men and women and calling upon God to bring liberation and deliverance. We raise our voice with Jonathan Myrick Daniels to say, "we are indelibly and unspeakably one." Will you pray for God to guide your feet in the ways of peace?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

### **A Litany for Gun Violence**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering all who have been harmed by gun violence, both intended and accidental. We lament that an American child is 12 times more likely to die by a bullet than are the children living in all twenty-five other industrialized nations combined. We acknowledge the deep pain and grief in our communities and nation. Will you commit to tear down the walls that divide us, and build-up the one human family, grounded in nonviolence, justice and love?

**People:** We will with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering all perpetrators and the families of those who commit acts of gun violence. We acknowledge that their lives are also devastated and their hopes dashed. For their sake and ours, will you pray for healing of the pain radiating from every act of violence?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice, united in our grief for the violent deaths of over 30,000 Americans by gunfire each year. Will you commit to prayer, study and action, ever hopeful that repentance and transformation will move us forward toward God's peaceable kingdom?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

### **A Litany for Transgendered Persons**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice in solidarity with the 1731 people murdered for their gender since 2008, along with the many other deaths that remain unknown. We stand especially for transgender women of color, who are frequently the first targets of anti-trans violence. Will you work and pray for the end of violence against trans bodies, remembering those we have lost and listening to those who are crying out for justice?

**People:** We will with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice in solidarity with the rising epidemic of transgender youth who have committed suicide. Taught to expect a lifetime of brutal discrimination, forced to endure being called by their wrong name & often betrayed by those closest to them, these young people came of age in a world that offered them no hope, no future. Will you work & pray for the creation of opportunities for trans youth and young adults, spaces that celebrate the fullness of their identities and honor their experiences?

**People:** We will with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice in solidarity with all those who have encountered discrimination because of their gender identity or expression. We remember all who currently live in a network of oppressions designed to erase their experience as we denounce the systems that create barriers to the full participation of people of all genders. Will you work and pray for the end of discrimination and full participation for people of all genders in every area of life?

**People:** We will with God's help.

### **A Litany for Paul Jones**

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice remembering Paul Jones, Bishop of the Missionary District of Utah from 1916 – 1918. We honor his speaking out against the United States' Involvement in World War I and revere his words: "I believe that the methods of modern international war are quite incompatible with the Christian principle of reconciliation and brotherhood." Will you pray diligently for an end to war?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice rejoicing that Paul Jones stood firm in proclaiming the Gospel of Peace when the multitudes were clamoring for war and his fellow bishops affirmed that, "war is not unchristian." We grieve at the outcome: Paul Jones forced to resign his seat in the House of Bishops in 1918. Will you pray that, as a church we may be converted by the witness of Paul Jones to proclaim the truth that modern warfare is incompatible with the Gospel of Christ?

**People:** We will, with God's help.

**Leader:** We stand before this Wall of Injustice honoring Paul Jones as founder of Episcopal Peace Fellowship. We give thanks for his lifetime of peacemaking, including resettling Jews displaced by the Nazis and advocating for a greater grasp in our nation's relations with Japan just before his death. Will you strive to embody a life of persistence in peacemaking that Bishop Jones modeled for us?

**People:** We will, with God's help.