## Black History Month

Recent beightened racial tensions in North America, as well as the 50th anniversary of the Alabama voting rights marches from Selma to Montgomery, have called communities of faith in Canada and around the world to recommit to antiracism and anti-oppression work. This Black History Month, we encourage communities of faith to continue to join with all people who are working toward racial justice. Consider reaffirming your commitment while using this prayer. Also consider what other actions you can take this month and throughout the year.

## Recommitting to Justice, Equity, and Peace

God of peace,

give us the courage, strength, and perseverance needed to challenge the systems of racism, so that we can clear a path for your justice, peace, and equity.

We believe racism is present in our society and in our church, and throughout time has manifested itself in many forms and in varying degrees.

We know racism is alive

in our language and in our structures,

and through our systems it actively works to deconstruct your glorious design,

blocking the path to justice, equity, and peace that Jesus brings.

Racism exists, and it challenges the gospel message that we cry.

We cry abundant life for all,

knowing that we are slowly being suffocated by the pervasive evil of racism:

some of us are choking; some of us cannot breathe; some of us are dead.

## We cry peace,

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knowing that we are the instruments of God's peace and that such peace cannot exist without justice, equity, compassion, and God's grace.

We cry Emmanuel, God-with-us,

knowing that to God,

every life matters—God is with all people even though as a community and as a society we have stated through our actions that some lives matter more than others.

Compassionate One,

Help us to understand how racism finds life in our hearts and in our cries.

In this time of tense anticipation,

may we commit ourselves to be people of your way crying and creating a path for justice, equity, and peace

for all people in this wilderness of hatred and racism.

Amen.

—Alydia Smith



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