

Handout #7
On Behalf of our Children
Wisconsin Council of Churches

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Gracious God, we thank you for making one human family of all the peoples of the earth and for creating all the wonderful diversity of cultures.

Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship and show us your presence in those who differ most from us.

For the racism which denies dignity to those who are different, Lord, forgive us:

Lord, have mercy.

For the racism which recognizes prejudice in others and never in ourselves, Christ, forgive us:

Christ, have mercy.

For the racism which will not recognize the work of your Spirit in other cultures, Lord, forgive us:

Lord, have mercy.

Forgive those of us who have been silent and apathetic in the face of racial intolerance and bigotry, both overt and subtle, public and private.

And take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts.

Break down the walls that separate us.

And help us to find that unity that is the fruit of righteousness and will enable us to become your beloved community.

Empower us to speak boldly for justice and truth and help us to deal with one another without hatred or bitterness, working together with mutual forbearance and respect.

And work through our struggles and confusion to accomplish your purposes.

O God of unconditional love,

you who show no partiality in respect to people or nations,

we have heard your good news of great joy for all the people,

We hear that good news, and in hearing, believe.

*We know that your sanctuary is a house of worship for all people,
with no regard for the color of our skin.*

May we celebrate our unity, made whole in our diversity.

Forgive us for our inability to let our "old selves" die to the world.

***We acknowledge that we participate in structures that are inherently racist,
and yet we do nothing to remedy it.***

Show us when we fail

*when we judge others according to the color of their flesh. **Amen***

Adapted from the United Church of Christ's "Prayers for Racial Justice Sunday" (www.ucc.org/worship/ways) and from the United Church of Canada (www.united-church.ca/bfw/resources.shtml)