

Prayer Service for Supporting Occupy Together

Many people of faith are part of the occupy movement. Others, especially religious leaders, wish to share their support of the concerns being lifted up during the protests. Below is a sample interfaith prayer service that can be used or adapted.



Welcome: *This may be done by several faith leaders representing various traditions who take turns reading or by one leader.*

Welcome to all gathered here today.

We gather here today to offer support and encouragement to those who have offered their bodies as witnesses for justice.

To join our voices in lifting up the cries of those who have been left out and excluded from the nation's wealth and to pray for our nation's leaders and priorities.

We come as people of faith across various traditions, joined by our concern for God's people and the sharing of prosperity.

All our faith traditions believe that work is sacred and that the economy should serve workers.

Those who want to work should be able to and work should pay enough to raise families in dignity.

How the economy is serving people is a central moral question.

Let us begin by hearing readings from sacred texts:

Readings: *Consider using these texts and others that have similar themes of justice and concern for neighbor.*

Hebrew Scriptures: Isaiah 65: 17-19, 21-23 (*God's vision for all of us sharing in prosperity.*)
Jeremiah 22: 13-17 (*God's vision for leaders' priorities*)

Christian Scriptures: Matthew 25: 31-45 (*The final judgment scene based on caring for those around you.*)
Luke 18: 1-6 (*Parable of the widow showing the importance of being persistent on advocating justice.*)

Qu'ran: Chapter (Sura) 30:37-39 (A call to give what is due to kindred, the needy, and the wayfarer.)

Buddist text: As a mother would risk her life to protect her child, her only child, even so should one cultivate a limitless heart with regard to all beings. With good will for the entire cosmos, cultivate a limitless heart: Above, below, and all around, unobstructed, without enmity or hate. Whether standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, as long as one is alert, one should be resolved on this mindfulness. This is called a sublime abiding here and now.
– from the Metta Sutta, the Buddha's Discourse on Loving Kindness

Song: *Ask an experienced song leader to lead the group in a simple song or two that some people might know and would be easy to teach and learn.*

Prayers of the People and for the People: *The suggested prayers below can be read by one person or multiple people. Or individuals can be asked to offer other prayers of their own choosing or design.*

- We lift up all those who have chosen to witness for justice by participating in an Occupy event. May their spirits be encouraged and their bodies strengthened.
Optional: Invite a few protestors to share why they are there. At the end of each short presentation, say, "Thank you for your witness."
- We give thanks for those who have provided food, organized the clean-up efforts, arranged for supplies, offered medical care and contributed to the support.
Optional: Invite a few supporters who've helped with logistics to speak. At the end of each short presentation, say, "Thank you for your service."
- We remember the millions of workers who are without jobs or have jobs without dignity, jobs that are unsafe or unhealthful, and jobs that can't feed their families.
Optional: Invite a few unemployed workers to share their stories. At the end of each short presentation, say, "Thank you for sharing your story. May your story inspire action."
- We pray for our nation's corporate and political leaders, that they will hear the cries of the poor, the cries of those who can't find work, the cries of those who have lost their homes. Help them listen anew to workers and families who are struggling. Touch their hearts. Move them to action. Help us be a true democracy that cares for all our members.
Optional: Invite a person or two to talk about plans to organize a delegation to meet with an elected leader or announce an upcoming action. At the end of each short presentation, say, "Thank you for helping our leaders hear the cries of the people."

Song: *Have your musician lead the group in another simple song or two.*

Closing: We ask you to join hands with your neighbors. Please repeat after me:

We are the 99 percent.

We want a society that works for 100 percent.

How we care for one another is a moral question.

How we divide the nation's prosperity is an ethical question.

How we witness to injustice is a faith question.

Thank you to the prophets in our midst.

Thank you to the public servants in our midst.

Thank you for giving us voices.

Thank you for amplifying our voices.

Thank you for creating a vision for a more just America.

May we together be blessed and go forward.

Amen.



Interfaith Worker Justice
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