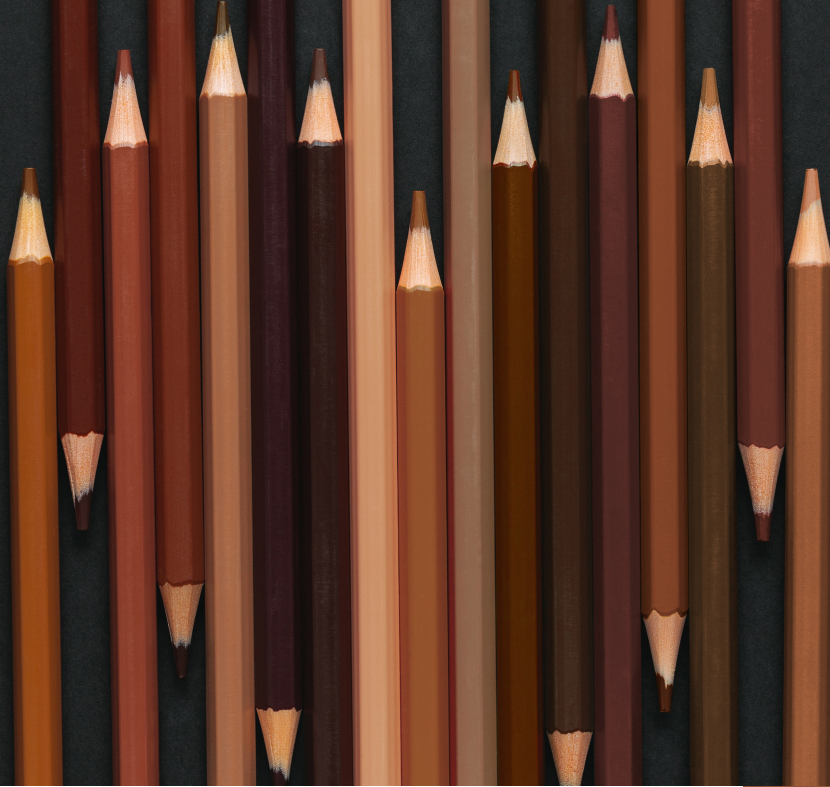


LOVE OUT LOUD

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the first edition of the Love Out Loud Newsletter!

BY PHOEBE "FIFI" RODRIGUEZ

My dearest brothers and sisters in Christ, According to Wikipedia, a newsletter is a regularly distributed publication that is generally about one main topic of interest to its subscribers. Newspapers and leaflets are types of newsletters. For example, newsletters are distributed at schools to inform parents about things that happen in that school. Newsletters are published by clubs, churches, societies, associations, and businesses—especially companies—to provide information of interest to members, customers, or employees.

Love Out Loud is all about taking a faith-based approach to the work of Anti-Racism. As people of faith, it is imperative that we engage with the most pressing issues of our time and in our communities. Many of us have awoken in this past year to the sin of racism and how it pervades our lives as Americans. The selections in this newsletter are designed to inspire both reflection and action, to wage war against that sin both within ourselves and in our world. You are welcome to go through them at your own pace and return to them whenever you like.

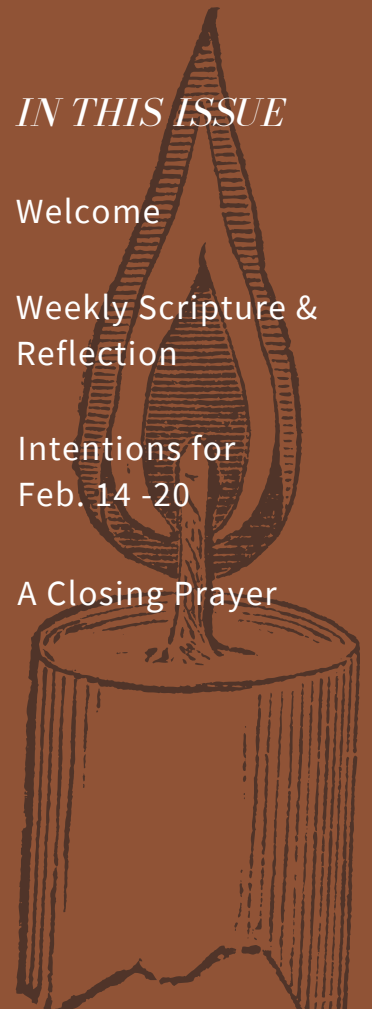
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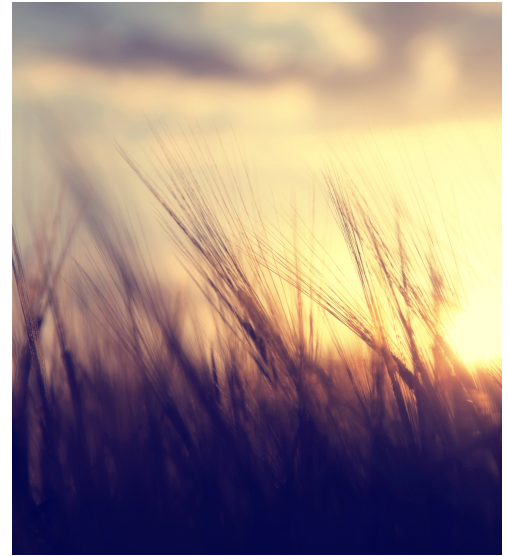
Weekly Scripture & Reflection

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” - 2 Chronicles 7:14

This verse comes to us from the story of Solomon’s dedication of the Temple. After the dedication, God speaks to Solomon about the importance of the Temple as a place of intercession, where God’s people can come to seek His face in the midst of catastrophe. There are several details within the verse that strike me as relevant to the work of Anti-Racism. First is the recognition that sin is both individual and communal. Therefore, healing from sin and injustice must be communal as well. We must examine not just our individual attitudes, but the ways in which we contribute to racist systems, patterns, and cultural norms. Secondly, healing cannot occur without humility. The very first thing God asks His people to do in

times of crisis is to humble themselves. So often, conversations on racism become places of great insecurity and fear for white people. We fear being viewed in a negative light, and we fear acknowledging our own complicity. But we cannot make something right without first acknowledging what was wrong, and we cannot grow as individuals or communities without acknowledging our deficiencies. Third, God asks His people to pray, to seek His face, and to turn from their wicked ways. After we have humbled ourselves, we can acknowledge that we do not know the solutions to the problems facing our nation. We seek wisdom from God, as well as from the wise people who have lived and studied

And finally, we work. We set goals, and we actively look for practical steps by which we can set right what is wrong. Only then will we receive our goal: communal healing.



Intentions for the Week of Feb 14-20

- We pray that COVID-19 vaccines would be distributed quickly, safely, and with equity. We know that this pandemic has disproportionately harmed low-income and BIPOC communities, and so we pray that these communities and their needs would not be forgotten.
- On Thursday, body-cam footage was released that showed officers of the Rochester NY police department handcuffing, pepper-spraying, and verbally abusing a nine-year-old Black girl. While the officers involved have been suspended, there is still much to be done to secure justice for this child and her family. We pray for healing, for justice, and for a world where Black children are treated with the same protection, care, and gentleness as white children.
- During Black History Month, we pray for honest examination and celebration of the numerous contributions Black Americans have made to this country. We pray that our nation’s history would be taught truthfully, without sanitizing or ignoring the chapters that make the dominant culture uncomfortable. We pray for the empowerment of Black youth, who so often are taught a view of history that leaves no space for them.

A Closing Prayer

BY DEBRA MOONEY, PHD

Dear God,

In the effort to dismantle racism, I understand that I struggle not merely against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities – those institutions and systems that keep racism alive by perpetuating the lie that some members of our family are inferior and others superior.

Create in me a new mind and heart that will enable me to see brothers and sisters in the faces of those divided by racial categories.

Give me the grace and strength to rid myself of racial stereotypes that oppress some in my family while providing entitlements to others.

Help me to create a nation that embraces the hopes and fears of oppressed people of color where we live, as well as those around the world.

Help me to heal your family making me one with you and empowered by your Holy Spirit.
Amen.