

SEPTEMBER PRAYER CYCLE

The International Decade for People of African Descent: A 2020 Prayer Cycle: Part 4 (September 2020)

Introduction to the Decade

The General Assembly of the United Nations has declared 2015–2024 to be the [International Decade for People of African Descent](#). In proclaiming this Decade, the international community is recognizing “that people of African descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected.”

As people of faith, we know every part of humanity is a reflection, an embodiment of the wisdom and power of God. Yet all of our collective humanity has been diminished and ruptured through the enslavement of African peoples and the colonization and exploitation of those same peoples’ land.

One of the ways the church is engaging with the Decade is by doing targeted work towards combatting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances faced by people of African descent. We know that prayer has the power to transform and amplify our actions. We therefore invite people to pray during this midway point in the Decade for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of people of African descent.

For more information on how The United Church of Canada is engaging in this Decade, visit the [Anti-racism webpage](#) or watch the [introductory video](#) created in conjunction with our full communion partner the United Church of Christ (USA).

How to Use This Prayer Cycle

This Prayer Cycle will be released throughout 2020; all parts will be made available for download in the [worship section](#) of the United Church website and on the [Anti-racism webpage](#).

Consider sharing your prayers on social media (use the hashtags #AfricanDescent, #UCCan, #UCC). A daily schedule of intercessions is suggested in this resource for Part 4.

- **September:** Lamenting human rights abuses faced by those of African descent
- **October:** Naming injustices faced by those of African descent

September

[For each day please add specific examples of African Descendant people related to each intercession and include the hashtag #AfricanDescent.]

Lamenting has an important place in the life of faith. We lament in the face of injustice, wrongs, and calamities. However, lamenting is not to mourn. We are not hopeless when we lament. When we lament, we acknowledge the pain and the suffering, we name the wrongs and injustices, but we do so with hope. Hope, believing that we are being heard and that the One who hears will respond.

During this month we lament for the human rights abuses faced by those of African descent. We lament and pray for:

1-Sep		The higher death rate of people of African descent from COVID-19
2-Sep		Health facilities in many countries in Africa and the Caribbean that are struggling to provide adequate health care in the face of COVID-19
3-Sep		Black youth and children who live in fear for their lives because of the colour of their skin
4-Sep		Black women who are forced to take lower-paying jobs despite their qualifications
5-Sep		The high murder rates and violence experienced by trans women of African descent
6-Sep		The experience of Black clergy in the church who face discrimination, and who find it more difficult to secure calls and appointments in ministry
7-Sep	Labour Day	People who are forced to work in abusive or exploitative situations
8-Sep		Immigrants of African descent who face discrimination
9-Sep		The refusal of some in our society to acknowledge and confront systemic racism
10-Sep		The history of racial surveillance, over-policing, and mass incarceration of Black people
11-Sep		Black women who are sexualized or who live or work in the context of gender-based violence
12-Sep		The alienation and rejection faced by LGBTQIA2S+ people of African descent from their families

13-Sep		Institutional racism embedded in the policies and practices of the church
14-Sep		Higher unemployment rate for Black people in Canada
15-Sep		Microaggressions faced by people of African descent
16-Sep		Systemic racism present in our systems to dispense justice
17-Sep		Racial profiling and carding by many police departments against Black people
18-Sep	UN International Equal Pay Day	Black women being paid lower than the average wage paid to all women
19-Sep		Bullying and ostracism faced by LGTBQIA2S+ youth of African descent in communities and schools
20-Sep		The association of the church in the past with racist groups such as the KKK
21-Sep		The difficulty of Black people in finding higher-paying jobs because of employment discrimination
22-Sep		The unfair profiling of women of African descent as “drug mules”
23-Sep		Systemic racism present in our health systems
24-Sep		The destruction of family because of higher incarceration rates of Black people
25-Sep		Black women, who have higher representation in unemployment rates
26-Sep		Lack of sensitivity and care for the mental health of people of African descent
27-Sep		The apathy or cynicism of people toward issues of anti-Black racism
28-Sep		Higher rates of Black people living in poverty
29-Sep		Rendering people of African descent as invisible and treating them as non-human
30-Sep		Systemic racism present in the education system, resulting in higher drop-out rates and lower educational achievements for Black youth