

**Friday, August 23, 2013**

**Interfaith Prayer for the Occasion by Rev. Carolyn L. Boyd**

**Woolly Mammoth Theater Presents: From Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin:**

**A Town Hall Meeting on Black Bodies and American Racism**

**Dear Creator and Sustainer:**

We are grateful for the opportunity to come from across the four directions of the city, from ward 1 to ward 8, surrounding metropolitan communities, from different social-economic backgrounds, from varying religious traditions and beliefs, secular views, and no particular religious practices at all. We come from different communities and organizations. We come with diverse views, expectations, life styles, hopes and fears.

We honor this sacred and joyful space we create today; here at Woolly Mammoth Theatre. We anchor Woolly Mammoth more richly into the hearts and minds of our community. We appreciate the role it plays in bringing us together this evening for a conversation, reflection, understanding and community.

We feel the pain of injustice. We know the hurt of being invisible. We understand anger that saps our life force. But, we also know hope. We know faith ...in community... in something bigger than ourselves.

May we be open to others' ideas and beliefs, respectful of our differences, not threatened by them. Let us invite the discourse.

May we grow in understanding and compassion for those shoes we do not walk so comfortably in. May we be patient with ourselves as we explore difficult and challenging "inner" space often shut so tightly by the hustle and bustle of life. Grant us strength, courage and grace to do the hard work of justice.

As we work, laugh and cry together; may we find common ground, common hope and common sense solutions. Enable us to move forward with a shared purpose and time tested trust.

May we be united by love, justice and peace. May we treasure each other as special jewels and sacred hearts. May we let go of our fear... our privilege, our power. May we trade rugged individualism for a renewal of community.

May we be open to see the full humanity of "the others." May we be open to new ways of living community. May we be open to new ways of being together.

Grant us wisdom to see a new better, brighter day. Grant us understanding in each other. Grant us faith in the process of dialog. Help us to act... compassionately, effectively, and justly, in integrity.

May we be blessed for walking this courageous and dangerous path: staring racism, ignorance, hate and fear directly in the eyes.

We commit to do what we can in our own unique and special ways to stop racial profiling, school to prison pipeline, declining employment opportunities, health care disparities and devaluing of black and brown men and boys.

We lift up the memories and lives of all black men who died literally and symbolically at the hands of fear and hate. We lift up the freedom fighters, peace makers and way-showers who gave their lives for civil rights, human rights, women rights, children rights, GLBTQI rights, labor rights.

We offer our gratitude and blessings to the young and inspiring generation of artists, activists, organizers, entrepreneurs, community and business leaders who come with the right stuff, at the right time and in the rite season-- of now.

Bless those tonight who will share their wisdom, their stories and their journeys. May we be enriched. May we tap into the creative energy of the universe and be more deeply connected to our community.

In the name of justice, righteousness and liberation, we say thank you.

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