The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of watercolor-style feathers. The feathers are rendered in various shades of blue, from light sky blue to deep navy blue, with soft, blended edges. They are scattered across the white background, creating a textured and artistic feel.

Justice Devotional: Equity and Inclusion

A Month of Cornerstone Practices:
Justice, Compassion,
Devotion, Worship

CENTENARY UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH'S
ADVOCACY TEAM



*If you have come here to
help me, you are wasting our
time. But if you have come
because your liberation is
bound up with mine, then
let us work together.*

- Lilla Watson

The Guide

How to Use This Devotional Guide

This Devotional Guide on Equity and Inclusion grew out of conversations during our Advocacy Team meetings.

Our team would like to welcome you into these pages during the month of May and beyond. We invite you to move into this guide with an open mind, heart and soul.

Our first invitation is to consider taking the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge from ProHabits. The weekday prompts you receive in your inbox are meant to raise consciousness as well as offer opportunity for dialogue and action. The intention of this challenge is to not only raise your consciousness level but to also create a habit around viewing the world through the lens of equity and inclusion. The more we do this the stronger our “justice muscles” strengthen. Here is more information on the Racial Equity Challenge and a link to sign up for the challenge.

21-Day Racial Equity Challenge by ProHabits. Learn about Prohabit’s 21-Day Challenge by watching this video:

www.tinyurl.com/2dt5y8jr

Use this link to sign up to take the 21-day challenge:

www.tinyurl.com/256f6uk5

If you would like a single reference page with all of the links contained in this devotional, please visit:

www.mankatocentenary.org/devotional

The Guide

How to Use This Devotional Guide

Our second invitation is to move through this weekly guide provided within these pages. The guide is designed to offer opportunity for reflection. There is a poem for each week followed by prompts for further education and action. The prompts were designed around the Wesleyan Cornerstones of Justice, Compassion, Devotion and Worship. Our team asks you to move into this guide with tenderness and care towards self and the people you will meet in the various poems and resource materials along the way. We have included a section with additional resource materials to deepen your level of consciousness.

We offer blessings on your journey. This is a journey we must do together. Jesus is there with us encouraging us to crack open our hearts to allow the light of Justice, Equity and Inclusion to shine in us and flow through us into the world. John O'Donohue offered this in his blessing, For a New Beginning, "Awaken your spirit to adventure; Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk; Soon you will be home in a new rhythm, For your soul senses the world that awaits you."

The world awaits beautiful YOU.



A Message

A Message from Centenary's Advocacy Team

*And perhaps we give a little to the poor, If the generosity should seize us
But if anyone of us should interfere In the business of why there are poor
They get the same as the rebel Jesus*

– **Jackson Brown**

There is a reason John Wesley names Compassion and Justice as separate faith practices. Like Worship and Devotion, acts of compassion and acts of justice may overlap at times, but they require very different expressions and achieve very different results.

Compassion is supportive and complementary. Justice is often disruptive and unsettling. It requires more than a kind heart. Justice requires an open mind and the willingness to admit failure without admitting defeat. Some acts will involve painstaking restoration while others demand razing structures and reframing systems.



True justice cannot be achieved without a shift in power: those in power must be prepared to put it down, those seeking justice must be prepared to pick it up, and neither task is easy. This course plays out over and over within the Bible as the mighty are brought low and the meek are raised up. Think for

a moment, we often read the Bible from the perspective of Jesus' disciples, or in-line with the Israelites. We see ourselves as God's Chosen People. But what if we spent more time reading it with the assumption that we are the Egyptians or the Pharisees—oppressing God's People? Are we ready and willing to kneel down?

The Bible makes it crystal clear that working to shift the balance of power is difficult and dangerous, but God's reward is everlasting. So let us engage in the practice of justice. Let us disrupt and dismantle. Let us lay down our power and lift up the stories of our less powerful siblings. Let us follow in the footsteps of the rebel Jesus.



Poetic Reflection ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

I, Too

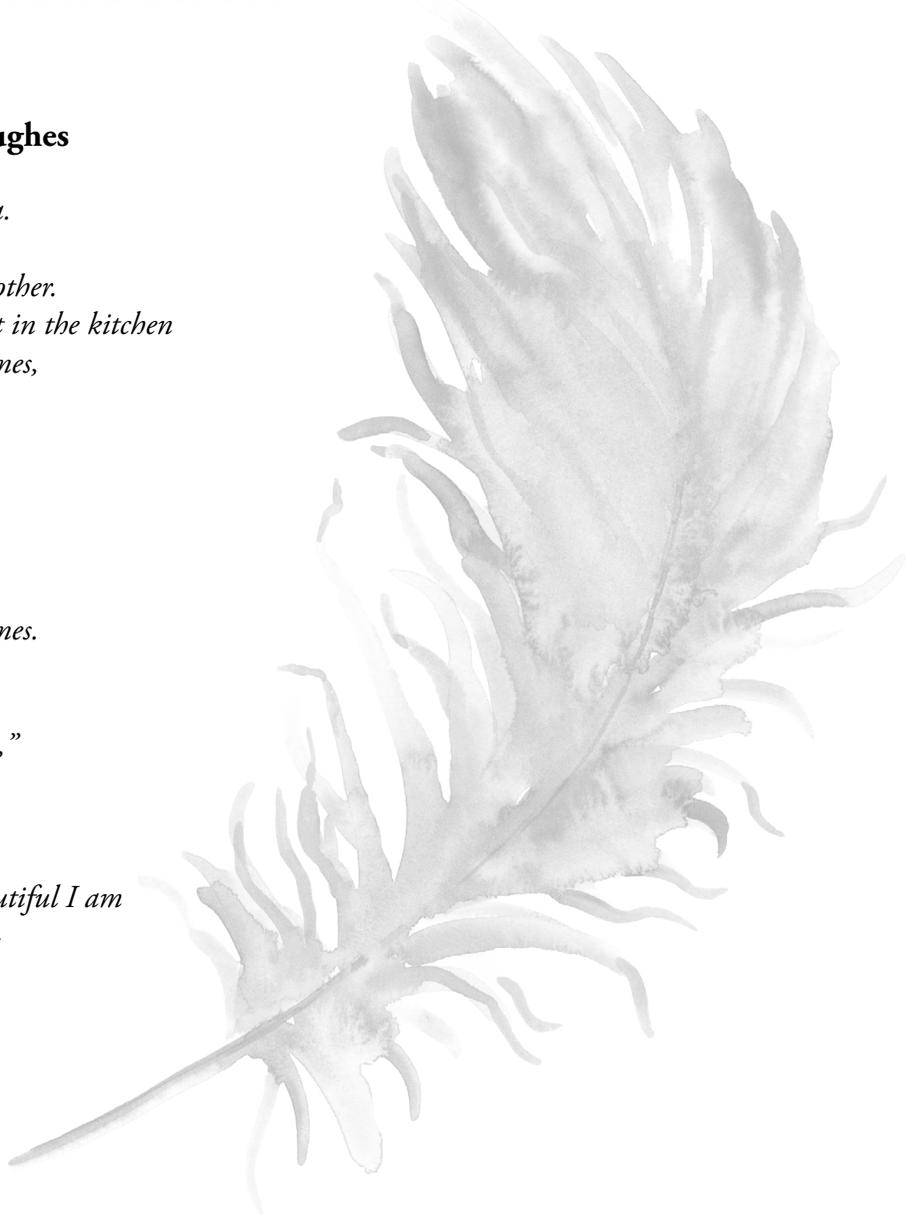
By Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

*I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.*

*Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.*

*Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, am America*



Cornerstone Practices

Weekday Commitment

- » ProHabits-Sign up here:
www.tinyurl.com/256f6uk5

Justice

- » On YouTube, view Amplify Black Voices MN Videos #1 and #2. Listen to what local leaders teach us about racism. Reflect upon the message. What action might you take? Write it down on your Week One Reflection Page:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQVljlZO8lQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUjBUE57-Nk>

Compassion

- » Consider how you can become a more supportive ally for people. On YouTube, view the short video, 5 Tips for Being an Ally:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dg86g-QlM0>
- » Read the Charter for Compassion and consider signing the Charter:
<https://charterforcompassion.org>
- » Consider a donation to Connections Shelter:
<https://www.connectionsshelter.org>

Devotion

- » View the 501 Monday-Friday Daily 5:00 PM Prayer on Centenary's Facebook Page or read it daily at a time of your choosing.
- » Prayer Focus: For equity, inclusion and justice for our Black, Brown and Asian siblings.
- » On your next shopping trip to the mall or grocery store, intentionally notice the diversity of people you encounter.

Worship

- » View Centenary's On-Line Sunday Service. View and reflect upon the message through the lens of Equity and Inclusion. Imagine: What could the message say to a Black man?

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Week One

May 3rd - May 7th, 2021

Self-Reflection Page ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Thoughts, Ideas and Action



Poetic Reflection ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Iris Song

By Rickey Laurentiis

*You go outside and the trees don't know
You're black. The lilacs will chatter and break
Themselves real bloom, real boon,
No matter your gender. You matter.
Who in you is most material, so
You matter.
Your afro gone touch the sky.
Come up from the ground looking extra fly,
Come up from the ground looking extra, fly,
I will touch the sky. I—open my mouth,
And my whole life falls out.*

» To read more poems from Rickey Laurentiis,
follow this link from Poets.org:
https://poets.org/poet/rickey-laurentiis#poet_works



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Cornerstone Practices

Weekday Commitment

- » ProHabits

Justice

- » Take the Harvard Implicit Association Test to better understand your racial biases - The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report. The IAT may be especially interesting if it shows that you have an implicit attitude that you didn't know about:
implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

Compassion

- » Curate a collection of images of bodies different from yours.
- » Donate to a local non-profit that supports racial justice- Greater Mankato Diversity Council, YWCA, MCC Refugee Services, NAACP Mankato
- » Discover and donate to a MN non-profit that is led by a Black person, Indigenous person, or person of color:
givemn.org (Search BIPOC Led)

Devotion

- » View the 501 Monday-Friday Daily 5:00 PM Prayer on Centenary's Facebook Page or read it daily at a time of your choosing.
- » Prayer Focus: Loving Kindness to our Earth Siblings - May You Be Safe, May You Be Happy, May You Be Healthy and May You Live With Ease and Peace
- » Light a candle. Reflect on the results of your Implicit Bias Test. What did you learn? Were you surprised? Remember- this is a test to raise your level of consciousness on racial bias not to create shame and guilt. It is an opportunity to learn and grow as a beloved child of God. Treat yourself with radical self-love.

Worship

- » View Centenary's On-Line Sunday Service. View and reflect upon the message through the lens of Equity and Inclusion. Imagine: What could the message say to an Asian woman?

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Self-Reflection Page ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Thoughts, Ideas and Action



Poetic Reflection



Still I Rise

By Maya Angelou

*You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.*

*Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.*

*Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.*

*Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?*

*Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.*

*You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.*

*Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?*

*Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.*

*Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.*

Cornerstone Practices ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Weekday Commitment

- » ProHabits

Justice

- » Join the Facebook Group or sign up for weekly emails from Invisible St. Peter/Greater Mankato to learn about and participate in the many justice activities this group plans. It also has a wealth of resources related to justice issues:
indivisiblespgm.weebly.com
- » Identify and intentionally support local BIAPOC businesses.

Compassion

- » Care for your body by practicing self-love. Our bodies are a creation of God, being made in God's image. Find a fun way to move your body. Drink water. Give your body plenty of rest. Look in the mirror and say, "I Love You!". Consider this quote by Sonya Renee Taylor from her book, *The Body Is Not An Apology-The Power of Radical Self-Love*: "Radical self-love invites us to love our bodies in a way that transforms how we understand and accept the bodies of others." Consider a donation of feminine hygiene products to:
CADA: cadamn.org/donate-goods.php
Partners for Housing: partnersforhousing.org/donate/

Devotion

- » View the 501 Monday-Friday Daily 5:00 PM Prayer on Centenary's Facebook Page or read it daily at a time of your choosing.
- » Prayer Focus: Safety of our transgender siblings.
Consider setting aside one day (maybe Saturday) to observe Sabbath. Take a technology holiday. Spend time in nature. Move slowly. Observe. Go to downtown Mankato. Again, move slowly. Notice people. Look at the silo mural project. Reflect on its meaning. Be intentional in your noticing.

Worship

- » View Centenary's On-Line Sunday Service. View and reflect upon the message through the lens of Equity and Inclusion. Imagine: What could the message say to someone with physical limitations?

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Self-Reflection Page ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Thoughts, Ideas and Action



Poetic Reflections ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Caged Bird

By Maya Angelou

*A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.*

*But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.*

*The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.*

*The free bird thinks of
another breeze
and the trade winds soft
through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on
a dawn bright lawn
and he names the sky his own*

*But a caged bird stands on the
grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a
nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his
feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.*

*The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.*

Rosa

By Rita Dove

*How she sat there,
the time right inside a place
so wrong it was ready.
That trim name with
its dream of a bench
to rest on. Her sensible coat.
Doing nothing was the
doing:
the clean flame of her gaze
carved by a camera flash.
How she stood up
when they bent down to
retrieve
her purse. That courtesy.*



Cornerstone Practices ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Weekday Commitment

- » ProHabits

Justice

- » On YouTube, view Amplify Black Voices MN Videos #3 and #4. Listen to what local leaders teach us about racism. Reflect upon the message. What action might you take? Write it down on your Week Four Reflection Page:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qq--DJaFu8s>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sp9X2T14SY>
- » Learn more about how you can be involved in the Mapping Prejudice Project, which exposes harmful racial covenants related to housing. There is an effort in Mankato to bring the project to our own community:
<https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu>

Compassion

- » Spend time in nature this week. Walk slowly. Observe the beauty of the Earth. Bring a bag and collect the garbage along your route. Consider how we all have to share this Earth home that God created in love. God created us with love- all beings. Reflect upon the intersectionality of Earth Justice and Racial Justice; how our siblings of color are more deeply impacted by the climate crisis. Consider this: What is our responsibility in Earth Justice? What daily actions might you take going forward related to the climate crisis? Write this down on your Week Four Reflection Page.
- » Learn more about the climate crisis from this organization: Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light:
<https://www.mnopl.org>
- » Consider volunteering or donating to Holy Grounds:
<https://www.mankatocentenary.org/holy-grounds>

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Devotion

- » View the 501 Monday-Friday Daily 5:00 PM Prayer on Centenary's Facebook Page or read it daily at a time of your choosing.
- » Prayer Focus: Our responsibility to and the actions required for Earth Justice
- » Consider the actions in the prayers at this website:
<https://www.theologyofwork.org/resources/a-daily-examen-for-living-as-an-antiracist-person>

Worship

- » View Centenary's On-Line Sunday Service. View and reflect upon the message through the lens of Equity and Inclusion. Imagine: What could the message say to an Indigenous child?

One-Year Observance of George Floyd's Death

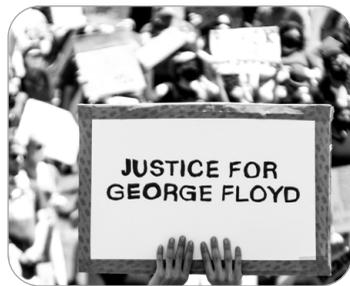
» Prayer Focus: For courage and a voice to speak up and act if you witness acts of injustice so that all God's children may experience wholeness, peace, equity, justice and inclusion, particularly our Black, Brown, and Asian siblings

Poetic Reflection ○ ○ ○

won't you celebrate with me

By Lucille Clifton

*won't you celebrate with me
what i have shaped into
a kind of life? i had no model.
born in babylon
both nonwhite and woman
what did i see to be except myself?
i made it up
here on this bridge between
starshine and clay,
my one hand holding tight
my other hand; come celebrate
with me that everyday
something has tried to kill me
and has failed.*



Self-Reflection Page ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Thoughts, Ideas and Action



501 Advocacy Prayer

*God of all lives, who teaches us through one another,
we in our ego-driven lives have sinned against our siblings,
treating them with disregard and causing them harm.*

*Creator, we humbly and with open hearts and minds
seek your grace and forgiveness.*

*May we actively work to become anti-racist,
to do no more harm to our black, brown and Asian siblings.*

*Give us the discipline to seek justice in every day, in every way:
to embrace discomfort and weariness of spirit,
as we have asked our black, brown and Asian siblings to do;
and to give space and weight to voices on the margins.*

*Creator, infuse our being with your wise guidance.
May justice prevail. May it wash over all beings.*

May it be so.

Written in December 2020 by the Centenary Advocacy Team

Videos from Unpacking Racism

Video: Structural Racism by Dr. Ibram Kendi (75 min.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqMUHXgQKOc>

Video: Structural Racism by Jon A. Powell (65 min.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ii4pLywfGnU>

Video: Cracking the Code (60 min.)

<https://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/cracking-the-codes-the-system-of-racial-inequity/>

Video: Allegories on race and racism by Camara Jones (20 min.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNhcY6fTyBM>

Video: A Trip To The Grocery Store (4 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTvU7uUgjUI>

Video: Bike Thief Video (4 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge7i60GuNRg>

Video: "Are you biased? I am" (9 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq_xYSOZrgU&vI=en

Video: History of Whiteness - duration 3:44 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxnVKIrsIkM>

Video: White Riots vs. Black Protesters - duration 2:53 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGJMgCn0fQs>

Video: Ideas for Not Being a Bystander

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krqcbiRu0ys>

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The Demography of the United States

Video: The Racial Mosaic of America by Manuel Pastor (60 mins.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ElrJ4XgexEM>

Article: ‘Black and Asian unity’: attacks on elders spark reckoning with racism’s roots:

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/feb/21/black-and-asian-unity-attacks-on-elders-spark-reckoning-with-racisms-roots?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Settler Colonialism and Native American/Indigenous People Erasure:

Article: Native Americans ‘Left Out in the Cold’ Under Trump Press Biden for Action:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/us/politics/native-americans-biden.html?referringSource=articleShare>

Article: ‘This is the Way We Rise’ Reinvigorates Native Hawaiians Fight for Justice At Sundance Film Festival:

<https://nativenewsonline.net/arts-entertainment/this-is-the-way-we-rise-reinvigorates-native-hawaiians-fight-for-justice-at-sundance-film-festival>

Podcast: Reservation Math: Navigating Love in Native America:

<https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/sidedoor/reservation-math-navigating-2gwWBadJc8X/>

Podcast: Episode 76: Native American Reservations (17 mins.)

<https://www.civics101podcast.org/civics-101-episodes/ep76?rq=native>

Anti-Racism Resource List: An excellent beginner’s resource list on Anti-Racism

<http://antiracismforbeginners.com/>

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Three Resources on why we must say “Black Lives Matter”:

Article and Videos specifically for children and youth:

<https://www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/racism/reasons-all-lives-matter-doesnt-work-in-terms-simple-enough-for-a-child/>

Article and Videos:

<https://www.vox.com/2016/7/11/12136140/black-all-lives-matter>

Article and Videos:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/all-lives-matter-black-lives-matter/>

Reflection

Final Poetic Reflection ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

We Are Worthy By Elandria Williams



*We are worthy
Not because of what we produce
But because of who we are
We are divine bodies of light and darkness
You are not worthy because of what you offer, not because of what is in your mind, not for the support you give others, not for what you give at all
We are worthy and are whole just because
In this great turning, in this great pandemic, in this radical readjustment and alignment
We are not disposable, we are needed, we are the very people that have withstood everything that has been thrown at us as a people and as Maya Angelou would say
Still I Rise
We arise from the pain
We rise from the grief
We arise from the limits people place on us and the limits we place on ourselves
We rise to be the children and the ancestors
We rise to be our true selves
Our true selves in relationship to our families and communities
Recognizing our liberating and whole selves
Honoring them and others as we strive for abundant communities, abundant lives, abundant relationships, and abundant values and cultural manifestations
We are worthiness personified
I, you, and we are worthy and deserve a life where we are not always fighting for our existence
Imagine what we could create if we were not always in the struggle
Imagine what we could envision if we could just be let to just go there
So tired of always having to resist, to fight, demanding, pushing
To everyone that has the courage, the power, the ability to co-create what we want and need*

Reflection

while rooting in what we can't lose and who we are

You are the visionary

You are the hope

You are our ancestors dreams

No you might not ever end up on some list somewhere

*But you are on a list in someone's heart and mind And if it's in how you move in the world so
people can see by example*

You are the embodiment of what we need

Thanks to all that are the embodiment

The embodiment not of productivity but the embodiment of radical love, care and sanctuary

It's time

Embodiment time

Embodiment

Living ones values out loud

Let me everyday live my values out loud

Let us everyday live our values out loud

Embodying our values

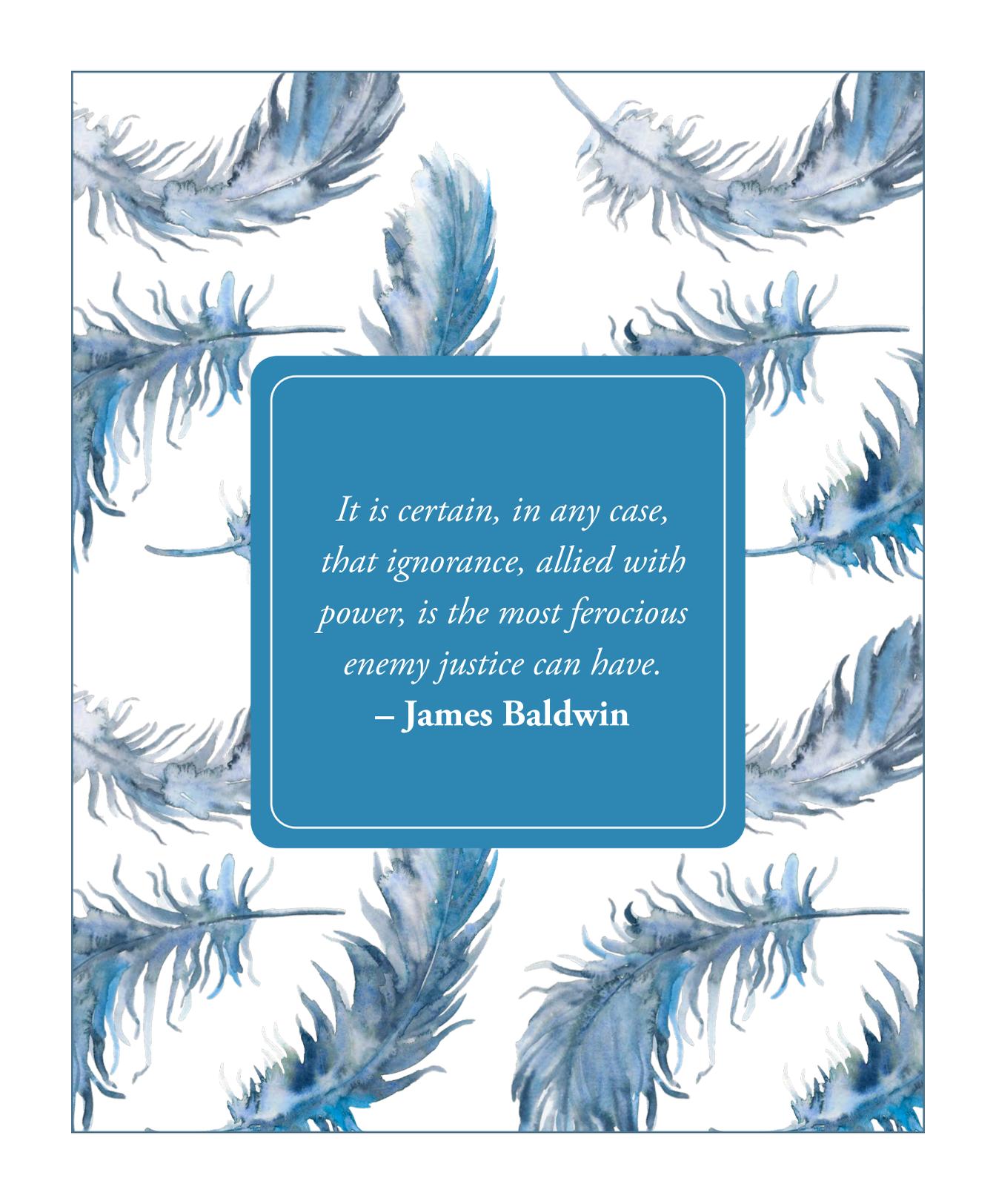
Not the productivity quotient

Beyond productivity

Past productivity

True embodiment

Life

The background of the entire image is a repeating pattern of watercolor-style feathers in various shades of blue and teal, set against a white background. The feathers are scattered and overlap, creating a textured, artistic effect.

*It is certain, in any case,
that ignorance, allied with
power, is the most ferocious
enemy justice can have.*

– James Baldwin