

## On the Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act

*On July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964, one of the most significant civil rights achievements in United States history.*

God, in your graciousness, you have guided us on the path to justice.  
We are grateful for the signing of the Civil Rights Bill in 1964.  
We celebrate the passing of this bill, which was so long overdue.

We remember all those who risked so much in the struggle  
For dignity, for full citizenship, and for civil rights in the U.S.  
We stand with those who are still struggling  
For rights and for justice.

We remember the songs and spirituals  
That sustained your people's spirits  
During the Civil Rights movement, and they hold us once again.  
These songs reminded us that we could be strong in solidarity,  
Like trees planted deeply that could bend but would not break,  
Despite the hatred and violence that rained down upon them.

We remember the many people in the Civil Rights movement  
Were not afraid to let their light shine out as they joined the struggle,  
And we are reminded that all are given light that should be used  
To illuminate the darkness and to help us see a path ahead  
So Christians and Jews, Mexicans and Muslims, may walk together.

We honor the struggle of the past and the struggle of our time,  
As we celebrate the Civil Rights Bill and as we commit  
To carry forward the work for equal rights for all.

May we have the determination and discipline  
Of those who sang out "to pray on, to hope on, to walk on,  
and to work on" for justice and peace. Amen.

