Prayers for Community in a Time of Pandemic

13 March 2020
God of the good news that spreads faster than fear,
God of the courage that comes from the heart:
Be with us as anxieties rise
and with us as uncertainty grows.
Be with us when children ask difficult questions,
And with us when parents seem farther away.
Remind us that to be a community does not always mean
to be physically present beside those we know well.
It also can mean being spiritually present
with those who feel very alone;
and that you as our God, the God made flesh,
are also the God who calls us from the tumult
and tells us to be still
and know
that you are God
with us.
Amen.

14 March 2020
God of experts and amateurs,
in a time of great uncertainty,
we begin to realise how little we each know.
Yet you have placed within our community
those who speak from reason,
who know the science,
whose profession it is to protect.
May we hear the voices of informed wisdom,
and give thanks for what is already here:
the knowledge that overcomes ignorance,
the love that overcomes fear,
the community that includes the grace we all need.
Amen.

15 March 2020
God of new and renewed community,
where two or three are gathered in your name,
you promise to be there.
You promise also
to be in parishes that meet this week online,
and in congregations that courageously keep on keeping on,
and in churches that try something very different today,
and even when we find ourselves alone.
Our children sing in Sunday school that the church is not a building. Let us be the church together, wherever we are, gathered by your Spirit, as only your Spirit can gather. And may we find you already in our midst, as we close our eyes in prayer. Amen.

16 March 2020

God of the desert and God of the garden, your son went into the wilderness. And there he sat. And there he prayed. And there he dreamed of a life more abundant for others. As we root down for an uncertain time, and sit with unanswerable questions, may sprout new thoughts for those less able to rest, so that when we do leave this desert, we join others in a garden that thrives. Amen.

17 March 2020

God of the widow and God of the prophet, you told us a story of how a little oil and a little flour, and the kindness of community, saw a family through. Jar after jar was filled and stored. Remind us how a drop and a speck, a tap on the door, the willingness to believe in response to a need made all the difference in that story, and can make all the difference in ours, too. Amen.

18 March 2020

God whose breath hovered over creation, God whose breath brought wet clay to life: Be in each grounding breath that we take, The rise of our belly, The fall of our chest. Be in the kind word we extend, the offer of help, the note of concern.
Be in the prayer that we whisper, 
and the laugh that we share, 
so that even in a time of chaos, 
we might breathe into life a new creation. 
Amen.

19 March 2020
God of the branches, God of the vine, 
God of the fruit that will last, 
when much of the familiar is pruned away 
-- the work routine, the school run, 
the certainty of our day -- 
may we see what is good and true 
blossom in reassuring ways: 
colleagues working as one, 
children learning from home, 
families praying together. 
May these days of great disruption 
bear out what is always true: 
that we can reach others 
with the love you provide 
when our roots remain in you. 
Amen.

20 March 2020
God of the home and God of the pilgrim, 
we begin to dig in for an uncertain season, 
and embark on a journey together. 
This is a path we haven’t been on. 
Yet we know in each step 
you are there alongside us: 
a guide, a protector, a friend. 
May each day on the road bring us closer together 
closer to a land of grateful reunion 
closer to the place you call home. 
Amen.

21 March 2020

God of stilled waters, 
God of calmed seas, 
on a night of a difficult crossing 
as your friends began to lose faith, 
you awoke and hushed 
the turbulent waves 
with the power of unearthly peace. 
May we respect the sheer force 
of what we cannot control
and believe in the strength
that sleeps in this storm.
Amen.

22 March 2020

God of the Sabbath,
on this newest first day of creation,
your people gather in creative ways
to bear the image of God together.
As we worship and worry,
as we praise and pray,
let us pause
and acknowledge
all that happened this week.
And as we bring our fears and release our tears
let us see more clearly
that the world you have made
is still good.
Amen.

23 March 2020

God of the neighbour,
God of the stranger,
how many times have we left the house
and passed the homes of those
we barely know?
Yet you have known them.
And you know the people across the globe,
who have gone through what we will soon go through
and those who have yet to see what we now see.
The stranger is our neighbour
in this little world we’ve made.
May we no longer estrange our neighbour
in the world we build together.
Amen.

24 March 2020

God of our going out and our coming in:
each step we take today
needs to make space for others.
Each errand we run,
each purchase we make,
has to make sense for the whole.
We must consider how our lives
affect the lives around us.
This is not new.  
It has always been thus.  
But going forward, in this next step, 
may this truth finally come home.  
Amen.  

25 March  
God of the fire and God of the wind,  
God of the silent sound,  
when you speak to us,  
you do so in ways we may not expect  
but cannot ignore.  
Allow us in this time of frantic noise  
and eerie stillness  
to listen again to the wind  
and the earth,  
to the gentle whisper of you  
calling our name.  
And may we hear in your voice  
words of love and hope,  
the good news of your presence with us  
still.  
Amen.  

26 March 2020  
God of the one and God of the whole,  
be with those who are working from home today  
and those whose work keeps them from home.  
Be with those who won’t go beyond the front porch,  
and those who stay on the front line.  
Be with those who must choose between  
doing a job they know they can do  
and being the parent only they can be.  
May we each in our private worry  
hear your universal call  
to come, to lay down heavy burdens,  
and find a welcome rest.  
And then with our burdens lightened,  
may we help to hold the whole.  
Amen.  

27 March 2020  
God of honest emotions  
God of cathartic tears,  
it would be sadder if in these days  
we didn’t need a good cry,
a release from the body,
a moment to name how it feels.
We thank you that these tears
are not tears of weakness
but of witness.
They speak to a God
who wept as we do, and showed
human love is divine.
Amen.

28 March 2020

God of the heartbeat, God of the pulse:
every day we ring a bell
to call us all to prayer;
at 9am and 9pm,
for years and years and years.
Its surprising note cuts through our talk
and breaks our scheduled plans.
It interrupts our conflict
and disturbs our fragile peace.
Today, though there are very few
who are close enough to hear,
may its peel reach out to those whose lives
need reassuring sound,
and bring to all the shocking news
that you are always near.
We ring it as we always do
to call us all to prayer.
Amen.

30 March 2020

God of the seed and God of the branches,
you promised that a grain of faith
would be enough to move a mountain,
or better yet,
to make a nest for roosting.
May we now see the ripe fruition
of seeds planted long ago
by grand, motherly types
who sang us hymns we still can hum,
who showed us kindness
and quiet strength.
May we then grow in this new season
to plant a mountain-moving seed ourselves,
a shelter for tomorrow’s wings.
Amen.

31 March 2020

God of pan-demos, God of all-people, how odd that it takes a global disease to show us that we are all one: one species, one family one genomic form, one people dependent on you. There are some among us acutely at risk to an invisible, indiscriminate foe. We join in prayer for them and us, that in our shared vulnerability you would cure us of this sickness. And the other one, the one that divides us, so that in healing we might become whole. Amen.

1 April 2020

God of pastures and God of lambs, these new-born creatures of spring know nothing of the worry or anxiety of our last month. They know instead of the earth beneath them and the sky above, and a mother who cares for them daily. May we who are more experienced remind each other of the steadiness of your providence, the instinct in your protection, the simplicity of your love. And may we then with confidence find our footing in this new-born world. Amen.

2 April 2020

God of hills and valleys, the newsreader said the peak will come in mid-April, just as we are set to celebrate resurrection. We enter this shadowy valley
with verses half-remembered
about your rod and your staff,
and our not fearing.
May the memory of your goodness
follow us in these days;
may your presence with us now
provide a constant comfort;
and may this darkened valley
light up with the dawn of an Easter
not bound by any chart or calendar.
Amen.

3 April 2020

God who loves those we love,
God who loves those we don’t;
it is easy to empathise
with people who behave as we do,
and face what we fear.
But when the us means
those who seem part of the problem,
our Christ-like compassion is tested.
Can our us include those
who take short-sighted decisions?
Can our we mean those
who put others at risk?
Can this community extend to those
whose actions threaten the whole?
We pray that it can,
because it already does.
Your compassion has included us all.
Amen.

4 April 2020

God of believers, God of deniers,
God of those who don’t know:
faith assumes uncertainty.
The truth is hardly ever simple;
the path ahead rarely clear.
We turn to you in part because
we know not where to go.
Yet faith assumes assurance.
Faith remains, with hope and love,
when all else fades away.
As we step forth with you today,
grant us faith to trust ourselves,
and let us believe in the good you provide
5 April Palm Sunday

God of crowds and God of crowns: in your humility, on the back of a donkey, at the start of a week of great pain, you showed a determination to save us not with overwhelming force but with self-giving, revolutionary love. May we see in your life and death, and in your resurrection, the way to face the foes within. May we overcome our fears, and put down our selfish wants; may we stop our tendency to blame, and fight for others first. As you shield us from what we can't control, save us from ourselves. Amen.

6 April 2020

God of Lazarus and God of Judas, your great love raises the dead, and condemns what is wrong in this life. During this holiest of weeks we see hatred and brokenness, and hypocrisy; but also beauty, and mercy and undying love. Your death made clear what must come to an end: our fear, our waste, our selfishness. Yet we rejoice that in this dying lies our rebirth and that you will bring the world, and all the grace-filled good in us, back to life. Amen.

7 April 2020, John 12:20-36

God of the fallen grain, God of the children of light: It was in your being broken down that you were lifted up. It is in releasing our lives to others that we bear your lasting truth.
As we head further into this week, 
a community dispersed, 
may our relinquishing of self, 
and our selfless love for others 
broadcast wide the great good news 
that even in death there is glorious new life, 
and that darkness will not overcome it. 
Amen.

8 April 2020

God of the shared bread 
and the common purse, 
You broke bread with those 
who broke your trust and took 
more than they needed for themselves. 
You still do. 
May our shared response 
to a common threat 
lead us each to reconsider 
what we need and what we want, 
and how we divide what we have. 
Break who we are 
so that we can be more for others. 
Amen.

9 April 2020

God who washes our feet, 
God who commands us to love: 
before the prayers in the garden, 
and the stations of the cross; 
before the tomb and the spices 
and the stone they put in place, 
there was this moment 
when you showed us what it meant 
to be divine. 
May we not forget 
that the power to defeat death 
was not what you wanted us to imitate. 
It was to lay aside all other things 
and to love. 
Amen.

10 April 2020, Good Friday

God of the crowds crying, ‘crucify!’ 
God on the cross crying, ‘forgive them’:
by doing and not doing,
we have repeated that Friday scene
in countless ways,
in countless places,
to countless sons and daughters.
We know not what we do
even when we know too well.
We are now facing death in a new way.
And human frailty. And human need.
And human solidarity.
Perhaps as we begin to see as you see
the reality of who we are,
we can finally begin to love as you love,
answer compassionately the cries we hear,
and be able to forgive, ourselves.
Amen.

11 April 2020

God of grieving,
God of silence,
there is a strange gift in having time,
one whole day this holy week,
to sit with questions of why and how long
and to hear no response at all.
To rush from Friday to Sunday,
from death to resurrection,
wouldn’t do either justice.
Nor would it dignify the life of those
whose daily pain and grief
and constant pleas for justice
go unanswered in the world’s daily rhythm.
Let your silence fill this silence,
until our empty noise dies out.
Amen.

12 April 2020

God of unbounded joy,
God of undying love:
the women went to the tomb
to tend to the crucified dead
and came back the first preachers
of resurrection.
As we come back from our tomb today,
and begin to live again,
may we deliver with unbridled joy
what the world is dying to hear:
that death is never the end; 
that love remains what is most divine; 
and that you continue to live 
in the beating heart of our humanity. 
Amen.

13 April 2020

Risen and reconciling God, 
Your greeting after the grave 
acknowledged the trauma and turmoil 
of that time and our own. 
The message of peace 
was what your disciples needed to hear, 
and what the world needs now. 
When we are reunited 
with those from whom we've been separated, 
may our greetings, too, be of peace, 
and may we see all division in the light 
of your reconciliation 
and all crises in the context 
of your resurrection. 
Amen.

14 April 2020

God of princes, God of nurses: 
this disease is a great leveller. 
It has humbled our rulers 
and exalted your servants. 
As a prime minister recovers, 
because primary caregivers carried on, 
let us note this abnormal way of being: 
this proper appreciation of sanitation workers, 
and grocery clerks, and childcare providers; 
those in the field and those on the frontline, 
the ones packaging food 
and delivering medicine. 
And may we remember this abnormal 
is your normal 
so we don’t return to the way it was. 
Amen.

15 April 2020

God who comforts, God who disturbs: 
for some your Easter message 
lands when spring is at its softest,
disrupting our anxiety
with the gift of needed peace.
For others, though,
this season grows harsh;
words of comfort become harder to hear.
May we who can now absorb
these rays of warming light
store them up for darker days to come.
And for those whose current climate
keeps comfort out of reach
may they find your presence in their midst,
and with it the returning promise
of a new and brighter day.
Amen.

16 April 2020

God of constant change,
God of steadfast love:
so much of what is familiar
is being put to rest,
perhaps for a spell,
perhaps for good.
May we who believe in life after death
have faith to lay aside tired ways
and to trust that what is true
and good and life-giving
will re-emerge
from this cocooning tomb, transformed
into the fuller embodiment
of what always was.
Amen.

17 April 2020

God of the fertile earth,
God of the scattered seed:
there are many lessons
that could take root right now.
We give thanks
that when and where conditions are right
the truth lands in good soil and sinks in.
Just yesterday a 100-year-old man,
a captain in a textbook war,
a sower of an ancient truth,
walked the length of his garden,
and on that path a long-held power
burst open for the world to see.
May his example produce a crop a hundred-fold
to wake a dormant spirit in us all.
Amen.

(with reference to Capt. Tom Moore, who has raised over £17 million for the NHS by walking the length of his garden 100 times before his 100th birthday.)

18 April 2020

God of rolling waters,
God of ever-flowing streams:
the skies do seem clearer,
and the air cleaner,
and the world less littered with our mess.
The earth looks more itself these days,
its resilience on fuller display.
But human nature is also more evident
and your warning rings loud in our ears:
what comes out of our mouths can defile;
what rots in our hearts can corrupt.
May justice and righteousness bathe us,
and wash out our self-serving sin.
Let us then resume our part in creation
and breathe out the joy we breathe in.
Amen.

20 April 2020

Risen and revealing God,
you walked with us for a long time
before we knew who you truly were.
We talked about this world
as if we were the ones who saw it clearly.
Now that we more fully recognise
your continued presence with us,
give us eyes to see the beauty
that surrounds us,
as well as the problems
we have too long ignored.
And may our hearts then burn
with your illuminating and catalysing fire
that we might see the world that you envision.
Amen.

21 April 2020

God of every living creature,
God of every creeping thing:
a bird came into our garden, 
and we didn’t know its name. 
The common snipe, the internet said. 
‘Common,’ which suggests
our grandparents would have known, 
and their grandparents, too. 
When did we forget it’s normal 
to see and hear nature on our doorstep, 
and to appreciate the everyday?
Now that we’ve been stopped 
by this common threat, 
may we never let such knowledge, 
or such birds, become so rare.
Amen.

22 April 2020

God of the earth, 
God of each day: 
we pray 
that fifty years from now, 
this crucial moment we are in 
will be seen as the turning point 
when the world began to work 
not just to flatten the curve 
but to address the growing crisis 
that affects us all. 
May this fifty-first Earth Day 
be the first day of a new era 
when the only enemy we meet 
in the peoples of the earth 
is our apathy. 
Amen. 

(With reference to Earth Day, first celebrated in 1970. It helped spur the modern environmental movement and featured the message: ‘We have met the enemy, and he is us.’)

23 April 2020

God of providence, God of surprise, 
if this virus had struck 25 years ago, 
who among us could have 
teleconferenced with our grannies, 
or homeschooled our children 
in online classrooms? 
Who would have dreamt of the conversations 
we’ve had with the man who brings groceries 
bought with the tap of a screen in our palm?
This is not to question the greed that has birthed such convenience; nor to ignore the suffering of those who don’t have the luxury of asking. It is to give thanks that your providence adapts to the world we create, allowing human connection to survive. Amen.

24 April 2020

God of our daily bread, God of the crescent moon: as many on earth begin to observe a month of fasting and prayer, we all enter another month like none that have come before. In these irregular times, we will not break fast together, or commune around the same table. But we pray that you would unite us in our shared humanity, and that we would resolve to break our bread with those who are most in need, so that our chronic disease of division leads us not into a famine of compassion. Amen.

25 April 2020

God of rivals, God of scapegoats: we are quick to find someone to blame, even when no one deserves it. We look for ways to take care of our own, while ignoring those highest at risk. We manage to indulge in just enough empathy to make ourselves feel a lot better, but we rarely choose to sacrifice the idols we truly value. Scapegoated saviour, as we muddle along in this mess of being human, allow us to see ourselves in the ones we accuse or neglect, and your grace in the place of judgement. Amen.

27 April 2020
God of the protective fold,
God of the abundant life:
you did not form us
to live in fear of others
or in want of simple joys.
In your keep may we find
the abundance you came to provide:
a constant supply of the love we need
and an ever-opening expanse
of a life that is ours to explore.
Amen.

28 April 2020

God of those in plenty,
God of those in want:
this disease separates us
one from another.
It also exposes an underlying division
that has been there all along:
the difference between the haves
and the have-nots.
May the chasm finally close between
those who will wait this pandemic out
with stockpiles of reserves
and the luxury of rest,
and those who have been waiting too long
for a voice at the table,
a seat at the banquet,
a prayer that isn’t filled with pleas.
Amen.

29 April 2020

God at the bedside, God at the graveside:
in care homes and hospices,
in hospital wards,
your spirit remains present
when family cannot be near.
With a comforting word or silent prayer,
in the final minutes of breath,
you have spoken a message of peace
through nurses and doctors,
chaplains and priests:
a Samaritan response at this roadside.
We give thanks that even if a disease
would rob us, through separation,
of a healing moment at death,
you appear at our side, time and again
with embodied, miraculous life.
Amen.

30 April 2020

God of tumult, God of peace:
more will change
in the weeks and months to come.
Further landscapes of our normal
will be shaken to the ground.
Gradual movements will accelerate,
market trends will shift,
and they will sweep away
much of what we know.
And so we pray for what we need:
the reassurance of your strength
in the midst of our community;
and the life that returns
in fuller resurrection
after what we love is laid to rest.
Amen

1 May 2020

God of the humbled, God of the hopeful:
as the first nations emerge from lockdown,
they present a vision of a future
of people in parks
and restaurants and schools.
They also remind us of a reluctance
to adopt the measures they took.
Those who have learned respect
for what humans cannot control were ready:
stockpiled with equipment;
trained in procedures.
Those who relied too much on the myth
of our own invincibility were ill-prepared.
And so, as we work to join others in recovery,
may we meet them in understanding
the limits of humanity’s power,
and the hope that comes from humility.
Amen.

2 May 2020

God of the weary,
God of the burdened:
after six straight weeks,
it would be stranger
if fatigue didn’t set it,
not only for those
who fight for breath,
or are working countless shifts,
but for all those whose minds
are occupied with stress and worry,
laden with concerns for the future.
Turn our ear to your invitation
to come and rest a while.
Give us again what we struggle to hold:
the strength to let go of control.
Amen.

4 May 2020

God of the world we create,
God of the world you reveal:
may our way be not of escape,
but of further connection.
May our life be not for ourselves
but for you and others still.
May our truth be not
what we shape it to be.
Instead may we accept
the stranger and more glorious truth
of what already is:
a greater world available
through your divine and selfless love.
Amen.

5 May 2020

God of those on the frontline,
God of the ones they must leave behind:
this separation is hard enough as we’re kept
from normal routines,
and interactions with friends,
the freedom to do as we please.
Especially for those who go to work
to be at risk, and stay away,
may your spirit provide what phones cannot,
what screens only attempt to project
and what pixels fail to capture.
May your spirit be known in our flesh today,
so that an earthly father
might be present with his son,
and the mother on the ward
can hold tight to her child.
Amen.

6 May 2020

God of the blossoming tree,
God of the laurels of spring:
some should be branching out right now,
embarking on first careers.
What a time to be told
this time is ‘yours.’
As we hold this rising generation,
we know there is a type of grief
for a life we thought we’d have.
And so we pray especially for those
looking to step out on their own.
May our communities support their reach;
may their ventures grow more certain;
and may their prospects be evergreen.
Amen.

7 May 2020

God who speaks from out of the whirlwind,
and hears sighs that are too deep for words:
as we come to terms
with what we do not know –
a timeline for return,
a safe social distance –
as we struggle
to make sense of the world around us
and imagine what life will be like,
ground us in our kindness.
May a gracious word
begin our next encounter,
a patient thought
accompany our coming breath,
so that with little left in our control,
we may control ourselves
with grace and faith and compassion.
Amen.
8 May 2020

God of our greatest generation,
God of our rising generation:
may this moment,
this hinge in history
this date to give thanks
and take courage
see an heroic spirit of sacrifice
and can-do confidence
join a growing passion for justice.
Strengthen our determination to
meet again some sunny day
with a fuller of sense of ‘we’
so that our reunions will not be
simply the end of separation,
but the start of reconciliation
with those who have not gained
from our victories.
Amen.

9 May 2020

God of our finite selves,
God of our inward life:
unable to venture out,
our worlds could grow much smaller.
And yet
our path with you
can also lead
deep into our inmost parts,
to knitted secrets
we have not yet unwound,
to hidden thoughts
that you have loved.
Give us courage to explore
these darker, personal realms,
so that the broader peace
we hope to build
might rest upon a peace within.
Amen.

11 May 2020

God of the common ground
God of the space between:
a renewed spirit of community
has been at work these many weeks.
We rejoice in this even as we know that conflict remains part of what it means to be human. As we arrive at honest disagreement, may we not seek blindly to impose our solutions upon others (even if we know we’re right). Instead, may we listen and learn from those we oppose and look for more of your answer in the ground we give way. Amen.

12 May 2020

God of this latest moment, God of this lifelong path: we are meandering through unbounded time without clarity of an endpoint. Like Samuel in the night, or Mary in the garden, we remain lost until we know the voice of the one calling our name; the voice of one with an end in sight, the one who tells us that life has won. Take our fear and confusion. Give us purpose and peace. Replace anxiety with joy. Place us again in a world that you love so this moment can reopen our eyes. Amen.

13 May 2020

God of our hearts and minds, God of our nervous systems, as our eyes and ears try to take in another day of news, our little bodies absorb the shock of the biggest event of our lives. Help us make sense of what we honestly feel. Fear. Loneliness. Exhaustion. Anger. And in naming what lives in our most inner selves,
may we grow more human
with each other:
warm-blooded and social,
communicative and relational,
present to nurse, eager to soothe
the people we more fully can be.
Amen.

14 May 2020

God of the spoken and unspoken,
may this separation
cause us to crave
the joy of human closeness.
May our face-to-face
on-screen meetings remind us
that no-one is fully realised
in two dimensions.
May our careful, scheduled
encounters that relay
only the necessary materials
lead us to appreciate
the power of unplanned
togetherness,
those conversations that drifted,
the pauses that linger
for another round.
Amen.

15 May 2020

God with us
and God within us:
just because
we’re all going through it
doesn’t mean this is normal.
Every body’s a little stressed out,
‘out of our comfort zone.’
So we need to find a reserve of patience
with ourselves and everyone else.
We all could use a bit more compassion,
and the time to take a deep breath.
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Help us draw out our more tolerant selves,
the ones who can cope with this mess.
Give us the space to centre ourselves
and find you. At peace. In our midst.
Amen.
16 May 2020

God who commands us to love,    
God who remains God with us:    
your answer, your solution,    
your remedy for our ills    
is not a product we can hold    
or a lesson we can recite.    
It is a life,    
a story,    
an ongoing relationship.    
It is a life that lives on for us.    
It is a story we can be a part of.    
It is a relationship we enter with you    
and with others.    
Help us remain together in love,    
responsive to one another’s needs,    
and changed by our one-ness in you.    
Amen.

18 May 2020

God who searches;    
God who finds:    
the ninety-nine    
may have wondered where you went    
when you sought the one alone.    
Did they feel lost themselves    
without you there?    
Or did they know that you remain    
right where you always are:    
with each and all of those you love,    
wherever they may be.    
If we should feel your absence    
may we sense it as    
a movement towards    
the others who belong,    
so that one’s assurance of being safe    
is tied to the whole’s recovery.    
Amen.

19 May 2020

God of hidden roots,    
God of deeper wells:    
how marvellous to see    
the blossoms, not just of this spring,
but those of seeds  
planted years ago.  
Friends have rung and reconnected  
not just because there's time,  
but because friendship  
and community have been revalued  
in this economy.  
We give you thanks  
for experiences that were never  
isolated, but shared, and which have grown  
through intervening years to silently provide  
an ecosystem in which to live,  
fertile soil in which to thrive.  
Amen.

20 May 2020

God of the heavens above,  
God of the earth below:  
a killer whale  
stopped traffic when  
its dorsal fin was spotted  
cutting through the startled waves  
of our strong and stranger fjord.  
It pointed to the realms that we  
humans float between:  
the anxious world we occupy,  
and the murkier depths of meaning  
that we navigate with you.  
As it gulps air then dives below,  
reappearing to surprise,  
may we learn to emerge, as well,  
as those who join our deepest faith  
with the matters of this earth.  
Amen.

With reference to the sighting of orcas in Strangford Lough, 15 May 2020;  
additional inspiration from a sermon by Harry Emerson Fosdick

21 May 2020

God of hopeful signs and careful plans:  
as our initial panic subsides  
and the itch to get back to normal  
replaces a fear of spiking fevers,  
keep us wary and alert.  
May we carry a parcel of humility  
to remind us we are human.
We are still not immune to the dangers of overconfidence and impatience. We are just as susceptible now to the invisible sway of hubris, and the make-believe of thinking that we’ve done all we can do. May your enduring presence provide the stamina we lack so our confidence can increase with grounded joy. Amen.

22 May 2020

God of David, God of Ruth: the heroes you chose from among the people were time and again the ones pushed past the margins or forgotten or forced to prove their own worth. We pause to remember the frontline workers who gave their lives for the national health: Tariq and Afua and Onyenachi, Jennie and Norman and Lill; and all those whose families now grieve. And we pray in this silence that our sense of family and hero and nation extends beyond our inherited traits. Amen.

23 May 2020

God of our earthly tents, God of our guiding light: you led your people through a desert and resisted a permanent home. You knew that a life made together is a life on the move, on roads we’d rather not choose. Follow me, you said. Come and see, you said. Be with me, my people forever. As we travel along through this
‘land of unlikeness,’
a terrain of unsettling truths,
your city of reunion awaits.
May the strangeness we face
and the people who change us
assure us we’re on the right path.
Amen.

25 May 2020

God who gives life,
God of all who give life to others,
we are never alone in our sorrows,
and never alone in our joy.
Being human means to know
a tethered link to one another.
The pretty world we look upon
remains an empty vessel
if we do not fill our landscapes
with the memory of each other.
And so we give you thanks
that even in separation
and past the final cut of death
we remain your co-creators,
making life with those we love.
Amen.

26 May 2020

God of justice, God of mercy:
outrage at a smug politician
can be satisfying;
shining a light
on the powerful when
one assumes the rules don’t apply
can clarify what is just and unjust.
But keep us from turning
our search for fairness
into a hunt for a villain.
Remind us that outrage
will not comfort the mourning,
and can’t cure a mindless disease.
Our kindness will serve as the
best equaliser,
offered to both the great
and the good.
Amen.
27 May 2020

God of daily bread,
God of simple pleasures:
we ask for enough for today.
Help us give ourselves
the very thing we need:
a walk to clear the head,
a phone call that draws a familiar voice,
a brief exchange with a passer-by,
a gentle word of encouragement.
These little things and their significance
can be easily dismissed,
but it is often the non-grand gesture,
or an everyday routine,
or an in-the-moment whim
that reminds us that our God
was always there.
Amen.

28 May 2020

God of the lilies,
God of the ravens:
the wildflowers are having
an absolute field day;
the rabbits can’t believe their luck.
Left to do what she does best,
nature certainly shows off.
We, too, may see
which root emotion
will rise and come to flower.
We pray that instead
of the worry the world
has tried to plant,
it may be the hope
you sow inside.
Amen.

29 May 2020

God of refining fire,
God of softer light:
there is a harshness in the news,
stories of acute pain and grief;
anecdotes of increasing hardship.
And beneath the headlines
there grows a realisation of deep systemic brokenness: original sins of division on lines of race and class and power.
As the sun rises on a gentle May morning, may we remember its burning heat, which should consume this hateful mess, but also that it shines with the light and warmth we need to face our broken world. Amen.

30-31 May 2020

God of descending fire, God of Pentecostal streets: transform us into your people. May we listen to those who speak in the global language of protest -- shouts that are mistaken as foreign. Their tongues/our tongues tell of pain and fear in words we all know by heart. Send us out from our hiding to speak about love, to demonstrate the power of justice. And may we see the new community you make in the admission and forgiveness of sin. Amen.

1 June 2020

God of righteous anger, God of rippling peace: somewhere, far from sight, the tempestuous sea and this quiet bay connect in one great body of water, linked to rivers and streams that extend a backward reach to headwaters far beyond our shore. May we on this earth, separated by vastly different experiences,
kept apart by distance and
the barriers we make,
be united by your spirit,
that the pain of one
might be borne by all
through the channels of your peace.
Amen.

2 June 2020

God of law,
God of order:
sometimes there are no words
for the vanity on display.
Remind us that when we use your name
for loveless purposes that divide,
we speak a clanging noise
and your voice cannot be heard.
Amen.

3 June 2020

God of one and God of all:
from our many
may a unity appear.
Help us find a way to hold
our differences together.
Bring us to the recognition that
to be most fully human
is to champion the
full humanity of others.
Your earthly image
cannot be found in the mirror,
but in the eyes of varied faces that
reflect the incarnated divinity
in our own.
Amen.

4 June 2020

God of spring and God of summer:
the first cutting has occurred
and the crows are picking through
the heaps, looking out for harvesters
who will arrive to scoop this up.
The beauty of these long rows draws
our eyes up and our minds back
to what has happened
these last few months.
We ask that you would be with us
as we consider what we’ve lost
and also what we’ve found.
May we mark these moments well.
The birds see now the value
of what will feed many
through the winter.
Amen.

5 June 2020

God of grace and beauty,
God of the crooked shore:
we give you thanks for those
who reveal your grace with
a wisdom they wear so lightly,
in a strength they only use
to lift up other people.
The generosity that some show
in conversation, and in lessons
they impart through open silence,
provides a glimpse of
divine light to be found
in stories yet to be told,
in questions we still want to ask.
Amen.

6-7 June 2020

God of holy relationship,
God of distinct inclusion:
with you and in you
togetherness matters.
Remind us that ours
is not a life
of living for ourselves.
In being with
and for each other,
may we discover that
how we relate to
how we are different
shows the essence
of who we each are.
8 June 2020

God of cathartic tears,  
God of embodied joy:  
how good it is has been  
to see a familiar face,  
to hear comfort  
in a dear friend’s voice,  
and to share our grief  
with someone who knows.  
As we move through this unbounded  
and exhausting time  
may we note the moments  
when we’ve been our most human:  
when our bodies  
instinctively responded  
to the truth of being alive  
and a part of something greater.  
Amen.

9 June 2020

God of the scales held in her hands,  
God of the scales that fell from his eyes:  
we pray for those who have waited  
far too long for justice;  
and for those who have taken  
far too long to see  
that systems said  
to be balanced and blind  
work for some but not for all.  
May repentance come quick,  
not from a fear of being condemned,  
but in the hope of being set free  
from the see-saw of us-them, win-lose,  
and from the blindness of seeing  
only what we want to be true.  
Amen.

10 June 2020

God of each moment,  
God of all time:  
years from now  
2020 will still be present
in our collective memory; not just for ourselves or our families or this town, or this nation, but for all people, everywhere. May this shared experience, with its sorrow, its anxiety, its lessons and revelations be the beginning of a new ‘we,’ the us you’ve been with from the start. Amen.

11 June 2020
God who weeps with us, God who rejoices with us: as we mark the seriousness of this pandemic, and lament the extent of our brokenness, give us the faith to see that the power that lies beneath us and that holds us fast to you is the power of justice. Remind us of the presence of joy in the hearts of those who know that love and beauty and kindness will last when all that is empty fades away. Amen.

12 June 2020
God of our healthy fears, God of our courage and faith: there is a strengthening pull wanting to carry us back to what they call normal. But there is also cautious resistance and a reluctance to embrace all that was. Help us in this in between. As we venture out and relax restrictions, may we not forget the dangers, nor lose sight of what we’ve gained in a time of self-imposed limitation. Strengthen our patience to let this play out;
and may the lessons we carry
help us all to pull through.
Amen

13-14 June 2020

God of the plentiful harvest,
God of the shaken-off dust:
there is enough work to be done
and enough good to be found
that no defeat can be final,
no success a time to stop.
As we set out
to help heal this world,
remind us that our own power
will always be insufficient,
but that your limitless spirit can speak
through the words we proclaim
of the good news of heaven
come near.
Amen.

15 June 2020

God of the community well,
God of our individual needs:
we will draw from these days
a shared experience for years and years.
Yet each of us balances
this pandemic’s challenge
with private struggles and
dissimilar circumstances.
May we take into account
the additional weight
that we and our neighbours will carry,
so that as we lend (and accept from)
each other support
we can draw out more lessons
from this well of community,
and bring home all that we can.
Amen.

16 June 2020

God of constant assurance,
God who is forever new:
a life of faith is
not without risk.
There is no telling what
lies ahead when we choose
to let go of what has been.  
But as we set off on this next adventure  
of finding our newer and truer selves,  
remind us that it is in becoming  
that we remain  
the people you created us to be.  
Amen.

17 June 2020

God of revelation,  
God of unveiling:  
the truths that many would  
pretend to discover  
are truths that others  
could never avoid.  
May this time be the time  
of conversation about  
matters that have laid  
underneath fears and prejudices,  
and beneath a wilful blindness.  
May your revealing of  
what has always been  
change us and what is to be,  
so that in acknowledging each other  
and the sins brought to light  
we might never find such cover again.  
Amen.

18 June 2020

God of sisters and brothers,  
God of growth through conflict:  
we see raw heartbreak  
when our children realise  
how elusive fairness can be.  
We gasp with them  
as they learn that even childish pranks  
and playful teasing can draw real blood.  
Young tears can signal a realisation  
that words and actions born from fear  
can harm the ones we love.  
May our growth in this time  
reassure each other.  
And as members of a family  
you maternally adore,  
may an unquestioned bond now hold us  
as when a sibling seeks forgiveness.
Amen.

19 June 2020

God we see in familiar faces,
God in the strangers we think we know:
as we meet again and see each other
on the street or on a screen,
give us a moment to look again
and discover how people can change.
There are worlds within
each person we love,
and also within those we don’t,
and steps to take from point a
to point b that we can walk together.
As we set out to reach the good ahead
may we greet what’s new inside us.
Amen.

20-21 June 2020

God of uncovered secrets,
God of fearless truth:
to have faith in your goodness
is to trust
that after all we would hide
is revealed,
and all of our whispers are heard,
your undying love will remain,
and your truth will stand unchanged.
May we forgo our protection of self,
and find life made whole in shalom.
Amen.

22 June 2020

God of midsummer light,
God of midwinter snow:
as our tilted earth
rounds the bend and turns
along its course,
we note the connection we have
with those around the world,
whether they are basking
in the fullness of the season
or rejoicing in the sun’s return.
May we know that even though
our highs and lows will rarely coincide,
the story of this year
and the shared rhythm of this life
provides a commonality with all,
even those to whom we are opposed.
Amen.

23 June 2020

God of human touch,
God of spiritual embrace:
this biggest event of our lives
will live on in our tissues,
something our bodies
are actively learning to hold.
And so the kindness we show
to ourselves,
and the support we offer each other,
is not just for right now.
May the soothing techniques we practice
and the centring breaths we take
hold us in this moment
and train us for moments to come,
so that without thinking
we can find ourselves
again, in your presence.
Amen.

24 June 2020

God of honest conversation,
God of ever-listening saints:
how we wish we’d found the words
and the courage in the moment
to say what needed said
when loved ones were much closer,
and the time was almost right.
Remind us of the time we have
alive with you right now.
Yours is an ear alert for prayer;
ours a communion in which to listen.
Help us
in silence with you, in words for others
convey both love and concern,
and may those who hear
and those who speak
receive the message of your peace.
Amen.
25 June 2020

God whose face is never seen
God whose image shall not be made:
you knew – even before we
melted our gold to worship a beast—
that we would be quick to put
our face, our skin, our accent, our culture
up on a throne and call it your name.
Save us from this idol that we want.
Remind us that you are not
the best version of us, so that we might
rank ourselves in second place.
Show us again that to be divine is not
to reign supreme, but to relinquish power,
to empty one’s self in love.
May we find you again alive in community
rather than lifeless in our reflection.
Amen.

26 June 2020

God of caught breath,
God of welcomed pause:
so much has happened so quickly,
that we can lose a sense of time.
As we continue to pace
and prepare ourselves
for more unknown to come,
we are grateful
for the faithfulness you promise:
the ‘strength for today and
bright hope for tomorrow’
that we find morning by morning.
Give us that song.
Have us hum it by heart.
May we share the new mercies we see.
Amen.

27-28 June 2020

God of prophets at the door,
God of cool cups of water:
justice is hard to define,
and harder to apply,
but love lived out in public
is never out of reach.
Help us all to welcome
the instinct in ourselves
to do the right thing
in the moment we’re in.
As we greet the one before us
with a kindness we’d expect
may our reward be no stranger
than an offer of a drink.
Amen.

29 June 2020

God of the second mile,
God of the turned cheek:
some who receive more hardship
respond with greater love.
Their faith runs all the deeper,
and their hope becomes like rock.
With acquired humility they keep
accumulating lessons
and accomplish more
beyond a terminal sentence
than those who barely start.
We give you thanks for saints
whose shortened lives contain
enough for several books;
whose every thought and
prayer and pause
deserves an extra page.
Amen.

30 June 2020

God of eternal life,
God of letting go:
throughout this long season
and over a century of days,
you have remained constant
as we’ve rediscovered ourselves.
There is more change ahead.
This pandemic is not finished.
Nor are we.
As we continue to be transformed,
may we cling to kindness and mercy;
to courage and trust;
to faith and hope;
to undying selflessness.
May divine love be made flesh
and given breath
in the life that changes with you.
Amen.

1 July

God of the prodigal’s return,
God of the rivals’ reunion:
when the son neared his father,
he bowed as a servant
and relinquished all familial rights.
It was the same gesture Jacob made
when he came near Esau in fear.
Their repentance and humility
were immediately engulfed
in a full-bodied embrace,
into a restoration of what was lost,
and a fuller celebration of what was found.
As we return to patterns
of work and life, and find ourselves
face to face again,
may we be restored with all
our humility and repentance intact.
Amen.

2 July 2020

God of extraordinary kindness,
God of ordinary folk:
as we reform ourselves
in these rebuilding days,
we are bound to mimic
the behaviour we see in others.
May we not get distracted
by those whose sound and fury
signify nothing.
Remind us of a divine potency alive
in those who quietly carry on
with compassion;
whose simple goodness,
their gift from you,
can recreate the world.
Amen.

3 July 2020

God of community,
God of our deepest self:
in this time of isolation
and protective separation, 
the truth of our connection 
has risen to the fore. 
Although our fear-based 
structures are 
more fragile than we thought, 
the bonds of human kindness 
contain the strength of godly love. 
We give you thanks 
that beneath this worldly tumult 
and within our beaten hearts 
we know that God is with us 
and will be with us still. 
Amen.

4 July 2020

We have been deeply moved by the response this series has received over the past 100 plus days, particularly as individuals and faith communities have incorporated them into their spiritual practice. Thank you so much for your comments and encouragement. The writer of these prayers will be on holiday for the bulk of July. During this break, we encourage you to share these posts and to review the collection, which can found in its entirety at our website: www.corrymeela.org.

3 August 2020

God of gardens we never noticed before, 
God of the time we didn’t know we had, 
we give thanks for weeks of renewal, 
for changes of scenery, 
for hours set to a different clock. 
We rejoice in the eyes we have to see 
this beautiful, hurting world again. 
We pray that as we return 
to scheduled patterns, 
we will continue to note 
the realms of glory all around us, 
the saints who have struggled on, 
and the joyful, urgent work we have to do. 
Amen.

4 August 2020

God of our growing hope, 
God of a learned caution: 
guide us now as our experiences diverge.
Some are eager to move forward, with a certain degree of risk; others continue to rely on the shield of our collective response. Grant us patience. Increase our courage. Give us the sense to know when we’re being overly careful, and when we’re being cavalier. But keep us united, so we might find our hope together. Amen.

5 August 2020

God of those who make good trouble, God of those who prize peace: we have been blessed by two who testified to the light just like their namesake before them: one Baptist, one Catholic, both fearless. We give thanks that on bridges in Selma and Derry, in marches and decades of politics, they continued to press with their own sweat and blood, so that love would overcome hate, and to show that a struggle, if righteous and just, should never have to be armed. Amen.

6 August 2020

God of our protective impulses, God of the common good: help us as we make decisions in the dark that will affect not just ourselves but those we love and those we should love. Give us the courage to trust not just our primal instincts, but the good news that what is best for the whole, for the neighbour and the stranger, is what protects the best in ourselves. Amen.
7 August 2020

God of deeper conversation,
God of deepening relationships:
with so little known
about what lies ahead,
may we now take the time
to meet ourselves again,
and to encounter anew
the people we say we know.
These strangers who may be close to us
have more to share when we
open ourselves to renewed curiosity
and trust that undiscovered joys
lie within
the connections we already have.
Amen.

8-9 August 2020

God who withdraws into quiet,
God who returns with reassurance:
after you took time for yourself
you approached the disciples
with a calming power.
May we, even as we fail
to match your miraculous ways,
find peace like yours
in the care we offer ourselves.
And then may we,
in the midst of new storms,
quiet the fears that unsettle our hearts.
Amen.

10 August 2020

God of receding tides,
God of rising waters.
more has become exposed
from around us and within:
beauty and ugliness,
and resilience and hurt.
May we hold what we discover
from these pools of hidden life
with gentle curiosity.
And may what we find
lead us into a daily rhythm
of extending your grace further
across near and distant shores. Amen.

11 August 2020

God of this shared earth and this shared experience: may this great leveller of a disease, this reminder of our common fragility, our mortality, and our recognisable fears, be also the great correction in our collective story. May this be the moment when we start again with clearer eyes and kinder hearts, and with a renewed resolve to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly together. Amen.

12 August 2020

God of childhood summers, God of lifelong memories: these present days are unlike any that have come before, but remind us a little of surprising moments that appeared when we were growing up; days of discovering ourselves for the first time in the context of others; seasons of actively figuring out who we thought we were. May we all renew our license to explore again who we can be, so that when this crisis is over we’re each a little more grown up. Amen.

13 August 2020

God who holds us in our brokenness, God whose healing makes us whole: the biggest event of our lives
is still unfolding.  
It is not something to be  
outmanoeuvred or outwitted.  
This story is still incomplete,  
and our recovery has yet to begin.  
That unknowing is part of our pain.  
There is wisdom in accepting  
the things we cannot change.  
But there is strength  
in remembering that nothing,  
not even what we can’t control,  
will separate us from your embrace.  
Amen.

14-16 August 2020

God of friends we’ve lost,  
God of friends we’ve kept:  
these surreal days we’re sharing  
do not meet us all equally;  
the private agonies  
that some are experiencing  
can be obscured by  
our universal ordeal.  
Remind us that today  
may be more difficult for others  
for reasons we do not fully see.  
May our solidarity in one experience  
not desensitize us to others’ pain,  
and may we be for them  
in ways that meet their needs.  
Amen.

17 August 2020

God of the guest house  
God of the room we prepare:  
the ones we welcome  
and the ways we welcome  
will reveal a great deal  
about how we receive  
your good news.  
May we, in this time  
of social distancing  
and human longing,  
accept your invitation  
to meet you again in the stranger,
and to meet ourselves in the
emotions we house,
and at the doors we either open
or close.
Amen.

18 August 2020

God of the people,
God of the daoine,
God of the Rén,
God of the ashkhas,
God of the bobl,
God of the personas,
God of the Menschen,
God of the log,
God of the lydui,
God of the watu,
God of the dhaoine:
may our glorious human diversity,
which we confuse with babble,
be the way our spirits unify
in your incarnate love.
Amen.

19 August 2020

God of empathy,
God of embrace:
your image rests in all of us,
even those we push away.
As we find the courage to welcome ones
we have seen as other,
may we find a clearer glimpse
of your eternal presence with us,
and discover in our encounters
our truer, better selves.
And then may we,
despite our brokenness
be received into your wholeness,
into a family where no difference
can deny that we belong.
Amen.

20 August 2020

God of welcome,
God of boundary:  
we give thanks that  
each of us can be our full selves  
in the community you create.  
And we pray  
that with your grace,  
our way of being our true selves  
will never harm others or  
prevent them  
from being their true selves.  
May we welcome one another  
as you have welcomed us,  
so that the lines we draw together  
trace the image of your love.  
Amen.

21 August 2020

God of opening possibilities,  
God of grace at the table:  
faith in you  
is faith in humanity.  
You have loved us enough  
to remain with us through death.  
You see in us is what  
we fail to see ourselves:  
that each person we encounter is  
a child of a loving God,  
a partner for a better world,  
a voice that adds meaning to this prayer.  
May we be freed  
to be ourselves,  
to live the life you want,  
and in that freedom find communion,  
and your presence in our midst.  
Amen.

24 August 2020

God of humility,  
God of courage:  
each conversation we enter,  
if honest and meaningful,  
will expose a vulnerability.  
We share our life experiences,  
the good and bad, and open up to pain.  
We reveal our ignorance of things,  
both consciously and not.
And so we pray for your grace
to be with us
in these imperfect conversations.
For acknowledging our weaknesses
will reveal your loving strength;
and facing of our fears together
will lead to something better.
Amen.

26 August 2020

God of honesty, God of grace:
opening up to others
raises a fear of being judged,
for reasons both
legitimate and imagined.
And so we pray that you
would let us love ourselves
the way you do:
to recognise another child of God.
May we also find you alive
in those who listen to us
and hear our story,
so that instead of judgement
we are given compassion;
and instead of rejection
we are offered embrace.
Amen.

28-30 August 2020

God of friends, God of enemies:
perhaps the great act of faith these days
is not a belief in you,
but a belief that you are present
in the people we want to turn away.
Help us discover
that there is always more to love
when we see others as you do;
there are differences not just to tolerate,
but to celebrate.
As you have remained with us and for us
despite all we have done to withdraw,
may we remain with and for others,
judging not as you could judge,
but loving more than we deserve.
Amen.
31 August 2020

God in our conflict,
God in our learning:
to be human is to find ourselves
in relation to those
with different goals, different needs,
different ways of being.
Remind us that our disagreements
are not the end of our connection.
May our differences
inspire our curiosity.
May our questions lead us
to better conversations,
letting us to see the world through
others’ eyes.
Amen.

1 September 2020

God of our knowing selves,
God of our inquisitive selves:
when we stop being curious,
our relationships wither.
May we encounter others today
not with our minds made up,
but with our ears pricked up
with interest and fascination.
May we form questions still open
to the possibility of surprise,
finding something wonderful
in answers we weren’t expecting,
and discovering how
everyday experiences
can still change us,
when we let them.
Amen.

2 September 2020

God of new lessons
God of old truths:
this faith of ours is
in what lies beyond us,
not just within us.
As we release ourselves
from the trap of thinking
we have it all figured out
and turn to you
and others for help,
for strength and insight
we don’t possess,
may the fear of not
being in control
be replaced by the assurance
of never being alone.
Amen.

3 September 2020

God of form and frame,
God of tension and resistance:
to grow we need something
to push against.
We need conflict to reveal
what we think, how we feel,
and for whom we’re willing to fight.
We need conflict to train us
how to be kind
when we really don’t want to;
how to make room for others
because we simply have to.
and because it makes
a better space for us all.
As we struggle and strain
may we hold our own
but always in connection with others.
Amen.

4 September 2020

God of the spaces between us,
God of the fractures within us:
in the gap between what is
and what should be
there is room
for empathy and learning.
There are truths there we don’t yet see
but could come to understand
if we care enough to ask,
if we imagine the reality of others,
if we have the courage to change.
May we enter that space
knowing well you are there,
waiting for us to join you
in a recreation of what was empty
into a garden full of life.
Amen.

7 September 2020

God of incremental changes,
God of seismic shifts:
this year has seen the world
transformed, even if we sometimes feel
that we have barely moved.
As we assess where we are now
in this strange, familiar place,
may we take heart in knowing
that the simple acts of kindness
and compassion we extend
help shape the world that’s yet to form
and affect what happens next.
Amen.

8 September 2020

God of changed minds,
God of changed hearts:
sometimes a good argument
can affect our thinking,
and in turn affect our behaviour.
But more often, it’s a better relationship
with someone we thought
we’d figured out
that reveals what our mind had missed,
exposing the flaw in our certainty.
No matter how we come to know that
your truth is different to what we imagined,
may this revelation lead
to a gentle revolution,
and may our turning around
bring us closer to you.
Amen.

9 September 2020

God of a long hard look in the mirror,
God of steadfast love:
the knowledge of your undying love
does not give us permission
to do what we want,
or license to act with overconfidence.
Instead, may it give us the courage to address what is broken in ourselves and the will to change what we can. May our faith in your grace reassure us that no matter what we find staring back at us, it will be accompanied by your ever-loving presence. Amen.

10 September 2020

God of righteous anger, God of unsettling compassion: even if do not seek it, we can find ourselves with much that could leave us upset. Too often we choose to dwell there, taking residence in resentment. We pray that you would move us, and unseat us from this state with a grace we hope that we can carry forward. May we take the lessons gathered and change direction as is needed, so we end up in a new place on the path of peace you show us. Amen.

11-13 September 2020

God of our distinct identities, God of our shared possibilities: if we want the world to change, and if we ask others to change, we must be willing to change ourselves. We give you thanks for the faith to believe that what is true and good in us will remain and be revealed. Through this transformation, and even in our letting go of what we want to protect, may we trust that we will find you holding on to who are meant to be. Amen.
14 September 2020

God of long walks with friends,
God of the longer walk of friendship:
we give thanks
for the accidental encounters,
the weekly catch-ups,
the second cups of tea.
We give thanks
for the desire to pick up the phone,
the thought to send a line,
the time we make when we have none.
We give thanks
that humans are relational creatures,
begun before birth in contact
with another,
and forever after made
not for efficient productions,
but for deeper connections.
Amen.

15 September 2020

God of lifelong companions,
God of sudden discoveries:
We know that to be honest with others
risks pushing them away;
we know that their honesty with us
will show what we’d hide.
Let our relationships be
the process of our becoming,
so that we are shaped
by laughter and tears,
by squabbles and smirks,
by courage and comfort,
by another who sees us
better than we can.
Amen.

16 September 2020

God of our great ideas,
God of our better angels:
when we are sure that we are right,
and that our solution is the best,
warn us of the danger that we pose.
Often, the insistence on one way
will make it harder for others to agree, particularly when we think it’s the only answer that makes sense. Help us as we choose to let go of what we might want to impose so that in the space that opens up, a co-created possibility might emerge. And then help us see that what is mine is hardly ever as nice as what is ours.
Amen.

17 September 2020

God of risky love, God of divine courage: to be ready to listen we should know what it’s like to be heard; to be good at giving support we should know what it’s like to be held. We give thanks that our best relationships not only provide additional strength; they help us practice the skill of being human by being vulnerable. And, therefore, strangely of being more like you. Amen.

18 September 2020 (Spirituality of Conflict 20 Sept 2020)

God of justice, God of grace: in trying to make sense of this world and our place in it, we train ourselves to expect reward for our work, and that our worth will correspond to our effort. As you give us today what we need, may we consider not where we stand in relation to others, but how we might stay in communion with those who,
like us, are dependent
on divine generosity.
Amen.

21 September 2020

God beneath the encompassing sky,
God above the hardening earth:
in this thin space between,
the great human drama plays out
with deep and deepening pains
and endless moments of joy.
Even as we take note
of how small our part may be,
may we take heart
that our next breath can hold
a message of light and love,
like the one
that brought your creation to life.
Amen.

22 September 2020

God of earth’s effortless turning,
God of this cycle of seasons:
one day on the calendar marks
both the beginning of autumn
and the beginning of spring;
the end of the north’s summer
and the end of the south’s winter.
While distant from each other,
we are connected by a rhythm,
a push and pull of light.
May it remind us that our journey
is not one we take alone,
and that the darkness that we enter
cannot stop the coming dawn.
Amen.

23 September 2020

God of persistent widows,
God of eventual justice:
as some sit with the luxury
of reflecting on how much
can be taken for granted,
others add their weight and their voice
to causes that may never
benefit them directly,
but can make it more likely
for rising generations to
experience what all should enjoy.
May we see privilege not
as a reward, deserved or not,
but as a tool in hand
to build a better world.
Amen.

24 September 2020

God of changing winds,
God of steadying hands:
be with us on the days
when we find ourselves in doubt,
so that we can be for others
when we they need some reassurance.
Give us extra strength
when we are feeling weak,
so we can lend a little muscle
to those who need support.
Grant us a double portion of your grace
so that when we are lacking enough
for ourselves, we can still extend
the peace that comes
from resting in your steadfast love.
Amen.

25-27 September

God who knows our fears,
God who knows our hearts:
we’ve taken your world
and created an endless game
of winners and losers.
We’ve set up a ladder
that gets us nowhere
but up and down.
Bring us down to earth.
Free us
from this hierarchical nonsense,
so we can see each other
face to face
and respond to real needs
without the fear of falling.
Amen.
28 September 2020

God with those on the margins,
God with those on the edge:
as we confine ourselves to what we know
and retreat into spaces we deem safe,
remind us that we are less likely
to find you there.
We will find ourselves alone
with the idols we carve and coddle,
and miss the chance to
touch your hem
as you head out to those in need.
But even as we fold ourselves
into our comfy pockets,
your grace doubles back to find us
and, with a cut, reveals
the edge we stand against
when we see ourselves as central.
Amen.

29 September 2021

God with us in difficult conversations,
God with us in difficult silences:
each moment and every mistake
gives us the chance to learn,
to understand and to change.
Before we react in fear or anger,
may we steady our breath
and calm our minds
to remind ourselves
that your love for us
is not in jeopardy.
And with that reassurance,
may we seek the truth
we need to hear,
and receive the grace
we mistook as threat.
Amen.

30 September 2020

God of the truth beneath our truths,
God of the foundation beneath our facades:
we give thanks that there is something
beyond our control
firmly devoted to our wellbeing.
We give thanks there is strength
available to us
in the moments when we want to give up.
We give thanks that sounding clear
through the noise and the distraction
is a whisper from you
calling our name
with the promise that you’ll
always be with us.
Amen.

1 October 2020

God who was there before all the chaos,
God who will be in the Eden to come:
set us down in this moment
with our boundaries fixed.
As we look to each other
to make sense of this world,
remind us that there is no horizon
that will not lead us to you;
our spirits will not find a place
to hide from your searching love.
So may that knowledge inspire new courage
to build again structures of justice,
and bring out anew from an unsettled state
a community whose heart
is steadied by you.
Amen.

2-4 October 2020

God of this full moon,
God our of eyes that cannot see
the moon is always full:
so much of reality is hidden from us
because of where we stand.
As this season turns
and our attention naturally wanes,
may we not forget
what we have seen
or try to cloak in shadow
what we pretend was never there.
And may we start to recognise
how our positions blind us
to what is really there.
Amen.

6-5 October 2020

God of power that is not brute strength,
God of connections that empower us all:
when will we learn
that not every obstacle
demands that we force our way through?
When will we see
that admitting our limits
will not leave us in want or at risk?
When will we trust
that our dependence on others
is not a symptom of weakness,
but the glory of humans
made complete in relationship?
May that understanding,
that insight, that faith
be part of our being today.
Amen.

7-8 October 2020

God of the billions alive on this earth,
God of the one who feels most alone:
we all share this crisis, this moment;
we all hang on this hinge in our history.
Yet we know that some
are more affected than others:
more vulnerable to disease,
more at risk from injustice;
who can’t afford a return to the normal.
As this pandemic has exposed
a common fragility,
may it reveal a common desire
to learn and to change,
restore and protect,
so that all may enjoy a sense of belonging,
and know that what comes
will be good.
Amen.

9-11 October

God of pilgrims who share this journey,
God of travellers upon this road:
This path changes us.
The conversations we have, and the views we’ve gained; the hurt we’ve endured, and the muscles we’ve trained: they bring us to a new place, and to a newer sense of us.
As we unpack the things we’ve carried and recount the things we’ve lost, may we marvel again at the journey itself, the gift of walking with others along a path that takes us into and beyond ourselves.
Amen.

12 October 2020

God of narrowing autumn light, God of branching autumn colours: as we hunker down for these darker months, may we wrap ourselves up in memories of days together. May our homes house the laughter of visits from friends, and sounds from a kitchen in the midst of a party. May our cosier moments in the season ahead give us the feel of company we keep even in our separation, even in our waiting for spring to arrive. Amen.

13 October 2020

God of the strength that lifts us each morning, God of the weight that drops us down in our beds: this constant fight against gravity, this struggle to push up and away – is a marker of life. It is our daily battle of no and yes. No, we will not lie still. Yes, we will live
and move and have our being.
We give thanks for the rest
that preserves our life for tomorrow,
so that as we rise from our night’s slumber
we begin again and gain a victory
in each waking, determined moment;
and see a glimpse, if only faintly,
of an endless rising dawn.
Amen.

14 October 2020

God with us in our policies,
God with us in our politics:
there are rarely easy answers
to the problems that confront us.
We do our best and make mistakes
and fix the damage done.
We try and fail and try again
but remain connected with each other.
We pray for those who represent us,
as well as those who don’t.
May we find new ways to compromise
without compromising what’s essential,
so that in fighting for what we need in life
we include the needs of others.
Amen.

15 October 2020

God of prudent precautions,
God of corrective adjustments:
in community,
we make decisions based
not on personal convenience
or private preference,
but on what is best for the whole.
As we pull back
from a desired outcome,
and let reality have its say,
give us the grace to accept
what is right for the many,
so that life is more than survival,
but a harvest that continually thrives.
Amen.

16 October 2020
God of the chaos we fear,
God of the day we create:
the eternal nature of your love
is something greater than permanence.
We don’t so much rest upon it
because it is fixed and unchanging
as we continually discover it:
surprising and true.
Morning by morning new mercies we see.
Give us faith not in what
we hope can still last
from the first breath of creation,
but in what arrives
in this newborn moment:
your voice bringing light
with news that is good.
Amen.

19 October 2020

God of waking children,
God of ageing parents:
right now, our worlds contain
those we’ve known for all our lives,
and those whose lives are just beginning.
In this moment, as surreal as it is,
we can still hold together a family
of friends and companions
with lines of communication,
and daily short connections.
We give thanks
for these domestic and digital bonds.
But may we also, through your spirit,
extend our reach to actively commune
with others still unknown to us
who likewise dwell with you.
Amen.

20 October 2020

God of cleared fields,
God of replenished stores:
the season that passes from
seeding to harvest
does not bring us to our destination.
It brings to us all
the substance we need
to carry ourselves further along.
As we look back
at how far we have come
and see the journey ahead,
let us give thanks for our progress
and the produce of time,
so our growth may continue
each day.
Amen.

21 October 2020

God of the hope we cling to,
God of the hope that won’t let us go:
be with us as we push forward
and as we pull back.
Be with us as we loan courage to friends
and receive some back in return.
Be with us as we proclaim
a truth with certainty,
and when we harbour real doubts;
Be with us as we dream up crazy new plans,
and when we are brought to our senses.
Be with us this moment
as you always have been
with a hope
that never has faltered.
Amen.

22 October 2020

God of a welcomed pause,
God of a calming exhalation:
we can move so fast
in our thoughts, our actions,
our reactions and our whims,
we can’t quite catch up with ourselves.
Even in lockdown, even on days
cleared of scheduled tasks,
we can fail to stop and accept from you
a moment’s gift of rest.
When time seems both to barrel on,
and hardly move at all,
may we catch our breath,
and settle in to your unhurried pace
so that we might then
with steady minds
approach the task at hand.
Amen.
23-25 October 2020

God of the friends who change our minds,
God of friendships that change who we are:
we give thanks
that in being with and for others,
we become something different ourselves.
Instead of pretending to know
another’s experience, or believing
the worst of what we’ve heard;
we can assume that what’s best in us
is also true for others.
To lead with trust instead of fear
is to have the faith
that you are God not just with one,
but with all; not just for us
but for everyone.
In finding you in the lives of others,
we find more of you within.
Amen.

26 October 2020

God of late night chats,
God of early morning thoughts:
the time we make with friends,
and the time we devote to friendship
restores and rewards us.
We pick up the phone
or join up for a stroll,
or simply look in the eyes
of those closest to us.
As creatures of connection,
we come alive as we relate our place
and our own story to others,
to shared memories and dreams.
So help us to dream ourselves
into a fuller and richer humanity,
with those we already know we love
and those who are always loved by you.
Amen.

27 October 2020

God of healthy disagreements,
God of principled stands:
we need not have the same mind
to sit around the same table.
We need not share precise beliefs
to fit within a home.
We need not speak the same dialect
to be a part of a loving family.
And we need not see the world the same
to know it's big enough for all.
As we hold firm
to what we know is right
may we honour the ground
where others stand
so that more of the earth,
and more of our imagination,
may be hallowed in your name.
Amen.

28 October 2020

God of serenity and courage,
God of serenity and wisdom:
may we know the difference
your promise makes
as we struggle to be patient;
as we steel ourselves for disappointment,
and speak our will out loud.
We pray that in a raw
and honest vulnerability,
as we wait and fret and hope,
we remember that the truth
you ask us to accept
is the good news brought
by the better angels of our nature:
news of justice and mercy and peace,
of those left out brought in.
Amen.

29 October 2020

God of the long to embrace,
God of the reunion to come:
so much of what you told us
about separation and waiting,
about sons and brothers
and widows rejoicing,
takes on new meaning these days.
As we note how part of ourselves
is aching for connection and completion,
for ghost limbs of a shared humanity,
may the bone of our bone
and the flesh of our flesh
return in the form of those among us we had not fully counted before.
Amen.

30 October – 1 November 2020

God of the dust to which we return, God of the ash that enriches the soil: there are seeds from trees that open only after a fire has passed through. They push the tips of their roots down when the sunlight above has space. May we remember that after all we see passes away, the gifts you promise remain. Faith. Hope. Love. And the greatest of these is taking root now in the soil of compassion and kindness. Amen.

2 November 2020

God of childhood stories, God of grownup concerns: democracies are about faith. We choose to believe, not just in ideals, but in people. We choose to trust something as unpredictable and unreliable as ourselves. Democracy rests on the faith that we ourselves can rule ourselves not only when we get what we want but also when we don’t. Be with us in this test as you have been with us in the past so that we might reward the faith you place in us. Amen.

3 November 2020

God of charity for all, God of malice toward none:
be with us.
Be with us as we ‘strive to finish
the work that we are in
to bind up a nation’s wounds.’
Be with us
as we ‘do all which may achieve
and cherish a just and lasting peace
among ourselves and with all nations.’
Be with us on this and every day.
Be with us all.
Amen.

5 November 2020

God of those who agree with us,
God of those who don’t:
keep us from dividing the world
into us and them,
for or against,
good and bad.
Remind us that humans
and human systems are always
more complex than the binary
choice of on/off, up/down.
As you have met us in the reality
of a living, breathing human life,
may we meet each other again
as three-dimensional people
and not as another yes or no.
Amen

6-8 October 2020

God of our exposed divisions,
God of your uniting spirit:
there is a rawness to democracy,
A revelation occurs as we see
more of who we really are.
And with that clarity comes a choice
to stand with or against
each other.
Remind us that you stood with us,
when you knew we were wrong,
when you didn’t agree with our choices,
when we were quick to turn against you.
So may we now choose to stand
with all those we can,
and in the choice to be together,
may we find new ways to thrive.
Amen.

9 November 2020

God of those we call enemies,
God of those you call family:
may we learn that democracy
is not about outnumbering the opposition
in a struggle for dominance.
It is about learning more about those
with whom we disagree,
our fellow citizens;
so that instead of drawing more to one side
or the other
we can co-create a greater whole.
Amen.

10 November 2020

God of hope-filled trials,
God of a cautious release:
as we begin to imagine
good news arising
from the measured process
of labs and computers,
of heroes and scientists,
of incomplete successes
and instructive failures,
may we allow ourselves
a sigh of relief,
but draw in more strength
so that a winter of waiting
may bring a spring of renewal.
Amen.

11 November 2020

God of sacrifice,
God of silence:
after years of battle,
the moment came
to quiet the guns
and acknowledge the loss.
That moment, extended now
for over a lifetime,
continues to witness
to others’ valour and honour,
and also to our madness
of turning to war again and again.
May we in this silence
do more than remain still.
May we commit to lives lived
worthy of peace.
Amen.

12 November 2020

God of our faith,
God in our uncertainty:
in our shock and in our lack of shock;
in our constant surprise,
and in our numbed sense that
nothing may surprise us anymore;
you have been present.
You remain with us,
giving reassurance
when things seem lost;
reinvigorating us
when we grow complacent;
telling us it’s okay to be tired
when we need a break.
May we find the balance
of neither doubting your steadiness
nor take it for granted.
Amen.

13-15 November 2020

God of those in acute need,
God of those in chronic need:
months and months in,
we still struggle to know
how cautious to be,
how much risk to accept,
how ‘normal’ we safely can act.
As hospitals fill up
and shops remain shut;
as political postures blur
into policy decisions,
may we gain wisdom from you
so that our cures may not do
more harm than disease,
and our wants not outweigh
neighbours’ needs.
Amen.

16 November 2020

God of each breath,
God of this next breath:
may this moment we’re in
be a moment now filled
with reassurance and grace;
with kindness and patience
for ourselves and for others.
May it be marked by hope
and compassion,
by learning and unlearning.
May it be a moment unencumbered
by mistakes we’ve made
or results we fear.
May it be a moment of peace
and renewal; a breath of new life.
Amen.

17 November 2020

God of the stories that include us,
God of the inclusions that restore us:
we need each other to thrive.
Without the other we are incomplete.
In our fiercer independence we
grow smaller and less true.
It is our inter-dependence
that reveals what's best within us all.
If we should be cut off from our fullness,
stunted by a sin of self-assurance,
show us that the lack in ourselves
is the space for something greater:
and our work with others a discovery
of the holy in ourselves.
Amen.

18 November 2020

God of Martha,
God of Mary:
in opening our homes to you,
in opening our lives to you,
may we also open ourselves,
so we are able to simply receive.
May we quiet our need to impress
and allow ourselves to be moved;
May we still an impulse to stay busy,
and turn to the task of being still.
And then may we find a better thing,
in the company of loved ones and rivals:
new purpose in the things we attend to.
Amen.

19 November 2020

God of the softness of night,
God of the brightness of day:
the change that comes
at twilight and dawn
arrives with no fuss,
yet is reliably revolutionary.
In a matter of moments
what was hidden is exposed,
and what we wrestled with
can be put to rest.
May we, in these daily transitions,
find comfort and solace,
and learn how to ease into
transformation with a grace
you build into each day.
Amen.

20-22 November 2020

God of those who hunger and thirst,
God of the ones we imprison:
you meet us in the lives of others.
Too often we seek you by pulling away,
by retreating into ourselves
or by assembling some body
of like-minded souls. And yet,
the way to find you
is not in separating ourselves
one from another,
but in seeking your presence
alive in encounter;
in meeting the needs
of the people before us:
the ones in your family
we've sought to exclude.
Amen.
30 November 2020

God of days with multiple arcs.  
God of the stars in the sky:  
there are countless reminders and signs  
of your grace,  
your promise to always be near.  
May we in our habits  
and the stories we tell  
remember the truth underneath.  
May we notice and witness  
to a steadying strength:  
the love that cradles us all.  
Amen.

1 December 2020

God with us in our individual struggles,  
God with us in our common ordeals:  
there is a freedom that comes in knowing  
that life is simply hard;  
not because we've done something wrong,  
or because we fail to see  
something obvious to others,  
but simply because life itself is hard.  
May that never become the licence  
to devalue another person’s hardships  
or the invitation to let our fears  
fill the space that opens up.  
May it become instead a moment  
to marvel at your gift  
of unconditional love;  
the security that provides us with  
a confidence not our own.  
Amen.

2 December 2020

God of a lowering December sun,  
God in the early morning watch:  
be with us in this work of waiting  
in keeping alert;  
in the practice of not being  
the one in control.  
May we find beauty  
in the quiet acceptance  
of being dependent  
on a promise of returning light  
as we watch the days grow shorter;
on an Easter dawn
as the hours grow dark.
Amen.

3 December 2020

God of separated families,
God of grace-filled reunions:
as we turn to go home
or imagine how we might,
may a clearer sense
of how far we are
not diminish the extent
of your welcome.
May an extended season of
distant togetherness
not obscure the view
or lessen the excitement
of an expectant parent
who longs for the return
of one, until now, thought lost.
Amen.

4-6 December

God of the songs our parents taught us,
God of the songs our children make up:
if lucky, we get to see
one generation reappear in the next,
with ourselves in the midst
of a much fuller chorus.
As we welcome another Advent season
may we rejoice in an ongoing arrival
of a strangely familiar refrain.
May we find our homes again filled
with the presence of those far off,
whose lives linger on in held moments
and whose voices are blended with ours.
Amen.

7 December 2020

God of watchers in the night,
God of lanterns lit:
our waiting turns
from anxiety to anticipation
when what is hoped for
feels like a sure thing.
May the lamps we raise
and the light we cast
cut the gloom around us,
so that we become a beacon
for your brighter day to come.
Amen.

8 December 2020

God of friends in hospital,
God of families of friends in hospital:
be with those who
are receiving care, and those
who wait to hear the news.
Be with those who offer care, and those
who wait for them at home.
May we know your presence with us.
And may those of us held together
in a moment both critical and routine,
be embraced by a community
more aware of the extraordinary gift
of those who tend to us
on each and every day.
Amen.

9 December 2020

God of those we’ve lost this year,
God of what we’ve found:
our grief speaks to the beauty of life
and the toll that comes
at the end of each connection.
Death can offer a lesson
to the lasting goodness of life,
a pain that means that love is real.
May we never forget
that our grief gives proof of something
that was and continues to be true:
that our hope endures
in being held by your undying love.
Amen.

10 December 2020

God in the return
to a simplified Christmas;
God in the advent
of extravagant joy:
may we, who are so accustomed to connecting happiness with an accumulation of things, receive the gift of valuing the connections we already have. May a stripped down celebration and a slower pace to the holiday reveal the treasure that was ours all along. And may we find in the strangeness of this year’s Christmas the wonder that was present in its first incarnation. Amen.

11 December 2020

God in the conversations that manage to change us, God in the encounters that change the conversation: rarely is it the argument that convinces us. It is more likely the experiences of others that, because they are shared and accepted, become a part of our own experience. Help us in this time of separation and waiting to connect to each other in ways that convey not just ideas or images but the spirit of community that forms us anew. Amen.

14 December 2020

God of Mary, who pondered your greeting; God of good tidings that brought us great joy: the first words she heard were ‘be not afraid’. And now in this year we, too, must consider whether we will accept a message of endless salvation when so much would make
the idea sound absurd.
May your power and spirit
overshadow our fears
so that our choice can be
to bear light to this world.
Amen.

15 December 2020

God of incarnation,
God whose presence arrives with a word:
there are friends who connect
so well and so genuinely
that even though they wear a mask,
their eyes can tell a story.
There are loved ones
who are so close to us,
that even from thousands of miles away
their voice can do enough
to calm our bodies and steady our breath.
May we remember that with a word
you entered this world;
and with a message of unconditional love,
you bring our true humanity to life.
Amen.

16 December 2020

God of Joseph,
God of those who find supporting roles
in stories they presumed
were about them:
help those who have the power
to push others away
find gentle ways to draw them closer.
May those who have the means
to walk away from problems,
find the strength to remain
so that solutions can be found
and made together;
and so we can be found
and remade together.
Amen.

17 December 2020

God who walks with us in our darkness,
God who draws out an inner light:  
even in the brightness of day,  
there is a limit to what one can see.  
Our ignorance and bias;  
our narrowed views and  
chosen positions prevent us  
from seeing the whole,  
and from seeing ourselves.  
In the welcome  
of others’ perspectives  
we gain greater sight.  
May we fear neither  
the uncertainty of night  
nor the exposure of day,  
for in both we are known by you.  
Amen.

18-20 December 2020

God of colleagues who start to wind down,  
God of children already wound up:  
this season will meet us wherever we are,  
to offer a message of hope.  
We give thanks for connections  
that have strengthened this year,  
and the resilience we’ve managed to show.  
As many take time  
to gain much needed rest  
and to focus on family at home,  
may our sense of being  
your people together  
give all of your children some peace.  
Amen.

21 December 2020

God of this deeper winter solstice,  
God of a southern summer height:  
as friends far away  
mark daylight’s full stretch,  
and we note the lowest notch of the sun,  
let us give thanks  
for local and global neighbours alike  
who, in sharing what extra they have,  
create a community of giving and receiving,  
of lending and borrowing,  
of weeping and laughing,  
of darkness kept within its bounds;
a growing light always on the horizon.  
Amen.

23 December 2020

God of carols we know by heart,  
God of traditions that reassure us:  
there is comfort in knowing that  
beneath all the tinsel and fuss  
the message of Christmas  
continues to speak truth.  
May those who are separated  
from loved ones this year  
and all of us unable to take part  
as we’d wish,  
find the gift of your presence  
and spirit with us;  
the warmth of love that is felt  
in the flesh.  
Amen.

24 December 2020

God of silent nights,  
God of heavenly peace:  
your light shines in the darkness  
so that even our darkness  
becomes a place to find hope.  
Still our hearts and minds.  
Quiet our concerns,  
and ease our anxieties  
so that in this moment  
we might hear the initial cry  
of new life born to us  
in a place of glorious humility;  
with the strength of human  
and divine vulnerability.  
Amen.

25 December 2020

God of incarnation  
God who is Emmanuel:  
this year we receive the good news  
that the divine gift is being with  
and for one another.  
May we who are brought  
together by your grace
even if we are physically apart, carry with us hope, peace, joy and love into a new year and into a world that longs for truer community.
Amen.

1-3 January 2021

God of this new year, God of this new breath: as we meet this day with relief and hope, with sorrow and with grief, may our bodies find the strength to endure an extended separation.
May our eyes begin to see a coming season of reunion. And may our hearts provide the courage to create encounters shaped by joy and relationships filled with grace.
Amen

4 January 2021

God of fresh starts, God of enduring truths: As we push out into this near year with a clinging caution and lingering trepidation give us the nudge to roll up our sleeves to meet our challenges with hope and courage; and with a renewed desire to see in each other the truth and joy of our inescapable interdependence.
Amen.

5 January 2021

God of these twelve days, God of these twelve months: May our times of rest restore us.
May breaks from work rekindle our passions.
May changes of view replenish our imaginations.
And may the hope, peace, joy and love given at Christmas sustain us throughout the year, so that the good news born to us might live more fully in our flesh.
Amen.

6 January 2021

God of the magi, God of the guiding star:
we give thanks for the wisdom to see
that you came not for one but for all;
and that our salvation arrives from beyond ourselves, our private spheres of influence, the traditions we know by heart.
May we be willing to step further out and become followers of something greater, worshippers of One born far away from realms we’ve personally mastered; asleep in the crèche of the whole.
Amen.

7 January 2021
God of our fragile democracies, God of our peaceful transitions: be with us.
Free us from divisive ideas of freedom; Empower a bravery that unites.
May our lands and our homes Safely house dissenting views and welcome our better angels so that the fuller truth of a greater union might be secured.
Amen.

8-10 January 2021

God of the resilience we build,
God of the community we create: 
may what holds us together 
not push others away. 
May our finding a common purpose 
not rely on naming a common enemy. 
And may our held beliefs 
be not in what we want to be true 
but in what you reveal to be right: 
a love that undoes us 
by leading us to love others 
as we love ourselves. 
Amen.

11 January 2021

God of our honest concerns, 
God of our lingering joy: 
as holidays become memories 
and our resumption of work 
falls back into rhythm, 
may we not forget 
the moments that restore us, 
nor put away the gifts that give 
a healthy balance to our life. 
May we bring into this new year 
a pattern of self-care 
that keeps Christmas continuing, 
as a glimpse of something better, 
as a way to live today. 
Amen.

12 January 2021

God of a deep and deepening peace, 
God of a calm that steadies our pace: 
may we 
take whatever moment we need 
to gather ourselves 
for the journey ahead. 
May we feel the rock 
of your presence beneath us; 
the assurance of shelter 
you provide in embrace; 
and the promise of company 
gathered close by your spirit; 
so that as we approach 
the unknown ahead 
we remember a strength
that can never give way.
Amen.

13 January 2021

God of tunnelling roots,
God of winter growth:
beneath the surface,
and when the light is less available,
the trees and shrubs use their time
to strengthen themselves.
Reaching out and feeling forward,
they connect themselves
more assuredly to their surroundings.
May we use this time
in a similar way,
so the spring that arrives
finds us already in fuller bloom.
Amen.

14 January 2021

God of a mother’s instinctive compassion;
God whose piety is an impulse to kindness:
our societies are reflections
of ourselves.
The brokenness we lament
out there in the world
mirrors all the fractures within.
May your maternal instinct to redeem us,
through lessons of repentance
and forgiveness,
restore the bonds between us,
so we can reveal both the hurt
and the healing.
And then, may a love
like her love at our birth
begin our new life together.
Amen

15-17 January

God who calls us to follow,
God who invites us to question:
you allow us to come as we truly are
and to see beyond
our limited view.
As we relocate ourselves within the reach of your grace, may our beckoning connections lead us from our set positions so we can gain a fuller sense of the good news we still can hear. Amen

18 January 2021

God in a stranger’s hello, God in a raised hand of greeting: those simple gestures, be it a glance toward a passer-by who looks back with a nod or the friendly question about what breed of dog you’ve got there, give us moments of connection and remind us of days to come when instead of passing by or getting only as far as small talk, we will be able to draw close and learn more from each other. Until then, we give thanks for that stranger’s hello and the greeting we offer in kind. Amen.

19 January 2021

God of life, God of a child’s questions about God: let us take comfort in the fact that we do not have all the answers. Allow our lack of knowledge and our dependence on faith reassure us. If we could understand it all, it wouldn’t be worth knowing. If we could contain all that is, there would be less room for hope and no room for curiosity. And it’s through the curious questions that we grow. And find your life. Amen.
20 January 2021 (repost from 3 November 2020)

21 January 2021

God in catharsis,
God in the part of us we call soul:
when we find a spirit of gratitude,
joy is not far away.
May we, as we give thanks
for the goodness still within us
and in the lives of those around us,
return to states of unity,
and in the work of
being with and for one another,
may we weep with those who weep,
and rejoice with those who rejoice,
and find ourselves again,
out of many, one.
Amen.

22-24 January 2021

God in our prayers for Christian unity,
God in our prayers for human unity:
in the humbling of yourself
we were exalted;
in seeing equality with others
we approach something more divine.
May we discover
in the emptying of ourselves
a way to come together
in a fuller human likeness.
Amen.

25 January 2021

God in the comforting blanket,
God in a new day’s adventure:
we give thanks for reminders
of your perennial grace,
and the surprising joy
that can greet each morning.
We pray for those
whose reserves are low
and whose anxieties are high,
and ask that today
we might lend as we are able,
receive as we need,
27 January 2021

God who is older than then,
God who is newer than now:
we give thanks that you
and your truth do not need
our protection.
We do not need to preserve
or defend
what is always true,
and forever discovered:
that in our life and in our death
we belong to you;
that in our life and in our death
we belong with each other.
Amen.

28 January 2021

God who sees through our weaknesses,
God who sees through our strengths,
this constant becoming
is something we learned from you.
You love us not as a perfect treasure
held firm in time,
but in a relationship
that changes and surprises,
disappoints and perseveres.
Help us to see
each other’s strengths as shelter
and our own weaknesses as invitation.
Amen.

29-31 January 2021

God of our spirits, clean and unclean;
God whose authority heals:
as this Sabbath comes,
let us sit and consider
what teaching still astounds us.
Is it the lesson of disappointment?
A cautionary tale of unmet hopes?
By your grace may it be
the good news of life;
a power that can silence our fears.
And in being drawn out
from the places we hide,
may your healing amaze even us.
Amen.

1 February 2021

God of the home we know,
God of the home we seek:
we give thanks
that a part of the human condition
is the hope, the sense,
the lingering feeling
that even though this world
is not as it should be,
a better world exists,
a different future is available,
a home for all of us
waits for all of us,
and today can be a part
of getting there.
Amen.

2 February 2021

God in the turning to spring,
God in the waiting together:
we give thanks that even
in separation;
even in this drawn out distancing,
we make sense of this life
and mark the passing of time
not only as individuals
in our own situations,
but as part of a greater collection
of your people, alive and alert
in this world.
May we enter this season
all the more aware
of fellow travellers;
of other pilgrims on the road.
Amen.

4 February 2021
God who is found
in the Word become flesh,
God who is found
in what words won’t express:
we give thanks that silence
and art and movement
help us make sense of life
in ways that thinking
and reasoning
and masterful theses
will always fail to achieve.
Help us balance ourselves
between creating and consuming
so we can find deeper wisdom
in the gift of simplicity,
in the work of being fully alive.
Amen.

5 February 2021
(with reference to Mark 1:29-39)

God in the healing of Simon’s mother-in-law,
God in the city gathered close at the door:
free us from our fever,
cure us of our disease.
When we return
from our deserted places,
may it not be into patterns of inequality,
but into habits of mutual service.
And in silencing divisive voices within us
may we not quiet that searching plea
for justice and peace and connection;
for the healing your message proclaims.
Amen.

8 February 2021

God of the psalms of joy,
God of the psalms of sorrow:
we note that part of being human
is acknowledging the brokenness,
in the world and in ourselves;
and that part of being human
is to love ourselves as you do,
and to recreate with
from all the broken bits
a new us and new world.
Amen.
9 February 2021

God of bursting early bulbs,
God of links to last year’s growth:
stored within us
are lessons and corrections,
a-ha revelations and
moments still taking on meaning.
As we open ourselves up
to a brand new spring,
may we display the colours
we’ve hidden inside;
and may the rooted life
we hold in our cores
ground us well for all
coming seasons.
Amen.

10 February 2021

God of the exposure that protects us,
God of the vulnerability that heals us:
We give thanks for boundaries
that keep us healthy and safe
particularly at times of great risk.
Yet we know that our bubbles
present their own kind of harm.
When we find ourselves
cocooning in comforts
and withdrawing from difference,
may we free ourselves
from the traps of contentment.
Move us to the edge of ourselves,
where notions of self-sufficiency
can be popped,
and our interdependence with others
can be restored.
Amen.

12-14 February 2021

God in the silence that speaks of grief,
God in the silence that speaks of awe:
we acknowledge the loss that comes
when teachers and friends disappear
from our view.
The agony of Elisha is felt to this day. But we acknowledge, as well, the gift of the mantle that falls to us: the gift of learning; the life of service that is ours to take on. May we see as the clouds clear, your presence remaining with us, preparing us for a message still to be told of life rising up from the dead. Amen.

22 February 2021

God who knows that even our good intentions can lead us astray; God who shows how the voices of others will call us back: we have come to a point when the choices seem to be yelling our opinions just to be heard, or keeping quiet in hopes of drawing no attention. Help us find a better way and a space shared by all of us where we can listen and be heard, where we can learn and add value, where the way forward draws from experiences we gather together. Amen.

23 February 2021

God who continues to call for justice; God whose justice is linked to mercy: we have wrongs to be righted, and corrections to be made. May they never be pursued with an eye that glorifies punishment, but with minds that envision restoration and reconciliation. May justice fully arrive not with fear or with threat, but in the hope of our own wrongs being made right; our desires corrected toward kindness
24 February 2020

God of those who lead by learning,
God of those who guide by helping:
we give thanks for things settled,
for hurts that have healed;
but the end of an ordeal for one
can mean its continuation
for another.
If and when a peace is imposed
rather than co-created,
it may be called a peace by some,
but is truly a peace for none.
And so we pray for rest,
not in a sense of completion,
but with the hope that, rested, we
can continue forward together
toward your lasting shalom.
Amen.

25 February 2021

God in daffodils waiting to burst,
God in lambs coming close to their birth:
there is pent up excitement,
a year’s worth of release,
so many are long to see.
But such times are not
for us to control.
The miracle of spring
arrives not on our watch.
So even if the end
of this pandemic winter
disappoints us with further delay,
may we know of the life
still at work deep within us
waiting for our moment to emerge.
Amen.

26-28 February 2021

God in truth’s open declarations,
God in truth’s quiet rebukes:
it is in our private relationships
and in the wider connections
that we we lose our life
and find yours.
When we pull others aside
may it not be to convince them
we are right;
may it instead help us to turn
our minds to higher things:
to the divinity at work
in the life of the whole.
Amen.

1 March 2021

God of this twelfth month,
God of this next minute:
may our warped sense of time,
be it sped or slowed,
never prevent us from
counting each moment
as the open chance to be
in communion with you
and with our neighbours;
May this lifetime be marked
not by days or years
but by gestures of kindness
that grow stronger with age.
Amen.

2 March 2021

God of a familiar light,
God of a heavy familiarity:
as we return to days
like last year’s days,
so much seems eerily the same
and everything slightly different.
This mix of comfort and discomfort
highlights the change in ourselves,
the power of our perspective
and the difference our attitude makes.
Help us turn our weariness
into readiness;
our hesitance into curiosity;
our ending into beginning;
so this heaviness becomes light.
Amen.
3 March 2021

God of those in love again
with their own home towns;
God of those coming to terms at last
with home-grown divisions:
In the work of bringing
more peace to the world
we begin with peace in ourselves.
Remind us that where each of us starts
affects what we see,
and who we will meet,
and what obstacles there are to overcome.
May we never forget that
when we come together,
we have travelled different roads;
and may we then have a greater respect
for where we all have been,
and what feeling at home can mean.
Amen.

4 March 2021

God of early morning birdsong,
God of creatures creating their future:
there is a seasonal rhythm
and a yearly pattern
that points to a continual cycle.
We give thanks that this
is more than simple repetition,
or perpetual sameness.
There is this forward drive,
a pull into coming days
fuelled by hope and possibility,
a desire to be a part of something more;
the instinct to build a nest
for a life that’s yet to come.
Amen.

5 March 2021

God of temples and houses,
God of markets and bodies:
we have crowded our lives
with a clutter of desire.
If zeal and anger can be righteous,
may they drive us to clear out
the tangled mess that we house
of religion and faith,
of money and worth,
of purity and holiness.
And then may we find
an undying presence
at home once in ourselves;
a temple that needs no protection.
Amen.

8 March 2021

God of the histories we tell,
God of the histories we don’t:
on either side of a border, you are there.
May we, in living out our faith,
ever pretend that there is a way
to make ourselves purer,
or more righteous,
or holier
by separating ourselves from those
that you
will never stop loving.
Amen.

9 March 2021

God in the welcome
that lets all feel at home,
God in the courage
that lets us let go:
if and when we know we are loved,
we can feel comfortable
in our own skin;
at peace in whatever turmoil arises;
and able to step out
into the unknown.
We will know that no matter
what may occur,
what is true will endure:
God will be.
Love will win.
And we will belong with God.
Amen.

10 March 2021

God who teaches in infinite ways,
God who listens with a desire to know: we communicate imperfectly, with words misunderstood, with thoughts not fully formed, with incomplete views from our narrow perspective. But you have taught us a language of kindness, a practice of empathy, a vision of people living with and for each other. Let us come alongside and learn. Amen.

11 March 2021

God of those who remain separated from loved ones; God of those who feel split in their emotions of ‘home’: we pray for ourselves, divided from each other, not only by distance, but by borders and histories, by politics and identities. With your help, may we find ourselves more at home with each other. May we close this separation, through a grace we extend, through the love we ourselves have received. Amen.

12-14 March 2021

God with us in a year of separation, God with us in a future of reconciliation: you tell us that your story is incomplete without our story. So may we resist the temptation to separate our story from others’, or to listen only to tales that make us hero or victim. May we gladly hear a fuller story, told as much in the lives of those we call other: those we have hurt without knowing, those whose hurts we have failed
to acknowledge.
And then may we see ourselves
and as part of the life
you alone can bring to completion.
Amen.

15 March 2021

God of big hills to climb,
God of little steps of courage:
help us light a candle in the darkness
and begin this journey
with renewed hope.
You know of the valleys
and the false summits ahead,
and the pasture that waits
with still waters.
Lead us on through the night
though we know there be danger,
for we cannot remain where we are.
Amen.

16 March 2021

God in this long, overdue cry;
God who can break our cycle of tears:
as we allow ourselves the freedom
to make sense with emotions
the madness of an abnormal year,
may we also confront
what we allowed to seem normal
in the years that have led us to now.
May the honesty in tears join
your river of justice:
a stream of righteousness
that flows to a city
where the vulnerable are safe,
where we measure strength
by its kindness,
and where you will be waiting
to wipe tears from our eyes.
Amen.

17 March 2021

God of Patrick, who was born in Britain;
God of Patrick, who died in Ireland;
God of Patrick, whose life continues
to lead us into conversations about where and to whom we belong, and how you surround us with your presence, and how you yourself are defined by relationship: as we continue this life together, bound by story and enlivened by myth, may we find more to say about a divine power that lies within every one.

Amen.

18 March 2021

God of long and good lives, God of new and good life: there are creatures now stirring who will continue to breathe long after some here are gone. And so we give thanks not just for our unpredictable years, but for our part in a steadier hum of activity: the life that exists on this planet. It is the only place we are sure this can happen. Amen.

19-21 March 2021

God of the grain that falls to earth, God of the fruit that grain will bear: you have created us to create life, even as we lose it; you have given us a gift of love that grows the more we share it. May we, as single grains of life, not hold our love within, but cast it wide and lose ourselves so new life can begin. Amen.

22 March 2021
God of those who always expect a happy ending;
God of those who no longer do: our faith is not here primarily for the good times.
to assure us we deserve whatever life we have.
It is always here so that it also here for moments when the ending is in doubt,
when answers are not clear,
when what seems truly certain is an uncertainty in this world.
Give us faith to believe, not in the guarantee of a happy ending but in the continuation of a story which always answers with good news.
Amen.

23 March 2021

God in the inches our children have grown;
God in the extra ring tree trunks now include: people are celebrating a second birthday in lockdown.
We are approaching a second Easter still in this tomb.
With your help, may this span of time which we only fully see once past, remain with us as a strengthening inner core.
Amen.

24 March 2021

God of those made to feel they somehow don’t belong;
God of those who may actually believe it: change our hearts, our minds, our ways.
We are different: wonderfully and fearfully made. There is no actual connection
between difference and danger,
but for the imaginary monster
we create in ourselves.
Change our hearts,
our minds, our ways,
so all are made to know
we belong.
Amen.

25 March 2021

God of a better together,
God of our better being as one:
there are structures and systems
we don’t know how to replace.
Assumed to be fair,
and meant to empower,
they continue to stick people
in the same stuck positions.
And so there is fear of others' power
rather than true power-sharing.
There is an official recognition
of only one voice –
one speaking with false certainty,
as if one voice could speak for all.
Or for you.
God of a better together,
God: may we be better being like you.
Amen.

26-28 March 2021

God of Bethphage and Bethany,
God of triumphs marked by humility:
as we enter a holy week,
we note how you entered a village.
As we set time aside
we note how each moment
can be sacred.
Help us on this journey
and in this work
of blessing the ordinary,
of anointing our days each day.
Amen.
5 April 2021

God of the courage
that comes from the heart;
God of the journey
that starts from within:
we pray
that this small step we take today
will lead us from our tomb
and along a path
of solidarity and peace.
As we come to you in prayer
as pilgrims in the dark
may your fiery, contagious spirit
resurrect a hope-filled life
so that we might be your people
with new courage in our heart.
Amen.

6 April 2021

God of the story we need to tell,
God of the story we need to hear:
if we only hear from one side,
we fail to hear the fullness
of your voice,
spoken through the lives of people
we think we know
but to whom we have not listened.
Give us courage to open our minds
by opening our eyes
and opening our ears
to stories you are waiting to tell us,
to stories that are already here.
Amen.

7 April 2021

God of the places
we know and love best,
God of the places
we've yet to discover:
so much of what we think
derives from what we see;
and so much of what we see
derives from where we sit.
Give us courage to move
from well-worn cushions
and dug-in positions.
Give us the foresight to believe
that the view from there is
just as illuminating as the one here:
a sacred spot where we will see
more in this world.
Amen.

8 April 2021

God of where an old church stood,
God in the spring that christens this field:
we pray for those whose frustration
becomes anger and violence.
We pray for those whose work it is
to convince the hope-starved
that we are close to something better.
We pray for peace.
We pray that in the space between
the old ways we thought were gone
and the new life still possible,
that you would stand
with those who stand
for peace. And hope. And a future
marked by what we share
rather than what divides us.
Amen.

9 April 2021

God whose voice brings new life,
God whose song recreates our world:
when the news discourages
and the scene before us
is one we wish we could turn off,
may we close our eyes and listen.
May the sounds you bring to our ears
and the landscape we create
within ourselves
with music and rhythm and beat
calm us when we need calmed,
inspire us when we need inspiration,
and encourage us when we need
new courage.
Amen.

12 April 2021
God of the change
that begins from within,
God of the difference
that starts with our learning:
Turn our discomfort
and our impulse to look away
into curiosity:
drawing us in safely,
leading us into better questions,
replacing our assumptions
with deeper understanding.
And then may we see a change
in ourselves
and in how this story
may play out.
Amen.

13 April 2021

God in the fist we relax open,
God in the release that comes
when we look ourselves
square in the mirror:
we confess
that violence is not
someone else’s problem,
something we can lock away
or hold back behind a wall
far away from our innocence.
We confess
the hurt we ourselves have caused
with words, with neglect,
with held grudges and withheld love.
Help us recognise the stone we carry
before we scold others
for what they may throw.
Amen.

14 April 2021

God in our private prayers,
God in our corporate worship:
we give thanks that the work
of bringing before you our best
and bringing out our better selves
is not something we have to do alone.
We can attend to the divisions
of which we are a part
by setting them before you;
by naming and acknowledging
together
our hatred and our violence.
In so doing, may we magnify
the love and peace you name
as worthy of our devotion.
Amen.

15 April 2021

God who helps us
control our appetites;
God of the righteousness
we should be hungrier for:
you know we are creatures
whose minds and bodies,
emotions and behaviours
are deeply interconnected.
Help us to listen to the wisdom
beyond our rationality.
Help us to connect
our own basic needs
to the needs of others,
so we long for what is right
and work for what is shared.
Amen.

16 April 2021

God who calls us
to visit the imprisoned,
God who frees us
from the prisons we form:
reconciliation assumes
a new relationship with
those we kept away.
Give us courage
to believe in rehabilitation:
not just in others;
but in ourselves.
May we be part of the restoration
your grace makes possible.
Free us from the lie we tell
that people cannot change,
the cell we form around ourselves
when we say we can’t be moved.
Amen.
19 April 2021

God in stories told without words,
God in pictures that move us:
we consume images
all day long.
Our wide-awake hours
have become like a dream:
with a constant stream
of the real and surreal
merging into our experience.
But we can still control this diet.
We determine the large portion
of what we see.
So may we fill our minds
with scenes envisioning peace.
And may we project
real lives of kindness, visible
with and without our words.
Amen.

20 April 2021

God who forgives us,
God whose forgiveness
leads us back into relationship:
with the grace we have received
from you
let us we work to mend what
forgiveness makes possible.
May we stress not a desire
to be proved right,
but a desire to make right
what still needs forgiven.
Amen.

21 April 2021

God who is never enshrined
by one culture;
God who lives
in the exhibition of community:
lead us to hear your voice
in the stories and values
of others.
Help us to trust that
exposure to different narratives
will not distance us from you,
but can brings us closer
to a truth you help to write
in lives we don’t yet know.
Amen.

22 April 2021

God of old acquaintances,
God of renewed friendships:
we pray for peace on a grand scale,
for breakthroughs through negotiation,
for brokered talks and systemic change;
but we know that peace comes also
in the hand-written note,
the courage to pick up the phone,
the long-awaited acknowledgment
of an unintended harm.
May we attend to these little wounds
so that in their healing
we may discover
the joy and power of reconnection.
Amen.

23-25 April 2021

God of those we call enemies,
God in prayers we mean to pray:
nothing in life or in death
can separate us from your love.
Your divine love. Your human love.
Your divinely human love.
May it be that nothing
in life or in death
will separate us from
the humanity we share
with others. With our enemies.
Even when we cannot live together,
may we remain connected
by prayers offered for fellow humans,
for those you continue to love.
Amen.

26 April 2021

God of those we consider a sect,
God of those we consider a threat:
we can slip
into thinking that those who are different are not simply different but wrong or dangerous simply because they are not us. May our differences display a diversity of beauty rather than a danger of division. And may we rise together to see that because you and I are different, there is something to celebrate in what is not me. Amen.

28 April 2021

God who sees our invisible scars, God who helps heal hidden wounds: many of us carry pain stored not in tissue, but in memories; held there by coping mechanisms that keep us carrying on. May we in our interactions be gentle and respectful, showing dignity to each other. And may our inner strength and others’ outer grace meet at the point of need to apply the balm our souls still seek, the relief you help us find. Amen.

29 April 2021

God of neighbours you call us to love, God of neighbours we know only as strangers: the knitting together of our frayed social fabric starts with threads close to home. From door to door may we stitch a society of friendly exchanges, of glances that become real hellos.
In a shared cup of sugar,  
or the lending of hands,  
may we make the connections  
and widen the circles that let  
more and more know  
love is near.  
Amen.

30 April 2021

God of the people who serve,  
God of the power we share:  
in representative governments,  
we ourselves are responsible  
for what is done in our name.  
And so we pray for those who,  
holding the power we give them,  
have stood against violence  
and stood with and beside those  
who are vulnerable.  
May they and we  
know that what is right  
may require courage,  
but is accompanied  
by the resolve of the people;  
by an unworldly power  
that holds firm and secure.  
Amen.

3 May 2021

God of victims,  
God of offenders,  
God of communities with justice:  
may your restoring power  
be at work in our work of repair.  
Be with us as we name harms,  
as we hear grief,  
as we reach a place we agree  
holds truth.  
And be with us then  
as we replace our impulse  
for retribution or vengeance  
with a desire for restoration,  
with a new sense of what power is for.  
Amen.
God in the midst of good books and good chats;  
God in the swapping of ideas and what ifs:  
it’s the connection we’re after, the a-ha moment we know others will have.  
Sometimes we need someone else’s keen eye to see what is on the page right before us.  
Whether in person or online, in a group of ten or just us two, be with us as we create within separate imaginations a story we unfold as we share.  
Amen.

5 May 2021

God of courageous hellos,  
God of grace-filled responses: as we emerge from behind these masks and find ourselves in the company of people we hardly know but with whom we share the story of a year, may we, with proper pacing and spacing, make and remake connections that last, even those that start with a fleeting exchange of passing and hurried hellos.  
Amen.

6 May 2021

God in our dearest friendships,  
God in the first moments that create lasting friendships: the bonds we cherish most began with newness and unfamiliarity. So may we approach each new encounter with hope.  
May we trust our ability
to overcome first impressions;
our power to lean in with curiosity;
and the sense that we can become
even more of ourselves
in friendships
we have yet to begin.
Amen.

7 May 2021

God who can be found
in our peace;
God who can be found
in our conflict:
to be human means to disagree;
to have difference experiences
and different needs.
The more we understand
our conflicts,
the more we understand
each other.
So bless us as we deal honestly
with our divisions
so that we can find your peace
together
rather than impose our own.
Amen.

10 May 2021

God in the earth
that can soften hard stone;
God in the love
that can soften our hearts:
a rock we pick up
and hold in our hand shows
we can weaponise anything.
Yet the same rock put down
or put to good use shows
another outcome is possible.
May the weight of the stone
we feel in our hands
bring the load of that burden to mind,
and may its release
as we lay it aside
bring softness to the roughness
we hold.
Amen.
11 May 2021
God of creative thinking,
God of win-win solutions:
be with us in the seriousness
of our disputes,
and in the possibility
of outcomes that
resolve problems
without picking a side,
without going to court,
without turning to violence.
May there be power
in our intervention,
in our listening, in our empathy,
and in our desire to find a path
that leads us all
to a better place.
Amen.

12 May 2021
God in the Gospel
according to Mark;
God in good news
we’re unsure how to share:
the story of your reign
speaks truth to our violence
and forces us to struggle
with the uses of human power:
to include or exclude;
to speak or keep silent;
to bind or release;
to obey or resist;
to follow or flee.
Be with us, crucified Christ,
as we wrestle with fears;
as we wonder without certainty
but with faith.
Amen.

13 May 2021
God in the agendas we set,
God in the habits we keep:
often the important
is obscured by the urgent
and our attention is spent
on the crisis at hand.
Remind us that the ongoing work
of peace and justice remains essential.
Our tending to relationships in society and in everyday encounters, our care and empathy, is the message of reconciliation that remains the priority of your people. Remind us that this good news is always more than AOB. Amen.

14-16 May 2021

God in the question of who is my neighbour; God in the question of how close we might be: may our love for you be known in our love for strangers. And may our faith in you be found in the search for beauty and truth outside of what we call our own. Amen.

Loving and challenging God, you have brought us here together, not just for this meeting, but in this life together. May the way we work together reveal the trust you have in us, the hope you have for us, the love you have given to those we represent and those we seek to reach. May our togetherness display the welcome and respect the courage and the hope that has drawn us to community and may we know as we pursue a path of reconciliation your presence alive within our midst with your challenge and your love. Amen.
17 May 2021

God of victims and survivors,
God who helps us hold our grief: our mourning and our trauma will take its own time. Some fifty-year wounds will still feel raw; and emptiness is not something that simply fades away. May we be part of a community that helps recover truth and supports families as they seek wellbeing. May we respond to pain with kindness, with therapy, and with advocacy, so that as our grief continues, our hope lives on. Amen.

18 May 2021

God in deepening relationships, God in continuing conversation: may we welcome each other with courage, knowing that being together changes who we are. We pray that through respectful relationships we transform the imbalances of power to allow each one of us to fully belong. And may it be that in holding silence and in listening well to each other, we hear your voice in the midst of us. Amen.

19 May 2021

God of carefully chosen words, God of unfinished truth telling: be with us as we do the work
of talking with ourselves.
Before we go out
to address a conflict
or offer peace,
or seek reconciliation,
may we engage
in an inner conversation
of challenge and honesty,
deep in a private humanity
we discover we share.
Amen.

20 May 2021

God with us as we make
courageous choices,
God with us when we need
more courage:
may we
be filled this Pentecost
with your Spirit
to stand up and speak out;
to make a better future
for friends and strangers,
for neighbours and enemies.
May the grace we receive
inspire new life
so our message of hope
out-voices our fears.
Amen.

21 May 2021

God with communities locked down,
God with communities opened up:
those first believers in resurrection
gathered in fear behind closed doors,
until
a spirit of fire and connection,
tongues of everyday language,
Pentecost courage,
came to be a part of who we are.
Emerging from our fears,
may we find words for the message
we have to share.
And may we gather
separated people together
in wonder of the good news
this courage will spread.
Amen.

24 May 2021

God in our courage,
God in our caution:
on this beautiful day
may we greet each other
as companions
on a shared journey.
We acknowledge what we
and others have carried:
gratitude and sadness,
excitement and concern;
private struggles and
collective hopes.
As we take
this next step forward,
may we do so in the knowledge
that we do not walk alone.
Amen.

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