

All-seeing, yet all-loving God

As we quieten ourselves to step more deliberately into your presence, we acknowledge that we come to God of deep mystery; a God who steered this magnificent creation into being yet at the same time, cares about little sparrows dying and the amount of hair we have on our heads. It is you who designed the magnificence of a sunset, the intricacies of a single fynbos flower, the power of the ocean and yet also the trillions of individual creatures that live in it. But somehow, in all this, you have the capacity to care about each one of us, scattered across the nations on this planet. You somehow have the capacity to hear our pain and reach into our hearts and let us know you are there. You forgive and extend grace, at times beyond our understanding. Amazingly, you are there, whenever we turn to you.

We acknowledge with the psalmist that this knowledge is too wonderful for us. So often, though we know your heart is towards us and your advice and support is always available, we go ahead and make our own plans. Though the offer is constantly there for us to live more with you, we choose rather to draw on you only when we need you. We live at times as though life is about me rather than us, that someone's pain is not also mine, that someone's lack is not my opportunity. The offer is always there of your empowering love, yet we regularly fail to draw from it.

Yet, despite all of this, as we come to you this morning, we choose to please you with our trust in your goodness, and to turn to you now, to this God of extraordinary power yet also of love beyond our understanding. Please extend your hand and your heart to us, yet again. Those of us who are mourning, we open our hearts to you to know your comforting presence; those who are struggling, we turn to you for strength and guidance; those of us rejoicing, we remember you in gratitude. Gracious God, in your amazing mercy, reach out to us in ways that only you know how.

How wonderful it is to know your acceptance, to know your love, despite everything. How extraordinary it is to know and engage with a God whose nature is to forgive, to reconcile and to make new. We say to you now; we are present, forgiven and loved and our hearts are open to you.

In so doing we say together to you ... our Father and Mother in heaven, hallowed be ...