

Opening Prayer

Dear God, thank you for our beautiful earth, for the mountains which are alive, and for the earth, which when we step on it we are reminded is millions of years old. Thank you for the sun which warms, heals, grows, nurtures and restores to wholeness.

We thank you for the plants like succulents and their symmetry, which inspire mathematical equations and quantum physics. Thank you for water which sustains all life and for your patience in the ways you remind us again and again that water is sacred.

Let us now confess our sins and transgressions. We confess our inability to see and understand beyond our conceptions of the universe – and for only measuring what matters here on earth according to a limiting human scale. We miss the macro (infinitely big) and macro (infinitesimally small) while we only care about what may matter to some humans. We confess our inability to be kind to each other, forgetting that there are no 'others' as we are all family and kin. We choose not to live in peace as if we do not have a role to play in 'their' war.

But we thank you God for your endless gifts...that what was once blossom, can become fruit, that what is fruit can sustain and bring life, that what brings life can bring comfort and that what brings comfort brings renewed energy.

Dear God, we are tired, anxious, worried and depressed. The relentless levels of pain and sadness we are continuing to experience in the third wave of the global 19 pandemic are overwhelming. We ask you to help us not be numb to the pain, suffering, grief and loss all around us. May we through your strength continue to be supportive and kind to families experiencing grief and loss at this time. We ask that through your spirit of radical love and kindness we can show love to the many children who have lost one or both of their parents, grandparents, primary caregivers or other family members to Covid. We ask for the compassion and necessary action required for the 3.5million South Africans who have applied for the Covid Relief Grant since the 1st August 2021. Let us not turn away from this pain.

Dear God, help us to be generous, gentle and curious about how we can live differently in and through your grace, so that we can ask questions that could show us what is really possible when love is a radical action and justice is Christ-like not just "to come" but rather justice that is unfolding in its becoming.

Finally, Lord, please help us to remember that we are made for **joy and laughter, that our smiles can hold the warmth of the sun and that our tears are sacred too.**

Amen.

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