

2021 09 12 Opening Prayer

Gracious and Merciful God, we thank you for your assurance of unconditional love

Because,

- No matter where we have been or failed to be,
- No matter what we have said or failed to say,
- No matter what we have done or failed to do,
- No matter whom we have loved or whom we have failed to love,

You welcome and embrace us with open arms, calling us by name,

You celebrate our homecoming with the finest meal and finest clothing

We thank you for reminding us that everything that we have comes from and belongs to you

That you hold all of creation in your loving arms, even when we damage it through our lifestyles

We thank you for gifts of creativity,

For speaking to us through drawings of children,

Paintings and works of art by everyone who has the courage to express themselves on a canvass,
paper, neighbourhood wall

The sculptor who can see something beautiful in a block of stone

The potter who fashions something beautiful from a ball of clay

The poet who uses words to express their deepest fears, hopes, emotions

The musician who uses notes, words and rhythm to speak to and through people

The scientist who uses knowledge to produce vaccines that protect us

The cartoonist and stand-up comedian who creatively confronts us with the truth that we would
rather conceal

Oh Lord, we gather as a privileged and incomplete community,

Aware that many people cannot participate in our gathering today because they don't have access
to technology

Help us to share the richness of this experience with those who cannot join us today

And commit to

- Doing all the good we can,
- By all the means we can,
- In all the ways we can,
- In all the places we can,
- At all the times we can,
- To all the people we can,
- As long as ever we can.

Terence Parker