

## Opening Prayer

Oh Lord, it is only through your grace that we enter this place. It is only through your everlasting grace that we even come close to you and each other in this your place. We enter these courts, we sing, we praise, we pray we listen to your word, once again, as we have done Sunday after Sunday. It is through your gift of grace that we receive again the invitation to come to you – we who are weary, burdened and heavy laden.

For this gift, Lord we feel moved to thank you, for if it were according to our human endeavours, Lord we would fall short. If you counted our transgressions to enable us to qualify, Lord we would all fall short. For see how we have failed to work towards your kingdom to which you have invited us. We have instead, created our own little fiefdoms, we have usurped your place in our hearts and we have failed to recognise you in others, and instead have undermined them, and demeaned them, have diminished them have paid no respect to them at all. We have failed to recognise your kingdom of humility and instead have relentlessly sought to be honoured and respected in the cars that we drive, the food that we eat, the language we use, the people we associate with. We have heard you call us to the kingdom of peace, and we have instead endorsed the kingdom of domination by denying justice to others, we have in your name denied others the right to love one another, we have failed to love others. We hear you speak of the kingdom of truth and we continue to live our lives in untruth, we continue to live our relationships in untruth, we continue to tell untruth to others. Oh Lord, we have subscribed to the kingdoms of this world which have called us to greed, to selfishness, to unforgiveness, to all that trips us on a daily basis. So thank you for your grace and mercy which are renewed every morning.

When we consider how we have fallen short, Lord we are moved to thank you for your mercy and your grace. We are moved to sing and to praise you for your creative power. You who have created the heavens long before time, you who laid the foundations of the earth and secured them, you who have hung the stars upon the heavens, and threw seeds upon the earth and waters them to fruition, you who suspends the birds upon the expanse of the sky. You who has taught the weaver bird to weave its intricate nest, and weaved each and every one of us intricately in our mothers' wombs. You are our God; you are our king. How great are your works!

Amen

Siphiwe Ndlovu

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