

Gracious God, our Mother.

In you, all of life was conceived.

In you all of life is nurtured

In you we live and move and have our being. Us in you. You in us.

Receive our humble offering of praise and gratitude today.

for your goodness and mercy that are the riverbanks that contain the flow of all our days.

for your delicate holding of our sometimes tender, sometimes wounded and sometimes hardened hearts.

for your greatness that humbly takes the form of a servant and appearing in the disguise of a stranger.

for your faithfulness that refuses to let us go even when we betray and deny the suffering ones you incarnate.

For hearing our cry before we even speak. For knowing our needs – our true needs before we ask or even know what they are.

for your forgiveness that is new every morning.

for your mercy that resurrects us to newness of life.

We humbly bow in praise and gratitude .... We humbly bow acknowledging your life-giving presence around us and within us .... and as we bow in gratitude for your grace, we experience something within our depths – shifting ... realigning:

Sometimes this feels like we have just turned towards home –

that we are on route to a place where we **know** we are known,

where we **trust** we are accepted

and where we **believe** beyond doubt that we will be welcomed with joy.

Give us this knowing today.

Give us this trusting today.

Give us the believing today.

Mother God today we especially praise you for knitting us together in *our* mother's womb. And as you awaken us to this amazing truth about our own lives, shake us awake with the truth that you have knit every person together in *their* mother's womb. By your Spirit of Truth affirm now within us that all people everywhere are intricately and wonderfully made. Made, in love, by love and for love ... by you. That absolutely nothing is able to negate this truth. Nothing we can do, say, or think. Nothing.

Forgive us for failing to trust this to be so. Forgive us for failing to see that this is the deepest truth about ourselves and everyone else. Forgive us not only for denying this but for living at odds with it. For falsely believing that some people are natural born haters or natural born killers, or natural born liars. To be feared and avoided. For falsely believing that some people are naturally born lazy or greedy or cruel or better or worse than others. Forgive us for replacing your truth with our lies. Lies determined by our fear and prejudice.

We call you creator of all but fail to value everyone you have created. We call you mother of all – but fail to recognise everyone as our family. So our confession today is an ancient one: We say we love you – you who we can't see – yet we refuse to love our sisters and brothers who we can see. Have mercy on us.

By your Spirit blow through us with your truth. Your liberating and healing truth. Come set us free. Come and heal us. Amen