Opening Prayers

Gracious and Eternal God,

We gather in Your presence this morning, seeking Your light, Your truth, and Your peace. You have called us to be one body in Christ, many members joined together to bear witness to Your love in the world.

We confess the shadows around us, Lord, we name the fear rising in our land, the threat of division and violence, the whisper of xenophobia, and the temptation to turn against our neighbours.

Forgive us when we forget that every stranger is Your child, made in Your image. God of justice and mercy, pour out Your Spirit upon us. Strengthen us to resist hatred, to speak peace where there is violence, to sow kindness where there is suspicion, and to build community where walls are rising.

Make us instruments of Your reconciliation. Let our worship today be a witness that love is stronger than fear, that hope is greater than despair, and that Christ's body is never divided. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who welcomed the outcast, who broke bread with strangers, and who calls us still to love without boundary.

Amen.