



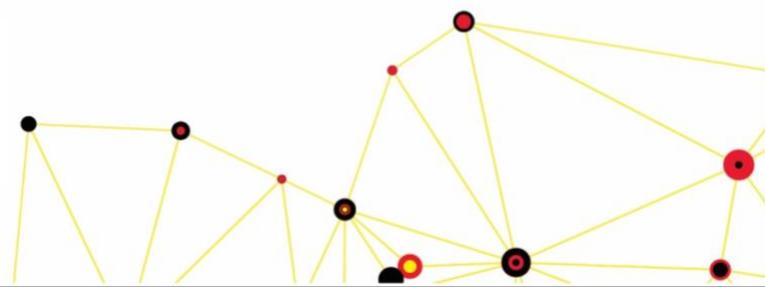
Moderator's Worship Resource: New Connections

In this strange year, as we adapt and change, and then adapt again to the challenges life brings, the Moderator, The Centre for Music, Liturgy and the Arts and the Moderator's worship team have put together some resources for use in worship.

This consists of a collection of prayers and a message from the Moderator, acknowledging how difficult this past few months have been for many, our ongoing uncertainty and vulnerability, our need for rest and restoration, and expressing our hopes for the future of our church. You are welcome to use these resources for your own personal prayer and reflection or in the prayers and worship of your community.

These include:

- An acknowledgement of land
- Prayer of thanksgiving for the church
- Prayer of lament and prayers for the world suffering during COVID-19
- Prayer for Sabbath rest
- Prayer for ministry leaders and the future of the church
- A video message from the Moderator – [click here](#)
- We Walk On – Words by Craig Mitchell, Music by Leigh Newton – [click here](#) or see below



Acknowledgement of Land

Tarlee Leondaris

Holy Spirit, our Great Creator,

Whether in church or at home we acknowledge our places of worship stand on the traditional lands of First Peoples.

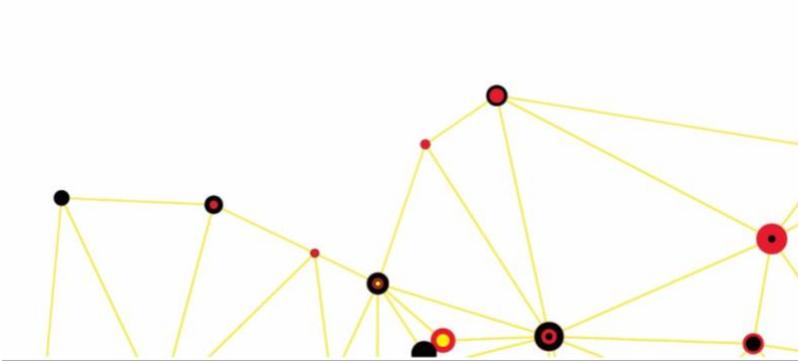
We praise the connection First Peoples have to the land and the wisdom this connection brings.

We give thanks for the many gifts of the earth that nourish us.
For nutritious foods, clean water and fresh air.

May Your blessings be poured out on those living on challenging land;
especially in areas damaged by drought, bushfires, floods and pollution.

We grieve that our human relationships on this earth are too often disconnected.
We lament that our care for the earth has too often dwindled.
Great Creator, open our hearts to the cries of the earth.

Holy Spirit, provide us wisdom so that we may be reconciled.
Guide us to work together as First and Second Peoples.
Fill us all with love to be Your disciples;
to care for one another and the earth.
Amen.



Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Church

Ann Phillips

Loving and sustaining God, we thank you for our church.
We thank you that while the doors to our buildings have been closed,
we have continued to be open and functioning as the church.

We thank and praise you for our church communities who have showed innovative thinking
to be able to work through a new and very different style of church.

We thank you for the acceptance to change from our congregations and the boldness and
creativity of our leaders.

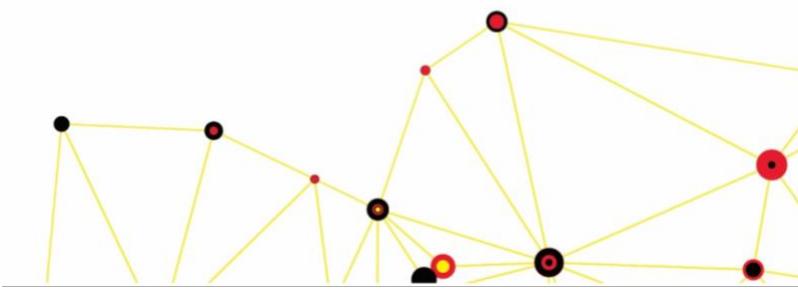
We thank you for those who have shared their resources and we thank you for those who
have been reached each week with the different styles of services offered.

We thank you that the church has still been present in the community, being your hands
and feet, reaching out and serving the community.

We thank you for the resilience of communities to keep going when it was hard, and for the
willingness to look out for each other and care for those in need.

Loving God we praise and thank you for journeying with us during this time of
lockdown. We thank you for the ways you have spoken to your people and carried us
through this time.

We give you praise for all you have done and for all you are.
Thanks be to you our God, Amen.



Prayer of Lament and Prayers for the World

Neryl McCallum

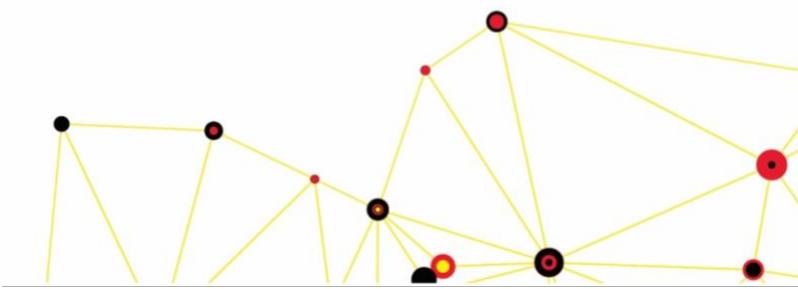
God, we have been sent into a spin of circumstances we were unprepared for.
In response we have put our heads down,
focussed our vision on what has restricted us
and the borders we dare not breach;
we have shut ourselves away and closed our doors,
we have done this as an act of goodness and kindness.

The rightness of this is without question,
sometimes what's in front of us is all consuming
and we need all our strength and energy to make it through,
but
this has narrowed our view.

Through fluke, good planning and the strangeness of our geography,
we have been fortunate here
and we should not doubt that.
But as we begin to lift our gaze to the world
we see that our circumstances are not common.

We need not look very far to see the need in our communities.
Many have been ill, and continue to be,
and people have died.
There is massive unemployment,
and we are shocked by the images of the lines for our welfare agencies
as they edge around several city blocks
and the shelves of food banks that are close to bare.
So many find themselves struggling financially.

When we shift our gaze wider
we cannot avoid what is happening in our world.
A virus that cannot be cured is catastrophic,
it sweeps through communities without fear or favour,
and there are numbers and statistics that we find hard to comprehend,
even with the best graphs.



As it travels it doesn't wipe away the other difficulties that communities are facing,
it exacerbates them.

There is still poverty, there is still war and conflict,

There are still refugees,

there is still persecution,

there is still hunger

and inequity.

COVID is another thing that adds to struggle and suffering.

God, we are overwhelmed by the enormity of what we see,
can't you work some magic here!

Come Spirit,

Bringer of comfort and strength.

Come Wisdom,

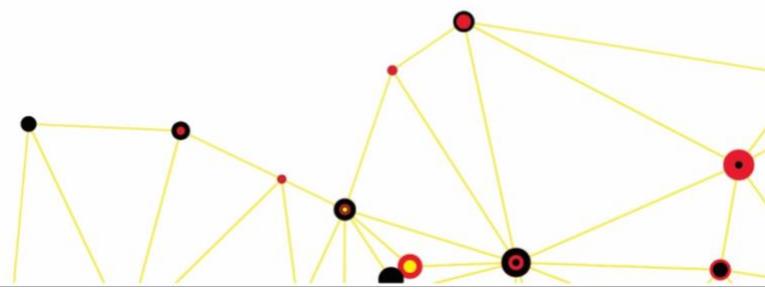
Guide and Companion,

We need to hear a word of courage

that we can carry on the work of justice and love with hope and compassion

as we face the unprecedented

and despite our unpreparedness.



Prayer for Sabbath Rest

Sean Gilbert

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

(Jesus, Matthew 11:28, NRSV)

“The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God and to allow that goodness to reach down and touch our deepest point of need.”

(Julian of Norwich)

*God of love and mercy,
in our yearning hear our prayer.*

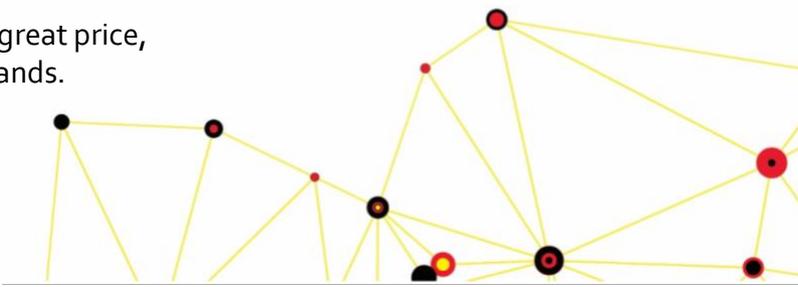
In sighs too deep for words
we express our weariness – exhaustion even –
born of complex, distressing circumstance,
unfamiliar schedules,
strange new tasks and inflexible technologies,
flat-screen gatherings,
interrupted and blurred connections,
pressures of intruding deadlines,
and the nagging uncertainty that even our best efforts
may not bear good and lasting fruit...

*God of love and mercy,
in our yearning hear our prayer.*

Help us, then, to come aside.
To rest, to recline,
to simply be –
deeply, freely and securely:
to yield to an enfolding of grace
that can only be found with you,
that is you –
at home in disquiet,
the surprising presence of shalom-love
in the midst of repeated tremors of human fear...

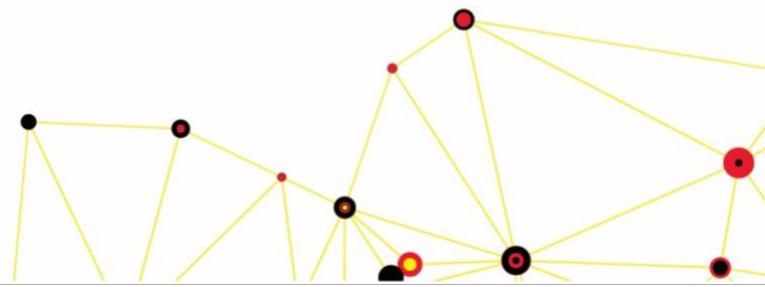
*God of love and mercy,
in our yearning hear our prayer.*

For we long to be a people of trust, not anxiety;
fidelity, not an impossible efficiency.
Those who find their hope in hidden pearls of great price,
and not in the obvious labours of minds and hands.



Lord Jesus Christ,
help us to rest wholeheartedly
in your gentleness and warmth of humility.
And may such a sabbath bearing and 'mood'
shape our Christian worship and witness in these Covid-19 days.
May it help connect us to the global family in its daily sufferings
and reconnect us to the fragile, yet fertile earth
from which we all draw our being,
our life, our desiring, common soul...

*God of love and mercy,
in our yearning hear our prayer.*
Amen.



Prayer for Ministry Leaders and the Future of the Church

Jennifer Hughes and Cheryl Wilson

Shepherding God,

In this year of mixed challenges and blessings we give thanks for ministers, ministry leaders and leaders in the church.

We give thanks for their wisdom and guidance, their courage and tenacity in the face of so much change.

For their compassion and ability to see those who are most vulnerable, for their heart for your gospel and for their faithfulness in service, we give thanks.

Some leaders have emerged from our communities, and some have discovered new gifts and skills. We give thanks that you continue to call people to witness and service, in every age and every situation. You are always faithful, steadfast God, and in this season, you continue to shape us, call us, and renew us as your people. We lift up our leaders and communities, in gratitude for your gifting and constant presence in our midst.

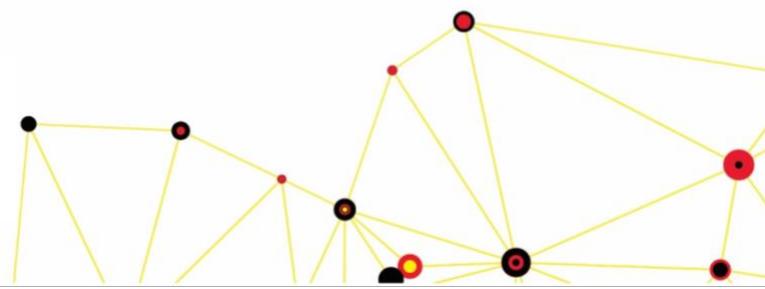
Gracious God, as we contemplate what lies before us now, we ask your guidance.

Some of us remain uncertain and vulnerable. Some anticipate with excitement being able to gather together for worship. For some of us, social restrictions are easing and new opportunities lie before us. Help us not to take for granted what we have, nor what we have experienced.

It seems tempting to try to rebuild life as we knew it, however we have changed, our world has changed, and our church has changed. Keep us aware of the ongoing needs around us, and responsive to your call to action.

Help us discern your ways for us, as we seek to follow Christ in mission. Lead us into new opportunities to worship, to witness, and to serve, holding fast to your vision of love, justice and reconciliation for all of creation.

Guide us in your Spirit, we pray. Amen



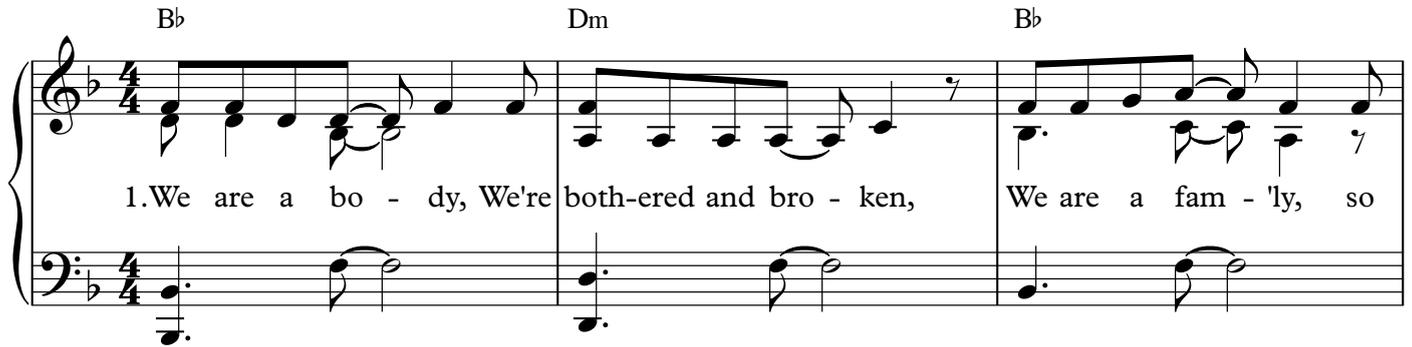
We walk on

Words: Craig Mitchell © 2020

Music: Leigh Newton © 2020

♩ = 100

B \flat Dm B \flat



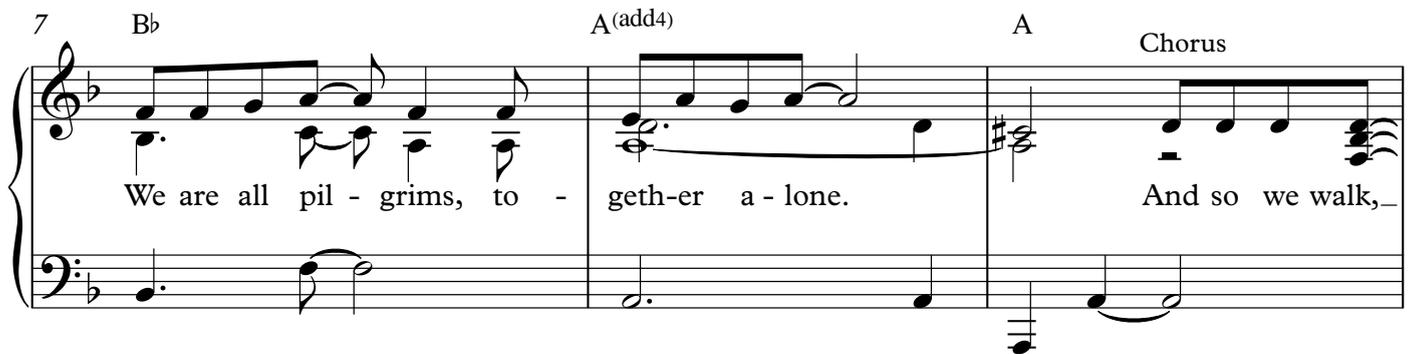
1. We are a bo - dy, We're both-ered and bro - ken, We are a fam - 'ly, so

4 C(add4) C Gm F



frac-tured and frail, Here is a house - hold, We're doubt-ful, di - vi-ded,

7 B \flat A(add4) A Chorus



We are all pil - grims, to - geth-er a - lone. And so we walk,

10 B \flat F C Dm 1,2,3.



and so we walk, We walk on, Lord, we walk on.

14

4,5. Dm Bb F

on. And so we walk, and so we walk, We walk

18

C Dm Dm *fine*

on, Lord, we walk on. *fine*

1. We are a body,
We're bothered and broken,
We are a family,
So fractured and frail.
Here is a household,
We're doubtful divided;
We are all pilgrims,
Together alone.

Chorus

And so we walk,
And so we walk.
We walk on,
Lord, we walk on.

2. We are a people,
We're holding a promise,
Once were full-bodied,
yet now we are bones.
Here was a heartbeat,
still heaving and hoping;
Life blood now seeping
as cold as a stone.

Chorus

3. We are all travellers
with little direction;
We are all followers,
With future unknown.
God of the twilight,
God of the morning,
God who stands by us -
Our story unfolds.

Chorus

4. We are all worriers,
We're anxious, despairing,
We are all dreamers,
Still longing for home.
Spirits are broken;
Our hearts are wide open,
Just for ourselves and
Just for the world.

Chorus melody 1

Chorus melody 2

5. This is our journey,
a wilderness people;
This is our yearning -
Of healing for all.
Behind and before us,
Within and beside us;
Christ in the pathway,
Christ in the call.

Chorus melody 1

Chorus melody 2