

# Congregational Prayer – Summertime

God of all life and our very breath,

We pray for the things we see. For sunshine and flowers, for farmers markets and community gardens, for smiles and for summer naps. Thank you. We also see when someone is sitting alone, those who struggle to have just enough, or pictures of those who suffer but feel far from us. Look down and see us and our prayers.

We pray for the things we hear. For laughter and music, for new languages being learned and voices being raised in the causes of peace and justice, for friends and strangers who speak to us of God. Thank you. We can also hear words spoken in anger, tears cried in pain, and questions that have no clear answers. Lean in and hear us and our prayers.

We pray for the things we can touch. For fresh-cut grass on bare feet and a refreshing splash of water, for safe hugs and enthusiastic high fives, for food that satisfies and home that shelters. Thank you. We can also touch a hand that is empty, a shoulder that is weighed down, the earth as it cries out to be cared for. Come close and hold us and our prayers.

We pray also for the things we can't see, can't hear, can't quite touch. We pray for each of us and our neighbours who struggle with precarious or under-employment, with mental illness, with grief that lasts longer than condolence cards, with loss that isn't mentioned in Hallmark cards. We pause in silence with our prayers that don't have names or don't always have a voice. (*Silence*)

Look down, lean in, and come close, oh God. Be with us wherever we go, and carry us. And we will be strong and courageous. Amen

Alissa Bender (Canada), 2019.

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