

Opening Prayer:

One: Beneath our toes
Beneath our shoes
Beneath floors
Beneath basement and cement and foundation

All We are still standing on holy ground

One Amidst cheerful chatter
TV drones and telephones
Planes and trains Sirens, horns, and the squeal of tires

All We listen for the call of the Earth

One Amidst trash, contamination, pits, pollution
Waste, seen and unseen
We are tired people, grasping for energy

All We are still standing on holy ground

One Bike riders and gardeners whisper alternatives
as creation groans beneath the weight of waste and
excess
Beneath even that sits holy ground
Firmly rooting all in the moving, shaping,
Cleansing powers of creation,

All We listen for the call of the Earth

“Lockdown” A Poem by: Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM

Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But, they say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise,
you can hear the birds again.

They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
across the empty squares,
keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.

Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in
a new way
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.

So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.

But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing, spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square ... sing.

Song She's got the whole world in her hands
 She's got the whole world in her hands
 She's got the whole world in her hands
 She's got the whole world in her hands

Closing Blessing:

One: May God's grace enfold us, Creation's beauty inspire
 us, and Earth's blessings heal and transform us.

All: Amen!

EARTH HOUR VIGIL

Saturday March 28, 2020 8:30-9:30pm

This Vigil was created for use at home by Claremont United Church. Prayers were adapted from: niagaraanglican.ca

A central candle is lit and placed in a safe location.

Preparation: We 'power down'.

All the lights in the house and any other power-sourced objects are turned off for the hour-long vigil.

A reading from Genesis 1:1-3

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.
God called the light "day," and the darkness God called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Introduction

One: Light is all around us. We often do not even realize it until it is gone and we are in darkness.

Tonight we will celebrate amidst darkness, guided by gentle candle light.

All: Light that will encourage us to reflect on who God is calling us to be for our world.