

1. **Welcome**
2. **Responsive Prayer:**

Eternal God,  
we praise you for this world, our home,  
and for every sign of your presence within it.

*Today we especially thank you  
for our church community,  
that to us it is a sign of your presence.*

We thank you for those  
who had the vision to establish it,  
for those who had the courage to believe you could use it.

*We acknowledge that the task is not an easy one.  
For this reason we praise you  
for every person whose perseverance  
has brought us to this day.*

For every person who has given  
heart, mind, skill, and money.

*For every person who has devoted  
energy, time and imagination.*

Most of all, our God,  
we thank you that you have been among us:

*You have celebrated with us in our joys,  
shared with us in our disappointments and loss.  
held us in our failures,  
disturbed us with your presence,  
and encountered us with your Son.*

3. **Affirmation Liturgies:**

#### **A Covenant for Now and Tomorrow**

God our creator, as you call us together to be your people,  
we will live by the values and in the hope of your kingdom:

*We will value each other as citizens of your kingdom  
and seek to be an inclusive community in which  
every member is given full justice, dignity and love.*

As you call us to follow Jesus, we will model  
our lives on his leadership and teaching:

*In response to your call, we will serve each other  
and the world as an expression of our obedience.*

As your Spirit is given to us, we will seek to discern  
and act upon your guidance:

*We will seek to be sensitive to the promptings of your Spirit  
in all aspects of our existence and affirm the appearance  
of the Spirit's gifts in each other's lives.*

As you have given each of us a part to play in this  
congregation, we will respect the different expressions  
and understandings of faith among us:

*And together, through these expressions and understandings,  
we will seek to discover your purposes and directions  
for our corporate life.*

Thus we commit ourselves to deepen our knowledge of you  
and our love of you:

*We will do this in solidarity with one another,  
through our communal worship, through disciplined  
spiritual journey, through faithful action in the world,  
and in honest fellowship with each other.*

*We commit ourselves to this Cityside congregation,  
for we believe that it is with and through each other  
that you have called us in love to serve.*

*We commit ourselves to act upon our discoveries in the faith,  
for we believe that we are partners with you  
in bringing the good news to those around us.*

### A Welcome to New Members of Cityside

We welcome you to the Cityside community.  
We affirm the journey that has led you to this place.  
We look forward to hearing your story,  
and sharing with you this phase in your life.

*May you find among us  
listening ears,  
warm hearts,  
and open homes.*

We invite your participation in the life of our church  
and welcome the gifts that you bring.  
There is a space for you here.

### Releasing of those leaving

We also acknowledge with sorrow that there are people who have chosen, for reasons both  
both positive and sad, not to journey with us any more. Let us call them to mind.

*We let them go with our blessing and prayer:*

God of our beginnings and our endings  
we celebrate the good that we have shared over the past years,  
and ask your blessing as they continue on their journey.

*We confess the ways where we have failed them and You,  
where we have unknowingly, or unthinkingly,  
made belonging here  
harder than it should have been.*

We release them to their new beginning,  
which, while it is an ending for us,  
is not the end of the communion we share  
as Christ-bearers in the world.

*So grant us all peace, and forgiveness,  
comfort the anxiety of parting,  
and give us grace to hold what is unresolved*

in your all-embracing love.  
Amen

### Prayer for ourselves

And finally, we pray for ourselves, for the grace to be and become the community that God is calling and shaping us to be.

God, our Divine Parent  
the one we call father and mother,  
from the chaos of cosmic dust  
you formed the earth upon which we stand.  
You called light from darkness,  
You shaped us from  
the dirt of the ground.  
May we who are made in Your image  
also be creative in  
our lives,  
our worship,  
and in our community.  
May we look at them and know  
that they are very good.  
In our beginnings and endings  
be with us.  
In our art, our work,  
and our worship,  
inspire us.  
May we dream dreams  
and have visions.  
May we be a resourceful  
and innovative community.  
A light shining in the city  
bringing others to you.

Jesus, our Christ,  
May we listen to and learn from those both inside and outside our community.  
Help us to have the courage  
to accept ourselves as we are,  
and the grace to accept others as they are.  
May we live our lives by walking together,  
moving beyond the surface  
and sharing in each others' depth  
As wave flows into wave  
so do our lives flow into one another.  
Give us the courage to share our lives,  
and the grace to accept that sometimes  
the wisdom of others is greater than our own.  
May we speak and listen here  
without fear of judgement,  
and be constantly surprised  
at where we find You.

Holy Spirit, our Companion,  
pray for us  
when we do not know how to pray.  
Let what emerges from our community  
be more beautiful, truthful, and vital,  
than we believe ourselves capable of being.  
Breathe life into our souls,  
that as you comfort us,  
we may comfort others  
that as you sustain us  
we may sustain others  
that as you hold us  
we may hold others.  
May the prayers of the saints surround us,

and may God bless us  
in that divine creative love  
that surpasses all understanding.  
Amen.