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.