



Lord of all Hopefulness,
when we dance together as one people – a light shines among us,
when we honor one another without partiality – a light shines among us,
when we bow and bend so that justice and mercy prevail – a light shines among us.
Blessed are you, our Light and our Life.

Together we stand in the light of this day
to enter into a time of confession.
For we know too well that we are a people
who cast stones,
create scapegoats,
and crush the least among us.

Today, we acknowledge our brokenness
and call upon your power to restore your image among us.

We continue to find ways to segregate ourselves by the color of the collars we wear, the way we labor, and the way we are paid.
We have forgotten that we are one people with many gifts who long to be a part of the land of the free and home of the brave.
We too easily find ways to say them and we lose the spirit of us.
Creator of New Life. Restore us.

We have allowed the brilliance of our humanity
to be diminished by the fears and anxieties of our time.
We have let the shadow of death order our days and our deeds.
Creator of New Life. Restore us.

We have become self-consumed.
We cannot see and we cannot hear the voices of others.
We have retreated into the hell of isolation and self-satisfaction.

We have too readily fled from the gift of community
that is to be the homeland of creativity and new life.

Creator of New Life. Restore us.

We have made vile and inhospitable language
the standard by which we address one another.
We dress up our lives with smiles, fine clothes,
and well-mannered gestures,
though our hearts settle for corruption
and our life together has become soiled within indecency.
Creator of New Life. Restore us.

We have forsaken the miracle of dialogue
for the disease of monologues and self-praise.
We have forgotten the things that make for peace
and become partners with injustice and intolerance.
O Lord of New Life. Restore us.

Lord of All Hopefulness,
WE BELIEVE in the foolishness of reconciliation that heals and makes us whole
WE BELIEVE in a creative power of life that nurtures and cares for the least among us
WE BELIEVE in words filled with visions that liberate and revive your people
WE BELIEVE in a living word that transforms even that which appears to be written in stone.

Today, WE BELIEVE that justice and mercy, loving kindness and peace turns us around and makes us into a people of hope in the face of all the other stories placed before us. It is here, we again rise up to new life and begin our work in this place. It is here and now that the hands once preoccupied with pointing will be transformed into gestures of welcome and solidarity. **Amen.**

Pastor F. Allan Debelak

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