

Congregational Prayer – For the Year Ahead

We're still here, God,
another year come and gone like a freight train.
Some parts are clear and memorable,
and there are blurry parts that went by too fast.
Thank you for every hug and handshake,
every smile and look of reassurance.
At the end of the year, we sit across the table,
and say "Here we are," like a benediction.
Our feet are on the ground, this good earth,
thank you for the way we are paying more attention.
Touching, tasting, drinking in the beauty,
inhaling the melodies on the wind that sing the world.
And yet, if we are honest,
there are too many broken hearts here on planet earth,
too many too broke, too hungry, too beaten, too forsaken.
Who knew the garden of Gethsemene could be this big?
Our knees aren't made for this kind of praying,
and we're not good at it either.
This year has found us torn between life as normal,
with all its dear particularities,
and life in a heap at the edge of the road, torn and bloody.
God of Hope, where is your relief?
Thank you for a Saviour who can say #MeToo,
and who lives to tell us the way through.
Hear our prayer for the year ahead,
help us believe in rainbows, sun after the bleakest storms.
Help us believe, against all odds, in love.
This time next year we want to be telling you
about another trip around the sun.
And its been glorious.

Carol Penner (Canada), 2021. leadinginworship.com
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