

Centering Prayer

Persistent God,
Save us from thinking that your love toward us is always gentle.

Pressure us into growing more human—not through the lessening of our struggles, but through the meaning of them. Let those struggles dig deep crevices in our lives, so that our gifts may be unburied.

Deepen our hurts until we learn to share them, and ourselves, openly; until we learn to acknowledge our needs honestly.

Sharpen our fears until we can name them, so that the power we have given them may be unlocked and we may be freed.

Help us to sort out our loves, clinging harder to the ones that bring us life and letting go of the attachments that pull us down.

Confuse us with the ways your values turn this world upside down—until we are rid of those grand expectations that keep us from seeing the small, glad gifts that are in front of us now, and here, and always.

Expose us—even our shame, in that dark corner where it hides behind our propriety—expose us until we can laugh at our common frailties and failures, until we can laugh our way toward becoming whole.

Deliver us from just going through the motions and wasting the things we are holding right now in our hands: a chance to make things different, a choice about who we are, our creativity, your call.

Let us see ourselves clearly, so that we can lift our eyes from ourselves to see you clearly too, and to worship you wholly.

Make us kind—to you, to ourselves, to one another.

Amen.