



Holy One, in whom we live and move and have our being,

We come to you at a time when, in our churches we are experiencing what it means to feel unsafe in our buildings and communities, unable to practice our sacred rituals together. We are separated from our families, from our communities, from the way of life we've known. We are experiencing a lack of necessary health supplies and other commodities, and the manipulation of truth for political ends. We're experiencing the added stress and anxiety this brings to our lives, financially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Today we pray that this new reality may sensitize us to those people for whom, with the coming of European colonizers, this was a constant reality for centuries – our indigenous neighbors. We celebrate the miracle of their survival, their strength and resilience, and their ongoing work of recovery of their traditional wisdom and spiritual practices. We pray too, for ourselves, as those who inherit the legacy of the colonizers.

Your Spirit of Truth, active within us, calls us to look at our own history as faith communities, as well as citizens of this country. We pray for the courage to learn the part our own church played in colonizing this territory - the injustices and lack of integrity involved in procuring land and resources, the cultural genocide in which we participated through the Indian Boarding Schools - and may we be discomfited by the underlying spiritual and cultural arrogance which caused and still causes so much suffering.

May we look to the heart of our faith, to the resources we have as churches and the guidance of your Spirit to choose a different path.

And we pray that this time of global disruption will wake us from the paths of destruction and exploitation so many of we human beings have been walking. May we know the joy of coming into right relationship with one another and with the whole Earth community, the joy of recognizing the sacred nature of the Earth and the true wealth of a loving, compassionate and just society of mutual support. We give thanks for all the visionaries who inspire us, and for the unquenchable creativity of the human spirit.

O God, we all carry within us the knowledge of our ancestors, and the light of your Spirit. May this be a time of redoubled commitment to connection with that knowledge and to following your guidance. May we seize this opportunity to be transformed, using the confinement required of us by this pandemic to re-order and re-build ourselves, so we can emerge transformed into new beings with a new, soul-deep understanding of our common humanity, our global web of connection and our interconnection with all living beings. May we emerge with a commitment to a healthier, more humble understanding of ourselves as people of faith, and a commitment to a more just and compassionate society for all.

*With gratitude, we offer this prayer by Maggie Edmondson, pastor of Winthrop Center Friends Church (Quaker) and member of REACH's Decolonizing Faith project, for individuals and communities of faith to lift up on the journey of decolonization and restoration.*