



# Prayer for all souls: past, present, and yet to be

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for JCoR Global Community Hour

by Teresa Blumenstein with excerpts and inspiration from *Dwellings* by Linda Hogan



## READER 1:

“I never learned the sunflower’s golden language or the tongues of its citizens. I had a small understanding, nothing more than a shallow observation of the flower, insects, and birds. But they knew what to do, how to live. An old voice from somewhere, gene or cell, told the plant how to evade the pull of gravity and find its way upward, how to open. It was instinct, intuition, necessity. A certain knowing directed the seed-bearing birds on paths to ancestral homelands they had never seen. They believed it. They followed.”





LEADER:

God of friendship in the darkest of hours,

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we find ourselves in an era of growing deserts,  
disappearing islands, and burning forests.




## READER 1:

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We need ears to hear your old voice that guides sunflower seeds out of soil.

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We need the courage to respond like the migratory birds and butterflies who accept your outlandish invitation to survive by undertaking a journey that appears impossible.



**ALL:**

God of friendship,  
give us such ears.

Give us such courage.

**TODAS Y TODOS:**

Dios de la amistad,  
danos tales oídos.

Danos tal valor.



## READER 2:

“There are other summons and calls, some even more mysterious than those commandments to birds or those survival journeys of insects...Once a century, all of a certain kind of bamboo flower on the same day. Neither the plants’ location, nor their age or size make a difference. They flower. Some current of an inner language passes among them, through space and separation, in ways we cannot explain in our language. They are all, somehow, one plant, each with a share of communal knowledge.”



LEADER:

God of many parts and one body,

we find ourselves in a state of disunity, disagreement,  
and divergent ideas about the road out of global crisis.



## READER 2:

Give us hearts that feel—and return—the good faith and good will in everyone we meet, especially those with whom we disagree.

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Give us lungs that balance each exhalation of truth with an inhalation of fresh, challenging ideas.

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Like the bamboo species that flowers on the same day in every part of the world, we each need a share of communal knowledge to pour ourselves out in unison for an idea whose time has come.



## ALL:

God of many parts and one body,  
give us such hearts.

Give us such lungs.

Give us a share in such  
communal knowledge.

## TODAS y TODOS:

Dios de muchas partes y un solo cuerpo,  
danos tales corazones.

Danos tales pulmones.

Danos una parte de tal conocimiento  
comunitario.



## READER 3:

“John Hay in *The Immortal Wilderness*, has written: ‘There are occasions when you can hear the mysterious language of the Earth, in water, or coming through the trees, emanating from the mosses, seeping through the undercurrents of the soil, but you have to be willing to wait and receive.’

... Once, in the redwood forest, I heard a beat, something like a drum or heart coming from the ground and trees and wind. That underground current stirred a kind of knowing inside me, a kinship and longing, a dream barely remembered that disappeared back to the body. Another time, there was a booming voice of an ocean storm thundering from far out at sea, telling about what lived in the distance, about the rough water that would arrive, wave after wave revealing the disturbance at center.”





LEADER:

God of endless, unwavering rhythm,

we find ourselves in an age of unprecedented disturbance  
in the seasonal patterns and growth cycles that birthed and  
oriented us to life on this planet.

## READER 3:

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Give us an appetite for sowing and reaping that follows the tempo of our earth community's regenerative symphony.

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Give us feet that tread lightly as we relearn the dance of reciprocity that is emblazoned on our bones.



**ALL:**

God of rhythm,  
give us such a tempo.

Give us such feet.

**TODAS y TODOS:**

Dios del ritmo,  
danos ese tempo.

Danos tales pies.



## READER 4:

“Tonight I walk. I am watching the sky. I think of the people who came before me and how they knew the placement of stars in the sky, watched the moving sun long and hard enough to witness how a certain angle of light touched a stone only once a year. Without written records, they knew the gods of every night, the small, fine details of the world around them and of the immensity above them...It is a world of elemental attention, of all things working together, listening to what speaks in the blood.”



LEADER:

God of resurrection, who forged the elements from dying stars, and who constructs each new generation from blood, sweat, and tears of the generations past,

we find ourselves at the tomb of old definitions of progress.



## READER 4:

We need a lifeblood infused with the creative passions of our forebears.

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We need discerning spirits that can relinquish their destructive ideas but embrace their timeless wisdom.

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We need a vantage point on their shoulders, so we can chart a more just and sustainable path.



## LEADER:

“Whichever road I follow, I walk in the land of many gods, and they love and eat one another. Walking, I am listening to a deeper way.

Suddenly, all my ancestors are behind me.”

[ALL ARE INVITED TO  
UN-MUTE AND SPEAK ALOUD  
THE NAMES OF BELOVED  
ANCESTORS.]

[SE INVITA A TODOS A  
DESMUDAR Y HABLAR EN  
VOZ LOS NOMBRES DE LOS  
ANCESTROS AMADOS]





LEADER:

Suddenly, all our ancestors are behind us.

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“Be still,” they say. “Watch and listen.  
You are the result of the love of billions.”



## ALL:

God of resurrection,  
give us such passionate blood.

Give us such wise spirits.

Give us such clear vision.

## TODAS y TODOS:

Dios de la resurrección,  
danos una sangre tan apasionada.

Danos espíritus tan sabios.

Danos una visión tan clara.



LEADER:

God of endless mystery,

we find ourselves accompanied by countless faces of Christ.  
We know we are the result of the love of billions of  
creatures, human and other-than-human.



## READER 5:

We need the deep wonder to perceive that, through your design, miracles of creation are not just possible, but inevitable.

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We need the humility to recognize that we are not the final objective of creation; we are not the weavers of life's brilliant web.

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We need the strength to grasp that our calling is not to be *good children* of your miracle, but to be *good ancestors* to the miracles who are yet to be. ○



## ALL:

God of mystery and miracle,  
give us the wonder,  
the humility,  
and the strength  
to be good ancestors.

## TODAS Y TODOS:

Dios del misterio y del milagro,  
danos el asombro,  
la humildad  
y la fuerza  
para ser buenos antepasados.



**LEADER:**

**God of justice,  
we find ourselves in a time of:  
ecological destruction for profit,  
domestic & sexual violence against women,  
abuse of children,  
mass migration due to violence and environmental disaster,  
unsafe & unstable living conditions,  
dehumanizing colonization,  
trafficking and exploitation of human beings,  
religious persecution,  
inaccessibility of education, water, and basic necessities,  
drug trafficking & paramilitary gangs,  
and many more injustices.**

## ALL:

God of justice,  
give us the courage to be good  
ancestors by doing our part to  
respond to the suffering we see  
in our world.

## TODAS Y TODOS:

Dios de la justicia, danos el valor  
de ser buenos ancestros  
haciendo nuestra parte para  
responder al sufrimiento que  
vemos en nuestro mundo.

