

A LITURGY FOR LENT

We come to worship as we are Lord, full of those feelings which would keep us from loving ourselves and others.

Receive us as we come and may our hearts be turned away from those feelings.

(#762)

Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown
has broken every barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Our misunderstandings often lead us to make snap judgements of others.

Our fear and uncertainty make us build walls to keep others from getting near us.

O Lord, help us to understand the kind of love that can break every barrier down – each wall that would separate your people.

Help us to be givers and receivers of that kind of love.

Even though we are persons with walls built against our neighbors, may we meet them as friends, as we all come before your grace and mercy.

Join us, O Living Christ, by becoming the cornerstone of our lives.

Just as you overturned the tables of old, O Lord, overturn the barriers that we place between ourselves as your people.

Make the stranger like a friend, the widow and widower like a mother and father, the convict like a child and the hero like a neighbor.

(OVER)

We struggle with our differences. Our world is wounded, O Lord, and we need your passion to be a sign for us.

The wounded world is in need of your balm. Help us to be healed. May our barriers be overturned as we minister in your home.

(#672)

By your reconciling love ev'ry stumbling block remove;
each to each unite, endear; come and spread your banner here.

Let us each for others care, each the other's burden bear.
to your church a pattern give, showing how believers live.

May it to the world appear that we your disciples are
by our loving mutually, by our Christian unity.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Kay Ward