

Universal Prayer

I invite us to hold a **moment of silence**.

Divine Spirit, known to us by many names;

This year has tested us in ways both anticipated and unforeseen. Collectively and individually, we are raw, bare. But we cannot go back.

As we work to end sexual and domestic violence; as we stand up to systems, ideologies and groups that perpetuate racism, anti-blackness and the oppression of historically marginalized voices and bodies; as we pursue justice long-overdue and long cried out for- in this work, with this work, we arrive here today.

As we enter into this month of awareness and action, we pray that you may open our eyes to a new way of knowing, feeling and imagining:

When tragedy threatens to close our hearts, give us the strength to feel the sacred hope of our ancestors and the generations that will follow us.

When uncertainty shakes our foundation and tramples our visions of the future, ground our souls in the trust of the soil beneath our feet and the air that fills our lungs.

When exhaustion seeps into our spirits, help us to find deep respite in laughter, tears, community and reflection.

We pray for a daring hope. The kind we cannot ignore; a hope undeterred by logic and unrestrained by our immediate reality. We pray for a hope whose current is strong and ceaseless. Even when the surface of life's water looks unchanged and unmoved, may we know that there is something greater, swirling beneath its exterior, at work in our hearts and minds.

When we are tired and worn and cannot muster the strength to conjure hope from our overwhelming despair, Divine Spirit, we ask that you hold our hand. For this alone, sustains. We ask that we *know* your presence in those moments when we truly question it.

Walk with us. And in times when we cannot walk, lift our weary eyes from the trench of dejection. Show us that though the road ahead may be long, we do not walk alone. We never did. And we never will.

Meet us here as we remember our past and honor our present. Unite us across our virtual realities; across the uncertainty that has come to define this year in evermore potent ways; across our vulnerable humanness and courageous humanity; unite us, here. Right now.

Help us, together, as the sacred collective, to imagine a future that we may not yet see but *know* to be true. Guide us as we speak boldly and proclaim that there is more; that in the nights of sweeping darkness and in the winter storms that surround us on the mountainside- there is *more*. Together, help us to proclaim this truth. This hope. Divine Spirit, we pray for an inspired imagination and the tenacity to pursue its manifestation.

In your Light we pray.



DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
AWARENESS
PROJECT