Touched By An Angel  By Maya Angelou

How does this poem inform you about our time together today?

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

Prayer

This prayer will be read once by a single voice, and then repeated by all

Can you hold that space open for me?
Can you keep your questions and suggestions
and judgments at bay
Can you wait with me for the truths that stay
hidden behind my sadness, my fear, my forgetting, and my pain
Can you just hold open a space for me to tell my story?

Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Mpho Tutu, in The Book of Forgiving

This prayer is printed in Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church’s Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Reconciliation, and Justice. In 2017, the Episcopal Church released this document as a road map in response to resolutions passed at the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church (2015). Becoming Beloved Community is available online at www.episcopalchurch.org/page/becoming-beloved-community.