

Prayer at Fountain Street Church

Richard A. Rhem
Fountain Street Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan

November 25, 2001

Transcription of the prepared text

Eternal God,
Creator of all that is,
enlivening Spirit whose breath gives life.
In the beginning, O God, your spirit/wind
brooded over the soupy chaos of emerging cosmos,
bringing forth order, beauty, and rhythmic regularity
in a rich diversity of infinite possibility.

It is with awe that we contemplate heavens
set with a myriad of starry diamonds in the inky blackness.
It is with delight that we trace the breaking dawn,
bask in the radiant warmth of the sun at its zenith,
watch with wonder its final moments
firing all with golden glow
before it slips below the far horizon.

Summer and winter, springtime and harvest –
All beautiful the march of days
as seasons come and go.
The hand that shaped the rose
has wrought the crystal of the snow.

Wonder, mystery, all about us
if we have eyes to see,
ears to hear,
if for a moment we pause, fully conscious, fully aware,
attentive to the reality into which our lives are woven,
a tapestry we can never fully take in.
Yet now and then, O God,
we get a glimpse of the grandeur of it all
and know ourselves to be a living part of it all,
bringing to the emerging wonder
a consciousness –

self-consciousness,
consciousness of the other,
the dawning of communion,
the foundation of community.

Ah, dear God,
the mystery deepens;
before the consciousness of ourselves, of the other,
we find ourselves in the presence of the mystery –
indeed, in your presence, O God, mystery of being,
mystery of our being,
of our being together.

We cannot take it in.
We cannot fully fathom the cosmic depths or the depths of our own being;
yet, in moments of awareness
we realize we have been gifted with life,
gifted with insight into the larger reality in which we share,
gifted with a sense of being known and of knowing,
knowing who we are
knowing the other,
knowing we are not alone but belong together.

In the stillness of this magnificent space
we contemplate the wonder of it all.