

wearing ourselves out in a quest to buy what is already ours:
God's unmerited love. I will begin by sharing a very personal
story about unmerited love.

But first turn with us into the stillness and listen to God
speak with the voice of the heart:

*My child, I made you for myself.
I made you like myself.
I delight in you.
My heart aches with pity
When you smother joy under the onslaught of busyness.
Then there is barely a minute
To pause and listen for me.*

*You run everywhere looking for life,
Searching for the life of life.
All the while I am here.
I am as close as a prayer.
I am breathing in your breath.*

*You look for me in the pleasures of life.
Things pile upon things,
Experiences crowd out experiences,
Places run together in a hazy blur,
And still you don't find that one thing that will satisfy you.
But I am here.
I am as close as a prayer.
I am breathing in your breath.*

*I made you for myself,
I wanted you.*

*I made you like myself,
I made you good and I made you free.*

*Listen! For I have carved in you the heart to hear.
Listen and know that I am near.
I am as close as a prayer.
I am breathing in your breath.*

*Before you speak the word of worry or worship I hear you.
Before you sing your delight or moan your anguish I speak.
I am here.
I am as close as a prayer.
I am breathing in your breath.*

*With each breath I choose life for you.
I paint the pattern of joy in your heart and leave it there for you to
find.
I build the frame of your flourishing in the center of your being and
call you to search it out.
I kindled the spark of goodness in you.
With each breath I fan the flame.
I am here.
I am as close as a prayer.
I am breathing in your breath.*

*With each breath you choose, my child, for you are free.
Will you breathe with me the breath of life?
Will you claim the joy I have prepared for you?
Will you seek me out and find me here?
Will you whisper the prayer?
Will you breathe in my breath?*