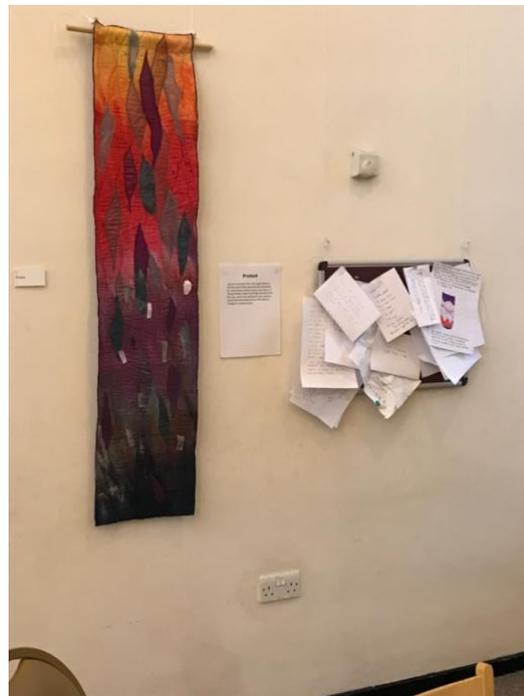


## **PROTEST: ANGER IS DIRECTED AT GOD BECAUSE THE WORLD IS NOT AS GOD PROMISED IT WOULD BE**



Lament offers a framework for people to protest the evils they identify in the world, the evils of their experience. Lament as protest offers the possibility of communal lament and personal lament. The spirituality of protest that lament lifts to God is cathartic utterance that this is not the way the world should be. Groups can become places where honest rage can be heard compassionately rather than silenced. The spirituality of lament is brave and courageous enough to tell the truth about life and the world as it is because it passionately believes that this is not how God wants it to be, and that with the God of the miraculous there is the hope of transformation.



### **Protest Prayer Exercise**

What would you protest in your life? In the life of the world?

What would you like to be different?

What are you angry about?

A lament starts with addressing God, then it moves into complaint, this can be about personal suffering, the enemies or God not caring or acting.

Then there is petition, asking God to do something, motivations: confession of sin, or protestation of innocence or even the public relations value of the writer (what good it will do you God)

Then always the confession of trust in God, usually introduced by “but” and the sense of a faith that knows what it is talking about. The writer then finishes with a vow of praise.

Some psalms to help: Psalm 22; Psalm 6; Psalm 30

Below is a lament I wrote recently to articulate my feelings to God about the current situation, it is a lament for the church as the body of Christ in the world, but laments can also be individual.

### **A lament for this time**

O God

How can so small a thing cause such chaos and confusion

Do you not care enough to stop it?

Do you not see the destruction?

Do you notice the dying and the grief?

Are you immune to fear and frustration of your people?

Have you turned your face away from us?

Around me,

People live in fear

Are isolated from those they love

Are exiled from their places of worship

Are dying separated from, crying for those they love most

How long? How long must we suffer this exile and separation?

But you are my God

In you I trust

You I continue to worship with Zoom, Facebook, YouTube and in my home

realising you make the secular sacred

You will prevail as you have done over generations]

You will make us signs of living hope

In you we trust

In your power to prevail

(Words are all from Louise’s notes accompanying the Stations of Lament.

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If you would like to contact Louise, please send an email to [office@bradfordnorth.org.uk](mailto:office@bradfordnorth.org.uk) for the attention of Rev Philip Drake, and we will arrange for messages to be forwarded)

In the photo above, from Louise’s exhibition in Sheffield, you will see a small noticeboard to which visitors were invited to attach their own laments of protest. If anyone is having a go at producing a lament of protest using this prayer exercise, we would consider using it here on the website. Submissions should be sent to [webmaster@bradfordnorth.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@bradfordnorth.org.uk)