**Psalm of Lament**
*This Psalm was first offered at a service of lament hosted by Living Skies Regional Council of the United Church of Canada on June 20 2021, in response to the (re)discovery of 215 children's bodies at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School after years of effort by the Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation.* It is written by Frances Kitson,

By the altars of our churches—

 there we sit down and there we weep

 as we think of the children.

On the communion tables there

 we hang up our righteousness and our certainty, our good intentions and knowing best.

For there we thought we did good things

 and there we thought we built the Kingdom.

How could we be so wrong?

How could we be complicit in such evil?

How did we fail to notice? How did we choose not to hear? How were we complacent? How did we succumb to bureaucracy and systems?

How did we claim to preach your word

 when in truth we were the ones who kept the little ones from You?

Let us not avoid the millstone around our necks,

 the rightful weight of Your sorrow, anguish, and anger at the works of Your church.

Out of the depths we cry to you, O Lord.

 Lord, hear our voice!

Let your ears be attentive

 to the cries of the generations of Rachels,

 weeping for the children they will no longer hold,

 refusing to be consoled.

What shall we do, Holy Mother, with the truth of our legacy?

If we sit in the seat of power, it is there;

if we believe ourselves the soul of the nation, it is there.

If we say, “Surely we meant well,

 and were only trying to help,”

even then we cannot hide from the shadow of our complicity,

for your truth is with us,

your justice calls us to account.

If you, O Lord, should mark our iniquity,

 Lord, we could not stand.

We wait for you, Blessed Father, our souls wait,

 and in your word we hope;

our souls wait for your justice

 more than those who watch for the morning,

 more than those who watch for the morning.

We hope in the Lord!

 For with the Lord there is truest justice,

 and with Her is great power to redeem.

It is You, O Lord, who will redeem The United Church of Canada

 from all its iniquities.

Turn, O Lord, save our lives;

 deliver us from our ugliness and evil for the sake of your steadfast love.

Let us not deem this truth of our identity an unfortunate chapter,

 a mistake no longer with us,

 a grievous error that is now redeemed.

But let us know the truth, and in the truth be made free:

 the truth that this harm is in our DNA,

 the truth that this evil is still with us,

 the truth that we too need liberation and healing,

 the truth that oppression and domination are woven in our fabric.

For you see and note trouble and grief,

 that you may take it into your hands;

the helpless commit themselves to you;

 you have been the helper of the orphan.

O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek;

 you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear

to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed,

 so that we from earth may strike terror no more.