

**From the Clewer Initiative for Anti-Slavery Day -
Monday 18th October 2021**

A lament using our senses

We still ourselves before Almighty God, as we come into his presence.

Pause

As we approach this time of prayer for those exploited, bruised and weary, may we, bare foot draw near to you, sensing the holy ground on which we stand, shoulder to shoulder with all for whom coercion and control dominates their lives.

**We weep and wail and look to you, the Lord of hosts.
Lord, turn deep darkness into the morning.**

We see you; we don't see you; we look but we lack visual acuity to recognise the suffering before our eyes.

God, help us to see our vulnerable brothers and sisters as you see them. Open our eyes, our hearts and our souls to recognise the vulnerable and all who are precious in your sight.

**We weep and wail and look to you, the Lord of hosts.
Lord, turn deep darkness into the morning.**

Heavenly Father, we hear your command to love our neighbour as ourselves. Open our ears in a new way during anti-slavery week.

May the bells that ring out across our nation, appeal to the ears of those for whom are unaware of their complicity in this crime.

May we listen afresh through the silence, allowing our heads and hearts to respond to how you are calling us to action; in our own diocese and county and to the cries ringing from all the corners of our global community.

**We weep and wail and look to you, the Lord of hosts.
Lord, turn deep darkness into the morning.**

Lord we hold today before you;

- The 11-year-old, wearing a mask, with cotton wool in his ears, armed with a shovel to mine gold underwater, dizzy from oil fumes from leaking machinery.
- The 14-year-old, feeling his way through the dark and deep waters fearful that the pit walls will collapse, guided only by his sense of touch to recognise the stones he must shovel.
- The teenager transferring cash to hand for drugs in a subway.
- The homeless person, within reach of the change dropped in his box, knowing that his exploiter will take this too, depleting him still further from the street life of hand to mouth not of his choosing.
- For those for whom this night will lie, not at rest, but endure the unwanted touch of another, inside and out, with the knowledge that tomorrow will bring the same.
- For those who toil and labour wearing inappropriate clothing for their tasks, hungry and sleep deprived through unrelenting activity.

We weep and wail and look to you, the Lord of hosts.

Lord, turn deep darkness into the morning.

For those in the National Referral Mechanism and those outside.

For those living on the edge of re exploitation.

Heavenly Father we cry out to you to direct the ways that we can influence policy makers and those holding power in our land and across nations.

We pray for the hopefulness that comes from partnership – rescue, restoration, and the rebuilding of lives.

May we never grow weary until the day when all are free to smell the air of freedom, to taste the fruit of their own labours, to encircle their arms around those whom they choose and see and own a horizon of their making.

Lord, as you turn darkness into morning, may your will be done on earth.

Amen