Dear God,  
I've got nothing...  
but "Dear God."  
Everything is a rehash of things I've already said.  
And yet, the more I pray,  
The more I teach,  
The more I preach,  
Things just seem to be getting worse.  
  
Dear God,  
I don't want people to have to live like this -  
with hate, with injustice,  
I don't want people to have to live like this -     
I don't want to live  
with forced silence because  
we are too afraid  
that the next time it will be OUR house.  
  
Dear God,  
Search me and know my heart.  
Help me to be a doer of your justice,  
Help me to be a maker of your peace,  
Help me to never confuse the two.  
Help me to never be silenced.  
  
Dear God,  
I know that your love reaches to everybody,  
no matter what.  
All of them.  
Even them.  
Even me.  
But I'm not as good as you are.  
Surely this is civil war.  
The bonds of affection have been broken.  
We are not friends, we are enemies.  
Our nature only sees the badder angels,  
The better ones are outside my view.  
  
Dear God,  
The words of the Psalmist are trapped behind my lips,  
Held back like roiling stormwaters behind a floodgate--  
Held back.  
Held back, but only for a time.  
Held back, because I know that wrath begets wrath.  
  
Dear God,  
I will not ask you to fix this.  
You have told me over and over again   
that this is out of your hands  
and you have placed this in our hands.  
Hands which are soft and idle and polite.  
  
Dear God,  
That's all I have.  
  
Kate Penney Howard  
North Christian Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana  
written January 6, 2021 for January 10, 2021 worship.