The neighbourhood calls, It beckons, It invites forward steps in long progression, The neighbourhood, This place, Crying out for presence, This place, Hungry for roots that mine the depths of this marginal, Fragmented, Contested space, The call rings out, “rebuild the walls long since fallen down”, Into this land Into this land of promise build a road to love, And leave space for the irrelevant, Create a place that’s safe Create a space rooted, A space that becomes a place, Recognise that this fertile ground is formed from people, Spreading roots and growing deeper into generative dirt, Tapping into a life, So profound, Where beauty and the practical, Are planted side by side, Flowers and vegetables, In all things God resides, This place of his making calls out, Beckons us forth into a new partaking, Our haste forsaking, The neighbourhood is a gift, A living garden, Take a breath, Breathe in shalom, Watch as hearts turn from stone to flesh, All things being made new, In this radical subversion of logic held as truth, Let the neighbourhood, Grow deeper into you, A splinter in the brain, Revealing new truths made known, In the small things, And daily disruptions that can be embraced, Cultivate grace, And seek out co-conspirators Borne out of relationships of depth, Relationships that recognise, Each and everyone is beautiful, And that beauty calls to beauty, In the viral contamination of the kingdom, Deceptively alluring and unstoppable, So powerful is this contagion, The God of the neighbourhood calls us all, To collaborate and risk a fall, For God’s dream’s sake, God calls us to be people of reconciliation, A people who listen and build a rhythm, A rhythm of being, Doing, Pausing, A rhythm based on experimental connection, Of faithful presence amidst distractions, God calls and God is gentle, God does and God is loving, Slowly, slowly, slowly, God speaks - these words are holy, “You will find me in the margins, With the misfits, And with your neighbours, Living with lives in turmoil, You will find me deeply rooted, In places where reconciliation, Is a quiet, subversive hymn, A slow, collaborative song,, Come join me in the neighbourhood, Where the kingdom grows on and on.”

The New Parish by Tim Watson (@beatliturgist)
**Nobody Crosses the Road, A Call and Response,**
by Tim Watson

Lord in our town on avenues where neighbourhoods converge
Nobody crosses the road

We share the same streets, but
Nobody crosses the road

Our lives are played out in tiny blocks of distance, but
Nobody crosses the road

If we would only look more closely, slow down and pay attention, we would see the need in the faces of strangers, but
Nobody crosses the road

If we could live into the new pathways of our local places we might witness a new emergence of hope, but
Nobody crosses the road

With intentionality and hopeful hearts we could practice faithful presence and live by other rules, but
Nobody crosses the road

In openness, love and action we might enter into a way of living unmarketable lives, set in the hearts of our communities, but
Nobody crosses the road

We lament for the lost and broken, but
Nobody crosses the road

Our desire is to shout of freedom to the captives, but
Nobody crosses the road

We long to live into your steps Lord, but
Nobody crosses the road

Bridges wait to be built, chasms of dissonance spilt our communities, and
Nobody crosses the road

Deep down we know all are made in God’s image, but
Nobody crosses the road

We long to tear down barriers of fear and shame, but
Nobody crosses the road

We long for shalom to reign, but
Nobody crosses the road

The kingdom of God is near, and yet
Nobody crosses the road

The kingdom of God is exploding with fragrant blossom, and yet
Nobody crosses the road

The voices of God calls us on, but
Nobody crosses the road

But we will cross the road
We will cross the road

We will walk the paths unused
We will cross the road

We will dream with and for our neighbours
We will cross the road

Collaboration will be our calling card
We will cross the road

We will speak for eyes to be dried
We will cross the road

And we will dry the eyes
We will cross the road

And with every faltering step
We will cross the road

In every moment when doubt fills our hearts
We will cross the road

We will cross the road, **We will cross the road**
We will cross the road, **We will cross the road**
So let us live another narrative into being and practiced truth, one where we, where we cross the road
We will cross the road. Amen. Amen.