

## North, South, East, West

*This was written as part of a pack of worship materials that we were asked to put together for the North Western Baptist Association on the theme of associating. We wanted to write a gathering prayer that would encompass and celebrate the wonderful diversity our association and to affirm that God meets us all whoever and wherever we are and delights that we are all different.*

North and south, we gather for worship  
East and west, we meet to pray.

In hilltop retreat, we still ourselves,  
while the urban buzz means the world is never far away.

In ancient chapel, an organ plays  
in modern hall, drums sound out praise.

Happy clappy confidence  
meets woolly liberal doubt

And all unite in praise of the God who meets us all.

Forgive us God  
when we seek to possess you  
to claim that you are made in our image  
or that of our tradition.

Forgive us God  
when we seek to deny you  
the possibility of meeting others  
in different ways to our ways.

Forgive us God  
when we see our diversity  
as a threat  
and try to force others into our mould.

*[Silence]*

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