

## **And We Think We Have Absolute Ownership of God**

Who build churches, temples  
synagogues and mosques  
and imprison God  
by our own sense of beauty  
and our acts of piety?

Who can claim in great  
hypocrisy  
that we own God  
by our frail hands  
and by the offerings of  
our gratitude and generosity?

But God cannot be imprisoned  
in our churches, temples,  
synagogues and mosques.  
God cannot be owned  
by our own hands and  
declarations  
on tablets of stones.

God dwells in the heart  
of man and woman -  
in communities of faith-  
as the living church,

the living temple,  
the living synagogue  
and the living mosque.

There is no individual,  
no ethnic or religious group,  
no brand of ideology or  
politics,  
no culture and country  
can own and imprison God  
absolutely.

God dwells in every man and  
woman  
whispering  
to the tablet of the human  
heart  
to do only acts of love,  
justice and mercy.

**Elizabeth Padillo Olesen,**  
*“Spirituality for Peace and  
Justice,” Author House, UK  
p. 106.*