

Gather Us, O God



Advent to Gather
Advent Together

Advent Lutheran Church
8840 University City Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28213
(704) 549-1555
www.adventlu.org

Pastoral Welcome

Prelude

“Holy Ground”

Annette Nolan

Affirmation of Baptism

L: We begin by making the sign that was made on the day of our baptisms. We gather in the name of the Father and of the Son ✚ and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

L: As we see the light the Christ candle, we remember the words that were said when we were baptized:

C: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

L: In baptism, God brings us into his family and calls us his own. By baptism, God gives us the gifts of faith, love, life, forgiveness, and strength, and asks to respond in faithfulness to him and in service to others.

L: I ask those who are affirming their baptisms today, do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism:

✚ to live among God’s faithful people

✚ to hear his Word and share in Holy Communion

✚ to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,

✚ to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus

✚ and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

C: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

L: Let us pray. We give you thanks, God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sharing the Peace

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Refrain

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

Prayer of the Day

L: Lord Jesus Christ, we may not be able to confront queens, or challenge presidents. We may not have the capacity to divert global resources or uplift entire countries. We may not have the voice to silence the noise of war, or the words to negotiate peace between armies. But, as we follow you, we are able to do small things with great love.

And so, we pray that you would empower us to act on the small differences we can make:

May we bring peace through small acts of gentleness and reconciliation.

May we bring prosperity to those in need through small contributions and collaborative relationships.

May we bring safety through small acts of consideration and community involvement.

May we bring wholeness through small acts of care and service.

And in all the small ways, may we be faithful sowers of the seeds of your kingdom in the world.

C: **Amen.**

The First Reading

Ezekiel 17:22-24

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

The Gospel Acclamation



Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Scripture

Mark 4:26-34

The Message

Song of the Day

"Seek Ye First"

Arlene Cash

The Iona Abbey Creed

L: Now let us confess our faith with the words of the Iona Creed:

**C: We believe in God above us,
maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon, water and earth,
of the breadth and beauty of all humanity.**

**We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ,
the Word made flesh, born of a woman, servant of the poor,
tortured and nailed to a tree.**

A man of sorrows, he died forsaken.

He descended into the earth to the place of death.

On the third day he rose from the tomb.

**He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present,
and His kingdom will come on earth.**

**We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
Life-giving breath of the church,
Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
Source of resurrection and of eternal life. Amen**

Prayers of the Faithful

L: Living God, you teach us the mysteries of your kingdom through the grain of mustard seed. Remind us, now, that our prayers, small and feeble though we may believe them to be, will always be enough.

Remind us that your Holy Spirit unscrambles our stumbling words, sorts through our wayward thoughts, and integrates our scattered images to create from them something of beauty and vitality.

Time of silence.

L: Living God, we pray for those closest to us . . . those around us in the community of faith, those we see face to face, and for those with whom we see only on ZOOM . . . for family and friends, for church and community, and for all with whom we are connected through the bonds of love . . .

Give time for the community to pray.

L: With confidence we pray,

C: Hear our prayers.

L: Living God, we pray for those who are our guides for life and faith, who point us to the ways of your kingdom . . . for all who share their faith, but what they say and how they live . . . for all who are heroes and role models for us . . .

Give time for the community to pray.

L: Living God, we pray for people who serve in community and nation, who walk in the corridors of responsibility and sit in the chambers of decision-making . . . for those who stand tall for what is right, for those who give of themselves for the benefit of others and place the greater good above the love of self . . .

Give time for the community to pray.

L: With confidence we pray,

C: Hear our prayers.

L: Living God, we pray for the people whose names and lives we know, those who today are in pain or distress or trouble, those who are happy, those who are sad . . .

L: We especially pray for:

- Ashton family
- Lemont Bell
- Lee Chandler
- Dallas Collins
- Alpha Omega Curry
- Dee Dunlap
- Natalie Eklund
- Linda Foley
- Eileen Folkerth
- Jennifer Frisina
- Donnell Horton
- Houston family
- Nylah Howard
- Andrew Hunt
- Waylon Kuklantz
- Elsie Mason
- Ray Matthews
- Lynn McClurkin
- Hilda Mertz
- Justin Mertz
- Rick Messina
- Lucy Mullis
- Chris Musial
- Leo Peeler
- Noel Petrea
- H.L. Propst
- Calvin Roberson
- Shannon Roberson
- Richard Schulz
- David Townsend
- Joyce Veit
- Herbert Watson
- Naomi Watson
- Beverly Williams
- Lewis Williams
- Renate Wilson

L: We now pray aloud or in the silence of our hearts for those we wish to name.

Give time for the community to pray.

L: With confidence we pray,

C: Hear our prayers.

L: Living God, we now pray for ourselves . . .

Give time for the community to pray.

L: Strengthen our faith as we seek first your kingdom and grant us courage to share your reign of love and justice in the world around us. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

C: Amen.

SHARING THE MEAL

Preparing the Table

“All That We Have”

Arlene Cash

Invitation to the Table

L: The table of bread and wine is now made ready. It is the table of company with Jesus, and all who love him. It is the table of sharing with the poor of the world, with whom Jesus identified himself. It is the table of communion with the earth, in which Jesus became fully human. So come to the table, all who have much faith and all who would like to have more; all who have been here often and all who

have not been in a long time; all who have tried to follow Jesus, and all who have fallen short. Come. It is Christ who invites us all to meet him here.

C: Amen

The Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer (*spoken*)

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Post-Communion Blessing

L: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood strengthen, keep and unite us now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE

Benediction

**L: May you never feel alone in the struggle for justice and peace.
May you know the support of family, friends, and people who feel as passionately about the world as you do.
May you feel a part of the great cloud of witnesses, who through the ages, did God's work and prayed for the coming of the Kingdom.
May you never feel alone.
And if you do, may you carry in your heart the words of Jesus, who told his friends:
"I am with you always."**

C: Amen.

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God

Sending Song

"Awesome God"

Annette Nolan