

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

September 5, 2021

Pastoral Welcome

Opening Prayer

“Stubborn Blessing”

(by Jan Richardson)

L: Don't tell me no.
I have seen you
feed the thousands,
seen miracles spill
from your hands
like water, like wine,
seen you with circles
and circles of crowds
pressed around you
and not one soul
turned away.

Don't start with me.

I am saying
you can close the door
but I will keep knocking.
You can go silent
but I will keep shouting.
You can tighten the circle
but I will trace a bigger one
around you,
around the life of my child
who will tell you
no one surpasses a mother
for stubbornness.

I am saying
I know what you
can do with crumbs
and I am claiming mine,
every morsel and scrap
you have up your sleeve.
Unclench your hand,
your heart.
Let the scraps fall
like manna,
like mercy

for the life
of my child,
the life of
the world.

Don't you tell me no.

Prelude

"Precious Lord"

Annette Nolan

Call to Worship

L: Gather us, O God

C: And we will know your life that makes us one.

L: Gather us, O God

C: And we will celebrate our variety and uniqueness.

L: Gather us, O God

C: And we will give you the pain of our brokenness.

L: Gather us, O God

C: And we will share the gifts of your Spirit.

L: Trinity of love braid us as one

C: That our brokenness be healed by you

That our fears be held by you

That our gifts be used by you

That our lives be offered to you

So that the world may know your reign of love. Amen.

Sharing the Peace

L: Where people squabble

C: Peace be among us.

L: Where races fight

C: Peace be among us.

L: Where neighbors argue

C: Peace be among us.

L: Where nations disagree

C: Peace be among us.

L: Where Christ's disciples gather

C: Peace be our way.

L: The peace of the Lord be 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 Illumination

L: Startle us, O God, with your truth and open our hearts and our minds to your wondrous love. Speak your word to us. Silence in us any voice but your own and be with us now as we turn our attention, our minds, and our hearts to you; in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray.

C: Amen.

The First Reading

Isaiah 35:4-7

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God!

The Gospel Acclamation

Carol Riddell

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 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: Gracious God, you call us not to settle for a life of existence for ourselves or for others, but for a life filled with faith, hope and love. Today we pray for this very reality for all humanity – *our neighbors both near and far* – with the same tenacious and expectant faith of the Syrophenician woman.

Silence

L: Gracious God, we weep for Afghanistan – a country ravaged by warfare, turmoil, and violence. Amid danger and unrest, give us and all our leaders the courage to strive for justice and peace and the perseverance to pray for a world that is safe and secure for all people.

L: Hear us, God,

C: for your mercy is great.

L: Gracious God, we pray the states, cities, and communities impacted by Hurricane Ida. We offer our prayers and support for those communities and relief agencies – like Lutheran Disaster Response – assisting with immediate aid and long-term assistance. We continue to pray for the country and people of Haiti after the earthquake.

L: Hear us, God,

C: for your mercy is great.

L: Gracious God, you call us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers as dear to us as our own needs. We pray for all our sisters and brothers who seek comfort, healing, refuge, rest, peace, wholeness, community, acceptance, and unconditional love.

L: We especially pray for:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Amanda Banbridge | ▪ David Park |
| ▪ Lemont Bell | ▪ Emily Park |
| ▪ Darren & Wendy Bengé | ▪ Leo Peeler |
| ▪ Peg Buckstad | ▪ Calvin Roberson |
| ▪ Dallas Collins | ▪ Richard Schulz |
| ▪ Troy Dane | ▪ Susan Severance |
| ▪ Charliese Eichler | ▪ Rashaad Sinclair |
| ▪ Dwight Hartsell | ▪ James Smith |
| ▪ Collette Hishon | ▪ LouAnn Tolson |
| ▪ Donnell Horton | ▪ David Townsend |
| ▪ Marylou Kuklantz | ▪ Dale & Sonia Tyson |
| ▪ Waylon Kuklantz | ▪ John Vick |
| ▪ Teresa Ledford | ▪ Herbert Watson |
| ▪ Ella Libke | ▪ Beverly Williams |
| ▪ Ray Matthews | ▪ Renate Wilson |

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

Time for the community to pray.

L: We remember and celebrate the lives of those who have died, especially:

- Pastor Henry McKay, the first Pastor of Advent, died on August 28th
- Bea Biggers, aunt of Lisa Williams, died on August 30th
- Ralph Purpur, friend of Russ McKittrick and the Lutheran Men in Mission of NC, died on August 28th
- Lewis Williams, father of Angie Martin, died on Sept 1st

L: By your Holy Spirit, comfort their families, and all who grieve, give peace to those who mourn, strengthen all through the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

L: Hear us, God,

C: for your mercy is great.

L: Gracious God, we pray for all healthcare professionals and relief workers, especially with the rapid rise of hospitalizations and the new surge of coronavirus infections. We give thanks for the development and availability of multiple vaccines, and we are bold to pray that those with vaccine hesitancy would choose to be vaccinated. Strengthen, encourage, and comfort us in the days ahead to rest in your peace amid anxiety, frustration, and worry.

L: Hear us, God,

C: for your mercy is great.

L: Gracious God, we offer these prayers to you, those spoken and those still unknown to us. Give us peace to trust you with the timing and the answers you provide. We ask all these things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

SHARING THE MEAL

Preparing the Table

Annette Nolan

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.

L: The gifts of God for the people of God.

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.

Sending Song

"Amazing Grace"

Carol Riddell

L: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God