

Gather Us, O God



Advent *To Gather*
Advent Together

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Prelude

“Simple Gifts”

Jennifer Frisina & Annette Nolan

Pastoral Welcome

Call to Worship

L: Gather us, O God

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

L: Gather us, God

C: And we will celebrate our variety and uniqueness.

L: Gather us, God

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

L: Gather us, 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

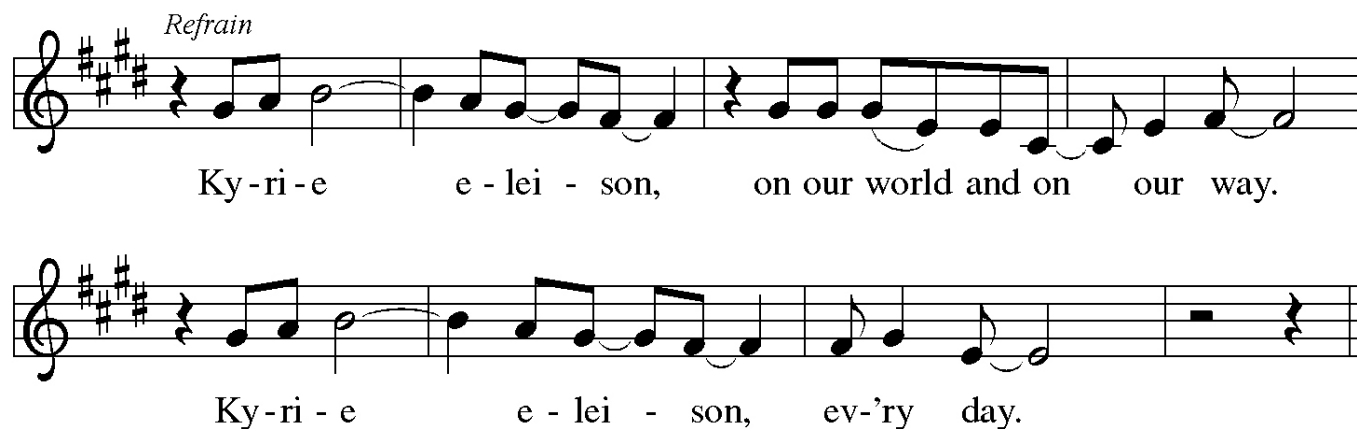
C: Peace be among us.

L: Where Christ's disciples gather

C: Peace be our way.

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD



For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all;
For this holy house, for all who worship and praise,
Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Refrain

That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor;
That we may live out . . . truth and justice and grace,
Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Refrain

Prayer of the Day

L: God our creator, you open our hearts with your grace and make them to be good soil.

Jesus our redeemer, your words do not return to you empty but make a home deep within us, so that we may bear the fruit of the Spirit. Let your waters of love fall softly upon the seeds that you have sown.

Spirit of life, you nurture all that is new within us and patiently tend the seeds of the Gospel as they become full with the harvest of grace.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

The First Reading

Isaiah 55:10-13

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

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The Message

Pastor Meghan Richter

As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread;
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.

As this cup of blessing is shared within our midst,
may we share the presence of your love.

As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread;
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.

Let this be a foretaste of all that is to come
when all creation shares this feast with you.

As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread;
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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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: Lord, look on your world – then look on us. How can we match up to the world's needs? We cannot even identify them adequately. Come to our aid!

A brief silence.

L: Lord of all justice, break our hearts for what breaks yours. We pray for all our brothers and sisters, who have been victims of oppression and injustice. As we celebrate the freedoms we have in our country, give us

courage to acknowledge our role – whether complicit or implicit – in mistakes and sins of the past in which we have denied those same freedoms to others through discrimination and racism. By the power of your Holy Spirit, empower us to work toward abolishing social structures which continue to perpetuate racial practices and policies. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

- L: Lord of all compassion, friend of all in need, you have untied our burdens and healed our spirits. We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened, those seeking healing, those in need within the church and the world.

We especially pray for:

[Prayers for members, family, and friends.]

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

- L: Lord of all healing and care, we pray for all healthcare professionals and relief workers, especially those who find themselves on the frontlines to bring healing, comfort and care to all impacted by the coronavirus. Strengthen, encourage, and empower us to be people of peace in the midst of anxiety, impatience, worry, dread, and a hunger for life to be normal again. May we be people who embody of a spirit of camaraderie, generosity, and faithful confidence. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**
- L: Lord, take the time and gifts you have entrusted to us, and teach us how to use them to give others the abundant life of Jesus – so that your people may rejoice in the new life you give, for you are the life-giver and we are your servants.

C: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil, for the kingdom, the pow'r and the glory are yours, now and forever.

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.

This is my song, O God of all the nations,
 a song of peace for lands afar and mine.
 This is my home, the country where my heart is;
 here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine;
 but other hearts in other lands are beating
 with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
 and sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine.
 But other lands have sunlight too, and clover,
 and skies are ev'rywhere as blue as mine.
 So hear my song, O God of all the nations,
 a song of peace for their land and for mine.

This is my prayer, O God of all earth's kingdoms,
 your kingdom come; on earth your will be done.
 O God, be lifted up till all shall serve you,
 and hearts united learn to live as one.
 So hear my prayer, O God of all the nations;
 myself I give you; let your will be done.

Text: Lloyd Stone, 1912-1993, sts. 1-2; Georgia Harkness, 1891-1974, st. 3

Text sts. 1-2 © 1934, 1962 Lorenz Publishing Company.

Text st. 3 © 1964 Lorenz Publishing Company.

Music: FINLANDIA, Jean Sibelius, 1865-1957