

Gather Us, O God



Advent to Gather
Advent Together

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November 15, 2020

Pastoral Welcome

Opening Reflection – *Spent*

*The one who had received the five talents
went off at once and traded with them,
and made five more talents.*

—Matthew 25.16

To trade you let go.
To invest you surrender.
God give me courage to let go
of myself,
my great investment
in the world you desire,
my self-spending
without which there is no return.
Today I give myself to the world,
banking on your grace,
not kept in fear,
not buried in inadequacy,
but spent with confidence,
and patient with the wait,
for the return
that is not mine but yours:
the world, blessed,
and myself, with interest.

(from Steve Garnaas-Holmes, *Unfolding Light*)

Confession and Forgiveness

P: To come before God with the truth of our lives is itself an act of faith: We trust that God is interested in us; interested in our minds and hearts and souls. We trust that God's mercy and grace are intended for us, too. With faith and in trust, let us make our confession to God, first in silent prayer.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P: God, hear our confession:
Sometimes our lives are a mess, because of choices we have made or because of choices others have made.
Sometimes our lives are great, and we're kind and generous.
Sometimes our lives are great, and we forget to be to grateful and humble.
We trust that in the jumble of all of this, you are present.
We trust that you are with us,
walking with us when we stray,
nudging us back to the right path,
slowing us down when we get ahead of you,
and waiting for us when we lag behind.
We thank you, God, and ask for your forgiveness,
and pray that you will stay with us throughout the journey.
Amen.

P: Brothers and sisters, this is the Good News:
In Jesus Christ, we are completely forgiven!
As you live out of and into this gift of forgiveness,
let us greet with world as people made new in Christ.
Amen.

(adpt. from Beth Merrill Neel, *Hold Fast To What Is Good*)

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.

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

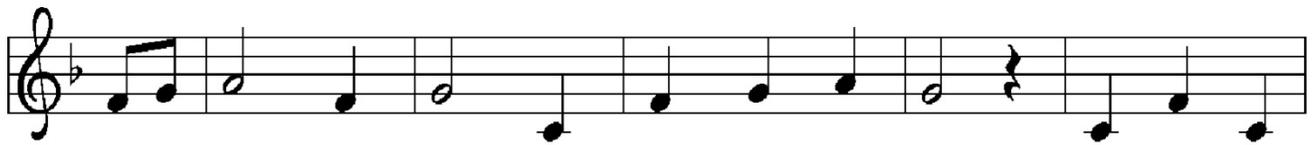
Prayer of the Day

L: Generous God,
in abundance you give us things both spiritual and physical.
Help us to hold lightly to the fading things of this earth
and to grasp tightly to the lasting things of your kingdom,
so that what we are and what we do and say may be our gift to you,
through Jesus Christ, who calls us to seek the things above,
where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The First Reading

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

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 25:14-30

The Message

Pastor Ward Misenheimer

Song of the Day "Let Us Talents and Tongues Em-ply" (vv. 1 & 2) Laura Torrence



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!

Refrain



Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

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. We know the world is so fractured and filled with chaos and crises of our own making. Teach us to pray, and when we struggle to pray, may your Spirit intercede with the words we cannot find. Come, Holy Spirit!

A brief silence.

L: Lord, whose giving knows no ending, we offer up the treasure that you have entrusted to us; we offer up the skills and time that you have graciously given to us; we offer up ourselves in service and praise. Receive these gifts by your grace. Multiply and use them through the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish Christ's work of love in the world. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

L: Lord of all peace, our nation becomes more divided every week. Anger, frustration, disappointment, suspicion, and distrust have eroded relationships and perpetuated a mentality of “us and them,” so that the real issues are eclipsed and the real people who are hurting are forgotten once again. By the power of your Holy Spirit, we pray for the deep healing that must happen — *no more band-aids* — and we pray for ourselves who are called to do the difficult work of rebuilding trust and creating communities that resemble your kingdom of heaven. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

We especially pray for

- Laura Angell
- Lemont Bell
- Fred Bridges
- Freda Christ
- William Ensley
- Emma Fettig
- Eileen Folkerth
- Cindy Henderson
- Dick Kuklantz
- Waylon Kuklantz
- Phyllis Lester
- Ray Matthews
- Hilda Mertz
- Justin Mertz
- Rick Messina
- Dick Moser
- Clyde Mullis
- Tyler Oddman
- Barney Quigley
- Calvin Roberson
- Shannon Roberson
- Richard Schulz
- Bobby Short
- Mark Steele
- Kirby Strickland
- Mary Faith Strickland
- Bill Toney
- Eva Toney
- David Townsend
- Herbert Watson
- Tammy Whaley
- 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 community to pray*).

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

- Ingeborg Boggess, aunt of Toni Hagerman
- Rick Modesitt, brother-in-law of Larry Brown
- Benny Liles, uncle of Herbert Watson
- David Clayton, cousin of Janet Rasmussen

. . . 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 Christ Jesus.

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. 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.

Sending Song

"Soon and Very Soon"

Morning Chimes