

# Gather Us, O God



*Advent to Gather*  
*Advent Together*

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## GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

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**Prelude**

“Precious Lord”

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.**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

P: The prophet Isaiah proclaims that the Lord will throw a feast for all the people of the world. A feast of the finest foods, a feast with vintage wines, a feast of seven courses, a lavish feast with gourmet desserts.

But, so often we decline the invitation to this feast without even sending an RSVP. We choose to live off of what is convenient, what is easy to acquire, and what will cost us very little. We choose to live on a fast-food diet rather than gather for a feast at the Lord’s table because we know too well that it will require much of us.

I invite you into a time of silence for reflection and self-examination to consider what might be holding you back from saying YES to the invitation from the Lord.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

P: Gracious Lord,

**C: Over and over, you have reached out to us, invited us in, encouraged us to spend time with you, and to feast with you at your table.**

**But we have been too busy, too arrogant, or too self-consumed, and we have chosen to ignore your invitations without so much as a thank you.**

**And when we do show up, we like to arrive late, slip out early, and take a raincheck on the difficult, demanding and costly work of discipleship.**

**Your feast is a feast of grace, and so it requires all that we have. Your feast is a feast of love, and so it means laying down our lives for others, friends and enemies alike. Your feast is a feast for all, and so it means making room for others to gather.**

**Forgive us. Cover us in your extravagant grace we fail to extend to others. Fill our cups to overflowing with humility and gratitude, that we might be transformed into the people you have called us to be.**

P: Hear the good news: In Jesus Christ, you are completely forgiven. The Lord remembers your sin no more, so now it is time for you to let it go. The table is set, come be filled on the goodness of the Lord and strengthened for your life of discipleship.

**C: 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.

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### PROCLAIMING THE WORD

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*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*

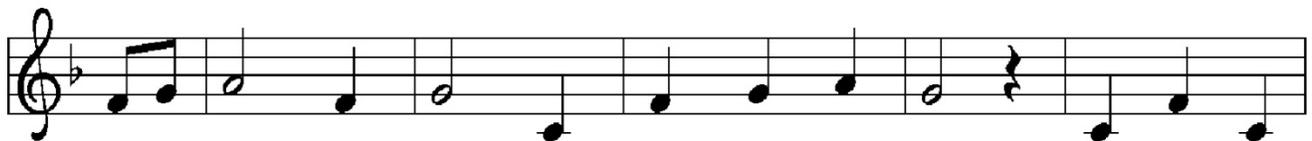
## Prayer of the Day

L: Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## The First Reading

Isaiah 25:1-9

## 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 22:1-14

## The Message

Pastor Ward Misenheimer

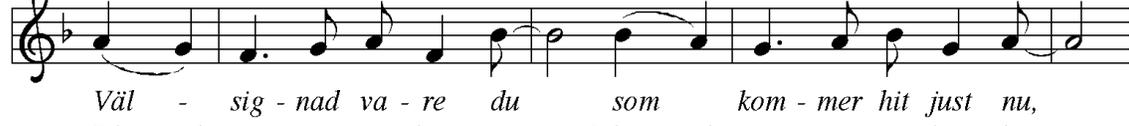
1\*



Du är he - lig, du är hel. Du är all - tid myck-et mer  
You are ho - ly, you are whole. You are al - ways ev - er more



än vi nån - sin kan för - stå, du är nä - ra än - då.  
than we ev - er un - der - stand. You are al - ways at hand.

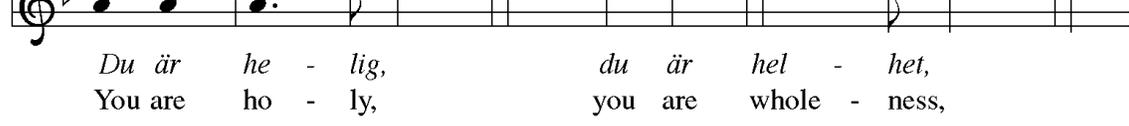


Väl - sig - nad va - re du som kom - mer hit just nu,  
Bless - ed are you com - ing near. Bless - ed are you com - ing here

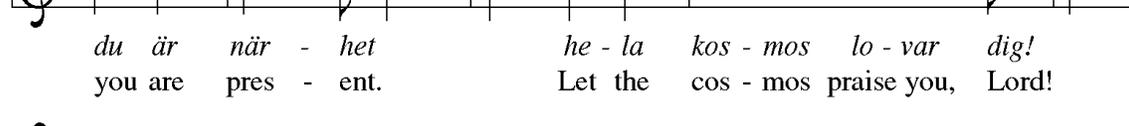


väl - sig - na - de vår jord, blir till bröd på vår jord.  
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.

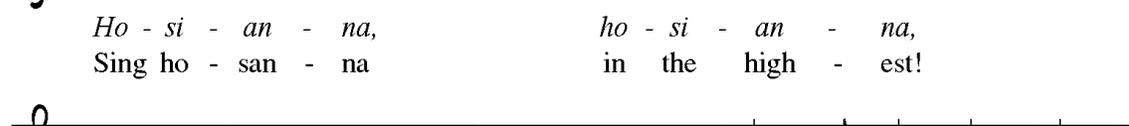
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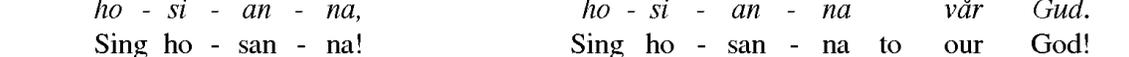
Du är he - lig, du är hel - het,  
You are ho - ly, you are whole - ness,



du är när - het he - la kos - mos lo - var dig!  
you are pres - ent. Let the cos - mos praise you, Lord!



Ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na,  
Sing ho - san - na in the high - est!



ho - si - an - na, ho - si - an - na vår Gud.  
Sing ho - san - na! Sing ho - san - na to our God!

\* May be sung in canon.

Text: Per Harling, b. 1945  
Music: DU ÄR HELIG, Per Harling  
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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. 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, we come into Your presence with praise and thanksgiving for your faithful love. Your love never fails—not even we turn away from you: when we ignore Your invitation, or desert you for gods of our own making. Even then you do not abandon us but reach out—again and again—inviting us back into relationship once more. 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

- Lemont Bell
- Anne Brown (Teleah Amaker’s mother)
- Freda Christ
- Chris Cochran
- Marie Cochran
- Paul Coleman
- Inez Easley
- Antonio Estrella
- Emma Fettig
- Eileen Folkerth
- Jan Frick
- Dwight Hartsell
- Dick Kuklantz
- Waylon Kuklantz
- Phyllis Lester
- Ray Matthews
- Hilda Mertz
- Justin Mertz
- Rick Messina
- Joan Moeller
- Clyde Mullis
- Tyler Oddman
- Nadine Osborne
- Dot Park
- Calvin Roberson
- Shannon Roberson
- Richard Schulz
- Elaine Slattum
- Mark Steele
- Mary Faith Strickland
- David Townsend
- Tammy Whaley
- Herbert Watson
- Beverly Williams
- Lewis Williams
- Lisa Williams

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 . . .

Hal Merriot, former Advent member

Myra Steele, sister-in-law of Jennifer Frisina

Michael Mason, nephew of Brenda Reid

. . . 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: We pray for all communities and all people who have been impacted by the devastating wildfires. We pray for all the communities impacted by Hurricane Delta. Strengthen and protect all firefighters, first responders, and relief workers.

L: 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. 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.**

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## SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE

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### 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

"I've Got Peace Like a River"

Annette Nolan