

# 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](http://www.adventlu.org)

September 27, 2020

---

## GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

---

**Prelude**

“I Stand in Awe”

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: As broken people, we come humbly into the presence of our loving God to ask again for God’s mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

P: Loving God,

**C: we confess that we have not told others of your desire to bring all people together into one family. Too often our loving acts are self-serving. We neglect to welcome strangers, to feed the hungry, and to mend broken relationships. Forgive us and light your fire of love in our hearts that we may share with others your deep, compassionate love for all creation.**

P: In baptism, God has made us one family, forgiven us our sins and shortcomings, and called us to new life. As we are reminded of our forgiveness, may we always be open to the power of the Holy Spirit to change us into a new creation, proclaiming to others the good news of Christ Jesus our Lord.

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.**

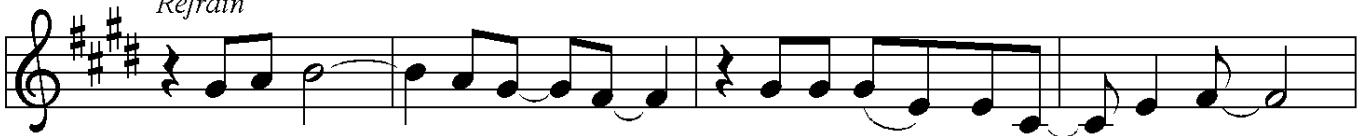
L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

---


## 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*

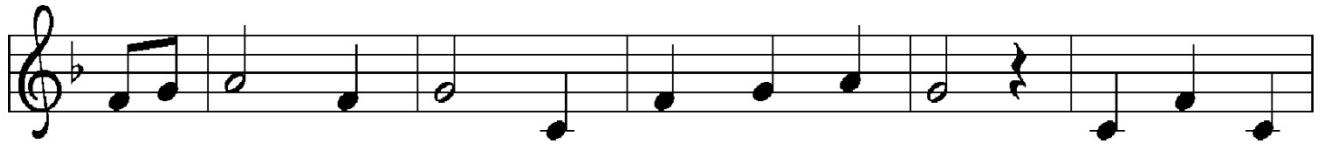
### Prayer of the Day

L: Merciful God, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to show us a different way to live — the way of deep humility and obedience. You have called us to love one another, and to work together with one heart and mind, balancing our needs with the needs of those around us. Give us courage to follow faithfully — with actions that bear witness to the words we speak, and worship that overflows into our daily life and relationships — so that our lives will bring glory and honor to your name. Amen.

### The First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4 & 25-32

## 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.



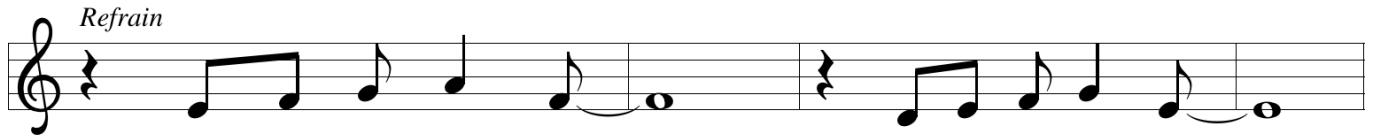
Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## The Holy Scripture

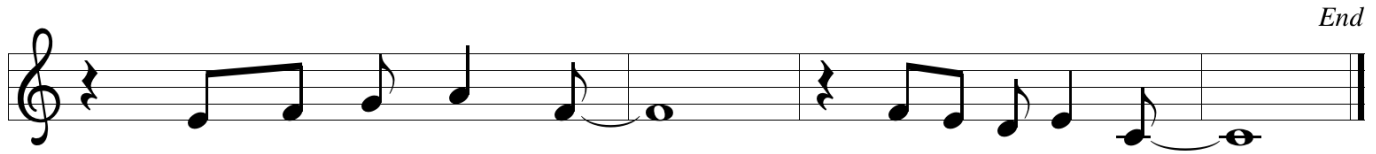
Matthew 21:23-32

## The Message

Pastor Ward Misenheimer



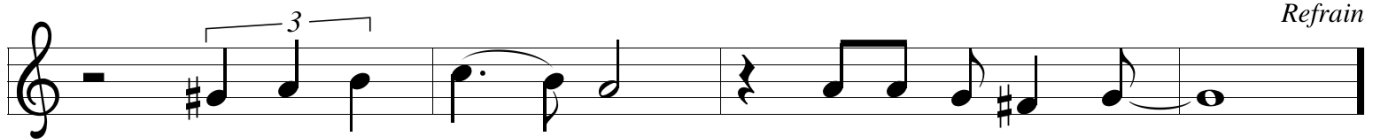
Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Text: Eddie Espinosa, b. 1953  
Music: CHANGE MY HEART, Eddie Espinosa  
Text and music © 1982 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing, admin. Music Services

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## 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 of all love, giver of all life, you know our frailties and failings; you know that our lives are a mixture of Yes and No, of an honest seeking to do what is right together with moments of choosing our own way. May we yield to the leading of your Spirit as you give us your grace to turn and follow you along the way of righteousness. 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
- Abby Bostian
- Anne Brown (Teleah Amaker’s mother)
- Freda Christ
- Paul Coleman
- Antonio Estrella
- Ann Farabee
- Emma Fettig
- Eileen Folkerth
- Jan Frick
- Dwight Hartsell
- Dick Kuklantz
- Waylon Kuklantz
- Phyllis Lester
- Michael Mason
- Ray Matthews
- Hilda Mertz
- Justin Mertz
- Rick Messina
- Joan Moeller
- Clyde Mullis
- Tyler Oddman
- Anita Ortiz
- Nadine Osborne
- Dot Park
- Shannon Roberson
- Richard Schulz
- Elaine Slattum
- Myra & Mark Steele
- Mary Faith Strickland
- David Townsend
- 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 . . .

Eric West, husband of Tammy Jones-West (who is the Assistant to the Bishop on the NC Lutheran Synod staff)

Jessie Amaker, grandmother of Teleah Amaker

Freddie Bridges, mother of Michelle Hagle

. . . 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 in California, Oregon, and Washington State. We pray for all the communities impacted by Hurricane Sally. 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.**

---

## 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

"Open the Eyes of My Heart"

A. Nolan & CJ Schrader