

NORTH TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021



Rooted in Love

Remembering Those We Have Lost

June 14, 2021

St. Andrew United Methodist Church

North Texas Annual Conference 2021

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Please silence cell phones as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

*Please rise in body or spirit.

***CALL TO WORSHIP** | Rev. S. Dianna Masters and Rev. Levy Laguardia

God be gracious to us.

All: **God be gracious to us, in this time of our grief.**

We are gathered together again, fewer than we were before, the empty space conspicuous, and each of us carrying a sadness that was yet unknown to us the last time we were gathered.

All: **O Spirit, give comfort to all in this fellowship of the freshly wounded. Meet and minister to each according to their need.**

Dear hearts, we travel this pilgrim journey together, so let us find courage to comfort and serve one another now. Together let us be the caretakers of the stories of the ones we lost, recognizing that theirs, and all our stories, are woven into that greater story still being unfolded by God across history and time. God knows our heartbreak. God sees our tears. Let us learn to love one another well in our common grief, O Lord.

Let us learn to speak freely together of our great loss and our still-greater hope.

All: **Spirit of God, be present as we share our hearts.**

Orchestrate our interactions.

All: **Accomplish your purposes.**

God, be gracious.

All: **Christ have mercy. Amen.**

HYMN 702 | “Sing with All the Saints in Glory” | HYMN TO JOY

LITANY OF THE SAINTS | Rev. Andy Lewis and Rev. Dr. April Johnson Bristow

Eternal God, your Word declares that the life that is laid down in faith will be raised and produce a great harvest. This we celebrate as we proclaim:

All: **Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

We thank you for those who chose the way of your Son, our brother, Jesus Christ.

In the midst of trial, they held out hope;

in the midst of hatred, they kindled love;

in the midst of persecutions, they witnessed to your power;

in the midst of despair, they clung to your promise.

We remember and praise you for the saints and martyrs of this and every age who in life and death faithfully proclaimed:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

In the company of all these saints, we look to Jesus, the Risen Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. In his holy name, we remember and name before you now those whose faith strengthened our own:

Arnel Barton Smith Jr.	Ralph L. Smith, Jr.	Valrye Eugene Gordon	Patricia N. Daves
Buist Binkley Wilson	Thomas Horace Price	Richard L. Fleming	Martha H. Walker
Kenneth M. Dickson	George Holcombe	Marilyn Bozell	Marjorie S. Philbrook
Donald R. Benton	Larry Gene Wisdom	Edrue W. Dodd	Mary Ida Richey Hale
Guy Douglas Garrett	Gregg Alan Smith	Marilyn Sue Gondol	Audrey Washington
James Edwin Pledger	A. Jarrett Major	Carroll Moore Starnes	Katheryn Kittrell
Shelley C. McNew	Wayne C. Odom	Ethelyn Bond	Don A. Russell
Gilbert E. Fleer	Paul C. Sackett	Dona Sue White	Martha Ann Sackett
Howard L. Strickland	William Boyd Smith	Sammye Ann Baker	Jane E. Bach
Van Louis Lazaroff	James F. Dean, Jr.	Patty R. Kirby	James E. Dorff

and all others whom we hold in our hearts and name aloud to God now.

These lives, like seeds, dropped to the ground, yet their witness has borne fruit and enables us to say:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

We pray for your church throughout the world and for that part to which we belong,

that it may be ready to spend and to be spent in your service,

that the love of self-preservation may be set aside,

that the deaths you demand of it may be embraced joyfully,

and that through us all it may proclaim:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

In silence we surrender to your will and purpose ourselves and all that we count important. For we cannot know the glory of Christ's resurrection if we do not have the fellowship of his sufferings. And we cannot expect to gather the kingdom's harvest if we do not sow the kingdom's seed. In us and through us, may your Spirit proclaim:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

SPECIAL MUSIC | “Beau Soir” | Debussy, composer; Heifetz, arranger
Dr. Jonathan M. Gregoire, organ; Dr. Martha Walvoord, violin

SCRIPTURE READING | Luke 4:16-21 | Rev. Martha Valencia

SERMON | “Our Divine Vocation” | Rev. Vic Casad

SPECIAL MUSIC | “Deep River” | Heifetz, arranger
Dr. Jonathan M. Gregoire, organ; Dr. Martha Walvoord, violin

PRAYER FOR THE PANDEMIC | Rev. Dr. April Johnson Bristow

God of consolation,
Surely you count in heaven,
Just as we count here on earth,
In shock and in sorrow,
The souls sent back to you,
One by one,
The dead from the COVID pandemic,
As the ones become tens,
The tens become hundreds,
The hundreds become thousands,
The thousands become ten-thousands
And then hundred-thousands,
Each soul, a heartbreak,
Each soul, a life denied.

God of wisdom,
Surely in the halls of divine justice
You are assembling the courts,
Calling witnesses to testify,
To proclaim
The compassion of some
And the callousness of others
As we’ve struggled to cope.
The souls taken too soon,
Whose funerals were lonely,
Who didn’t need to die,
Who died alone,

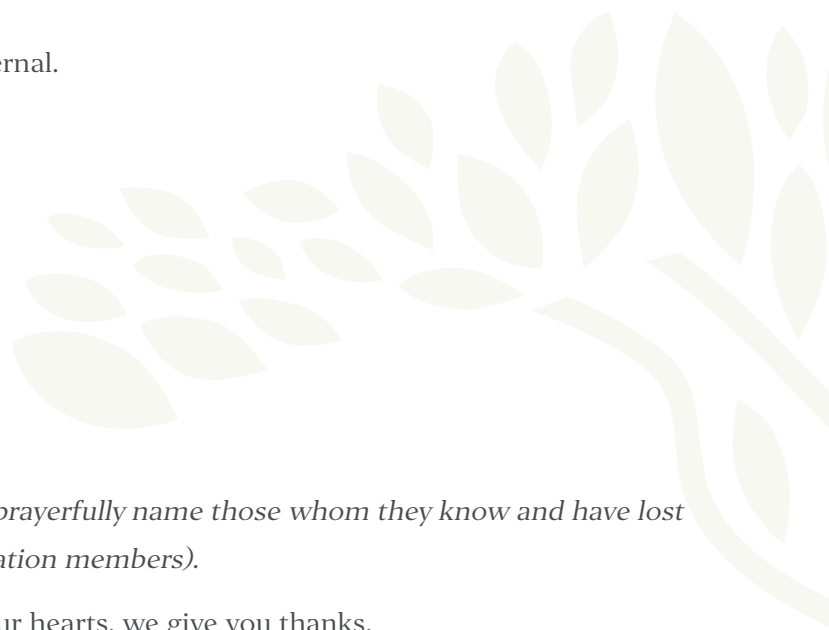
Will tell their stories
When you judge
Our triumphs
And our failures
In these hours of need.

God of healing,
bring an end to this pandemic,
And all illness and disease.
Bless those who stand in service to humanity.
Bless those who grieve.
Bless the dead,
So that their souls are bound up in the bond of life eternal.
And grant those still afflicted
With disease or trauma
A completed and lasting healing,
One by one,
Until suffering ceases,
And we can stop counting the dead,
In heaven
And on earth.

The congregation (in person and online) is invited to prayerfully name those whom they know and have lost due to the COVID pandemic (family, friends, congregation members).

O God, for all of those we have named aloud and in our hearts, we give you thanks.

CLOSING REMARKS | Bishop McKee



WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Bishop Michael McKee | North Texas Annual Conference
Reverend Dr. Victor E. Casad | Superintendent, East District
Reverend Andrew J. Lewis | Clergy Assistant to the Bishop and
Director, Center for Missional Outreach
Reverend S. Dianna Masters | Retired

Reverend Levy Laguardia | Senior Pastor, Axe Memorial United Methodist Church
Reverend Dr. April Johnson Bristow | Associate Pastor, First United Methodist Church Richardson
Reverend Martha Valencia | Senior Pastor, Elmwood United Methodist Church

ST. ANDREW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Reverend Allison Jean | Associate Pastor, Worship and Arts
Taylor Davis | Director of Music and Worship Arts
Phillip Haworth | Associate Director of Music
Dr. Jonathan M. Gregoire | Organist
Dr. Martha Walvoord | Guest Violinist
St. Andrew United Methodist Church Chancel Choir



ST. ANDREW