

Aslan Is On The Move  
Prayers of the People - Litany for Advent

Leader 1: Prepare the way of the Lord! Make his paths straight. Let us pray to God who sends a Son to make things right with the world.

Leader 2: In Narnia, before Aslan arrived it was “always winter and never Christmas”. Many peoples of the world live always in war and hunger, and never peace and justice. May we work for justice and peace for all. Let us pray for the world. *In the silence that follows the people are invited to offer their prayers for the world either silently or aloud.*

Leader 1: Aslan is on the move.

**People: God so loved the world that he gave his only Son . . . that the world might be saved through him.**

Leader 2: ‘When Adam’s flesh and Adam’s bone sits . . . on the throne, the evil time will over and done.’ This Narnian prophecy reminds us that we are Christ’s hands in the world, called to serve where we are in our nation and our communities. It is our responsibility to build a nation that cares for the least of these.

Leader 1: Let us pray for Joseph our president, for Kim our governor, for Congress, the Courts, and our local governments. For peace that passes all understanding. *In the silence that follows you are invited to offer their prayers for the nation and for our communities either silently or aloud.*

Leader 2: Aslan is on the move.

**People: Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these ... you did it to me.**

Leader 2: When the children learn that Aslan is a lion they ask “Is he is – quite safe?” Mr. Beaver replies, “Course he isn’t safe. But he’s good. He’s the King, I tell you.”

Leader 1: As the Body of Christ we risk everything for the sake of the gospel, reconciling the world to God who isn’t safe, but who is good. We prayer for all around the world who do the work of Jesus Christ. We pray for the Church - especially the church in places where it is not safe, but is doing the good work of God. *In the silence that follows the people are invited to offer their concerns for the Church either silently or aloud.*

Leader 2: Aslan is on the move.

**People: Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.**

Leader 2: The ancient prophecy of Narnia says, “Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight, at the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more.” In baptism we are made one with Christ and called to comfort the afflicted, heal the sick, feed the hungry, and raise the dead. May we have hearts to love and hands to serve. Let us pray for those who suffer or who are in sorrow, and for all we are called to serve. *In the silence that follows the people are invited to offer their prayers for those who suffer either silently or aloud.*

Leader 1: Aslan is on the move.

**People: This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.**

Leader 1: Aslan knows the “deeper magic from before the dawn of time”-- that the rules are fair and there will be wonderful surprises. Christ became obedient unto death -- even death on a cross. We entrust all who have died to God’s continuing care and love. Let us pray for those who have died and those who mourn. *In the silence that follows the people are invited to offer their concerns for departed either silently or aloud.*

Leader 2: Aslan is on the move.

**People: Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Leader 2: After the White Witch had been defeated, the statues restored to life and the children crowned and enthroned, the creatures of Narnia and the Kings and Queens of Narnia lived in great joy. In all things we are more than conquerors through Christ who loved us. Let us give thanks for the many blessings poured out upon us. *In the silence that follows the people are invited to offer their thanksgivings.*

Leader 1: Aslan is on the move.

**People: Amen Come, Lord Jesus!**

Leader 1: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all - let us pray. Gracious and holy God, in Christ you have emptied yourself and become holy. You have been obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore we exalt and praise you, we bend our knee to you, and we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us that we may more fully be your presence in the world, proclaiming your love in word and deed throughout all worlds. Amen.

Many C.S. Lewis fans are familiar with one of the children's first conversations in Narnia and how they question Mr. and Mrs. Beaver's description of Aslan. It goes like this:

*"Is he a man?" asked Lucy.*

*"Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. Certainly not. I tell you he is King of the wood and the son of the great emperor-beyond-the-sea. Don't you know who is the King of the Beasts? Aslan is a lion – the Lion, the great lion."*

*"ooh!" said Susan, "I'd thought he was a man. Is he – quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."*

*"That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver; "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."*

*"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.*

*"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver; "don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."*

The genius of C.S. Lewis' often-quoted conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, Lucy and Susan is that it so cleverly captures the unguessable, out-of-the-box, awful goodness of God. The theologian Frederick Beuchner writes this about our unguessable, counter-intuitive God who surprised us in the manger:

*Those who believe God can never, in a way, be sure of Him again. Once we have seen Him in a stable, we can never be sure where He will appear or at what lengths He will go, to what ludicrous depths of self-humiliation He will descend in His wild pursuit of man. If holiness and the awful power and majesty of God were present in this least auspicious of all events, this birth of a peasant's child, then there is no place or time so lowly or earthbound but that holiness can be present there too. And this means that we are never safe, that there is no place that we can hide from God, no place where we are safe from His power to break in two and re-create the human heart. It is just where God seems most helpless that God is most strong. It is just where we least expect Him that He comes to us fully.*

It was a feature of C.S. Lewis' faith that very early on he was determined not to 'leave bits out' of his picture of Jesus. His oldest friend Arthur Greaves had been a Christian long before him, but after his conversion Lewis soon came to suspect that his friend wasn't really taking the gospels seriously. In a letter to him he said, 'I'm beginning to think that you can only get what *you* call

“Jesus” out of the Gospels by leaving a lot out’. Some years later Lewis was writing a letter to a woman who was thinking about becoming a Christian. He says something like this to her: ‘Everyone told me that if I read the gospels I’d find Jesus irresistible. Well, I didn’t find that at all! What I did find was that most of the time we aren’t even invited to give an opinion about him – *he’s* the one who will give his opinion about *us*!’ So it’s not surprising that when Lewis came to give us his picture of Jesus in the character of Aslan the Lion, he tried to portray this combination of kindness and severity – of total authority and absolute love.

Good and terrible – gentle and severe – loving and commanding – this is Aslan. In other places in the books this combination of characteristics is underlined for us. In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* Aslan ends up giving his own life in the place of Edmund the traitor, just as Jesus gave his life for us.

How are we to approach this Jesus? First we approach him in absolute confidence in his love for us. Aslan gave his life on the stone table so that Edmund the traitor could go free. In the same way, the Bible tells us that the Son of God loved us and gave himself for us on the Cross. He held nothing back. So we can be absolutely confident in his love for us.

But his love for us is not always the same as ‘being nice to us’. It’s a tough love that will never ‘let us off the hook’; if he knows that something is good for us, he will be relentless in pointing us toward it, even if it is hard and painful. He will always tell us the truth about ourselves, in the hope that we will accept it and move forward in our relationship with God.

**In the Chronicles of Narnia, when confronted by the idea of Aslan, the lion, who is a picture of God, Lucy asks, "Is He safe?"**

**"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver."Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."**

**Mr. Tumnus also says, "He's wild, you know. Not a tame lion."**

God is grand, beyond our imagination, everywhere, powerful, gentle. We may never know Him fully, but acknowledging His presence in the reality of a quiet snow storm, the painted evening sunset, the comforting embrace of a friend or lover, the grace of forgiving, gentle words from a loved one, in the flesh real live person who is being God to us, laughing or crying or having a warm, intimate embrace, and actively loving Him through each moment, understanding that He was the designer of these gracious moments of life.

It can't be found from saying, "Tomorrow, I will do better." Or "Tomorrow I will make myself have a devotional," with guilt in my heart.

It is found in a heart fully alive to Him--through my messing up and my being a child in my faith--but loving, loving, loving and seeking Him while I may be found. It is not virtual--imagined by reading one more book, but it is days upon days of just being, walking with, talking to, resting in--His presence, in His word, contemplating Him, complaining to Him, doubting Him, knowing His patient grace and love, when most undeserved--just like a real relationship. If I invest my time and my heart, I will indeed end up with a real, in the flesh relationship.

And so if I am to find that place of quiet rest--it must be as a result of being with Him, day in day out and then coming to know Knowing and understanding Him through all the moments of my life, through what He has made, what He has said, what He has taught me through His Holy Spirit, what I have learned from being with other godly people who are filled with His attributes. It is a real live relationship--exciting, always mysterious, an adventure, but to be close to His heart--will always, always bring confidence, peace, security.

If I engage my worship of Him through all the moments of walking them with Him as my closest of companions, then a natural result will be that I will be and feel near to His heart and then I will find that being there, it is a place of quiet rest. But, it is a life intentional, lived, pursued--without the investment of heart, time, mind and soul (Loving Him with our heart, soul, mind and strength), there can be no rest--But if

I invest my whole being in Him, with all honesty as I am with Him, getting to know Him as my not tame lion, then I will come to find more than I ever hoped for.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jn2n3wdAQi4>

JESUS SHALL REIGN WHERE'ER THE SUN

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

O COME, O COME or O COME THOUGH LONG EXPECTED JESUS

Mark 13:24-27

“But in those days, following that distress,

“the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light;

**25**

the stars will fall from the sky,  
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’<sup>[a]</sup>

**26** “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. **27** And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Malachi 3:1-3

“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

**2** But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. **3** He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness,