



**The Episcopal Church of the Advent
September 2, 2025 Newsletter
Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost**



We welcomed The Reverend Tryggvi (pronounced “Trig-vee”) G. Árnason to Advent on Sunday, September 7th. Father Tryggvi led our congregation in worship and was warmly received at a reception following the 10:30 service in the Parish House. After a long and thorough search for a new Priest-In-Charge, we celebrated Father Tryggvi’s arrival with great enthusiasm. Father Árnason is the oldest of four brothers, all born and raised in Reykjavik, Iceland. He comes to us from North Carolina, where he served 13 years as Rector of St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in Hickory, NC, and 11 years as Chaplain and Priest Associate at Holy Innocents’ Episcopal Church in Atlanta.

Sermon Notes – The Cost of Discipleship

On Sunday, we joyfully welcomed our new Priest-In-Charge, Father Tryggvi G. Árnason, who declared it “simply great!” to be with us. With a playful nod to his Icelandic accent—where “W” and “V” blend together—he set the stage for his sermon on Luke 14:25-33, and what it means to be a disciple. Father Tryggvi used humor to highlight how language shapes understanding, noting that “simple” in Icelandic means straightforward (and only straightforward), yet in English it can imply plain or uncomplicated. He extended this to cultural differences, like how “football” means soccer abroad but a hand-played game here, or how Southerners say “fixin’ to.” These examples illustrated a deeper point: words carry nuanced meanings across cultures, and misinterpretation can obscure truth.

This lens of language brought fresh insight to the challenging Gospel of Luke. When Jesus tells a crowd that to be his disciple, they must “hate” family, carry their cross, and give up possessions, we are taken aback much as those in the crowd who constantly follow him. These stark words can feel jarring—how could Jesus, the

embodiment of love, demand hatred? Father Tryggvi addressed this by introducing Joseph Ernest Renan (1823–1892), a philosopher and Aramaic scholar. Renan was an expert in Aramaic, which was the language that Jesus spoke, and called Luke’s Gospel “the most beautiful book in the world” for its portrayal of God’s boundless love. This is most clearly seen in the story of the Prodigal Son and Jesus’ words on the cross: “Father, forgive them.” Renan’s insight framed Father Tryggvi’s approach: Luke’s Gospel is a story of God’s love, not division.

To clarify Jesus’ words, Father Tryggvi turned to Eugene Peterson’s *The Message*, which translates “hate” (Greek: *miséō*) as “refusing to let go” of family, friends, or possessions. In this context, *miséō* isn’t literal hatred but a call to prioritize God above all else. We learn that Jesus isn’t asking us to reject loved ones but to ensure nothing—family, wealth, or community—takes precedence over our relationship with God. This is the cost of discipleship: a deliberate choice to align our lives with God’s will, even when it’s demanding.

Discipleship requires discernment, not impulsiveness. Jesus’ analogies of a builder planning a tower or a king preparing for war underscore the need to “count the cost” of following him. Renouncing possessions isn’t about literal poverty but about holding things loosely—whether wealth, status, or attachments—so they don’t hinder our trust in God. Luke’s Gospel, while stark in its demands, balances this with God’s grace, assuring us of divine love, as seen in parables like the Prodigal Son.

Father Tryggvi closed with a poignant question: “What do I trust more than I trust God?” He reminded us that Jesus invites us into a transformative relationship, one where Christ graciously helps us carry our cross if we let him. This is a challenge for us to examine our priorities and trust God above all, confident in His love to guide us.

Reflection Question: What intentional act of discipleship might we embrace this week to deepen our relationship with God? Is it possible to sacrifice additional time for prayer, serving others, or letting go of a grudge?

Peace be with you,
Kim

A Celebration of Life for Livy Scholly: Saturday, September 20, at 10:30 am in the Chapel at The Farmhouse Inn at Hundred Acre Farm, followed by a small reception. All members of Advent are cordially invited.

Parish House project: After the 10:30 service on Sunday, a review of the Parish House maintenance and renovation project was presented to the congregation by O.J. Booker. Preservation builder Curtis Whitzel and Vestry members were also present to answer questions.

Stewardship Campaign Chair: Vestry member Mary Horton is this year’s Stewardship Campaign Chair. The Campaign will begin this month. Parishioners will soon see mail and email which will contain pledge cards and other information.

**Rota for the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 14, 2025**

LEM: 8:00 A.M. / 10:30 A.M. Pridgen
Altar Guild: Abbott-Yost-Strickland
Flower Guild: Branch
1st Reading: B Pridgen

2nd Reading: Jackson-Lewis
Vestry of the Day: Jackson-Lewis
Organ Tech: Quillin

**Readings for the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 14, 2025**

[Link to Readings](#)

First Reading: Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
The Psalm: Psalm 14
Second Reading: Timothy 1:12-17
The Gospel: Luke 15:1-10

Parish Prayer List

Jack Armistead, Sue Baldwin, Fr. Dann Brown, Lynn Cupples, Bob Cupples, Flossie Dodge, Mary Ann Edelman, Anita Hunt, Kate Jackson, Beth Tamplin Jones, Julie Hancock Jones, Mary Mack Jones, Jan Kozel, Bill Kurtz, Susan Kurtz, Kathy Lehman, Brian Lehman, Jerry Maddoz, Dutton Morehouse, Jennie Newton, Annette Piazza, Dennis Reeder, Lynne Roach, Dick Schmidt, Emily Sigman, Betty Thomas, Jack Ward, Gloria Ward, Jay Whitcomb.

September Birthdays: **14** Vic Jackson, **15** Maryann Dartnell, **17** Julie Jenkins, **20** Ray Bennett, **20** Alex Branch, **26** Devon Dartnell, Harrison Yost, **28** William Wood Burriss

Recurring weekly calendar

- Rite I Eucharist: Sunday, 8:00 AM
- Sunday school (adult): Sunday, 9:15 AM
- Rite II Eucharist: Sunday, 10:30 AM
- Morning Prayer service: Wednesday, 9:00 AM
- Off the Rails AA group: M, Tu, Th @ noon
- Madison AA group: Th, Su @7:30 PM, F @ 7:00 PM

The Episcopal Church of the Advent

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